

Innovation on Cultural and Creative Product-Designing Traditional Chinese Poetry into Product

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Abstract

The cultural and creative (CAC) industries have experienced rapid growth in recent years, and "Culture" plays a critical role in design. Traditional Chinese poetry is an intangible cultural heritage in China's civilisation. Therefore, designing "Traditional Chinese Poetry" into products will be a CAC product design trend. This study investigates how to transform Traditional Chinese Poetry elements into CAC products with an innovative design model. Through the design practice, participants have successfully designed CAC products based on ancient poetry elements. Moreover, there still needs to be more research on the cultural product design of the intangible traditional culture in China.

Keywords: cultural and creative product; traditional Chinese poetry; symbolic semantics; innovation; product design.

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1.0 Introduction

With the rapid growth of China's CAC economy and the versatile demand of the market, CAC product design plays an essential role in expressing our culture. Furthermore, the designer's creative energy is also inspired by culture. Therefore, culture is the foundation of CAC product design. Moreover, when we need inspiration or innovative ideas for design products, we can search for some unique part of the culture, like The Traditional Chinese poetic aesthetic theory, which has nearly 2 000 years of history. Therefore, as a designer, we need to integrate technology, science, art, and culture to create more possibilities for our traditional culture in the future.

Artists or audiences in traditional Chinese arts tend to focus on subjective emotional expressions. The meaning of Chinese aesthetics is expressed in the form of poetic words. Painting and poetry are primarily connected to aesthetics or subject expression. The CAC industry's characteristic and type is the creative expansion of the cultural content, which is emphasised by design. In addition, its components include a CAC industry that displays the aesthetic style following the steps of aesthetics and experience and lifestyle of the classic traditional Chinese poetry culture like Tang poetry through the development of diversified values. Tang poetry is considered one of the highest achievements of Chinese poetry creation and is typical of traditional Chinese literature. In the Tang dynasty, over 50,000 poems were composed by more than 2,200 poets, profoundly impacting Chinese and even world cultures. China has many scholars researching Tang poetry and has made significant contributions to (Li, 2010). For example, The design practice case "Zi Lian Lamp" in this study was designed from the poetry of Tang poetic Zi Lan. It contains substantial implications of cultural spirits from the symbolic semantics of tang poetry, excellent functional aspects, poetic oriental traditional flavours, and poetic shape design from the intangible elements of tang poetry.

Furthermore, the innovations of CAC design contribute to these attractions. Hence, this research aims to explore the innovative design of CAC products through the elements of Chinese traditional poetry culture. It analyses the components of tang poetry's CAC product design from perspectives of symbolic semantics, cultural meanings, material meanings, pattern meanings, and so on. As a result, this research study on transforming tang poetry into a designed and developed CAC product promotes product value.

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2.0 Literature Review

2.1 The Current Situation Regarding China's Cultural and Creative Industry Development

Huang and Jia (2022) highlight the importance of big data technology and its connection to art design in promoting innovation and growth in the industry. Tong (2021) focuses on the foreign trade aspect of Beijing's cultural and creative industry, identifying the small scale and need for diversified patterns. Zeng (2022) analyses the development of cultural and creative industries in Anhui Province, emphasising the need for policy integration, regional characteristics, and structural optimisation. Li (2010) explores marketing strategies in the cultural and creative industry, using the Palace Museum as a case study and suggesting improvements in copyright protection and international promotion. 2004, the National Bureau of Statistics issued the Classification of Culture and Its Related Industries. In 2009, The State Council issued the Cultural Industry Revitalization Plan. In 2010, the fifth Plenary Session of the 17th CPC Central Committee proposed to promote the cultural industry as a pillar industry of the national economy. At this point, the CAC industry has established a pillar position in China's economic pattern. The report of the 18th Representative Commission of the Chinese Communist Party put forward "to carry out the strategy of innovation-driven development" in 2012. That shows innovative product design has risen to the position from enterprise behaviour to the national economic and social development strategy. With this background, innovative products (especially those embodying the regional culture's characteristics) seem more important. Innovative products designed with prominent national and regional cultural features have become the common focus of designers and theoretical researchers (Ling, 2017). In 2013, Shan Jixiang, the director of the Palace Museum, proposed that "cultural products should be not only cultural but also creative." Since then, the Palace Museum has begun to show substantial value in developing culture and innovative products.

Moreover, it has also driven the development of the Chinese CAC design field. Furthermore, It has become a super celebrity online since Taobao's official sales store launched in 2010, with over 5.2 million followers and an annual sales volume of over a billion yuan. Moreover, the Palace Museum in Beijing has changed its previous products' more traditional design style to become "unorthodox". Through various cute displays on Weibo, the Palace Museum promotes interaction with netizens and attracts many fans. That drives the collective cute sales trend of numerous local museums and cultural institutions (Xian Yi, 2017). Then, the Phenomenon of Internet Celebrity Design came out in addition to inheriting the characteristics of an Internet celebrity to attract attention. Moreover, its unique design features and forms introduce new thinking and changes to the design industry (Li, 2021).

2.2 The Problem with China's Cultural and Creative Market

Wang (2022) identifies issues such as the late start of cultural and creative industries and weak export strength of cultural and creative enterprises, which hinder the export of cultural and creative products. Tong (2021) focuses on the foreign trade of Beijing's cultural industry and identifies problems such as small scale, single form, and the need for a developed pattern. Chen (2022) emphasises the need for more stamina for development and new development and breakthrough points in China's cultural and creative industries. Li (2022) discusses the challenges faced by intangible cultural heritage in preserving its authenticity while integrating with the modern cultural industry. The CAC market is rapidly growing with great economic potential in China, and various traditional Chinese cultures influenced its development. In recent years, even small cities like Qingyuan, Guizhou and Dali have concentrated on marketing and promoting the cultural industry due to the enormous commercial benefits that can be realised in the CAC market. Furthermore, all the cities have noticed that their core competencies are local traditional cultures. From the analysis, some problems can be concluded for China's CAC industry by now:

- 1) The problems of seriously homogeneous products: Some existing CAC developments in China need to be more superficial in their interpretation of Chinese culture, and their cultural connotation needs to be deeply explored. Nevertheless, as a result, it leads to excellent homogeneity. Hence, they need help to survive in the fierce market competition.
- 2) There needs to be more innovation in existing CAC design: planar products account for the vast majority, remaining satisfied with consumers' material needs. However, in the aspect of personality and spirit, the individual needs of some consumers still need to be fully considered.
- 3) Weak product competitiveness: there needs to be a strong connection between CAC carriers and culture. Currently, most creative products directly extract cultural elements and combine them with existing products, requiring more resonance of cultural connotation and cultural emotion. Primarily for crafts and decorations, the product needs more competitiveness to attract tourists to buy goods.
- 4) Single product purchase method: the product is the only offline purchase; there is no online purchase channel. A complete industrial chain has yet to be formed. That results in the need for more popularity and influence of CAC products in China.

2.3 Traditional Chinese Poetry

The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines "poetic" as "loving or implying poetry, especially because it shows imagination and affection." Comparing Oriental classical art and aesthetics to Western ones, this definition becomes clearer. Traditional Chinese poetry, or ancient Chinese poetry, pronounced as "Gu Shi" in Chinese, refers to Chinese poetry works before the Opium War in 1840. Its original meaning is a poem written by ancient people. In a broad sense, ancient Chinese poetry includes poems, ci and sanqu, written by ancient people. In a narrow sense, ancient poetry refers only to ancient and modern poetry made by ancient people. (Zhou Yang, 1986). According to a large number of studies on the historical development of traditional Chinese poetry, its classified and evaluation are as follows:

- 1) Ancient Chinese poetry.
- 2) Modern-style poetry, the Ci. Ci, another form of poetry

3) Sanqu. Modern poetry.

2.4 Theories and Steps to Designing Culture into Designs

According to Rungtai Lin's research in 2007-2016, cited more than 1000 times, and Jing Cao's research in 2022, the design model of cultural products mainly includes three parts: conceptual model, research method, and design process. The design concept focuses on identifying cultural characteristics of cultural relics and then translating them into design models for creating cultural products. The research method includes three steps: identification and extraction, remodelling and transformation, and design and production. From the original cultural objects, features of the cultural heritage are extracted (identification and extraction), then remodelled and transformed into design elements (remodelling and transformation), and finally, cultural products are designed (implementation and production). The design process provided four steps to designing a cultural product: investigation (setting a scenario), interaction (telling a story), development (writing a script), and implementation (designing a product).

2.5 Product Semantic Analysis

Product semantics focus on what objects of use mean, the symbolic aspects of products, and the psychological, social, and cultural meanings associated with them (Krippendorff, 1992). Accordingly, more than the application and research of Product Semantic Analysis in product design is needed from the perspective of product significance and use. Zhang (2022) presents a semantic alignment system for multilingual query-product retrieval, utilising pre-trained multilingual language models to improve the ranking of query-product pairs. Deng (2022) proposes a multi-label classification model with semantic matching and negative label sampling for product attribute value extraction, aiming to capture semantic interactions between attribute values and product text. Fang (2022) introduces a hierarchical semantic concept and industrial design process model based on product semiotics and cognitive semantics, utilising Information-Centric Networking (ICN) technology to optimise product quality. Based on current research, evidence indicates that applications of this type have become one of the most common approaches product designers use. The modern product design method is comprehensive and based on user demand, user experience and communication on the user-centred design axis. From this perspective, product semantics opens up new horizons for product designers regarding design methods. According to many studies, No matter how designers use colour, shape, form, or texture in designing products, they send messages via a part of the language that deals with meaning, called semantics.

Consequently, designers and ergonomists should know what messages they wish to send, what sort of response can be expected from the recipient, and the symbols and attributes that comprise that language. Moreover, the meaning of symbolic function is contained in product semantics: It helps users understand what era and country the product is from; It helps users understand the social and cultural background of the product as well as the emotional factors contained in it. It allows users to understand the product's social values and cultural views; It helps users understand its brand identity; It makes products more enjoyable and meaningful.

3.0 Methodology

Understanding the intersection between traditional Chinese poetry and CAC product design is paramount for our study. This section aims to elucidate the methodology adopted in our research, addressing the feedback received for a more comprehensive explanation.

3.1 Objective Identification

The core aim of our study was to explore how "product design" can transform traditional intangible cultural resources, specifically conventional Chinese poetry, into "CAC products".

3.2 Literature Analysis

An extensive review of Chinese traditional aesthetics was conducted. This enabled us to discern that the symbolic semantics of conventional Chinese poetry verses can be used as design inspiration. The literature also gave insights into the historical and cultural significance of the poetry, aiding in the design process.

3.3 Case Study Method

Given the nature of our research, a case study methodology was deemed appropriate. This allowed for an in-depth analysis of the subject matter and facilitated the drawing of connections between traditional aesthetics and modern product design.

3.4 Symbolic Semantic Analysis

Traditional Chinese poetry is replete with symbols and meanings. To extract design elements, a symbolic semantic analysis was carried out. This entailed understanding the deeper meanings and connotations of poetry verses, subsequently using them as a foundation for design.

3.5 Experimental Design Process

Post analysis, an experimental design process was launched to create CAC products. This was iterative, taking learnings from each cycle to refine and perfect the designs.

3.6 Evaluation

Finally, the designed products were evaluated based on their alignment with the traditional essence and market appeal. Feedback from potential consumers and design experts was collected and incorporated.

3.7 Research Procedure

This research aims to study the innovative design methods and procedures of cultural creative products based on the cultural elements of traditional Chinese poetry. This study focuses on the classic Chinese poetry culture. Hence, traditional Chinese poetry is an immaterial culture. Therefore, In this study, the case study method will be used to explore how to design traditional Chinese poetry into a CAC product and establish its design model. At the same time, an experimental design practice was conducted in this study to test the design model.

Furthermore, design case collection, analysis, and actual and on-site case studies may obtain this research results. This research used product symbolic semantic analysis to determine the elements of design which will be needed for the product, clear the functions and formalise symbolic semantic elements to obtain the forms and characteristics of the design works. Therefore, we can contribute and provide reference cases for the development of China's CAC product design, which is based on traditional intangible culture, through the results of this study. And then, we can also Enhance the products' value with China's traditional culture.

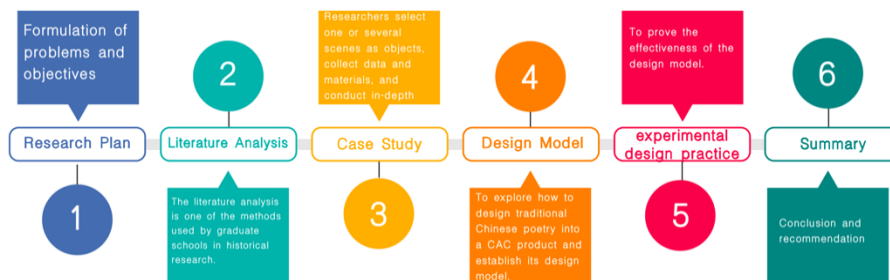


Fig. 1: Research Procedure

3.8 Justification for Chosen Methods

The decision to base our designs on traditional Chinese poetry was rooted in the belief that culture and tradition can significantly enhance the value of modern products. The case study approach offered a focused lens, making the research more structured and relevant. Symbolic semantic analysis was crucial given the symbolic nature of poetry. Though time-consuming, An experimental design process ensured that the final products accurately represented the intended fusion between the traditional and the modern. The evaluation phase was crucial to understanding market reception and ensuring the commercial viability of the products.





In summary, our methodology was meticulously planned to ensure a harmonious blend of tradition and modernity in the resulting CAC products. This detailed explanation offers a clearer understanding of our research process and the rationale behind our chosen methods.

4.0 Case Study

4.1 Case Study of Cultural and Creative Products in China

Here are some products created from China's cultural images, as shown in Table 1. To analyse CAC products, we need to determine their symbolic meanings, the transformations in their functions, and the significance of historical stories and design terms.

Table 1: CAC Products in China.



The Original Product	The Original Picture before Transformation	Cultural Product Picture	Analysis of the Product
Instruments: Pinched enamel dragon long square tripod furnace late Qing Dynasty			Celadon incense burner uses lotus seed reference design to simplify the traditional incense burner. Full of zen and Oriental charm.
The Chinese fans: Has a close relationship with the Chinese traditional paper folding.			The lamp is made of rice paper printed with poems and paper fans. This product has strong bamboo culture and Buddhist culture.

(Source: Baidu BaiKe and TaoBao)

4.2 Case Study of Traditional Chinese Poetry in the Cultural and Creative Industry

Based on the type of CAC products in China's market, we can see very few products designed from traditional Chinese poetry culture. And the design method of those products needs more innovation and creativity. For example, as shown in Table 2, examples of CAC products based on China's traditional poetry culture are listed. According to the representative work on the list, we could only see the symbol of the ancient calligraphy with poems of the Tang Dynasty cultural signs; even though this product has strong traditional cultural colour and the significance of historical stories and design terms, the characters only used as patterns, and the transformations in their functions just as a lamp and the shape as an ordinary lamp, nevertheless, it is still lacking innovation cultural elements on it transformed by design.

Table 2: Culture and creative products based on traditional Chinese poetry

The Original Product	The Original Picture before Transformation	Picture of the Cultural Product	Analysis of the Product
Ancient calligraphy with poems of the Tang Dynasty			The lamp is made of rice paper with poems from the tang Dynasty poems. This product has strong traditional cultural colour.

(Source: BaiDu BaiKe and TaoBao)

5.0 Design Model

5.1 Design Model of Cultural and Creative Products of Traditional Chinese Poetry

Based on the research above, In this study, the CAC product design model consists of three main parts:

The first part is Design Inspiration (taking cultural features from traditional Chinese poetry). The design inspiration and cultural product design concept focus on capturing the cultural characteristics of cultural objects and then for use in developing cultural products by transforming these elements into design elements. This part includes two steps:

- 5) Analysis of the meaning of poetic imagery.
- 6) Analysis of the composition of poetic images.

The second part is The Semantics of Product (extract symbolic semantics of traditional Chinese poetry). For example, in Table 3, the "Sun Bird necklace" not only represents the Jinsha culture of Chengdu but also symbolises the thousand-year-old cultural relics and experience of the cultural story of the ancient Shu civilisation. Cultural symbols can improve the quality and status of cultural products, so they are widely used in product design and other design fields development. This part includes three steps:

- 1) Identification, extracting symbolic semantics from traditional Chinese poetry's original cultural features.
- 2) Transformation, transforming them to design information and design elements.
- 3) Implementation, finally designing a CAC product.

Table 3: CAC products of Sun Bird necklace

The Original Product	The Original Picture before Transformation	Picture of the Cultural Product	Analysis of the Product
Sun Bird totem			This necklace is made from the sun bird culture of jinsha site. This product has a strong Oriental aesthetic color.

(Source: Baidu BaiKe and TaoBao)

The third part is the Design Process. This research conducts four steps of the traditional Chinese poetry CAC product design process, which are further described as follows:

- 1) Translate the design elements into 2D Images.
- 2) Analysing the Shape and Structure of sketches.
- 3) Scheme Optimization
- 4) Design a Product: Based on the symbolic semantics and sketches obtained previously, the design features of cultural products will be determined according to ancient Chinese poetry's cultural characteristics.

The following design model of CAC products which is based on the cultural elements of traditional Chinese poetry will help to understand the relevant design process previously proposed in this paper, as shown in Figure 2:

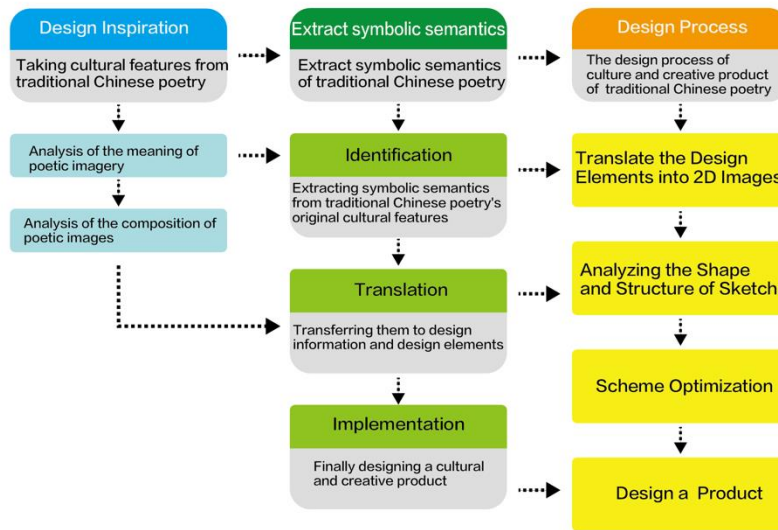


Fig. 2: cultural and creative product design model of traditional Chinese poetry

5.2 Experimental of Designing Traditional Chinese Poetry into Cultural and Creative Product

This study focuses on traditional Chinese poetry culture, conducting design development according to the process above: inspiration from traditional Chinese poetry cultural symbols, extracting product symbolic semantics and transferring them to Design Elements, and finally, designing a product. To evaluate the feasibility of the design model, we carried out an experimental design practice. The design practice process of the design model took approximately 32 class hours with 28 Department of Industrial Design students in their sophomore year divided into seven groups. The students and teachers are from the (SCCM) Chengdu Academy of Fine Arts, Chengdu city, Sichuan province, China. The testing design process focused on implementing the CAC product design model of traditional Chinese poetry. After the design practice, a total of 7 works were received. Through the screening of their teachers and researchers, the representative design case of this design practice is the "Zi Lan lamp", as shown in Figure 3, this design work is from group four which is one of the seven groups, and the designers are Sandy Shui, Anna Hu, Lee Li. They are Department of Industrial Design (SCCM) Chengdu Academy of Fine Arts students. The symbolic semantics of Zi Lan lamp was extracted from one of poet Zi Lan's poems. The external design revealed the traditional Chinese poetic aesthetic; when the users turn on the light, they would be absorbed in a poetic quality environment with the Chinese aesthetic.

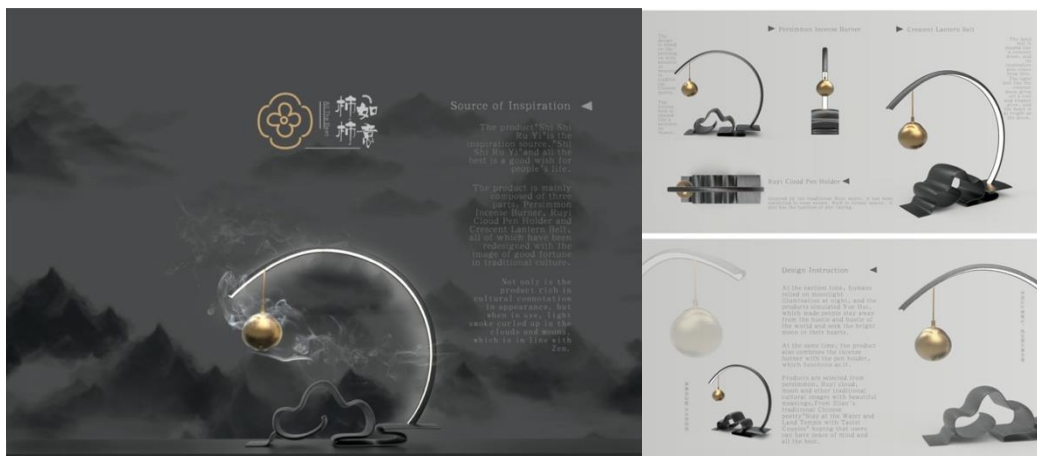


Fig. 3: Zi Lan lamp.

The purpose of this research is to explore the innovative design methods and design procedures of CAC products, and the focus of this research is to explore the application of intangible traditional cultural elements in the design of CAC products. From their unique and abundant cultural connotations and attributes of difference, product symbolic semantic analysis will be used to extract and form traditional Chinese poetry with abstracting shape and understand each verse's Future applications and abstractions of design elements. Take the "Zi Lan lamp" as an example, the analysis is shown in Figure 4.

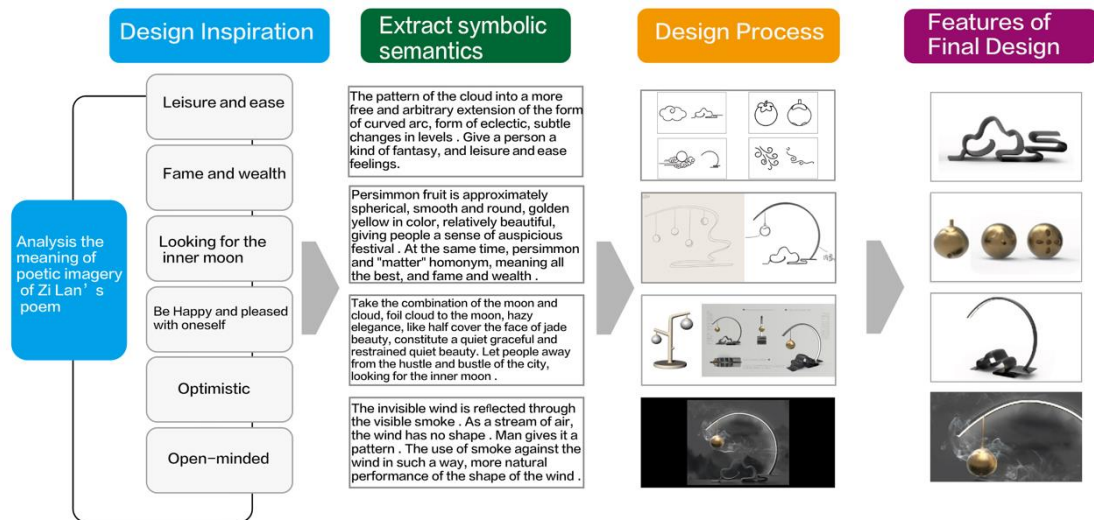


Fig. 4: Product symbolic semantic analysis of "Zi Lan lamp"

According to the experimental design of the "Zi Lan lamp", which used Symbolic Semantic analyze in this article, a traditional culture like traditional Chinese poetry can be formed into a product by extracting its Symbolic Semantic. The design connotations of cultural products are extended from this Symbolic Semantic. The design of CAC products based on intangible traditional culture in the context of modern culture, this study can provide a reference for the same type of products. A design model for CAC products based on Chinese traditional culture is constructed in this study by analyzing Chinese traditional poetry culture and transforming its cultural connotations and charms into design elements. This study is intended to provide a practical means of exploring and practising design in Chinese traditional culture.

To sum up, the experimental design of CAC products can prove the effectiveness of the design model. This indicated that the CAC product design model of traditional Chinese poetry conducted in this study could help designers to extract design elements from intangible cultural features and improve their design skills. Meanwhile, This will provide designers with more options with regard to innovative design in the field of CAC products.

6.0 Discussion

The interplay between traditional cultural elements and modern product design presents a compelling narrative, especially in the context of an ever-evolving global creative and cultural industry. This paper's exploration of integrating traditional Chinese poetry with CAC product design offers a rich tapestry of insights and findings that merit in-depth discussion.

6.1. Relevance of Traditional Elements in Modern Design:

Our research underscores the enduring relevance of traditional elements in contemporary design contexts. The appeal of traditional Chinese poetry, with its symbolic semantics and profound aesthetic viewpoints, lends a unique and differentiated value to CAC products. This intertwining of the ancient and the modern not only augments the product's intrinsic value but also serves as a testament to the timeless nature of cultural elements.

6.2. The Power of Symbolic Semantics:

Delving into the symbolic semantics of traditional Chinese poetry revealed a vast reservoir of design inspirations. The nuanced meanings, allegories, and symbols embedded in the verses provided a rich palette for designers to draw from. The success of the CAC products designed in this study showcases the potential of tapping into such deep-rooted cultural semantics.

6.3. Innovation in Intangible Culture Preservation:

By focusing on the "transformation" and "value addition" aspects of traditional intangible culture, the research paves the way for innovative strategies in cultural preservation. As societies progress, the risk of cultural erosion increases. However, by weaving these intangible elements into tangible products, we can ensure their continued relevance and appreciation.

6.4. Challenges and Future Directions:

While the study yielded positive outcomes, it also brought forth challenges inherent in the endeavor. Striking a balance between staying true to the cultural essence and ensuring market appeal is a nuanced task. Future research might delve deeper into understanding consumer perceptions and preferences, ensuring that the cultural integration is both authentic and appealing.

6.5. Broader Implications for the CAC Industry:

The study's findings have broader implications for the CAC industry at large. It highlights the vast potential of looking inwards, towards one's cultural heritage, for inspiration. In a world increasingly characterized by homogenization, such differentiation can provide a competitive edge.

In summary, the implications of this research extend far beyond the immediate context of integrating traditional Chinese poetry into product design. Firstly, the research underscores the importance of intertwining intangible cultural heritage with modern design practices, thereby highlighting a pathway for preserving and revitalizing endangered or less prominent cultural elements in contemporary contexts. This approach can be a catalyst for other cultures and traditions to seek innovative avenues for representation in today's global market, fostering intercultural understanding and appreciation. Moreover, the methodology and framework established in this study can serve as a blueprint for other sectors seeking to embed cultural nuances into their offerings, be it in the realms of fashion, architecture, or digital media. By recognizing the value of symbolic semantic analysis, industries can tap into deeper emotional and cultural resonances with their target audiences, paving the way for more meaningful consumer engagements. Lastly, the research opens up conversations about the ethics and authenticity of cultural representation in product design. It beckons designers, researchers, and businesses to tread carefully, ensuring that the cultural elements they incorporate are not merely surface-level aesthetics but genuinely respect and honor the depth and nuances of the traditions they represent. This calls for a more collaborative and inclusive design process where cultural stakeholders play an active role, ensuring that the essence of their heritage is captured accurately and respectfully. The fusion of traditional Chinese poetry with modern CAC product design elucidates the immense potential of such interdisciplinary endeavours. Not only does it add layers of depth and meaning to the product, but it also reaffirms the value of preserving and celebrating cultural heritage in contemporary contexts. The discussion presented here hopes to inspire further exploration in this domain, paving the way for more culturally enriched and globally appealing products.

7.0 Conclusion & Recommendations

The research underscores the profound potential of melding intangible cultural treasures with modern product design. By focusing on traditional Chinese poetry as a conduit, it showcased the innovative outcomes when symbolic semantics are translated into tangible products, thus enhancing their intrinsic value and appeal. This confluence of tradition and innovation not only offers a fresh perspective to product design but also posits a way to preserve and promote cultural heritages in today's fast-paced, globalized world. However, the study does not come without its limitations. The exclusive focus on poetry, albeit enriching, could overlook other facets of the vast and diverse Chinese culture. The interpretation of symbolic semantics is inherently subjective, leading to possible inconsistencies in design outcomes. Moreover, while the methodology offers a context-rich approach tailored to Chinese poetry, its broader applicability remains untested, warranting caution when generalizing findings to other cultural contexts. The lack of deep exploration into consumer reception of such products further leaves a gap in understanding market dynamics and acceptance. In light of the study's findings and limitations, it is advised that future efforts consider a broader range of cultural inspirations beyond poetry, possibly delving into Chinese paintings, music, or folklore for a more comprehensive representation of culture. Integrating feedback from potential consumers during the design process is crucial to ascertain market appeal and relevance. Collaborating with cultural experts can mitigate the risk of unintentional cultural inaccuracies, preserving authenticity. Additionally, assessing the adaptability of the proposed model in varied cultural contexts could reveal its broader potential, promoting inclusivity in global design practices. In sum, this research illuminates the way forward for designers keen on integrating cultural elements, while also highlighting areas for refinement and deeper exploration. Embracing these recommendations can pave the way for truly innovative products that not only appeal to consumers but also champion the rich tapestry of global cultures.

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Paper Contribution to Related Field of Study

We hope All these efforts would not only be used in developing our own culture and heritage. We hope that the interpretation and analysis of this study will provide researchers, operators, and designers involved in cultural product design research with more references and a better understanding of future design models' feasibility.

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