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The Impact of Social Media on Consumer Satisfaction: The Role of Usage Frequency, Brand Image, Brand Identification, and Content Quality

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Abstract

In recent years, consumers have widely utilised social media to be particularly involved with interested brands via online platforms, share their opinions, and easily explore brand-related information. Hence, this study examined the impacts of social media, from the perspectives of usage frequency, brand image, brand identity, and brand content, on consumer satisfaction in China based on social identity theory and attachment theory. The research applied a quantitative method via an online questionnaire, and 302 valid responses were received. After the data was collected and a research model was built, multiple regression analysis was utilised to analyse the data and prove the hypothesis. As such, the findings showed that brand content quality significantly positively affected consumer satisfaction, while usage frequency, brand image, and brand identity had insignificant relationships to consumer satisfaction. The study's results contributed to the existing related literature by further analysing the impacts of usage frequency on consumer satisfaction and aiming to provide marketers with feasible strategies to help improve consumer satisfaction.

Keywords: Social Media, Usage Frequency, Brand Image, Brand Identity, Brand Content Quality, Consumer Satisfaction, Social Identity Theory, Attachment Theory, China

1.0   Introduction

In the digital era nowadays, businesses are increasingly transforming their models from physical storefronts to online platforms to leverage evolving consumer behaviour and technological advancements (Nayyar, 2025). This shift not only expands market reach and reduces operational costs but also drives innovative strategies that enhance customer engagement and competitive advantage (Kraus et al., 2021). Specifically, the number of social media users worldwide has increased from 2.73 billion in 2017 to 5.17 billion in 2024 and is estimated to achieve a total of 6.05 billion social media users in 2028 (Statista, 2025a). This rapid growth in social media users highlights its expanding influence on consumer behaviour and emphasises businesses' need to adapt their models and optimise digital strategies to enhance consumer satisfaction. Therefore, the main role of social media in modern business models is to facilitate dynamic customer engagement by enabling targeted marketing and strategic brand building that drives business growth (Semenda et al., 2024).

In the global markets, worldwide social media advertising spending increased by approximately 117% from 2019 to 2023, where the importance of utilising social media as part of business strategies was further focused (Statista, 2024b). Among the regional markets, Asia was the biggest market that incurred the highest spending in social media advertising, with a total of $106.57 billion in 2024, based on Figure 1. Particularly in 2023, China's social media penetration rate totalled 74%, slightly greater than in some developed countries such as the United States and Japan (Statista, 2025c). Consequently, China had 1,080 million active social media users and ranked the highest among Asia-Pacific countries, indicating that China led the social media global trend significantly (Statista, 2025b). At the same time, 43% of respondents in the survey conducted by PwC (2023) in China showed the intention to research and purchase the products on social media, such as Xiaohongshu and TikTok, ranked second among other choices. Hence, the significance of investigation regarding the relationship between social media and consumer satisfaction in Asia, specifically in China, may be magnified as the most valuable region in the world.

Consumers on social media often seek detailed product information, reviews, and user-generated experiences that provide authentic insights and assist with rational buying decisions (Sahai et al., 2024). In fact, 26.8% and 26.4% of respondents in the survey shown by Statista (2024a) indicated that the purpose of social media was finding the interested product and the related information, respectively, for further purchasing decisions. As such, consumers demand timely and personalised content that aligns with their lifestyle interests and enhances trust in the brand (Rashidi-Sabet & Bolton, 2024). By strengthening brand-consumer interactions, promoting personalised content recommendations, and leveraging the unique communication channels of social platforms, brands are better able to enhance consumer satisfaction. With the growth of the digital market, the correlation between brands and consumers needs to be justified to improve brand strategies and consumer satisfaction through interaction and feedback on social media.
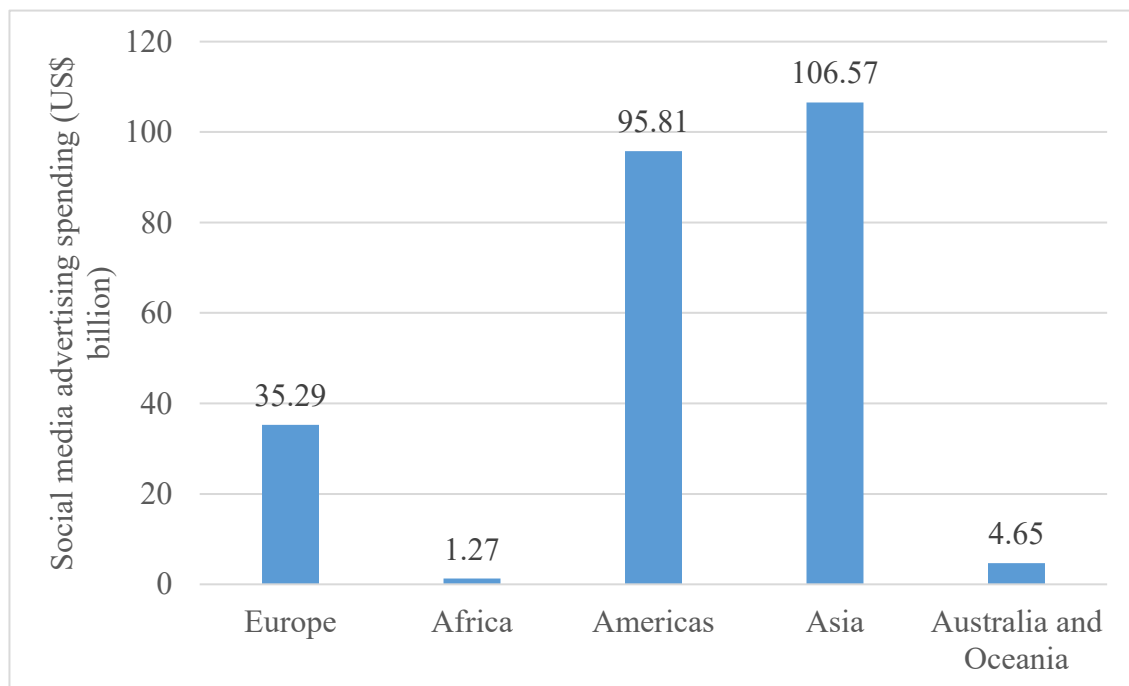

Figure 1: Global Social Media Advertising Spending in 2024 (Statista, 2024c)

Some research was conducted on the relationship between social media and consumer satisfaction (Bilal et al., 2024; Leckie et al., 2022; Hasan & Sohail, 2021). However, there is a relative lack of studies on investigating the effects of social media on the business or brand aspect on consumer satisfaction. Meanwhile, the existing studies generally focus on single dimensions without considering the interaction of these factors underpinned by theoretical frameworks. Building on the gap identified in existing literature and informed by Social Identity Theory and Attachment Theory, this study seeks to:

    i.   Examine the impact of social media usage frequency on consumer satisfaction in China.

    ii.   Examine the impact of brand image through social media on consumer satisfaction in China.

    iii.   Examine the impact of brand identity formed on social media influences on consumer satisfaction in China.

    iv.   Determine the effect of brand content quality on consumer satisfaction in China.

Therefore, this research aimed to fill the research gap by examining the impacts of social media on consumer satisfaction in China, where usage frequency, brand image, brand identity, and brand content quality were represented in terms of social media based on Social Identity Theory and Attachment Theory. The research offers a holistic view of satisfaction drivers by examining cognitive (brand image and brand identity) and affective-behavioural (usage frequency and brand content quality) variables.

2.0   Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

2.1   Theoretical Underpinning

This study adopted the Social Identity Theory and Attachment Theory to examine the impacts of social media on consumer satisfaction while explaining the factors of consumer decisions being influenced by the intentions with particular brands and the emotional bonds formed between consumers and brands through social media

interactions, respectively, ultimately impacting consumer satisfaction (Wang et al., 2024; Stevens et al., 2024).

Social Identity Theory was introduced by Tajfel and Turner (1986), which stated that the identification of an individual with a group influences their behaviour, especially in intra- and inter-group interactions, where the individuals not only construct their self-concept through their own characteristics but also achieve their identity by identifying with a specific group. Further, Stevens et al. (2024) justified that a higher involvement and connection of an individual with a party and a higher self-acknowledgement as a party member will be acquired. Therefore, the determined social identity provides a framework to represent a group identity (Hsu, 2024). As such, this may suggest a deeper self-identification with the brand community being developed as the consumers become more engaged and emotionally connected to brands via social media, thereby enhancing consumer satisfaction. Based on Social Identity Theory, this research primarily investigated the effects of usage frequency, brand image, brand identity, and brand content quality on consumer satisfaction. Positive interactions in social media increased the identification of consumers, then increased contentment (Arghashi et al., 2021).

In addition, Attachment Theory was adopted in this study, originally conceptualised by Bowlby (1969) and extended by Ainsworth (1978), which explained the structure of early emotional bonds with caregivers to shape the expectations and behaviours of individuals in later relationships. Hence, it is essential to recognise that the existence of emotional bonds often influences the behaviour of community members to achieve their satisfaction, and Attachment Theory has been applied to explain these behavioural patterns by positing that individuals establish connections with people or objects to meet specific needs (Wang et al., 2024). Similarly, social media users tailored their actions in response to their attachment to the social media platforms, which were believed to provide psychological comfort and enhance well-being. In contrast, an individual's attitude toward social media can be considered a driving force behind the development of positive beliefs and deep emotional bonds with the network (Maghraoui & Khrouf, 2024). Furthermore, this theory has been extensively applied by Kim and Kim (2022) to understand consumers' relationships with brands, companies, and products. It posited that consumers could form emotionally specific bonds with human brands, which

led them to perceive these relationships as unique and irreplaceable. Such strong attachments fostered feelings of appreciation and empowerment, contributing to more successful marketing outcomes.

2.2   Usage Frequency

The brands can interact directly and respond to consumers' feedback through social media with customised content and personalised recommendations (Ortiz et al., 2023). High-frequency social media usage is linked to deeper engagement with brands. The more frequently consumers interact with brand content, the stronger emotional attachment and loyalty become as the brands provide relevant and timely content, thereby increasing their overall brand experience (Ortiz et al., 2023). Despite the established connection between frequent social media use and enhanced brand engagement, limited research examined the direct relationship between usage frequency and consumer satisfaction. Shaengchart et al. (2023) explained that the usage frequency on social media impacts a business's competitiveness, while Kalenyuk et al. (2024) indicated a positive relationship between the competitiveness of a business and consumer satisfaction. Therefore, a hypothesis was determined as follows to explore and clarify the potential relationship between usage frequency and consumer satisfaction:

H1: Usage frequency has a positive impact on consumer satisfaction.

2.3   Brand Image

Brand image is consumers' belief about a brand (Rather et al., 2024). It shapes customer perceptions, impacts customer value beliefs, and has a crucial function during daily operations (Chuenban et al., 2021). Consequently, a company's management can improve consumer satisfaction by providing consumers with high-quality services through a good corporate image (Dam & Dam, 2021). Furthermore, brand image has been explored in its relationship with consumer satisfaction in previous studies where a significant and positive relationship was proven (Hua et al., 2024; Win et al., 2024; Iqbal

& Khan, 2024). Particularly, a previous study emphasized the brand image on social media, where values, emotions, and professionalism should be promoted to enhance consumer satisfaction (Hua et al., 2024). When a brand satisfies consumers' demands, the brand builds a reputation and improves consumer satisfaction (Win et al., 2024). Therefore, a hypothesis was developed as follows in this study:

H2: Brand image has a positive impact on consumer satisfaction.

2.4   Brand Identity

Brand identity comprises a distinct set of associations that brand strategists aim to build or sustain by reflecting the essence of a brand and conveying an organisational promise to its customers (Dash et al., 2021). Brand identity represents the deliberate projection by the seller, and every brand employs a variety of tools to reach and connect with its target consumers effectively. According to the studies done by Dash et al. (2021) and Abadi et al. (2021), the relationship between brand identity and consumer satisfaction was proven to be significant and positive with each other. These findings imply that a good brand identity enhances both consumer perceptions and loyalty. By consistently aligning brand messaging with customer expectations, organisations build an environment in which consumers feel understood and valued (Vetrivel et al., 2024). Hence, this dynamic relationship improves the long-term connections that improve brand equity and overall market performance. Based on brand identity, a hypothesis was proposed as follows:

H3: Brand identity has a positive impact on consumer satisfaction.

2.5   Brand Content Quality

Brand content quality reflects the brand's ability to leverage creative expertise to deliver valuable and sustainable information to consumers consistently. It enhances the overall effectiveness of information dissemination by focusing on content relevance, presentation format, and expressive techniques in digital advertising (Yang et al., 2024;

Zulkifli et al., 2024). Brands use engaging content and informative messaging to direct consumers to official websites, services, or newly launched products. Both brands and content creators emphasise this approach to foster deeper consumer engagement, ultimately enhancing consumer satisfaction (Nguyen et al., 2025). Throughout past studies, the quality of brand content has been proven to significantly positively affect consumer satisfaction, as shown by Ahn et al. (2023) and Hsu et al. (2021). Researchers have highlighted the strategic importance of investing in innovative digital content to encourage brands to continually enhance their content to maximise consumer satisfaction. As such, this study developed a related hypothesis as follows for further investigation:

H4: Brand content quality has a positive impact on consumer satisfaction.

2.6   Research Model

This study constructed a research model within the theoretical framework of Social Identity Theory and Attachment Theory as shown in Figure 2, where the dependent variable was consumer satisfaction, and the independent variables were usage frequency, brand image, brand identity, and brand content quality, which were represented in terms of social media perspective.
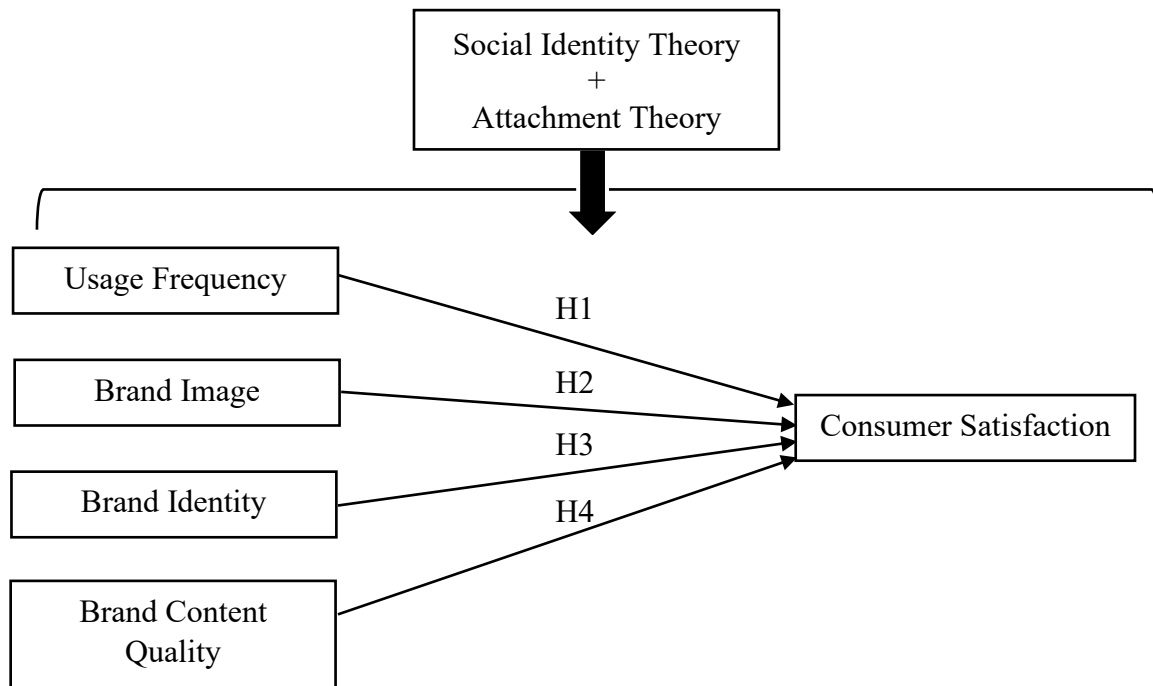
Figure 2: Research Model

3.0   Research Methodology

3.1   Sampling methodology

A quantitative approach can analyse the numerical data, test hypotheses, and determine statistical relationships between variables (Lim, 2025). Statistical techniques, such as multiple regression, provide comprehensive estimates of effect sizes and allow hypothesis testing with sufficient statistical power (Myors et al., 2010). Therefore, quantitative analysis was applied to justify the relationship between the independent variables and customer satisfaction in this study. On the other hand, a questionnaire survey was carried out in this study to collect the primary data, which was more reasonable and reliable than the secondary data collection method (Baldwin et al., 2022). In quantitative research, the aggregate is the set of all individuals that the researcher aims

to understand, and the study aims to draw samples from the aggregate and infer aggregate characteristics (Fischer et al., 2023).

Therefore, the population of this study consisted of consumers who actively participated in brand interactions, at least one brand, through various social media platforms within China. Meanwhile, the employees of the brands surveyed are excluded from the surveys to avoid bias toward the brands. Although many programs can be used to estimate sample size, G*Power is usually the first choice of researchers (Hair et al., 2017). This study set an effect size of 0.15, a significance level of 0.05, a statistical power of 0.8, and four predictors. Hence, the results indicated that the number of respondents for this study should be at least 85 based on Figure 3. As such, 320 questionnaires were sent, and 267 valid responses were filtered.
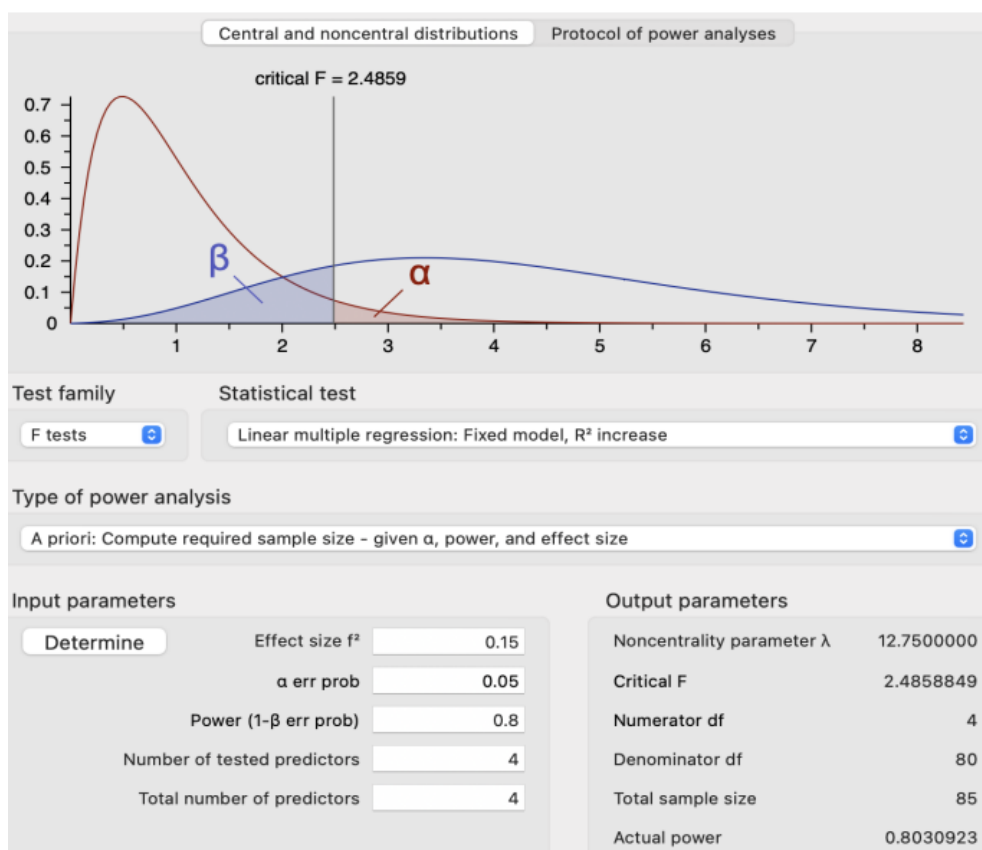

Figure 3: GPower Analysis Result

3.2   Questionnaire Design

All scales used in the questionnaire were measured using a Likert five-point scale with 1 representing "strongly disagree" and 7 representing "strongly agree" for the variables, including usage frequency, brand image, brand identity, brand content quality, and consumer satisfaction, as shown in Table 1. A non-probability convenience sampling strategy was utilised as it may quickly deploy surveys online and capture data in real-time, which is particularly important given the fast pace of digital communication and social change (Lehdonvirta et al., 2020). As such, this research employed an online survey for data collection, and the questionnaire was designed based on the purpose of the research and a review of relevant literature by using the Tencent Questionnaire, which was placed and collected through WeChat, Xiaohongshu, Weibo, and other platforms were targeting the active social media users. The questionnaire was shared as a link or QR code, and the respondents participated voluntarily. Personal information was treated with strict confidentiality, and the content was used only for this study.

Table 1: Scale Items

Variables	Measurement Items	Sources
Usage Frequency	1. I frequently use social media to follow my favourite brands.	De Oliveira Santini et al. (2020)
	2. I prefer to get updates about brands through social media rather than traditional media.	Alzubi (2022)
	3. I interact with brands quite frequently through social media platforms.	Majeed et al. (2021)
	4. I often browse brands' content on social media.	Wang (2021)
Brand Image	1. Brands on social media have brand value.	Hasan et al. (2023)
	2. Social media has improved my perception of brands.	Iqbal (2025)
	3. I believe that brands on social media present a positive image.	Palaniswamy and Duraiswamy (2023)

	4. I think brands on social media are more relatable than brands in traditional advertising.	Bandyopadhyay and Rishi (2025)
Brand Identity	1. I can easily identify the brands I follow on social media.	Ju (2024)
	2. The success of that social media brand is my success.	Sander et al. (2021)
	3. I am interested in what others think about this social media.	Lee and Hancock (2024)
	4. I often recommend brands on social media to friends or family.	Bargoni et al. (2022)
Brand Content Quality	1. Content brands share on social media appeal to me.	Waqas et al. (2022)
	2. The content brands share on social media is informative and valuable.	Nikolinakou and Phua (2020)
	3. Brands create quality content that keeps me engaged.	Mohammad et al. (2020)
Consumer Satisfaction	1. I'm satisfied with my decision to use social media.	Samala and Rawas (2024)
	2. My choice to use this social media was a wise one.	KV (2024)
	3. Social media has increased my satisfaction with the brands I follow.	Khan (2022)

3.3   Empirical Model

After the data was completely collected and filtered, the base models were developed to explore the direct impact of independent variables on consumer satisfaction. This model assesses how different elements of social media influence consumer satisfaction. As such, the later analysis was conducted using SPSS software, involving the structure of demographic statistics to understand the population of consumers in social media. Furthermore, a descriptive analysis was summarised to justify the variable concerned by the respondents, as well as a reliability analysis to verify the data validity (Leong et al., 2024). A correlation analysis was used to determine the relationship between the independent variables and consumer satisfaction individually, and a multiple regression

analysis was used to explore the impacts of independent variables on consumer satisfaction.

4.0   Analysis and Findings

4.1   Demographic Statistics

Table 2 shows the demographic statistics of respondents with 267 valid responses. Most respondents were female (52.4%), and most respondents were between the ages of 18 to 24 years old (40.1%), while those below 18 years old had the lowest number of respondents (3%). The majority of the respondents were educated at a bachelor's degree level (47.6%). Among the respondents, more than half of them spent 3 hours to 5 hours on social media (51.3%), particularly on Douyin where 25.1% of the overall respondents concentrated.

Table 2: Demographic Profile

Measures	Items	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	127	47.6
	Female	140	52.4
Age	Below 18	8	3.0
	18 to 24	107	40.1
	25 to 34	79	29.6
	35 to 44	27	10.1
	45 and above	46	17.2
Educational Level	High school and below	11	4.1
	College degree	97	36.3
	Bachelor's degree	127	47.6
	Master's degree	15	5.6
	Doctoral degree and above	17	6.4
Daily Usage Time	Below 1 hour	10	3.7
	1 hour to 3 hours	20	7.5

	3 hours to 5 hours	137	51.3
	Above 5 hours	100	37.5
Social Media	WeChat	88	33.0
	Douyin	67	25.1
	Weibo	51	19.1
	Xianghongshu	26	9.7
	Bilibili	22	8.2
	Others	13	4.9

4.2   Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive analysis revealed in Table 3 that usage frequency, brand image, brand identity, brand content quality, and consumer satisfaction each exhibited a generally positive perception among the 267 respondents. Specifically, brand identity stood out among other independent variables with the highest average (Mean=5.2978), where the respondents strongly identified with the brand overall. Meanwhile, consumer satisfaction (Mean=5.0225) demonstrated comparable means and indicated that the respondents tend to evaluate the brand favourably and express satisfaction with their experiences. Among the observed minimum and maximum values across the constructs, the respondents' experience with brand content quality indicated a wide range of distribution (ranging from 1 to 7). Brand identity showed the lowest standard deviation (0.8245), implying that perceptions of brand identity were relatively consistent within this group. Conversely, consumer satisfaction exhibits the highest standard deviation (1.23949), suggesting a wider spread of consumer satisfaction levels.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics

Variables	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation
Usage Frequency	267	1.5	7.0	4.9991	1.18288
Brand Image	267	1.25	6.75	5.0178	1.12324
Brand Identity	267	1.50	6.75	5.2978	0.8245
Brand Content Quality	267	1.00	7.0	5.0012	1.14252
Consumer Satisfaction	267	1.33	7.0	5.0225	1.2349

4.3   Reliability Analysis

The reliability analysis demonstrates acceptable internal consistency for most constructs in the study, as indicated by Cronbach's Alpha (α) values that meet or approach the recommended threshold of 0.60 (Nunnally, 1978). In the analysis in Table 4, usage frequency (α=0.786), brand image (α=0.740), brand identity (α=0.747), brand content quality (α=0.683), and consumer satisfaction (α=0.735) all exhibited Cronbach's Alpha values comfortably within the acceptable range and performed reliable data collection and results to be analysed in further analysis. Nonetheless, the overall reliability of the measurement scales was reinforced by the combined Cronbach's Alpha of 0.829, which highlighted the instrument's validity when assessing all constructs in a model.

Table 4: Reliability Analysis

	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
Usage Frequency	4	0.786
Brand Image	4	0.740
Brand Identity	4	0.747
Brand Content Quality	3	0.683
Consumer Satisfaction	3	0.735
Overall Reliability	18	0.887

4.4   Correlation Analysis

The correlation analysis shown in Table 5 identified the individual relationship between the variables, where the overall relationships were proven as significant at the 0.01 level. Specifically, brand image and usage frequency indicated a relatively high correlation (r=0.788), implying that individuals who frequently engaged with social media platforms tended to develop stronger brand perceptions. In addition, usage frequency is positively associated with brand identity (r=0.548) and consumer satisfaction (r=0.310), where a greater interaction may enhance brand identity and improve overall consumer satisfaction. The brand image was significantly linked to brand identity (r=0.543) and consumer satisfaction (r=0.287), highlighting the importance of a favourable brand

perception in shaping positive attitudes and experiences. Brand identity also correlates with brand content quality (r=0.445) and consumer satisfaction (r=0.419), where a well-defined brand identity can enhance perceived content value and consumer satisfaction. Of particular note was the substantial correlation between brand content quality and consumer satisfaction (r=0.723), which concluded that high-quality content may strongly influence consumer satisfaction.

Table 5: Correlation Analysis

	Usage Frequency	Brand Image	Brand Identity	Brand Content Quality	Consumer Satisfaction
Usage Frequency	1				
Brand Image	.788**	1			
Brand Identity	.548**	.543**	1		
Brand Content Quality	.294**	.312**	.445*	1	
Consumer Satisfaction	.310**	.287**	.419*	.723**	1

** = significance of correlation existed at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

4.5   Multiple Regression Analysis

The analysis shown in Table 6 indicated that the model that involved usage frequency, brand image, brand identity, and brand content quality significantly explained consumer satisfaction (F=76.644, p<0.001), with an adjusted R-squared value of 0.539 under multiple regression analysis. This suggests that 53.9% of the variance in consumer satisfaction can be attributed to these four independent variables. Brand content quality had a significant positive impact on consumer satisfaction (β=0.668, p<0.001). Hence,

the hypothesis of H4 was supported. While the other three variables, usage frequency, brand image, and brand identity, had an insignificant effect on consumer satisfaction where (β=0.107, p=0.128), (β=-0.057, p=0.412), and (β=0.094, p=0.084), respectively. Consequently, the hypotheses of H1, H2, and H3 were rejected. As such, the summary of the examined hypothesis testing in this research is demonstrated in Table 7.

Table 6: Multiple Regression Analysis

	Adjusted R-square	**F**	**P-value**
Model 1	0.539	76.644	<0.001
Variables	**Beta**	**t**	**P-value**
Usage Frequency	0.107	1.529	0.128
Brand Image	-0.057	-0.822	0.412
Brand Identity	0.094	1.733	0.084
Brand Content Quality	0.668	14.191	<0.001*

*p < 0.05 = significant

Table 7: Summary of Hypothesis Testing

	Hypothesis	**Decisions**
H1	Usage frequency has a positive impact on consumer satisfaction.	Rejected
H2	Brand image has a positive impact on consumer satisfaction.	Rejected
H3	Brand identity has a positive impact on consumer satisfaction.	Rejected
H4	Brand content quality has a positive impact on consumer satisfaction.	Supported

5.0   Discussions

The hypothesis testing concluded that only H4 was supported, while H1, H2, and H3 were rejected. Based on the results, this study examined one significant positive factor of consumer satisfaction in China's social media, which was brand content quality. Brand content quality significantly affected consumer satisfaction in China, which is consistent with the research completed by Ahn et al. (2023) and Hsu et al. (2021). Therefore, the importance of delivering relevant, engaging, and well-crafted messages to Chinese

consumers was expressed, as high-quality brand content can lead to positive consumer satisfaction and experience. By prioritising content that resonates with the values and interests of consumers, brands are more likely to cultivate trust and strengthen long-term loyalty in this competitive digital environment (Donga et al., 2025).

Usage frequency and consumer satisfaction showed an insignificant relationship in China, where diverse social media platforms and rapid technological advancements can lead to a highly saturated digital environment (Torous et al., 2021). From the perspective of Social Identity Theory, frequent usage was not translated into deeper group affiliation or enhanced self-concept unless the consumers perceived meaningful shared values or community belonging (Kim et al., 2023). Attachment Theory further implies that consumer satisfaction grows when individuals develop affective bonds that fulfil their emotional needs (Wang et al., 2024). In cases where repeated interactions lack a sense of trust or alignment with personal interests, usage frequency may not directly lead to stronger attachments. Thus, the meaningful brand-consumer bond is important to improve consumer satisfaction (Ferreira & Pereira, 2025), although consumers may be active on social media platforms.

Besides, the relationship between brand image and consumer satisfaction was proven as insignificant in this study, which was not supported in studies explored by Hua et al. (2024), Win et al. (2024), and Iqbal and Khan (2024). Social Identity Theory indicates that individuals may assume part of their self-thought from membership in social groups or communities (Tajfel & Turner, 1986). However, in a market as vast and competitive as China, brand image may be overshadowed by other factors, such as the perceived value or brand content quality. The high number of domestic and international brands vying for consumer attention could dilute the impact of brand image alone (Loken & John, 2023). As an example in China's beverage industry, a store of a Chinese bubble tea chain, Mixue Ice Cream and Tea, was exposed for food safety issues but was supported by some netizens as the popularity and affordability of products sold (Global Times, 2025). As such, Chinese consumers might emphasize tangible benefits more than relying solely on brand image.

Ultimately, brand identity was determined to have an insignificant effect on consumer satisfaction in this research, which contradicts Dash et al. (2021) and Abadi et al. (2021). Attachment Theory suggests that a stronger, more personal bond between consumers and brands leads to higher consumer satisfaction (Ainsworth, 1978; Bowlby, 1969). However, the sense of belonging might decrease if the brand identity does not reflect consumers' values or lifestyles (Büyükdağ & Kitapci, 2021). In addition, intense market competition and rapidly shifting consumer preferences can make it challenging for brands to communicate a distinct identity that stands out (Arora, 2023). In fact, 45% of respondents in China were pursuing a new brand in 2021, compared to the previous year, while 49% had a minor intention to change to the new brand (Statista, 2024d). Therefore, when the brands fail to align their identity closely with consumer preferences, the influence of brand identity on consumer satisfaction weakens.

6.0   Conclusion

6.1   Implications of the Study

This study strengthened the empirical foundation of Social Identity Theory and Attachment Theory (Ainsworth, 1978; Bowlby, 1969; Tajfel & Turner, 1986) in related fields and contributed to theoretical development and existing literature. As such, this study is among the first to integrate social identity theory and attachment theory into a single model that explains consumer satisfaction via social media. The significant role of brand content quality extended the understanding of Attachment Theory and demonstrated that engaging content encourages stronger emotional bonds and trust, thus promoting consumer satisfaction. Meanwhile, the insignificant findings for usage frequency, brand image, and brand identity challenge assumptions derived from Social Identity Theory, suggesting that frequent social media use or brand affiliations may not universally translate into deeper self-concept alignment or enhanced consumer satisfaction unless the content resonates with personal values. These results underscore the context-specific nature of these relationships in the highly competitive and rapidly evolving Chinese market, where consumers prioritise tangible benefits and personalised content experiences over brand marketing. Particularly, investigating the relationship

between usage frequency and consumer satisfaction filled the gap, and the lack of studies on the relationship provided a new reference dimension for related research.

Nowadays, consumers and businesses are challenged to efficiently identify a specific brand among similar products and services and retain consumers' attention. From the perspective of social media managers, this study believes that greater brand content quality was the breakthrough that solved these challenges. Second, while usage frequency, brand image, and brand identity may remain important in other contexts, this study suggested that these variables are irrelevant to driving Chinese consumer satisfaction independently. Instead, marketers should build trust and emotional connections through engaging narratives and interactive experiences. Third, it was essential to adapt promotional strategies to reflect local consumer behaviours and leverage the emerging platforms and communication styles that facilitate meaningful dialogue. By emphasising content quality and authentic engagement, the brands can enhance their visibility and ultimately shape long-term customer relationships. Moreover, the brands may remain competitive in the market by monitoring consumer feedback and technological innovations, which allow for timely adjustments to content strategies, thereby improving consumer satisfaction.

6.2   Limitations and Recommendations

Firstly, the sample adopted in this study consisted of opinions collected from respondents on the brands in the overall industries within the investigated social media. Future research should consider testing a specific brand individually in a particular industry to ensure a comprehensive analysis of an industry; such an investigation may fulfil the specific conditions in various industries. Secondly, the findings of this study may be more applicable to markets with similar levels of development, as this study was conducted in mainland China, and more developed regions may be considered for exploration, where the results may vary depending on the cultural background of the research environment. Thirdly, only three to four items were investigated in the measurement scale of the questionnaire design. Future research may explore more items to be investigated to enhance the study's comprehensiveness and reliability of findings.

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