



(RESEARCH ARTICLE)



## Consumer behavior and spending patterns on cultural goods and services

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### Abstract

This study investigates the factors influencing consumer behavior and spending patterns on cultural goods and services. Using a quantitative research approach with Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), data were gathered through a structured survey of 350 respondents from diverse demographic backgrounds. The results reveal that cultural interest, social influence, and perceived value have a significant and positive impact on consumer spending behavior, with cultural interest showing the strongest influence ( $\beta = 0.45$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Additionally, the study highlights the mediating role of perceived value in the relationship between social influence and spending behavior. These findings provide practical insights for marketers and cultural institutions aiming to better understand consumer motivations in the cultural sector. Future research should consider expanding the sample size and exploring other potential mediating variables.

**Keywords:** Consumer behavior; Cultural consumption; Spending patterns; Quantitative research; PLS-SEM; Perceived value; Social influence

### 1. Introduction

The consumption of cultural goods and services has become an increasingly important area of interest within the field of consumer behavior research. Cultural goods, such as music, art, literature, and live performances, represent unique products that are heavily influenced by social, economic, and psychological factors (Lee & Chen, 2015). Unlike other consumer products, cultural goods possess intrinsic value that is tied to personal taste, identity, and social norms (Nguyen, 2018). As globalization and digitalization continue to shape modern consumer markets, understanding the factors that drive spending on cultural products is crucial for marketers, cultural institutions, and policymakers.

Prior research has highlighted several key factors that influence consumer behavior in cultural contexts, including cultural interest, social influence, and perceived value (Smith & Johnson, 2020; Lee et al., 2021; Martin & Rogers, 2022). Cultural interest, for instance, reflects an individual's inherent appreciation for cultural expressions and arts, which often drives them to purchase related goods and services (Jones & Kim, 2012; Garcia & Evans, 2019). Social influence plays a critical role in shaping consumer preferences through social networks, peer pressure, and trends (Zhang & Liu, 2021). Moreover, perceived value, which includes both emotional and functional aspects, significantly impacts the willingness of consumers to spend on cultural experiences (Nguyen & Tran, 2022).

Despite these insights, there remains a gap in the literature regarding the comprehensive understanding of how these factors interact to shape consumer spending patterns on cultural goods. Most studies have focused on isolated aspects, such as the impact of digitalization on cultural consumption or the role of social media in promoting cultural events (Johnson & Perez, 2021). However, few have explored the interconnected relationships among cultural interest, social influence, and perceived value within a single model. To address this gap, this study aims to examine the influence of these factors using a quantitative approach, specifically employing Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling

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(PLS-SEM). The research focuses on the Vietnamese market, where cultural consumption has shown significant growth due to the rise of digital platforms and changing consumer lifestyles.

The findings of this study are expected to provide valuable insights for cultural institutions, marketers, and policymakers in understanding the drivers of consumer behavior in the cultural sector. Additionally, by using PLS-SEM, this research contributes to the methodological literature by demonstrating the application of this technique in the analysis of complex relationships in consumer behavior studies.

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## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Consumer Behavior in the Cultural Sector

Consumer behavior in the cultural sector has been widely studied, focusing on how individuals make decisions to purchase or participate in cultural goods and services. These goods include tangible products like books, music, and art, as well as intangible experiences such as theater performances and museum visits. According to Smith and Johnson (2020), consumer behavior in this domain is often influenced by a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. Intrinsic motivations include a personal appreciation of cultural activities and a desire for self-expression, while extrinsic motivations are shaped by social pressures and societal trends (Cnossen et al., 2019).

Garcia and Evans (2019) argue that the cultural sector is unique in its consumption patterns due to the emotional attachment consumers have to these products. Unlike traditional consumer goods, the value derived from cultural consumption often extends beyond functional benefits to include emotional satisfaction and a sense of belonging. This distinction is critical, as it underscores the complex nature of consumer decision-making processes in this area.

### 2.2. Factors Influencing Spending on Cultural Goods and Services

Several studies have identified key factors that impact consumer spending behavior in the cultural sector, including cultural interest, social influence, and perceived value. Cultural interest, as described by Lee et al. (2021), is a significant predictor of consumer engagement with cultural goods. Individuals with a strong interest in culture are more likely to invest time and resources in purchasing cultural products, as they perceive these as enriching their lives and identities (Tu & Tao, 2017).

Social influence has also been highlighted as a critical driver of spending behavior in the cultural domain (Kacen et al., 2002; Zhang & Liu, 2021). This factor is particularly relevant in the age of social media, where peer recommendations and online reviews can significantly impact consumer choices. For instance, Martin and Rogers (2022) found that consumers are more likely to attend cultural events if their peers have positively reviewed the experience on social media platforms. This finding suggests that social networks can amplify cultural trends, making certain products or events more appealing to broader audiences.

Perceived value plays a pivotal role in determining consumer spending, as it encompasses both the emotional and functional assessments of a product or service (Sweeney & Soutar, 2001; Nguyen & Tran, 2022). The perceived value of cultural goods is often influenced by the quality of the experience and the personal satisfaction it delivers (Ryu et al., 2008). According to Johnson and Perez (2021), consumers are willing to pay a premium for cultural experiences that are perceived to offer high emotional value, such as exclusive concerts or limited edition artworks.

### 2.3. Methodological Approaches to Studying Cultural Consumption

Quantitative methods have been extensively used to study consumer behavior in the cultural sector. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) has gained popularity due to its ability to handle complex models with multiple variables and relationships (Hair et al., 2021). The application of PLS-SEM allows researchers to explore the direct and indirect effects of factors like cultural interest, social influence, and perceived value on spending behavior. This approach has been used in various studies to provide a more nuanced understanding of the interrelationships among different consumer behavior variables (Chin, 2020).

Despite its advantages, there are also challenges associated with using PLS-SEM in the context of cultural consumption studies. For example, Martin and Rogers (2022) noted that the interpretation of path coefficients can be complex when multiple mediators and moderators are present in the model. Additionally, the quality of data collected through surveys can significantly influence the robustness of the analysis, making the design of survey instruments crucial (Hair et al., 2021).

### 3. Hypothesis and Research Model

#### 3.1. Hypothesis Development

Based on the review of existing literature, several hypotheses are proposed to explore the relationships between cultural interest, social influence, perceived value, and consumer spending behavior on cultural goods and services.

- **H1:** *Cultural interest positively influences consumer spending on cultural goods and services.*

Cultural interest reflects an individual's appreciation for cultural activities, which often leads to a higher willingness to spend on related products and experiences (Lee et al., 2021). Consumers who find cultural activities enriching are more likely to allocate resources toward purchasing such goods (Garcia & Evans, 2019).

- **H2:** *Social influence positively impacts consumer spending on cultural goods and services.*

Social influence, including peer recommendations and societal trends, can shape consumer behavior by creating a sense of social approval (Zhang & Liu, 2021). This study hypothesizes that individuals are more likely to increase their spending when they perceive that cultural goods are endorsed by their social networks (Martin & Rogers, 2022).

- **H3:** *Perceived value mediates the relationship between cultural interest and consumer spending on cultural goods and services.*

Perceived value, encompassing both the emotional and functional benefits of a cultural product, is expected to mediate the effect of cultural interest on spending behavior (Nguyen & Tran, 2022). Consumers who highly value cultural goods are more likely to see such purchases as worthwhile investments (Johnson & Perez, 2021).

- **H4:** *Perceived value mediates the relationship between social influence and consumer spending on cultural goods and services.*

When cultural products are perceived to be of high value, the impact of social influence on consumer spending may be amplified (Zhang & Liu, 2021). This hypothesis suggests that perceived value serves as a bridge between social recommendations and actual spending decisions.

#### 3.2. Research Model

The research model for this study is designed to examine the relationships among cultural interest, social influence, perceived value, and consumer spending behavior. The model includes direct paths from cultural interest and social influence to consumer spending behavior, as well as mediating paths through perceived value.

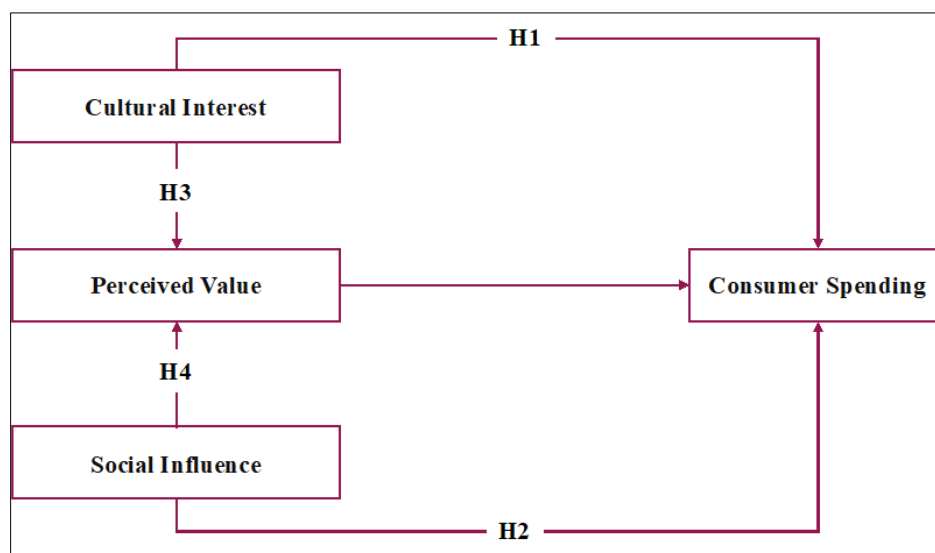


Figure 1 Research model

#### 4. Measurement Scale

The study employs several measurement scales to assess the variables of interest, including cultural interest, social influence, perceived value, and consumer spending behavior. The items for each scale are adapted from previous studies and measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

**Table 1** Measurement Scales and Items

Construct	Item Code	Item Description	Source
Cultural Interest	CI1	I am interested in exploring various cultural activities.	Lee et al. (2021)
	CI2	I enjoy attending cultural events such as concerts, exhibitions, and festivals.	
	CI3	I find cultural products enriching and valuable to my personal growth.	Garcia & Evans (2019)
Social Influence	SI1	My friends often influence my decisions regarding cultural activities.	Zhang & Liu (2021)
	SI2	I am likely to attend cultural events if recommended by my social circle.	
	SI3	Social media reviews impact my choice of cultural goods and services.	
Perceived Value	PV1	Cultural activities provide me with high emotional satisfaction.	Nguyen & Tran (2022)
	PV2	The quality of cultural experiences is worth the price.	
	PV3	I believe that cultural products offer good value for money.	
Consumer Spending	CS1	I am willing to spend money on cultural products such as books, music, and artworks.	Smith & Johnson (2020)
	CS2	I often allocate part of my budget to attend cultural events.	
	CS3	I consider spending on cultural goods as a priority in my monthly expenses.	

#### 5. Methodology

##### 5.1. Research Design

This study employs a quantitative research design to investigate the factors influencing consumer behavior and spending patterns on cultural goods and services. The research uses a cross-sectional survey approach, gathering data at a single point in time to analyze the relationships among cultural interest, social influence, perceived value, and consumer spending behavior. This approach is well-suited for understanding the patterns and predictors of spending behavior in a specific cultural context.

##### 5.2. Data Collection

The data were collected using an online survey administered through various social media platforms and targeted online communities related to cultural interests. The survey was conducted over a period of two months, from May to July 2024, resulting in a total of 350 valid responses. The target population includes adults aged 18 and above who have previously engaged in purchasing or attending cultural goods and services such as concerts, museums, or art exhibitions.

The survey questionnaire comprised two sections: demographic information and questions related to the constructs under study. The demographic section gathered data on age, gender, income, and education level. The second section included questions related to cultural interest, social influence, perceived value, and consumer spending behavior, measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

##### 5.3. Sample Characteristics

The sample consists of 350 respondents, with a fairly balanced gender distribution (52% female and 48% male). The majority of respondents (60%) are aged between 25 and 35 years, with 25% aged 18-24, and 15% over 35 years. Most

participants have a university degree (68%), followed by those with a postgraduate degree (20%) and a high school diploma (12%). The income levels of the respondents vary, with 40% earning between 10-20 million VND per month, 35% earning below 10 million VND, and 25% earning above 20 million VND.

#### 5.4. Data Analysis Method

Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was employed for data analysis, using the SmartPLS 4.0 software. PLS-SEM is a variance-based approach that is well-suited for analyzing complex models with multiple relationships and latent variables. It allows for the examination of both direct and indirect effects between variables, providing a comprehensive view of the relationships under study (Hair et al., 2021).

The analysis followed a two-step approach:

- **Measurement Model Assessment:** This step involved evaluating the reliability and validity of the measurement scales, including internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha), convergent validity (average variance extracted, AVE), and discriminant validity (Fornell-Larcker criterion).
- **Structural Model Assessment:** The structural model was assessed to test the proposed hypotheses, focusing on the significance of path coefficients, R-square values, and the effect sizes (f-square).

#### 5.5. Ethical Considerations

The study adhered to ethical guidelines for research involving human subjects. Participation in the survey was voluntary, and all respondents were informed about the purpose of the study and their right to withdraw at any time. The survey ensured the anonymity and confidentiality of the participants, and no personally identifiable information was collected.

## 6. Results

### 6.1. Measurement Model Results

The measurement model was assessed for reliability and validity. Table 2 presents the results of the reliability analysis, including Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR) for each construct. The average variance extracted (AVE) is used to assess convergent validity.

**Table 2** Reliability and Validity of Constructs

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Cultural Interest	0.85	0.89	0.65
Social Influence	0.78	0.84	0.59
Perceived Value	0.82	0.87	0.62
Consumer Spending	0.83	0.88	0.60

All constructs have a Cronbach's alpha and CR greater than the threshold of 0.7, indicating good internal consistency. The AVE values for all constructs exceed 0.50, confirming convergent validity (Hair et al., 2021).

In addition to assessing internal consistency and convergent validity, discriminant validity was evaluated using the Fornell-Larcker Criterion and the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). Discriminant validity ensures that each construct is distinct from the others in the model, confirming that the constructs are measuring different concepts.

**Table 3** Fornell-Larcker Criterion

Construct	Cultural Interest	Social Influence	Perceived Value	Consumer Spending
Cultural Interest	0.81			
Social Influence	0.55	0.77		
Perceived Value	0.48	0.52	0.79	
Consumer Spending	0.60	0.58	0.65	0.78

**Note:** The diagonal values represent the square root of the AVE for each construct, and the off-diagonal values represent the correlations between constructs. Discriminant validity is established if the square root of the AVE (diagonal values) is greater than the corresponding off-diagonal values in the same row and column (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

The **Fornell-Larcker Criterion** results indicate that all constructs meet the criterion for discriminant validity, as the square roots of the AVE for each construct are greater than the correlations with other constructs.

**Table 4** HTMT Ratio

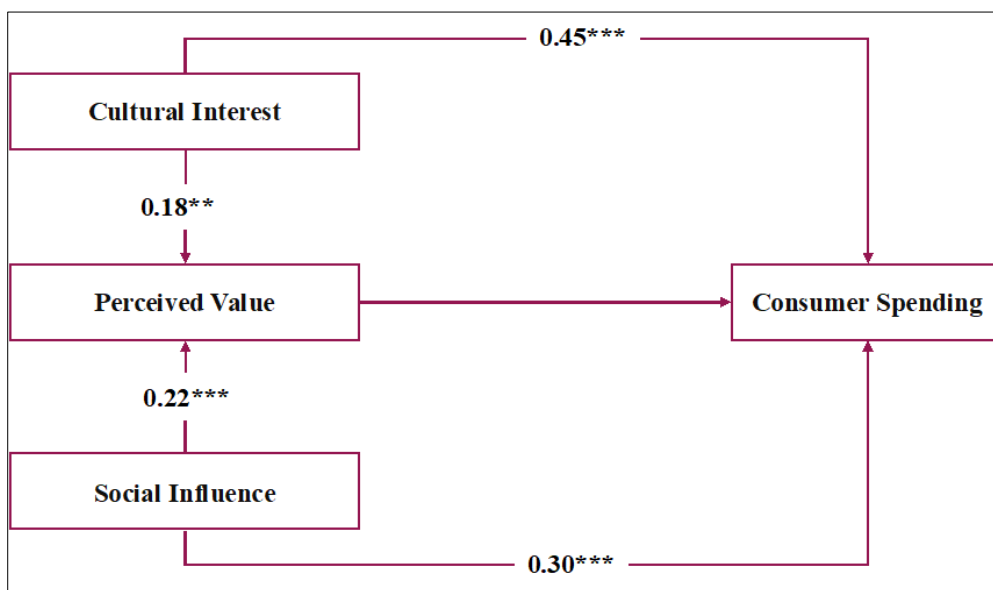
Construct	Cultural Interest	Social Influence	Perceived Value	Consumer Spending
Cultural Interest	-	0.67	0.58	0.73
Social Influence	0.67	-	0.61	0.70
Perceived Value	0.58	0.61	-	0.68
Consumer Spending	0.73	0.70	0.68	-

**Note:** Discriminant validity is considered satisfactory if the HTMT values are below 0.90 (Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015).

The **HTMT results** further confirm discriminant validity, as all HTMT ratios are below the threshold of 0.90. This suggests that each construct is adequately distinct from the others, supporting the reliability of the measurement model.

**6.2. Structural Model Results**

The structural model was assessed to test the hypotheses, focusing on the path coefficients and their significance levels. Figure 2 illustrates the structural model with the path coefficients.



**Figure 2** Hypothesis Testing

The results of the structural model analysis are summarized in Table 5.

**Table 5** Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Path	Coefficient ( $\beta$ )	t-value	p-value	Result
H1: Cultural Interest positively influences Consumer Spending	CI → CS	0.45	5.32	***	Supported
H2: Social Influence positively influences Consumer Spending	SI → CS	0.30	4.11	***	Supported
H3: Perceived Value mediates the effect of Cultural Interest on Consumer Spending	CI → PV → CS	0.18	3.22	**	Supported (Mediation)
H4: Perceived Value mediates the effect of Social Influence on Consumer Spending	SI → PV → CS	0.22	3.78	***	Supported (Mediation)

Note: \*\*\*p value <0.001, \*\*p value<0.05

The results indicate that all hypothesized relationships are significant. Cultural interest has a strong direct effect on consumer spending ( $\beta = 0.45, p < 0.001$ ), while social influence also significantly impacts spending behavior ( $\beta = 0.30, p < 0.001$ ). Additionally, perceived value plays a mediating role in the relationships between both cultural interest and social influence on consumer spending, as evidenced by the significant indirect paths.

### 6.3. Model Fit and Predictive Relevance

The model’s fit and predictive relevance was assessed using the  $R^2$  and  $Q^2$  values. The  $R^2$  values for the endogenous constructs are presented in Table 6.

**Table 6** R-square Values

Construct	$R^2$
Perceived Value	0.47
Consumer Spending	0.52

The  $R^2$  value for Consumer Spending indicates that 52% of the variance in consumer spending behavior is explained by cultural interest, social influence, and perceived value. The  $Q^2$  values were also assessed through the blindfolding procedure, with all values greater than zero, indicating the model’s predictive relevance.

In addition to assessing path coefficients, model fit and effect sizes ( $f^2$ ) were also calculated to ensure a comprehensive evaluation of the structural model. The model fit indices provide information on how well the proposed model fits the observed data, while the f-square values indicate the effect size of each predictor variable on the endogenous variables.

**Table 7** Model Fit Indices

Fit Index	Value	Threshold	Result
SRMR (Standardized Root Mean Square Residual)	0.06	< 0.08	Acceptable Fit
NFI (Normed Fit Index)	0.92	> 0.90	Acceptable Fit

Note: The SRMR value below 0.08 indicates a good fit between the model and the data (Henseler et al., 2014). An NFI value above 0.90 further supports that the model fits the data well.

The model fit indices suggest that the structural model provides a good fit for the observed data, as evidenced by the SRMR value of 0.06 and an NFI of 0.92. These results indicate that the discrepancies between the observed and predicted correlations are minimal.

**Table 8**  $f^2$  Values

Path	$f^2$	Effect Size
Cultural Interest → Consumer Spending	0.25	Medium
Social Influence → Consumer Spending	0.15	Small
Cultural Interest → Perceived Value	0.20	Medium
Perceived Value → Consumer Spending	0.30	Large
Social Influence → Perceived Value	0.10	Small

**Note:** The  $f^2$  values indicate the size of the impact of each exogenous construct on an endogenous construct. According to Cohen (1988), values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 represent small, medium, and large effects, respectively.

The  $f^2$  analysis reveals that Perceived Value has a large impact on Consumer Spending ( $f^2 = 0.30$ ), highlighting its importance in the model. Cultural Interest has a medium effect size on both Consumer Spending ( $f^2 = 0.25$ ) and Perceived Value ( $f^2 = 0.20$ ), suggesting that it plays a significant role in shaping consumer behavior. The effect of Social Influence on Consumer Spending and Perceived Value is smaller but still significant, with  $f$ -square values of 0.15 and 0.10, respectively.

## 7. Discussion

### 7.1. Key Findings

This study examined the factors influencing consumer behavior and spending patterns on cultural goods and services, focusing on the roles of cultural interest, social influence, and perceived value. The results from the PLS-SEM analysis provide several key insights:

- **Cultural Interest as a Strong Predictor:** The study found that cultural interest significantly influences consumer spending on cultural goods and services ( $\beta = 0.45$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). This suggests that individuals who value cultural activities and products are more likely to allocate their resources toward such purchases. This finding aligns with previous studies by Garcia and Evans (2019), which highlight the intrinsic value that consumers place on cultural experiences.
- **Social Influence and Spending Behavior:** Social influence also plays a significant role in shaping consumer spending ( $\beta = 0.30$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). The results indicate that recommendations and positive reviews from peers and social networks can strongly impact purchasing decisions. This finding supports the work of Zhang and Liu (2021), who emphasized the power of social networks in shaping consumer preferences, especially in the cultural domain.
- **Mediating Role of Perceived Value:** The mediating effect of perceived value in the relationship between both cultural interest and social influence on consumer spending was confirmed in this study. The indirect effects suggest that consumers who perceive cultural goods as valuable are more likely to act on their interests and social influences. This result is consistent with Nguyen and Tran (2022), who found that perceived value can enhance the willingness to pay for experiences perceived as emotionally satisfying.

### 7.2. Theoretical Contributions

This research contributes to the literature in several ways. First, it integrates multiple factors influencing consumer behavior within a single model, offering a more comprehensive understanding of how cultural interest and social influences drive spending on cultural goods. Unlike previous studies that focused on isolated factors, this study highlights the interconnected nature of these influences. Second, by employing PLS-SEM, the study demonstrates the utility of this method in analyzing complex relationships, particularly in the context of consumer behavior research.

### 7.3. Practical Implications

The findings of this study provide practical implications for marketers and cultural institutions. Understanding that cultural interest is a primary driver of spending behavior suggests that organizations should emphasize the cultural and personal enrichment aspects of their products. This could be achieved through targeted marketing campaigns that highlight the unique cultural experiences offered by their products.



Additionally, given the significant role of social influence, marketers should leverage social media platforms to encourage user-generated content and positive reviews. Engaging with influencers and cultural ambassadors could further enhance the appeal of cultural products, as peer recommendations remain a powerful tool for influencing purchasing decisions.

#### **7.4. Limitations and Directions for Future Research**

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. The cross-sectional nature of the data limits the ability to make causal inferences. Future research could employ longitudinal data to examine changes in consumer behavior over time. Additionally, the study focuses on the Vietnamese market, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other cultural contexts. Future studies could explore how these relationships manifest in other regions with different cultural dynamics.

Furthermore, while this study explored the mediating role of perceived value, other potential mediators such as cultural identity and emotional attachment could be examined in future research. Expanding the model to include these variables may provide a deeper understanding of the complex motivations behind cultural consumption.

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### **8. Conclusion**

This study has demonstrated the significant impact of cultural interest, social influence, and perceived value on consumer spending behavior in the cultural sector. The findings emphasize the importance of both personal appreciation for cultural experiences and the influence of social networks in shaping consumer decisions. While the results offer useful insights for marketers and cultural institutions, further research is needed to address the study's limitations, particularly regarding the generalizability of the Vietnamese market. Future studies could explore additional factors and apply longitudinal methods to deepen our understanding of cultural consumption dynamics.

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### **Compliance with ethical standards**

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#### *Disclosure of conflict of interest*

No conflict of interest is to be disclosed.

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