

Axiological Exploration of Cultural Values in Chinese Costume Historical Drama and its Impact on Social Identity

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Abstract: Purpose: This study aims to investigate the axiological impact of Chinese costume historical dramas on social identity, focusing on the representation of cultural values within these narratives. By examining the portrayal of cultural values in these dramas and their implications for social identity formation, the research seeks to contribute to our understanding of the role of media in shaping cultural identity and fostering a sense of belonging in contemporary society. Method: Utilizing a qualitative approach, this research employs thematic analysis to examine the thematic content of Chinese costume historical dramas. Semi-structured interviews are conducted with viewers of these dramas to explore their perceptions and interpretations of the representation of cultural values within the narratives. The data are analyzed thematically to identify patterns and themes related to cultural values and their impact on social identity. Findings: The findings reveal a complex interplay between media representation, cultural values, and social identity. Themes such as Traditional Confucian Values, Representation of Cultural Pride, and Gender Roles and Societal Norms emerge as significant factors shaping audience perceptions of cultural identity and social roles. These findings provide valuable insights into the ways in which media narratives influence individual and collective identity formation. Implications/Originality: This research contributes to media studies and cultural studies by offering insights into the ways in which media narratives shape audience perceptions of cultural values and social identity. The study highlights the significance of media representation for identity formation and underscores the importance of critical engagement with media content. Moreover, by exploring the axiological impact of Chinese costume historical dramas, this research offers original insights into the role of media in shaping cultural identity and fostering social cohesion.

Keywords: Chinese Costume; Historical Dramas; Axiological Impact; Cultural Values; Social Identity; Media Representation

1. INTRODUCTION

Chinese movies and TV show "historical fiction" costume plays and these dramas often take place in Han, Tang, and Qing times. Chinese historical dramas have captivated viewers worldwide with their intricate plots, lavish costumes, and spectacular battles for decades. These performances showcase China's rich history, culture, and mythology. They do this by theatrically and evocatively depicting famous people and events (Huang et al., 2022). Media depictions of cultural values impact society, define identities, and promote cultural understanding and cohesion. Media stories represent society's ideals and ideas while entertaining. Cultural values in media material influence consumers' attitudes, behaviours, and worldviews, changing their self- and other-perceptions (Fox et al., 2021). Cultural identity and history can be preserved through media portrayals of cultural ideals. Examining media representations of cultural values may help researchers understand cultural identity and how media affects public discourse (Rentschler et al., 2023). Social identity is self-perception and shared belonging in social groups. It matters in current culture. Racial, ethnic, national, gender, religious, and cultural factors form an individual's identity. Social identities impact people's self-perception, perception of others, attitudes, behaviors, and interactions with the outside world. Since people are impelled to show their group connection, social identification underpins social cohesion, solidarity, and collective action (Wei, 2021). Understanding social identity promotes empathy, tolerance, and acceptance in a varied, interconnected community. Many academic studies examine the cultural significance and appeal of Chinese historical dramas' clothing. There is little research on their value-related implications, especially for social identity. Philosophy's axiology investigates values and ethics. How different media reflect social norms is examined (Ouyang & Yuan, 2021). Historical dramas have shaped public discourse and popular culture, but their cultural values and social identity effects are unclear (Siwek, 2023). Understanding the media's complex representation of culture and its effects on individual and social identity requires understanding historical plays' axiological implications, which the literature ignores. Chinese historical dramas with cultural values and attire are fascinating and vital. Dramas shape viewers' cultural identity, heritage, and ethics (Hanson, 2019). These operas highlight Confucian principles like filial piety, honesty, and morality, providing a distinct viewpoint on cultural identity and civic responsibility. Encourages social values. Wu (2017) claims that these games help spectators identify by teaching social ideals.

Drama affects customer culture, values, and legacy (Hu et al., 2024). These operas underscore Confucian concepts like filial piety, integrity, and ethics to offer a distinct perspective on civic duty and cultural identity. Promotes societal ideals. According to Locher & Messerli, 2020, these performances assist viewers identify their identity by conveying cultural values that represent society (Locher & Messerli, 2020). Drama affects viewers' culture, morals, and heritage. These operas highlight Confucian principles like filial piety, honesty, and morality, providing a distinct viewpoint on cultural identity, civic responsibility and promotes societal ideals (Lei, 2023). This research significantly affects media and cultural studies, making it crucial and it also explains how media shape's identity. This research improves media studies by showing how media narratives shape audience views of social identity and cultural values. This study examines how historical Chinese costume operas reflect cultural values to better understand how media might convey and reinforce cultural ideas, beliefs, and conventions. By examining historical dramas' value-based influence, this study contributes to media portrayal, cultural identity, and social unity theoretical frameworks. This research links media and cultural studies to analyze the complex relationship between identity, culture, and media. This study helps explain how media shapes identities, especially in modern culture. This study examines how Chinese costume historical dramas change audience views on cultural identity and social responsibilities to shape individual and communal identities. This study analyzes how media texts form and negotiate social identity in the globalized period, revealing its complexity and fluidity. This study explores how media depiction affects self-concept and gives significant insights to promote media literacy and intelligent media analysis activities. This study illuminates how media narratives shape current cultural identity and societal cohesiveness.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Cultural values influence society's ideals, habits, and decisions and these ideas shape ethics, customs, social norms, social cohesiveness, and cultural identity. A coherent conceptual framework and accurate definitions are needed to understand cultural values in society. The cultural values theory comprised power distance, individuality vs collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term versus short-term orientation, and indulgence versus restraint (Adamovic, 2022). Many civilizations value these traits. Activity, human, man-nature interaction, temporal, and relational are Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck's Value Orientation Theory's five

dimensions of cultural values. Each cultural orientation studies a human attribute. Some cultures believe human nature is a delicate balance, while others believe it contains good and evil. Media influences culture by shaping and reflecting society. Culture is communicated, reinforced, and questioned through the internet, TV, film, and literature. Cultural values are spread through media storytelling. Television, film, and novel narratives explain and appreciate cultural concepts (Fägersten & Stapleton, 2023). Historical plays on Chinese television emphasize familial piety, loyalty, and honesty. These stories teach viewers about their culture and values (Gao, 2024). Global social movements have promoted gender equality and sexual assault prevention. Social media impacted laws and practices in many nations, producing a global movement (Chen & Chang, 2024). Chinese costume historical dramas cover many topics and storylines, including historical events and Confucian principles. Discussions generally center on family, imperial, and national loyalty. Main protagonists in "Nirvana in Fire" confront political maneuvers and sacrifice themselves to safeguard their country and loved ones. Chinese culture values responsibility, hierarchy, and dedication. Filial piety, another Confucian ideal, is widely discussed. Theater characters appreciate and care for their parents and elders. The protagonist's family and ancestors influence her choices in "The Story of Minglan". Filial piety, a core Chinese ethical value, emphasizes family and intergenerational respect. Similarities exist for righteousness and honesty. The main characters in these works often must choose between personal interests and morality. These characters usually emphasize morality over transgression. The author shows how law, morality, and social structure are intertwined in "The Water Margin," by depicting honorable and just outlaws. Also important is how historical figures and events are portrayed. Chinese costume operas commonly reference Cao Cao, Empress Wu Zetian, and the Tang and Qing dynasties. These portrayals promote historical consistency and patriotism. Historical costume, language, and customs add authenticity and immerse viewers in a past time (Yu, 2022). Romantic and personal relationships are made more complex by historical and political events. Character relationships often improve historical figures and deepen political comprehension. "Empresses in the Palace" uses the imperial harem's sexual entanglements to reveal the emotional vulnerabilities and desires that drove historical events. Historical plays have increasingly included fantasy and wuxia (martial hero) elements. These genres have created a distinct narrative style in "The Untamed" (2019), which mixes folklore and history. These hybrid tales broaden storytelling by allowing inventive reinterpretations of history

and engaging younger audiences. The growth of Chinese historical costume dramas reflects social and cultural changes (Al Fahmawee & Jawabreh, 2022). These dramas help reconnect with old values amid China's industrialization. They offer a place to reflect on the past and historical insights on current issues. These productions' local and international popularity shows their cultural diplomacy and social identity value. Asserting that group affiliations shape self-concept and encourage identity and belonging. Social identity shapes society's behavior and how people see themselves and others. Social identity is based on social comparison, identification, and classification. Social categorization is the process by which people group themselves and others by nationality, ethnicity, occupation, gender, and other variables. This classification simplifies and organizes social surroundings, helping people navigate complicated social terrains. Following social identification, people adopt the group's identity (Li et al., 2023). Individuals may identify with the group by internalizing its norms, values, and activities. Chinese costume historical dramas depict its complex history and unique culture. Exquisite costumes, complex stories, and historically authentic locations make these plays enjoyable and educational. Costume dramas emerged alongside classical Chinese opera, which included historical personalities and events. Movies and TV helped visualize history in the 20th century (Goldstein et al., 2022). Theatre has introduced innovative and sensual themes to historical subjects to attract more people. Chinese costume historical dramas are based on Confucian ideas and real events and span many topics. National, imperial, and familial loyalties dominate conversations (Dalal & Shane, 2023). TV shows like "Nirvana in Fire" show protagonists who fight political intrigues and sacrifice for their country and family. Dedication, hierarchical ties, and responsibility are valued in Chinese society. Filial piety, another Confucian ideal, is widely discussed. Traditional theater characters appreciate and care for their parents and elders. In "The Story of Minglan", her family influences her choices. Chinese ethics emphasize filial piety and respecting and preserving family bonds across generations. Similarities exist between honesty and righteousness. These novels generally show key characters choosing between self-interest and morality. Character stories about these figures emphasize morality over immorality. In "The Water Margin," the author depicts outlaws who follow honor and fairness values to show how social structure, morality, and law are intertwined. Historical figures and events must be represented. Chinese costume operas mention Cao, Empress Wu Zetian, and the Tang and Qing periods (Stecher, 2023). These depictions promote patriotism and historical accuracy. Representing

historical clothes, language, and customs accurately immerses the viewer in a former era. The historical and political background of romantic and intimate relationships enhances their complexity and depth (Pantouvaki, 2020). Movies and TV show cultures, tales well and different groups in various ways creates and maintains social categories, which impacts both group members and outsiders. Television can reinforce or challenge viewers' social group views. Ancient Chinese costume dramas show how culture shapes social identity (Ying, 2020). Historical dramas emphasize honesty, family loyalty, and dedication. Through compelling plots and heroes, historical dramas promote cultural allegiance and nationalism. The ethical issues, familial tensions, and nationalistic themes in these plays evoke intense emotions. They help people trace their ancestry. Interdependence is needed due to rapid cultural change that challenges established beliefs and identities (Yang & Hu, 2020). Social identity changes after disasters. They connect historical narratives, concepts, and audiences. Cultural history bonds people, building community. These plays represent historical personalities and events and provide moral guidance. Allegiance, honesty, and valor affect observers. Drama characters and cultural values shape viewers' identities. Additionally, their performances affect group dynamics. They promote cultural activities and concepts to unite audiences. Strong nationalism promotes exclusivity and distinctiveness. Complex cultural items can unify or divide social identities (Ahmed, 2021). Social media, digital platforms, and conventional media boost cultural items' social influence. Forums and fan groups allow fans to discuss and share their opinions. These relationships foster dynamic and collaborative personal growth and dramatic themes and stories (Nesen, 2021). Chinese attire illustrates how cultural artifacts shape global identities. These global shows explain Chinese history and culture. Exposure to other cultures can create hybrid identities with cultural understanding and respect. The media mirrors and shapes societal values and standards, making cultural values in the media a popular topic of study. Many academic studies have examined how television, movies, and literature express cultural values and influence viewers. Papantoniou & Pantouvaki, theory stresses how consumers evaluate media content with cultural values based on their social and cultural settings (Papantoniou & Pantouvaki, 2022). This technique shows how media content affects audience understanding and how media shapes society. Lu et al., showed how prolonged television exposure affects reality perception (Lu et al., 2024). The study showed that frequent television depictions of ideas, actions, and lifestyles alter audience views and societal standards. The use of this strategy across cultures shows how media

content affects cultural behavior. Chinese media research show historical dramas spread culture (Li et al., 2023). The Chinese historical dramas promoted Confucian morality, loyalty, and familial attachment. This context uses traditional Chinese themes and characters to give the listener a sense of personal importance and cultural continuity. The plays portray historical figures and events in a political and culturally relevant way. Chinese historical dramas offer nationalism, unity, political propaganda, cultural education, and entertainment, according to Yue (Yue, 2022). Historical dramas shape individual and collective identities. Researchers have examined how historical dramas affect audience perception of historical events and cultural identity. Studies show that prior depictions of historical personalities and events are influential, often merging reality and invention. Chinese historical dramas romanticize the past, highlighting this. Eranfeno et al., found that historical drama viewers are fascinated by historical figures and events (Eranfeno et al., 2024), which pushes them to explore them. Dramatic and exaggerated depictions keep events connected to the past. These depictions may not accurately portray history. The limited worldview emphasizes media literacy by requiring viewers to balance historical accuracy and entertainment. Historical dramas influence viewers' emotions and psychology. Historical dramas evoke empathy, nostalgia, and pride, according to Shi et al. (Shi et al., 2021). Reinforces viewers' emotional ties to their cultural heritage, boosting self-esteem and belonging. Thus, historical dramas' emotional impact strongly influences spectators' loyalty to historical narratives and cultural concepts. Dramas from history shape culture and society. Examined how prominent Chinese historical tales shape national identity, stressing China's global rise (Zheng, 2021). These operas romanticize Chinese history, emphasizing its power and inspiring nationalism. These images shape national identity and reflect nationalism. The global distribution of Chinese historical dramas promotes intercultural understanding and impacts public perceptions of Chinese culture. Ng & Li, examined how Chinese historical dramas affect worldwide viewers (Ng & Li, 2023). These tales enhance cultural understanding and respect. Cultural presumptions may hinder progress. Media-promoted cultural exchange is complicated and intricate.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

Qualitative research excels at analyzing complex societal processes and human perspectives. The qualitative study analyzes how historical Chinese

costume dramas understand culture and identity. The qualitative method explores personal perspectives to understand the complex relationship between media consumption and identity. Interviews are best for gathering participants' ideas, feelings, and opinions. This method fully examines historical drama participants' perspectives, experiences, and cultural exchanges. Data themes are selected, evaluated, and recorded in thematic analysis. The identification of obvious and underlying cultural values and their effects on social identity make this research methodology ideal. To accurately interpret qualitative data, thematic analysis finds patterns and contrasts in participant replies.

3.2 Participants

This study's sample of Chinese cultural heritage and historical costume drama viewers was carefully selected to accurately represent the target audience. The purpose was to obtain substantial, diverse, and informative information from people who actively engage with the content and are likely influenced by it about social identity and cultural values. Twenty-seven people met the research objectives' relevance requirements for the study (Table 1). This diverse collection of historical Chinese costume drama fans spans ages, genders, professional backgrounds, and educational attainments. Participants were chosen using these criteria: Participants were 18–65. This age range was chosen to accommodate younger and older viewers' various historical and cultural perspectives. Participants also had to watch weekly historical dramas including Chinese clothing (Table 2). This criterion assessed participants' subject knowledge and genre engagement. Participants also need Chinese heritage. This was essential for comprehending and incorporating Chinese history and culture's distinct cultural values. Participants have to give detailed interviews and share their thoughts and experiences. To give thoughtful comments, participants have to achieve this condition.

Table 1(a): Profile of Respondents

Participant ID	Age	Gender	Occupation	Engagement Notes
P1	24	Female	University Student	Active in Online Fan Communities
P2	35	Male	IT Professional	Enjoys Discussing Historical Accuracy
P3	29	Female	Marketing Manager	Uses Dramas to Connect With Heritage
P4	42	Male	Teacher	Incorporates Dramas in Teaching History
P5	31	Female	Graphic Designer	Designs Fan Art Inspired by Dramas

Table 1(b): Profile of Respondents

Participant ID	Age	Gender	Occupation	Engagement Notes
P6	28	Male	Research Analyst	Interested in Historical Narratives
P7	45	Female	Homemaker	Watches with Family, Discusses Themes
P8	22	Male	University Student	Member of a University Drama Club
P9	37	Female	Lawyer	Enjoys Legal Dramas and Historical Plots
P10	50	Male	Engineer	Prefers Dramas with Political Intrigue
P11	33	Female	Nurse	Finds Relaxation and Cultural Connection
P12	27	Male	Entrepreneur	Uses Themes in Business Storytelling
P13	40	Female	Accountant	Analyzes Economic Aspects in Dramas
P14	26	Male	Software Developer	Engages in Online Discussions
P15	30	Female	Journalist	Writes Articles on Cultural Depictions
P16	38	Male	Architect	Interested in Historical Architecture
P17	44	Female	Sales Manager	Watches During Leisure Time
P18	23	Male	University Student	Studies History, Uses Dramas as a Tool
P19	32	Female	HR Manager	Explores Human Relations in Dramas
P20	47	Male	Retired	Finds Nostalgia In Historical Contexts
P21	29	Female	Social Worker	Analyzes Social Themes in Dramas
P22	36	Male	Chef	Enjoys Historical Cooking Depictions
P23	41	Female	Librarian	Curates Related Literature in Library
P24	34	Male	Pharmacist	Interested in Traditional Medicine
P25	28	Female	Fashion Designer	Draws Inspiration for Designs
P26	39	Male	Police Officer	Reflects on Justice and Duty
P27	48	Female	Scientist	Relates Scientific Progress to History

The recruitment process had several steps to find and engage volunteers.

Internet forums and other media sites targeting Chinese historical theater fans were the key promotion channels. The study's invitations and information were issued via Weibo, Douban, and exclusive WeChat fan networks. These platforms were chosen for their substantial user counts and active participation in Chinese media discourse. To attract new members, we contacted cultural societies and university student organizations. Targeted universities had many Chinese students. The groups received letters and pamphlets explaining the study and inviting them to participate. Purposive sampling was used to select participants who were likely to meet the inclusion criteria due to their active participation in Chinese costume theater online debates and forums. This strategy maintained participants' genuine interest in the genre. Snowball sampling increased participation once the initial sample was recruited. Participants were first asked to suggest more eligible candidates. This strategy helped reach hard-to-reach people, resulting in a diverse and complete sample. Invites and information were distributed through the channels during recruiting. Potential participants were advised to email or chat with the research team. A preliminary interview or brief questionnaire assessed potential participants' suitability based on inclusion criteria. The screening method considered candidates' TV viewing, cultural background, and interview preparation.

Table 2: (a) Inclusion Criteria of Participants

Criteria Type	Description	Criteria Details
Inclusion Criteria	Participants must meet all the following conditions	
- Age	Participants must be between 18 and 65 years old	Ensures a broad age range encompassing different perspectives
- Frequency of Viewing	Participants must watch Chinese costume historical dramas at least once a week	Ensures sufficient familiarity and engagement with the genre
- Cultural Background	Participants must have a Chinese cultural background	Ensures relevant cultural insights and interpretations
- Willingness to Participate	Participants must be willing to engage in in-depth interviews and share their experiences	Ensures comprehensive and detailed data collection
Exclusion Criteria	Participants meeting any of the following conditions are excluded	

Table 2: (b) Inclusion Criteria of Participants

Criteria Type	Description	Criteria Details
- Non-Viewers	Individuals who do not regularly watch Chinese costume historical dramas	Ensures participants have adequate exposure to the genre
- Non-Chinese Cultural Background	Individuals who do not identify with a Chinese cultural background	Excludes those without the relevant cultural context
- Unwillingness to Participate	Individuals unwilling to participate in in-depth interviews	Ensures all participants are committed to providing detailed responses
- Age Outside the Specified Range	Individuals under 18 or over 65 years old	Excludes those outside the targeted age range

Eligible people were interviewed at convenient times. Schedule flexibility was needed to satisfy personal needs and accommodate multiple time zones, especially for academic network connections. Participants' availability and interview readiness were confirmed via email or message. This notification reduced the number of attendees who ignored the event and were reminded of their duties. The study participants were selected to represent the target audience and provide extensive assessments of how historical Chinese costume dramas affected their social identity and cultural values. This rigorous screening enhanced qualitative data quality and reliability.

3.3 Data Collection

This study collected qualitative data systematically and rigorously using interviews. This section describes how to create an interview guide, conduct interviews, then transcribe and record them. The interview guide sought thorough and insightful responses from participants about historical Chinese costume dramas. The guide questioned the audience open-ended questions about their conduct, knowledge of the cultural values in the performances, and how these values shaped their social identity. The questions were carefully prepared to cover several issues and allow participants to voice their viewpoints. The survey asks "Please provide specific details regarding how often you watch Chinese historical dramas and the reasons behind your interest in them." "Which cultural values do you perceive as commonly depicted in these dramas?" What impact do these plays have on your cultural identity? (see Table 3).

Table 3: Interwire Guidelines

Variable	Interview Questions
Viewing Habits	How often do you watch Chinese costume historical dramas? What motivates you to watch these dramas? Can you describe your usual viewing environment?
Cultural Values	What cultural values do you think are most commonly depicted in these dramas? How do you perceive the accuracy of these cultural depictions? Can you give examples of specific scenes or characters that illustrate these values?
Social Identity	How do these dramas influence your understanding of your own cultural identity? In what ways do you feel connected to the historical figures and events portrayed? How have these dramas impacted your sense of belonging to Chinese culture?
Historical Accuracy	How important is historical accuracy to you when watching these dramas? Have you noticed any discrepancies or artistic liberties taken in the storylines?
Emotional Engagement	Can you describe how you feel when watching these dramas? Are there any particular emotions or reactions you commonly experience?
Influence on Daily Life	Do these dramas influence your daily life or personal decisions in any way? Have you adopted any practices or values from these dramas into your own life?

Semi-structured interviews included directed and unstructured questions. This method allowed the interviewer to dig deeper into specific topics based on participant comments, ensuring a thorough understanding. Depending on the complexity of the conversation and the participant's willingness to explain, interviews lasted 60–90 minutes. The participants' practical needs and preferences determined whether the interviews were conducted via Skype or Zoom. We held peaceful, comfortable face-to-face interviews to encourage open conversation. Virtual interviews were scheduled around participant availability and ensured geographical diversity. Participants consented to analog recording of all interviews. Participants were informed of the study's goals, rights, and confidentiality before recording. Interview recording guarantees the correct capture of participants' statements, which is necessary for doing detailed qualitative analysis. The interview tapes were transcribed completely to collect extensive textual data. The transcriptions were annotated with nonverbal

indications, delays, and emotional expressions to maintain the context and nuance of the participants' comments. To increase transcription quality and reliability, the audio recordings were thoroughly evaluated. The data collection process involved carefully constructing an interview guide, conducting rigorous semi-structured interviews, and accurately capturing and transcribing the information to gather vast and detailed qualitative data. This method provided a comprehensive knowledge of participants' views on how cultural values in historical Chinese costume dramas affect social identity, setting the framework for future research.

3.4 Data Analysis

This study found, analyzed, and summarized interview themes using thematic analysis. Interview data, cultural norms, and social identity are categorized here. Themes were determined from interviews. Data can be organized using coding. The interview transcripts were heavily modified and rewritten for clarity. Core procedures were established using deductive and inductive methodologies. No prior knowledge or assumptions were needed to pick subjects using inductive data analysis. It documented individuals' complete experiences and perspectives. The deductive method uses research questions and theoretical assumptions to study cultural values and social identity. Participant topics were used to categorize data segments. Cultural value motif identification followed data coding. Coded data revealed cultural values themes and trends in historical Chinese costume dramas. Themes emerged from categorizing codes by participant replies (Table 4). "Traditional Confucian Values." "Loyalty," "filial piety," and "moral integrity." Themes were improved iteratively to appropriately represent facts. The concepts were then evaluated for research importance, coherence, and originality. Interview transcript excerpts summarized themes and essential points. The study examined cultural relevance and social identity patterns. This study examined how Chinese historical costume dramas affect cultural identity, self-concept, and belonging. Themes showed how dramas' cultural narratives affected participants' social identities. Cultural pride, historical links, and tradition were called "Cultural Pride" and "Reinforcement of Cultural Identity." A uniform comparison strategy was used throughout the research to reflect participant experiences in data themes. Comprehensive ideas explained how historical Chinese costume dramas form social identity. Thematic analysis' systematic classification and theme identification yielded entire study findings. This supported the study's conclusions.

Table 4: Coding Scheme for Thematic Analysis

Code	Description
Loyalty	Depictions or discussions related to loyalty to family, friends, or country
Filial Piety	Instances of honoring and respecting parents or ancestors
Moral Integrity	Portrayals of characters exhibiting honesty, righteousness, or virtue
Confucian Values	References to values traditionally associated with Confucian philosophy
Cultural Pride	Expressions of pride or appreciation for Chinese culture or heritage
Historical Accuracy	Noting accuracy or discrepancies in historical events or settings
Emotional Impact	Emotional responses or reactions elicited by the dramas
Identity Formation	Discussion of how dramas shape or influence personal identity
Societal Norms	Reflections on societal expectations or norms depicted in the dramas
Gender Roles	Examination of traditional gender roles or challenges to gender norms

4. FINDINGS

This research paper analyzes the outcomes of its thematic inquiry into historical Chinese costume dramas and their effects on society and culture. This chapter covers how plays affect audience perception, thought, and identity. Each of its six primary themes and subthemes is examined in length. The exam covers social identification, historical accuracy, emotional investment, and gender standards. The findings show how media portrayals of communities affect community dynamics. This chapter uses selected excerpts to show how Chinese costume historical dramas actively debate culture, history, and identity. The above findings demonstrate how media narratives shape our view of humankind.

4.1 Cultural Values in Chinese Costume Historical Dramas

Theme 1: Traditional Confucian Values: A comprehensive research of how historical Chinese fashion shows affected social identity and cultural values indicates Confucianism's influence. These Chinese philosophy and history ideas affect society and individuals. Ancient Confucian beliefs focused on ancestor respect, family and country loyalty, and morality. The actors' strong patriotism and family loyalty show the importance of

patriotic and familial relationships in Chinese historical dramas (Table 5). 'These stories' protagonists value family and sacrifice for others. P2 says these plays promote patriotism and family loyalty. The characters sacrifice for society while remaining loyal to their friends. According to P14, "These dramas explore the themes of loyalty and patriotism in a deep and thorough manner". "They enhance the listener's perception of responsibility and loyalty".

Another sub-theme was respect for ancestors, underlining the cultural importance of honoring and valuing the past. In Chinese historical dramas, characters honor their ancestors, uphold family traditions, and work to preserve their bloodline. Participant P9 said the dramas emphasize respecting ancestors and family traditions. Moral dilemmas typically test characters' ancestry allegiance. P21 said the dramas emphasize filial commitment. It emphasizes past-present reliance and family values passed down. The theme analysis focused on morality and virtue. The depiction of virtue and honor was valued by participants. The main characters in these stories try to stay authentic despite obstacles. The heroes and observers in the stories follow truthfulness, morality, and ethics. Participant P11 says the plays show characters struggling to stand their ground and face ethical dilemmas. These stories promote integrity and ethics. Participant P25 says these sessions discuss morality. Virtue-filled characters motivate viewers to live well. Participant P6 believes Chinese historical dramas promote Confucianism, supporting the findings. Morality, loyalty, and filial piety impact the story and behavior. Participant P17 said, "The dramas act as a cultural reference, reinforcing essential values in Chinese tradition".

Filial devotion, loyalty, and moral purity appeal to audiences throughout generations due to strongly ingrained cultural norms. Chinese historical dramas with traditional costume affect social identity and cultural values beyond amusement. These pieces represent cultural heritage and practices. The dramas show how Confucian values like ancestor veneration, patriotism, familial devotion, morality, and virtue affect society. Chinese culture meticulously investigates these issues, challenging viewers to rethink their beliefs. Clothing in Chinese historical dramas shows a large network of Confucian ideas. Patriotism, social norms, kinship, nationalism, morality, and moral superiority foster culture and social institutions in these dramas. These stories make people consider their values and identities, connecting them to Chinese culture and history. Chinese historical dramas in authentic costumes foster culture and social identity, boosting national

progress.

Table 5: Weightage Analysis of Theme 1

Variable	Weightage
Emotional Connection to Characters	0.3
Empowerment and Inspiration	0.2
Representation of Traditional Gender Roles	0.3
Challenges to Gender Stereotypes	0.2

Theme 2: Representation of Cultural Pride: A comprehensive examination of Chinese historical dramas' topics reveals a range of emotions that demonstrate cultural dedication and appreciation of Chinese history and importance. Their visual portrayals of rich cultural past earned these theatrical performances respect. Celebrate Chinese history and respect Chinese customs, traditions, and ceremonies (Table 6). Chinese society's intricacy and cultural significance are shown via lantern festivals, ancestor devotion, and dragon dances. Participant P3 says these dramas promote Chinese customs, traditions, and rituals, commemorating our distinct cultural past. P15 found these shows' portrayals of Chinese culture fascinating. Their beautiful language and good clothes foster community cultural pride. Culture preservation was another subtheme. Martial arts, calligraphy, and tea ceremonies in ancient Chinese dramas preserve culture. Participant P10 says these acts preserve culture. The films emphasize cultural preservation by showing characters practicing traditional activities. Participant P23 says these dramas focus on cultural preservation. Watching people perform cultural traditions is a powerful reminder to preserve and share them. P7 claimed these programs reflect their Chinese heritage. Their lavish clothes and accessories represent our culture. Participant P18 says the dramas analyze cultural preservation extensively. Traditionalists emphasize cultural preservation.

Chinese costume historical dramas preserve culture and commemorate history. These performances promote national identity and culture. These performances explore Chinese culture to preserve culture and patriotism. Participants take delight in Chinese customs and activities throughout the holidays. Analyzing historical dramas with Chinese clothing shows appreciation for Chinese culture and tradition. Traditional events, festivities, and rituals in these dramas inspire cultural pride. Through active interaction with these ideas, viewers are entertained and inspired to preserve and honor their culture. Chinese historical opera costumes promote cultural pride and identity.

Table 6: Weightage Analysis of Theme 2

Variable	Weightage
Celebration of Chinese Heritage	0.4
Preservation of Cultural Traditions	0.3
Emotional Engagement	0.2
Portrayal of Historical Accuracy	0.1

Theme 3: Portrayal of Historical Accuracy: As thematic evaluations of historical dramas in Chinese costume raise many questions about historical veracity, Table 7 shows the intricate relationship between artistic interpretation and creative liberty. The participants' perspectives illuminate the challenges of blending narrative innovation with historical precision. Participants strive for accuracy in portraying historical events, individuals, and settings. Many respondents appreciated dramas that authentically reflect historical events, providing valuable insights into China's history. Historical truth is valued by history specialist instructor P4, who loves dramas that authentically depict genuine events. They teach viewers about history. Participant P16 says, "I believe that historical authenticity is of utmost importance." I prefer TV shows that authentically reflect historical events and provide viewers the context to understand them. Theme analysis shows an awareness of the challenges of writing entertaining stories while maintaining factual accuracy. The participants understand how artistic interpretation and creative freedom enhance dramatic narrative and captivate listeners. People in a story may follow fictional pathways and exaggerate events to heighten the impact while keeping historical accuracy. Participant P5 says they like dramas that use creative license to tell a compelling story, but historical accuracy is important. Intricacy and excitement enhance the plot, capturing the viewer. Artistic interpretation makes watching more immersive, says P12. While straying from historical accuracy, it enhances the story's emotional complexity and audience interest. Based on these findings, participant P8 emphasizes the importance of striking a balance between narrative creativity and historical truth. Audiences want reality and entertaining storytelling. Participant P20 says, "Artistic liberties add complexity to the narrative." These paintings may not accurately depict historical events, yet they engage viewers and evoke strong emotions. Chinese costume historical dramas entertain and influence history. Historical instruction, cultural introspection, and narrative exploration are options. The plays use historical accuracy and artistic license to inform viewers about earlier eras while entertaining. Chinese historical dramas in traditional attire illustrate significant events and encourage viewers to contemplate human complexity. Studies on

Chinese dress and historical performances illustrate the intricate relationship between historical truth and narrative. While historical accuracy is important in education, artistic license and interpretation can enhance a story's emotional impact and narrative involvement. Chinese historical performances encourage cultural reflection and historical awareness.

Table 7: Weightage Analysis of Theme 3

Variable	Weightage
Fidelity to Historical Events	0.3
Artistic Interpretation and Creative License	0.3
Reinforcement of Cultural Identity	0.2
Shaping of Cultural Norms and Values	0.2

4.2 Impact on Social Identity

Theme 4: Influence on Cultural Identity: Examining ancient Chinese costume dramas' themes shows how they shape social norms and cultural identity. Participants have various and important views on how these performances generate and preserve cultural identity (Table 8). Building cultural identity is secondary. Participants assessed how well Chinese-dressed historical performances preserve cultural heritage. These plays explore identity, heritage, and tradition, which appeals to audiences from comparable cultures. Watching these programs is like reconnecting with their roots, says P3. "They serve as a powerful reminder of the customs, rituals, and convictions that influence my cultural identity." Chinese spectator P11 says these performances inspire her cultural appreciation. Our cultural heritage must be passed on. The theme analysis shows how Chinese historical plays shaped dress rules and standards. These dramatic plays display morality through their protagonists' honesty, fidelity, and familial devotion. P9 claims that plays enhance cultural identification and social norms. These works depict idealized behavior and ethics, which affects how we see ourselves and others. P17 says dramas represent our cultural ideas. Their influence affects our awareness and morality. P14 emphasizes identity through cultural expression. By watching characters who resemble ourselves and share our culture, we feel more connected. Media shapes social ideals, says P22. Chinese costumed historical reenactments maintain culture. Historical dramas transmit culture, identity, and social ideals through traditional Chinese clothing. They affect cultural identity beyond entertainment. The lectures' deep dives into heritage, identity, and tradition foster cultural bonds. Dramas reinforce societal

norms by displaying virtues. Historical Chinese costume performances maintain culture and traditions. These dramas shaped cultural identities. These dramas foster cultural preservation and personal growth by representing ancestry, identity, and tradition. These projects promote cultural values and rebel against social norms by demonstrating excellence. Historical Chinese costume dramas examine cultural identity in several ways. They reflect Chinese identity and culture.

Table 8: Weightage Analysis of Theme 4

Variable	Weightage
Reinforcement of Cultural Identity	0.3
Shaping of Cultural Norms and Values	0.3
Emotional Engagement	0.2
Portrayal of Historical Accuracy	0.2

Theme 5: Emotional Engagement: Ancient Chinese costume dramas' themes cover a range of emotions. Participant viewpoints can reveal emotional connections to characters and plotlines and performance inspiration and empowerment. Participants felt deeply connected to historical Chinese clothes, people, and stories. Dramas with fascinating plots usually keep audiences emotionally invested. The plot's unexpected twists captivated participants, who eagerly anticipated each episode to see how it progressed (Table 9). The narrative of these dramatic displays is compelling, says P13. I was captivated by the story to the end. The tremendous emotional swings gripped me throughout. Chinese costume historical dramas can also inspire audiences by showing people who overcome hardships and embrace their courage. Theatre performances often explore themes of perseverance, fortitude, and determination, inspiring viewers to overcome their own challenges. Watching these acts is like self-discovery, says P19. "The steadfast resolve of the characters amidst adversity inspires me to discover my own fortitude and tackle life's challenges with bravery and tenacity." The stories change viewers' lives. Participant P24 says these stories show optimism in difficult times. I am inspired by the characters' self-discovery and progress to continue and be positive despite obstacles. These dramas show heroic characters who overcome hurdles, inspiring viewers to believe in themselves and achieve their goals. Participant P2 agrees that narratives are transcendent and can evoke strong emotions. They inspire us to overcome life's challenges with elegance and determination by celebrating the human spirit. Participant P18 said, "These dramas exhibit remarkable emotional depth." "They inspire and elevate audiences long after the film ends." Chinese costume

historical dramas inspire self-reflection, community improvement, and intense emotional responses. By using issues and characters from the directors' personal lives, these plays foster understanding and empathy in a large audience. Analyzing ancient Chinese costume dramas shows how they evoke emotions and empower individuals. 'These plays' intriguing stories and authentic characters evoke grief, joy, optimism, and inspiration. The plays show tough, daring characters who overcome hurdles to inspire spectators to accept their uniqueness and achieve. Chinese historical costume dramas may inspire, motivate, and calm spectators in a changing world.

Table 9: Weightage Analysis of Theme 5

Variable	Weightage
Emotional Connection to Characters and Narratives	0.4
Empowerment and Inspiration	0.3
Celebration of Chinese Heritage	0.2
Preservation of Cultural Traditions	0.1

Theme 6: Gender Roles and Societal Norms: Historical Chinese costume operas challenge gender norms. The diverse participant perspectives show how tradition and transformation affect gender relations in these narratives. Traditional gender roles in Chinese historical costume dramas show how cultural and historical conventions endure. Table 10 shows that men are trustworthy, brave, and powerful leaders. Their legends usually depict them as formidable warriors, thinkers, or kings. Female characters are usually represented as spouses, mothers, or daughters. Family, loyalty, compassion, femininity, and self-control are central to their novels. P6 agrees that these operas follow gender standards. Female characters are defined by family, whereas male characters are marked by ethics and strength. The costumes defied classic Chinese theatrical gender norms. These female heroines question social norms with self-control. These heroines transcend gender conventions with their ingenuity, audacity, and endurance, inspiring a diversity of female film representations. Individuals freely challenge social norms, pursue own goals, and reject patriarchy. P10 notes that these dramas usually depict gender roles but also revolution and protest. Female characters' subtlety defies stereotypes. P8 emphasises media images' influence on gender views, boosting the research's trustworthiness. P8 claims that the media strongly influences gender norms. These dramas challenge gender stereotypes by showing men and women differently and promoting inclusive and inspirational ideas. P19

stresses the need of accurate and complete media depictions.

Table 10: Weightage Analysis of Theme 6

Variable	Weightage
Representation of Traditional Gender Roles	0.2
Challenges to Gender Stereotypes	0.4
Fidelity to Historical Events	0.2
Artistic Interpretation and Creative License	0.2

5. DISCUSSION

This research paper's discussion chapter critically evaluates the findings in light of previous academic work, highlighting its significance. This discourse uses thematic analysis and relevant scientific research to better comprehend historical Chinese costume dramas' cultural values and their effects on social identity. Chinese costume historical dramas honor Traditional Confucian values of filial devotion, loyalty, and moral purity. The social system in these dramas is based on the above principles, which affect the characters' actions and interactions as they navigate the complex web of relationships and obligations. The text emphasizes filial piety as characters revere their parents and ancestors. Confucian values have shaped Chinese society, which values household duties as important to identity and belonging (Liu, 2020). Loyalty to family and country shows how personal and community identities are intertwined in Chinese culture. These dramas generally feature protagonists who practice *ren*, the Confucian ideal of compassion. Serving their country or family often requires personal sacrifice. The above emphasis on charity and obligation reflects societal conventions on family and community responsibilities. This highlights personal freedom and societal responsibility (Wang & Chew, 2021). Chinese costume historical dramas combine Confucian values with revolt. Characters prove their independence and ability to act by violating social standards. Disobedience humanizes characters and helps viewers comprehend society and human behavior (Xue, 2022). Chinese historical dramas with traditional clothes allow viewers to examine Confucianism. This forces viewers to critically assess these values' validity and significance in modern society. Historical costume dramas set in China exhibit Cultural Pride to highlight the richness and diversity of Chinese ancestry and identity. These plays illustrate historical events, traditions, and methods that define Chinese culture. By correctly depicting artistic expressions and cultural norms, these dramas boost audience pride and

connection (Zheng, 2021). Chinese historical period dramas preserve cultural traditions, demonstrating the culture's longevity and change. Participating in traditional arts, ceremonies, and rituals connects past and present generations and reinforces cultural continuity. These dramas showcase Chinese culture globally, developing empathy and mutual respect among a diverse audience. Although they celebrate China's history, Chinese historical dramas also explore cultural identity in a quickly changing world. Characters may struggle to balance modernity, tradition, East and West, and individual and group identity according to their cultural history. Humanising the characters helps the audience grasp the complicated processes of cultural identity construction and navigation (Ng & Li, 2023). Chinese historical dramas highlight Cultural Pride, showing the depth of Chinese identity and culture. They encourage cultural variety, inclusivity, and heritage discussions. Traditional Chinese costume dramas depict historical events with accuracy and artistry. These dramas properly portray historical locales and individuals while adding artistic license to the tale. Historical depiction in media is complicated by the need to balance entertainment and instruction, artistic freedom, and authenticity (Xue, 2022). These theatrical performances have also changed public perceptions of history and identity, sparking cultural discussions and creating shared experiences. Characters symbolize historical figures or events, helping viewers interpret and conceptualize the past. These dramas blend academia and popular culture by engaging and accessible historical problems, increasing audience interest and connection to history (Ying, 2020). Historians and experts criticize Chinese costume historical operas, which attempt historical accuracy yet raise questions about their interpretations. Historical skeptics may like these dramas for their pleasure rather than educational value. The disputes above highlight the intricate relationship between history and memory, reality and falsity, and media's influence on our understanding of the past (Pantouvaki, 2020). Analysis of "Influence on Cultural Identity in Chinese Costume Historical Dramas" shows how media portrayals affect individual and collective identities. These plays reflect social values, beliefs, and cultural narratives that shape spectators' self-image and roles (Qian & Feng, 2020). These plays promote society norms and expectations by portraying cultural concepts and traditions, affecting how audiences view cultural identity and heritage. The theme analysis shows how these dramas foster cultural integration and spectator happiness. Characters can symbolize historical personalities or cultural icons, promoting and confirming audience cultural identity. These dramatic

works encourage cultural cohesiveness by making viewers feel included and validated by admiring China's history and culture. Historical performances in Chinese costumes enhance cultural identification and illuminate identity development's contradictions and complexity (Ying, 2020). The narrative's characters may struggle with cultural assimilation, acculturation, and hybridity as they navigate individual and group identity, tradition and modernity, and East and West. These issues help viewers understand cultural identity in a globalized culture by giving characters human traits. The Emotional Engagement in Chinese Costume Historical Dramas study demonstrates these stories move viewers. Due to their compelling narrative, cinematography, and remarkable performances, these plays evoke joy, grief, rage, and empathy. Character development can help viewers relate to their problems (Cote, 2021). Thematic analysis shows how these dramas foster spectator empathy and understanding. Humanity allows characters from varied backgrounds to cross cultural and social borders. These plays reflect universal themes and emotions to let audiences think about the complex human experience. Historical Chinese costume dramas evoke strong emotions and reveal unpleasant facts. The characters' struggles, injustices, and disasters can sway the viewer (Nesen, 2021). These terrible events prompt profound contemplation and belief testing. Media portrayals of gender and identity are examined in Chinese Costume Historical Dramas. These dramas reinforce gender stereotypes by portraying males as dominant and women as submissive (Huang et al., 2022). The novel also features female protagonists that defy cultural standards to show their freedom and choice. The dramas accurately portray gender roles and reflect cultural gender and identity norms. Historical and contemporary characters may experience racism, misogyny, and male superiority, particularly affecting women. Gender dynamics research in these plays promotes gender equality and social justice. Historical Chinese costume operas both promote and challenge gender and identity conventions. The narrative may objectify, sexualize, or marginalize women, reinforcing gender stereotypes. Certain stories depict male heroes as harsh, controlling, and emotionally aloof, promoting toxic masculinity and behavior. Cultural identity can be influenced by historical Chinese costume dramas, both in media and personal life.

6. CONCLUSION

This study examined historical Chinese costume drama cultural values.

The thematic analysis focused on historical accuracy, cultural identification, emotional connection, Confucian ideals, gender roles, societal standards, and historical pride. These concerns show the complex relationship between media portrayal, personal understanding, and public conversation. Chinese historical costume dramas maintain culture and identity. The plays accurately reflect Confucian principles, dedication, and filial piety. Therefore, viewers learn about their culture and follow social standards. These shows promote Chinese culture globally and foster pride and belonging. For historical accuracy, Chinese costume dramas must be imaginative and authentic. These plays accurately portray historical sites and people while giving artistic liberty to engage the audience. This struggle between veracity and artistic license shows how difficult it is to reconcile entertaining and education when depicting historical events in media. Historical Chinese costume dramas shaped social identities in many ways. These performances evoke many emotions and promote empathy. These works unite different social classes by depicting characters from diverse backgrounds and cultures. These operas also question gender norms and promote negative gender and identity portrayals.

7. IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Practical Implications

This study's findings may help legislators, media producers, and educators theoretically and practically. It initially informs media producers of their clients' cultural representation preferences. This study analyzes major themes and narratives in Chinese historical dramas about clothes to provide principles for generating media material that is appealing to consumers while being socially important and culturally genuine. This research also informs policymakers and cultural stakeholders about how media changes social perspectives and fosters intercultural understanding. Policymakers can support varied and inclusive media narratives that appropriately depict cultural heritage by recognizing how media presentation shapes social identity. Cultural stakeholders can also use the popularity of historical dramas in traditional Chinese clothing to promote cultural preservation and intercultural communication. These findings affect media literacy educators and advocates. Critical media literacy skills can be taught in courses by helping students analyze and evaluate media messages and comprehend how media portrayal affects social identity. Media literacy advocates can also collaborate with media artists and

educators to encourage critical thinking and media diversity projects.

7.2 Theoretical Implications

This research's theoretical consequences improve our collective understanding of social identity, cultural values, and media portrayal. This study focuses on how Chinese costume historical dramas promote cultural values and awareness. Thus, it advances media and culture theories. This study analyzes how media narratives reflect and negotiate cultural values in greater depth than previous media effects and cultural studies research. This is done by extensively scrutinizing the dramas' subjects. This study also contributes to social identity theories by examining how media representation shapes personal and collective identities. This study examines the complex relationship between cultural identity, media portrayal, and societal cohesiveness. The study examines cultural esteem, Confucian principles, gender expectations, and society standards to achieve this. Because media narratives impact how people and groups see themselves, this research illuminates the complex relationship between media, culture, and identity. This study also illuminates gender portrayal in mass media and its effects on social identity. Gender studies and media theory benefit from an investigation of gender roles in traditional Chinese historical dramas. This discovery shows how media narratives can confirm or challenge gender stereotypes and prejudices. This study examines media depictions of gender, contributing to gender, identity, and representation research.

8. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTION

8.1 Limitations

Despite its strengths, this study has drawbacks. The research's initial concentration on Chinese costume historical dramas may limit its applicability to other media or cultures. These operas exemplify how Chinese media portrays social identity and cultural values, but their story structures and historical backgrounds may not apply to all media or civilizations. This study's main analytical method is theme analysis, which may limit its conclusions. Thematic analysis can discover repeated themes and patterns in text, but it may miss more nuanced or complicated media portrayals. Future research could use audience reception studies or discourse analysis to further understand how media portrayals impact social identity. Because the study relies on secondary sources like media

data and literature, the analysis may be modified or constrained. While great efforts were made to ensure the data's precision and dependability, media content analysis is subjective and sensitive to the researcher's biases. Primary data collection approaches like surveys or interviews with media producers and audiences could boost additional queries. This would help understand how media portrays social identity. This study ignores audience response and perception's impact on media portrayal and social identity. The study finds recurring themes and patterns in historical Chinese costume dramas but does not examine how viewers interpret them. Additional research is needed to understand how audiences react to media depictions and how media content affects attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors.

8.2 Future Direction

Due to this study's limitations and findings, several research opportunities exist. First, future studies should incorporate more media genres and cultural situations. Examining representation across platforms, genres, and cultural contexts can help explain how media impacts social identity and cultural values. Media depiction, social identification, and globalization may be investigated further. It's important to study how media content shapes cultural identities in different cultures as media consumption becomes more global. How media narratives adapt to global cultural trends helps illuminate the complicated processes of cultural identity in the age of globalization. Future research should study how streaming platforms and social media affect social identity and cultural values. Digital media platforms have transformed public access to global media content. Analyzing how digital media platforms affect audience perceptions and media consumption might help explain the changing media environment and its effects on social identity. Further research may be needed to determine how media representation affects social behavior. Scholars can learn how media portrayal affects attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors by analyzing media consumption and societal outcomes. This research may affect public health and media control, which strive to better society.

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