

The Exploration of Purchase Motivation among Doujinshi Consumers

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ABSTRACT

This study explores how visual quality and community interaction affect consumer interest in female-oriented doujinshi. Based on fan culture and aesthetic consumption theories, a questionnaire was distributed online and analyzed using SmartPLS 4.0. The results show that both visual quality and community interaction positively influence consumers' interest, with community interaction also partially mediating the effect of visual quality. The findings suggest that combining visual appeal with strong social engagement is key to building consumer connection in the doujinshi market. This study offers both theoretical insights and practical suggestions for creators and marketers in fan-based creative industries.

Keywords: Doujinshi, Female-oriented, Purchasing motivation, CWT

1. Introduction

The Taiwanese female-oriented doujinshi market is growing rapidly, especially with events like Comic World Taiwan (CWT), where creators and consumers actively interact. The market, which combines emotional narratives, aesthetic images, and fan culture, has evolved from informal doujinshi to a structured creative industry. As independent publications become more popular, expectations for Visual Quality and interactivity are also rising.

According to recent studies [1], [2], factors such as illustration style, printing quality, and community participation have a significant impact on consumers' purchasing intention. This is especially true for female readers, who are influenced not only by the content but also by the emotional resonance and sense of belonging of the fan community [3]. These trends reflect a shift in the way fans choose and support doujinshi.

This study examines how visual quality and community interaction shape consumer interest in female-oriented doujinshi. Using Smart PLS to analyze survey data, the research clarifies the relationship between these factors and offers insights for creators to better engage their audiences. The contribution lies in integrating visual and social elements within a unified model, extending

aesthetic consumption debates to the female-oriented doujinshi context. From a managerial perspective, the findings stress that visual appeal alone is insufficient; durable consumer connections emerge when strong visuals are reinforced through active engagement such as consistent posting, creator–fan replies, and participation in community events.

2. Literature Review

This chapter reviews previous research related to the three key constructs of this study: Visual Quality, Community Interaction, and Consumer Interest. The review provides both theoretical background and empirical evidence, forming a basis for the proposed hypotheses.

2.1 Visual Quality

Visual aesthetics are a key factor in consumer attraction, especially in media and fan-created content. Chou [2] found that artwork style, cover design, and printing quality significantly influence fans' purchase decisions in doujinshi markets. Chen [3] emphasized that aesthetic satisfaction enhances emotional involvement, suggesting that visual quality not only affects initial impressions but also fosters loyalty and long-term interest. This perspective is consistent with broader research on aesthetic consumption, which highlights how experiential aspects such as fantasies, feelings, and enjoyment drive consumer behavior [7].

2.2 Community Interaction

Social engagement plays a critical role in fan culture. Lin [4] highlighted how online and offline interactions—such as discussions, fan events, and social sharing—contribute to a sense of belonging in the doujinshi community. Chou [2] noted that active participation enhances perceived value and satisfaction. These findings resonate with the concept of participatory culture, where audiences are not merely passive consumers but active participants shaping cultural production [8].

2.3 Consumer Interest

Interest is a psychological state that motivates exploration and consumption. According to Chen [3], fans are drawn to emotional resonance and character relationships, which shape their buying behavior. Cai [5] found that identity and peer influence further reinforce interest in anime-related products. These elements are particularly relevant in the doujinshi market, where content often resonates with subcultural identities.

2.4 Integrating Aesthetics and Community

Recent studies begin to merge visual and social perspectives to explain fan behavior. Chung and Liao [1] emphasized that independent publishing improves both visual quality and fan interaction. When these two elements come together, they create a more compelling and immersive consumer experience. This study extends prior research by testing the mediating role of Community Interaction between Visual Quality and Consumer Interest.

In summary, previous studies have confirmed that both visual aesthetics and social interaction are important drivers of fan engagement in the doujinshi market. Visual quality shapes consumers'

initial perception and emotional resonance, while community interaction reinforces their sense of belonging and sustained interest.

However, the relationship between these two dimensions and how they jointly influence consumer interest remains underexplored. This study aims to bridge that gap by testing whether community interaction mediates the effect of visual quality on consumer interest.

3. Research Design

3.1 Problem Hypotheses

To better understand the mechanisms behind consumer interest in female-oriented doujinshi, this study raises the following research questions:

3.1.1. How does visual quality influence community interaction in female-oriented doujinshi?

3.1.2. How does community interaction affect consumer interest?

3.1.3. Does community interaction mediate the relationship between visual quality and consumer interest?

3.1.4. Which factor—visual quality or community interaction—has greater impact on consumer perceptions and engagement?

3.2 Research Hypotheses and Conceptual Framework

To explore how Visual Quality and Community Interaction affect Consumer Interest in female-oriented doujinshi, this study proposes the following research hypotheses and conceptual framework.

H1: Visual Quality positively influences Community Interaction.

H2: Community Interaction positively influences Consumer Interest.

H3: Visual Quality positively influences Consumer Interest.

H4: Community Interaction mediates the relationship between Visual Quality and Consumer Interest.

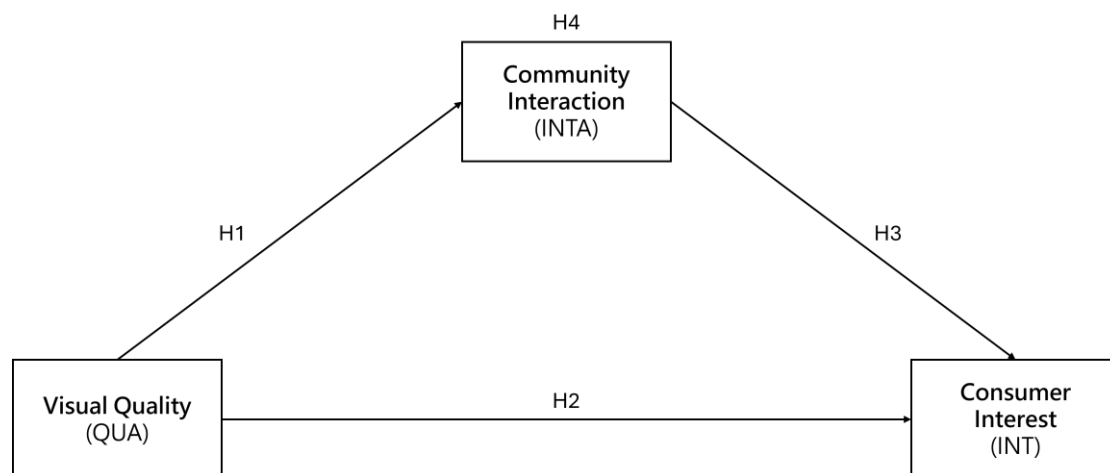


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study.

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis Procedure

The research procedure involved two main stages: data collection and data analysis. First, data were gathered through an online questionnaire distributed to consumers familiar with female-oriented

doujinshi. The questionnaire included measurement items for visual quality, community interaction, and consumer interest, each assessed with a 5-point Likert scale adapted from established studies [2], [3], [5]. After screening for incomplete or invalid responses, a total of 299 valid samples were retained for analysis.

Second, data analysis was conducted using SmartPLS 4.0, following the two-step approach recommended by Hair et al. [6]. The first step involved assessing the measurement model to ensure reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity of the constructs. While most Cronbach's α values exceeded the 0.70 threshold, the community interaction construct reported an α of 0.655. Since $\alpha > 0.60$ is acceptable in exploratory research [7], the construct was retained. The second step involved evaluating the structural model to test the hypothesized relationships among visual quality, community interaction, and consumer interest. This approach is suitable for exploratory studies with complex models and medium-sized samples [6], providing robust results for hypothesis testing.

3.4 Research Limitations

Several limitations should be noted. First, the sample is restricted to consumers in Taiwan who are familiar with or have previously purchased female-oriented doujinshi, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other cultural contexts or international doujin markets. Second, the study relies on participants' self-reported perceptions and behavioral intentions rather than actual purchase behavior. This reliance introduces potential biases and reduces the ability to draw strong causal inferences about real-world consumer actions. Third, the study focused on direct and mediated effects but did not explore potential moderating variables, which could further enrich understanding of consumer behavior.

Future research may address these issues by incorporating qualitative interviews, observational methods, or longitudinal tracking to capture deeper insights and behavioral dynamics over time, as well as expanding samples across different cultural contexts. Taken together, while these limitations constrain the scope of interpretation, they do not diminish the study's contribution. The following section presents the empirical results and discussion derived from the SmartPLS analysis.

4. Results and Discussion

This study uses a structured questionnaire to explore how visual quality and community interaction affect consumer interest in female-oriented doujinshi. The data were analyzed with SmartPLS 4.0, which is suitable for examining relationships between multiple variables [6].

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The results show that participants generally had positive views of female-oriented doujinshi. The average score for visual quality was 4.29 (SD = 0.65), meaning most people liked the artistic style and appearance of the works. Community interaction had a slightly lower average of 3.70 (SD = 0.62), suggesting that readers interact with creators or other fans at a moderate level, but there's still room for improvement. Consumer interest scored 4.17 (SD = 0.66), indicating strong engagement with the

storylines and characters. Among the three, visual quality received the highest score, followed by consumer interest, while community interaction had more mixed responses.

4.2 Reliability Analysis

To check if the questionnaire items were consistent, this study used Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability [6]. The alpha values were 0.705 for visual quality, 0.692 for consumer interest, and 0.655 for community interaction. Although 0.655 is slightly below the usual 0.7 standard, it is still acceptable for exploratory research, especially when scales are newly applied [6], [7]. All composite reliability values were above 0.7, showing that the items within each group are consistent and reliable.

4.3 Convergent and Discriminant Validity

All three constructs—visual quality, community interaction, and consumer interest—demonstrated satisfactory convergent validity, with Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.50. Discriminant validity was confirmed through both the Fornell–Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT), ensuring that the constructs are conceptually distinct and appropriately measured. These results provide confidence in the adequacy of the measurement model, allowing for subsequent testing of the structural relationships among constructs.

4.4 Structural Model Analysis

Before testing the hypothesized relationships, multicollinearity was assessed using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). The results are shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1. Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) for Indicators (N=299)

Indicator	INTA01	INTA02	INTA03	INT01	INT02	INT03	QUA01	QUA02	QUA03
VIF	1.274	1.233	1.397	1.384	1.28	1.407	1.378	1.369	1.376

Source: By authors.

All indicators exhibited VIF values well below the recommended threshold of 10.0 [6], with the highest being 1.407 (INT03) and the lowest being 1.233 (INTA02). Specifically, the VIF values for the interaction indicators (INTA01–INTA03) ranged from 1.233 to 1.397, the interest indicators (INT01–INT03) ranged from 1.280 to 1.407, and the quality indicators (QUA01–QUA03) ranged from 1.369 to 1.378. These results indicate no collinearity concerns, confirming the robustness of the model estimation.

The results of the structural model are summarized in **Table 2**, which reports the path coefficients, t-values, and p-values for each hypothesized relationship.

Table 2. Structural Model Path Coefficients (N = 299)

Path Relationship	Original Sample(O)	Sample Mean (M)	STDEV	T Value	P Value	Result
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QUA → INTA (H1)	0.316	0.326	0.063	5.053	0.000	Supported
INTA → INT (H2)	0.243	0.251	0.060	4.062	0.000	Supported
QUA → INT (H3)	0.288	0.291	0.074	3.901	0.000	Supported
QUA→INTA→INT(H4)	0.077	0.080	0.023	3.326	0.001	Supported

Note: QUA = Visual Quality ; INTA = Community Interaction ; INT = Consumer Interest

Source: By authors.

Visual quality (QUA) had a significant positive effect on community interaction (INTA) ($\beta = 0.316$, $t = 5.053$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H1. Community interaction (INTA) significantly predicted consumer interest (INT) ($\beta = 0.243$, $t = 4.062$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H2. Visual quality (QUA) also exerted a direct positive effect on consumer interest (INT) ($\beta = 0.288$, $t = 3.901$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H3. Furthermore, the indirect effect of QUA on INT via INTA was significant ($\beta = 0.077$, $t = 3.326$, $p < 0.01$), supporting H4 and confirming the mediating role of community interaction.

Taken together, these results confirm that visual aesthetics strongly influence both social engagement and consumer attitudes. Community interaction not only drives consumer interest directly but also partially mediates the impact of visual quality on interest. The standardized path coefficients of the structural model are presented in Figure 2.

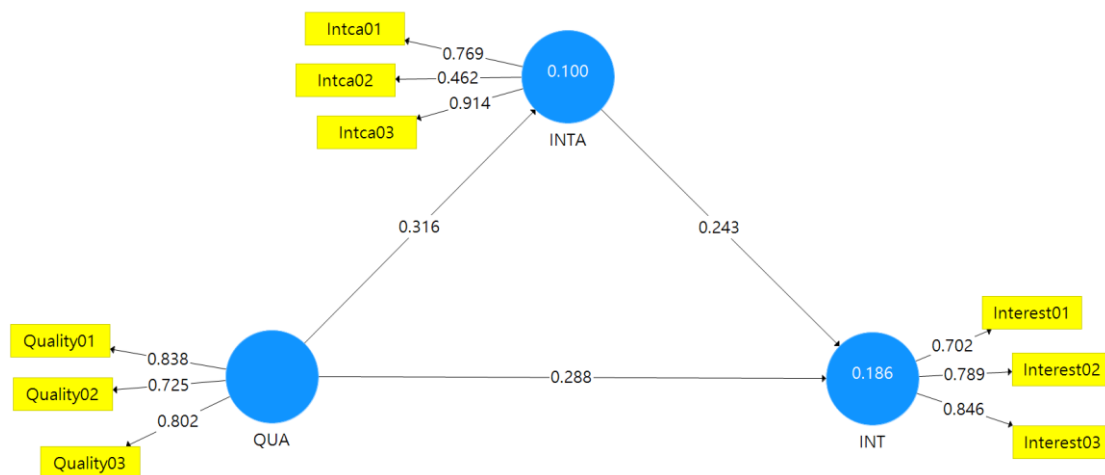


Figure 2. Standardized PLS-SEM Structural Model and Path Coefficients.

Source: By authors.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Research Findings

This study investigated how visual quality and community interaction jointly influence consumer interest in female-oriented doujinshi. Based on data collected from 299 respondents and analyzed using SmartPLS 4.0, all four hypotheses were supported. The results confirmed that visual

quality not only exerts a direct positive effect on consumer interest but also enhances community interaction, which itself significantly predicts consumer interest. Moreover, community interaction partially mediates the effect of visual quality on consumer interest, suggesting that the combination of aesthetic appeal and social engagement is essential for fostering consumer connection in the doujinshi market.

5.2 Theoretical and Practical Contributions

From a theoretical perspective, this research extends aesthetic consumption theory to the context of female-oriented doujinshi, a subcultural creative market that has been underexplored. By integrating visual and social dimensions into a unified model, the study clarifies how aesthetic and participatory elements work together to shape consumer motivation, thus enriching discussions in fan culture and subcultural marketing literature.

From a managerial perspective, the findings highlight that visual quality alone is insufficient for sustaining consumer interest. Creators and marketers should pair strong visuals with active engagement strategies, such as maintaining a consistent posting cadence, responding directly to fan feedback, and participating in both online and offline community events. These practices not only cultivate consumer loyalty but also strengthen the emotional bond between creators and their audiences, thereby increasing the likelihood of purchase.

5.3 Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the sample was restricted to Taiwanese consumers recruited through online questionnaires, which may limit the generalizability of the results across different cultural contexts. Second, the study relied on self-reported data rather than behavioral measures, which may introduce common method bias. Third, the cross-sectional design precludes strong causal inference.

Future research can address these limitations by adopting cross-cultural samples to compare consumer behaviors in different regions, employing qualitative methods such as interviews or ethnography to capture richer insights into fan engagement, and utilizing longitudinal or experimental designs to establish causal relationships. Expanding the scope to include moderating variables—such as fandom experience, creator reputation, or platform type—may further refine the model and generate deeper understanding of doujinshi consumption dynamics.

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Conflicts of Interest

The author confirms that there are no conflicts of interest.

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