

An Empirical Study of the Perceptual Authenticity of Social Media and the Attachment Relationship of Users' Urban Brands Based on Environmental Protection

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Abstract. Identifying and understanding the intrinsic mechanisms by which users are loyal to a particular city has become a focus of user behavior research and urban brand research. The study combines the perception of authenticity, social interaction, urban brand attachment, brand trust and urban brand loyalty model based on social media under environmental protection. The results show that social media perception of authenticity and social interaction have a positive impact on urban brand attachment; social media perception of authenticity and brand attachment have a positive impact on urban brand trust; Social media perception of authenticity, brand attachment, and brand trust have a positive impact on urban brand loyalty. The perceived authenticity of social media has a positive impact on social interaction.

1. Introduction

In the era of mobile Internet, along with the rise of the online celebrity city, local governments are also actively building social brands through social media. Identifying and understanding the internal mechanisms that users are loyal to a particular city has become a focus of user behavior research and urban brand research. In the past research, a large number of scholars have examined the loyalty of tourists to tourist destinations from a tourism perspective and rarely studied the mechanism of urban brand loyalty. Therefore, this study will explore the role of users in the social media perception of authenticity, social interaction, urban brand attachment, brand trust and urban brand loyalty from the perspective of social media.

2. Research Model and Hypothesis

2.1 Research Model

Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) proposed rational behavior theory, which mainly analyzes how attitudes affect consciously individual behavior. As a general model, rational behavior theory proposes that any factor can only indirectly influence behavior through attitudes and subjective criteria, so that people have a clearer understanding of the rationality of behavior. Based on the previous scholars' model, this study attempts to explore the relationship between social media perception authenticity, social interaction, urban brand attachment, brand trust and urban brand loyalty.

2.1.1 Perceived authenticity and brand-like attachment, brand trust, brand loyalty and social interaction

Erdem and Swait (2004) believe that authenticity can enhance consumers' trust in brands and promote consumers to build positive brand attitudes and generate brand loyalty. Zhu Yuqing and

Yuan Haixia (2019) found that the sensory experience, emotional experience, action experience, thinking experience and related experience of WeChat public account positively affected users' brand attachment. It can be argued that the more authentic the social media conveys the authenticity of a city, the users will have a positive impact on the senses, emotions, and thinking of the city, thus generating certain emotional appeals. Therefore, the research proposes the following hypothesis:

H1-1: Social media perception authenticity will have a positive impact on urban brand attachment

Llicic and Webster (2014) believe that the degree of authenticity of the relationship between consumers and brands, and the degree of perception of brand authenticity factors will affect consumers' willingness to buy brands and enthusiasm for word-of-mouth recommendation. Wang Na et al. (2017) believe that brand authenticity has a positive impact on brand trust. It can be argued that when a city establishes a real and reliable brand image, users can perceive the authenticity of the city brand and gradually build trust in the city. Therefore, the research hypothesis is proposed:

H1-2: The perceived authenticity of social media will have a positive impact on urban brand trust.

Bryce et al. (2015) believe that the authenticity of the object could have a significant impact on the loyalty of the tourists. For the authenticity of existentialism, there is a real state of existence through the activities of the tourism activities. Chen Ruixia and Zhou Zhimin (2018) believe that the perception of consumer culture tourism authenticity can affect the loyalty of tourists. It can be considered that when the user generates the perception of authenticity through the social media, it can effectively satisfy certain mobile machines and promote the formation of word-of-mouth, thereby enhancing their loyalty. Therefore, the research hypothesis is proposed:

H1-3: The perceived authenticity of social media will have a positive impact on urban brand loyalty.

Perse and Rubin (1990) argue that frequent media roles can reduce consumer perceived risk, enhance the perceived authenticity of consumer media roles, and consumers are more willing to socialize with them. Zhou Fei et al. (2018) also verified that the virtual spokesperson's perceived authenticity will have a positive impact on social interaction. Therefore, the more realistic the content that users are exposed to using social media, the more they can trigger people's emotional tendencies. The research hypothesis is proposed:

H1-4: The perceived authenticity of social media will have a positive impact on social interactions.

2.1.2 Users' brand attachment and brand trust, brand loyalty.

Gao Xiang and Lu Qinghua (2012) found that urban brand attachment will positively influence urban brand trust in the study of the influence mechanism of urban brand attachment. Zhao Hongxia et al (2014) believe that emotional attachment will significantly affect consumer trust in the early stages of trust establishment and stability. It can be argued that trust plays an important role in enhancing the attachment of users' city brands and provides emotional links to improve trust levels. Therefore, the research hypothesis is proposed:

H2-1: Users' urban brand attachment will have a positive impact on user' urban brand trust.

Zhou Jianming and Deng Shijian (2015) believe that brand attachment has a significant positive impact on brand loyalty. Jia Yanju and Lin Derong (2016) believe that local attachment will affect the loyalty of tourists to the tourist destination. It can be argued that when users have strong brand attachment to urban products, they are more inclined to invest more time and energy to pay attention to the city and conduct positive word-of-mouth communication on the city. Therefore, the research hypothesis is proposed:

H2-2: User' urban brand attachment will have a positive impact on users' urban brand loyalty.

2.1.3 Users' brand trust and brand loyalty

Gong Yanping and Fan Shuli (2008) found that brand trust has a positive impact on brand loyalty. Wei Sheng and Wu Xiaoding (2012) believe that brand trust is the cornerstone of building brand and consumer relationships, and brand experiences that bring trust to consumers are often more likely to gain consumer loyalty. Li et al. (2014) believe that brand trust will positively influence customer loyalty. It can be considered that the higher the user's trust in the city, the greater the loyalty to the city. Therefore, the research hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Users' urban brand trust will have a positive impact on users' urban brand loyalty.

2.1.4 Social interaction and brand attachment

The participation of community members and interactions with other members reinforces the community experience of members, resulting in brand identity (Jang et al., 2008). Xiong Yufen (2019) believes that the members of the music brand community are more familiar with the familiarity, entertainment and interdependence of the brand community, and the higher their influence, the higher their social identity. From the perspective of urban brands, the more social media people share the city information, the stronger the brand attachment to the city. Therefore, the research hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Social interactions will have a positive impact on city brand attachment.

3. Research Design

3.1 Variable Test

The study mainly obtained data through questionnaires. In order to ensure the validity of the questionnaire, the questionnaire was revised through the foreign mature scale. The perceptual authenticity is based on the scale developed by Morhart, Felicitas (2015). The social interaction is based on the scale developed by Spiggle et al. (2012) and Newman et al. (2014). The city brand attachment refers to Yang (2009) and Hong. The scale developed by (2011), the city brand trust refers to the scale of Sargeant (2007) and Gao Xiang, Lu Qinghua (2012), and the city brand loyalty refers to the scale of Donthu (2005).

3.2 Sample and data collection

A total of 320 samples were used in this study, accounting for 88.88% of the recovery rate. In the total sample, males accounted for 41.9%, females accounted for 58.1%, samples under 25 years old accounted for 58.8%, samples aged 26-30 accounted for 20%, and samples over 30 years old accounted for 21.2%. The sample of high school education accounted for 9.4%, undergraduate students accounted for 76.9%, and the sample of master's degree or above accounted for 13.8%.

4. Data Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

4.1 Reliability and validity analysis

To ensure the validity of the research hypothesis, a reliability and validity analysis was conducted on the questionnaire. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of each variable was more than 0.7 by SPSS19.0 statistical analysis, indicating that the reliability was better. From the results of the validity analysis, the KMO value is 0.930, which is greater than 0.7, the Bartlett spherical test statistic is also less than 0.001, and the factor analysis extracts a total of 5 factors, and the cumulative interpretation of the variance reaches 78.957%. The results indicate that the scale has good discriminant validity and construct validity. At the same time, the absolute value of the Pearson coefficient between the variables exceeds 0.3, which is significant at the 0.01 level.

4.2 Hypothetical Test

Through the hierarchical regression analysis of brand attachment, brand trust and brand loyalty, the following results are obtained: Perceived authenticity ($\beta = 1.020$, $p < 0.001$), $R^2 = 0.127$ has a positive impact on brand attachment, assuming H1-1, H4 is established; perceived authenticity ($\beta = 0.332$, $p < 0.001$), brand attachment ($\beta = 0.240$, $p < 0.001$), $R^2 = 0.524$ had a positive impact on brand trust, assuming H1-2, H2-1 was established; perceived authenticity ($\beta = 0.168$, $p < 0.001$), brand attachment ($\beta = 0.145$, $p < 0.01$), brand trust ($\beta = 0.301$, $p < 0.001$) had a positive impact on brand loyalty, $R^2 = 0.522$, assuming H1 -3, H2-2, H3 are established. Perceptual authenticity ($\beta = 0.637$, $p < 0.001$),

there is a significant positive effect between $R^2=0.304$ and social interactions, assuming H1-4 is established.

5. Research Conclusion and Suggestions

From the perspective of social media, this paper conducts an empirical study on the relationship between perceived authenticity, social interaction and urban brand attachment, and draws the following conclusions: First, the perceived authenticity of social media has a positive effect on urban brand attachment. When the user feels more realistic through the social media, the city will have stronger emotional connections; second, social interaction has a positive effect on city brand attachment. When users and the media have a strong connection and interaction, they will also have stronger emotional connections to the city; third, the perceived authenticity of social media has a positive effect on social interaction. The more realistic the image of the city perceived by users through social media, the stronger user perceived interaction with the media, and the more interactions they generate.

According to the above research results, the following suggestions are proposed for the management of cities from the perspective of social media and social interaction: First, to fully tap the content of social media, the administrative agencies must strengthen the role of social media. Social media should be regarded as a very important information publishing platform, and it will be transmitted through the network representative information such as the online celebrity spots, famous universities, local customs and customs, and increase the emotional connection of users to the city. Second, make use of the interactive functions of social media, through certain incentives to guide users to participate in interactive activities such as praise, comment, and forwarding. Through in-depth cooperation with KOL and other to stimulate the activity of online users, increase the user's interaction with social media, and thus increase the emotional connection to the city. Third, to enhance the perception of authenticity by enhancing the user's sensory experience, emotional experience, action experience, thinking experience and associated experience in social media. This can further establish trust with users and promote the formation of attachment relationships, thereby promoting users to generate loyal behaviors and spreading for urban brands.

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