JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

A Model of Brand Revitalization and Its Effect on Stimulating Sales Demand (Case Study: Development of Cultural and Handicraft Industries)

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ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to develop and empirically test a model of brand revitalization and examine its effect on stimulating sales demand in the context of cultural and handicraft industries. This study employed a causal, applied, and cross-sectional research design. The statistical population consisted of stakeholders in cultural industries and handicrafts in Tehran who were over 18 years old. Using cluster random sampling based on five geographical regions of the city, a sample of 384 respondents was selected according to the Krejcie and Morgan table. Data were collected through structured questionnaires designed based on the theoretical framework and expert opinions, covering six dimensions of brand revitalization (brand awareness, brand image, brand personality, brand relationships, brand development, and brand reputation) and the construct of sales demand stimulation. The measurement model and structural relationships were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS software. Reliability and validity were assessed through Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE), while model fit was evaluated using R^2, Q^2, and GOF indices. The results of structural equation modeling indicated that brand revitalization had a strong and statistically significant positive effect on sales demand stimulation ($\beta = 0.790$, $t = 36.901$, $p < 0.05$). At the dimensional level, all six components of brand revitalization exerted positive and significant effects on sales demand stimulation, including brand development ($\beta = 0.497$, $t = 8.265$), brand image ($\beta = 0.415$, $t = 7.970$), brand awareness ($\beta = 0.311$, $t = 5.242$), brand reputation ($\beta = 0.308$, $t = 5.152$), brand personality ($\beta = 0.216$, $t = 3.921$), and brand relationships ($\beta = 0.202$, $t = 3.164$). The coefficient of determination for sales demand stimulation was 0.623, indicating substantial explanatory power of the model. The predictive relevance ($Q^2 = 0.409$) and goodness-of-fit index (GOF = 0.540) further confirmed the adequacy and robustness of the structural model. The findings demonstrate that brand revitalization is a significant and effective strategic mechanism for stimulating sales demand in cultural and handicraft industries, emphasizing the importance of a multidimensional and integrated approach to brand renewal that enhances both symbolic value and market performance.

Keywords: Brand Revitalization, Sales Demand Stimulation, Cultural Industries, Handicrafts, Structural Equation Modeling, Branding Strategy

Introduction

In increasingly saturated and turbulent markets, brands are no longer static identifiers of origin or quality; they are dynamic strategic assets that must continuously evolve to remain meaningful, competitive, and commercially

Article history:
Received 14 January 2026
Revised 18 April 2026
Accepted 25 April 2026
First Published 01 May 2026
Final Publication 01 March 2027

How to cite this article:
Ghanbari, A., Azizabadi Farahani, F., Rezaei, A., & Salhi Amiri, S. R. (2027). A Model of Brand Revitalization and Its Effect on Stimulating Sales Demand (Case Study: Development of Cultural and Handicraft Industries). *Journal of Management and Business Solutions, 5*(2), 1-17. https://doi.org/10.61838/jmbs.278

effective. The pressure of digital transformation, shifting consumer expectations, fragmented attention, and intensified market rivalry has made the preservation of brand relevance a central concern in both mature and emerging sectors. Under such conditions, brand revitalization has gained prominence as a strategic response for organizations whose brands face stagnation, symbolic fatigue, declining differentiation, or weakening market resonance (1, 2). Rather than representing a superficial redesign or promotional adjustment, brand revitalization refers to a deliberate process of renewing the value, meaning, identity, and market position of a brand so that it can reconnect with consumers and regain strategic momentum (3, 4). This process is especially important in sectors where symbolic value, authenticity, cultural narrative, and emotional connection significantly shape demand, as is the case in cultural industries and handicrafts.

The conceptual literature suggests that brand revitalization is fundamentally tied to the question of continuity under conditions of change. A brand must remain recognizable enough to preserve its accumulated associations while becoming sufficiently renewed to respond to contemporary expectations. This dual challenge has been emphasized in both theoretical and managerial accounts of revitalization, which argue that successful renewal depends on balancing brand heritage with innovation, familiarity with freshness, and authenticity with strategic adaptation (5, 6). In this respect, revitalization is not simply a defensive reaction to decline; it is an active strategic effort to restore relevance, rebuild market energy, and generate renewed customer engagement. Pon describes revitalization as a future-oriented resilience mechanism that enables brands to reposition themselves in post-disruption environments, while Light identifies revitalization as a disciplined strategic process that requires correcting core branding mistakes and realigning the brand with lived consumer meaning (1, 4). These observations indicate that brand revitalization should be studied not only as a branding phenomenon but also as a broader commercial capability with implications for demand generation.

A major stream of scholarship has examined revitalization through the lenses of consumer perception, organizational strategy, and market signaling. Studies have shown that revitalization efforts often operate through changes in brand identity, brand meaning, communication, product innovation, symbolic repositioning, and the reactivation of consumer memory structures (2, 7). In declining or mature brands, revitalization can serve as a corrective mechanism for restoring consumer attention and reversing negative trajectories of indifference or erosion. Abbas, for example, shows that brand ambassadors and product innovation can contribute to the revitalization of a declining mobile phone brand by restoring salience and making the brand relevant to new expectations (8). Likewise, Ma and colleagues demonstrate that the revitalization of classic brands depends heavily on consumer perception, indicating that the success of renewal strategies is inseparable from the way consumers interpret changes in brand signals, symbolic consistency, and renewed value propositions (9). Such findings suggest that revitalization is effective when it activates not only recognition but also renewed interpretive engagement.

This interpretive dimension is highly salient in the case of heritage-based, traditional, and culturally embedded brands. Cultural and handicraft industries typically rely on meanings that exceed utilitarian consumption. Their brands carry historical, artistic, territorial, and identity-related significance, which means that commercial success often depends on how effectively these meanings are preserved, communicated, and modernized. In the digital era, heritage enterprises have faced a paradoxical challenge: they must protect authenticity while remaining visible and desirable in highly competitive and fast-changing marketplaces. Li and colleagues show that heritage enterprise revitalization for cultural sustainability depends on adapting brand meaning to digital conditions without severing the cultural continuity that gives the brand its legitimacy (10). Similarly, Xiang emphasizes the dilemma of inheritance versus innovation in revitalizing time-honored brands, underscoring that traditional brands cannot rely on nostalgia alone; they must reinterpret their heritage in ways that fit contemporary consumer frames (11). Johanna and Géraldine also argue that brand heritage can be used strategically in revitalization when the past is not merely preserved but reactivated as a resource for future relevance (6). These insights are directly relevant to cultural industries and handicrafts, where the commercial future of brands depends on the strategic management of cultural memory.

Another important body of work stresses that revitalization is not solely a top-down managerial activity but also a social and cultural process. Brands can be brought back to life through the actions of consumer collectives, communities, and broader sociocultural networks that participate in meaning reconstruction. Närvänen and Goulding demonstrate that sociocultural brand revitalization emerges through collective engagement and the reanimation of shared symbolic structures, suggesting that consumers do not passively receive revitalized brands but actively help constitute them (12). This perspective is especially relevant for brands associated with handicrafts, cultural production, and local identity, because these brands often circulate through networks of artisans, tourists, residents, cultural institutions, and digital communities. In such settings, brand revitalization may operate through renewed awareness, enhanced image, stronger relationships, reaffirmed personality, perceived development, and reinforced reputation. These dimensions together shape the way stakeholders understand whether a brand has become more compelling, contemporary, and worthy of attention.

From a managerial standpoint, the significance of revitalization is ultimately tested by its commercial consequences. A revitalized brand is expected not merely to look renewed but to stimulate market demand by enhancing visibility, increasing attractiveness, improving purchase motivation, and supporting sales conversion. This link between branding and sales has become even more central in the digital economy, where identity formation, sales strategy, and belief in brand credibility interact closely. Shams and colleagues show that brand identity development and sales strategy are deeply interconnected in digital settings and that consumer belief in the brand moderates their effectiveness (13). Ezechi and colleagues similarly argue that integrating marketing and sales strategies strengthens brand visibility and customer engagement, both of which are essential precursors to demand activation (14). Lazebnyk's work on sales management also highlights the importance of information and procedural support in profitable brand segments, implying that commercial outcomes depend on the coordination between brand-building efforts and sales-oriented mechanisms (15). Together, these studies indicate that brand revitalization should be analyzed not as a separate symbolic exercise but as a strategic antecedent to market response and sales demand.

The relevance of sales demand stimulation is particularly strong in industries where purchase decisions are shaped by symbolic resonance and perceived uniqueness. In cultural industries and handicrafts, consumers often respond not only to product features but also to narratives of place, craftsmanship, authenticity, and emotional-cultural attachment. As a result, the ability of a brand to stimulate demand depends on whether it can make these meanings visible, memorable, and desirable in the minds of target audiences. Feizi and colleagues, in the context of destination branding, show that branding significantly contributes to urban tourism development, reinforcing the idea that branded symbolic environments can stimulate economic participation and market movement (16). Because handicrafts and cultural products frequently intersect with tourism, local identity, and experiential consumption, the revitalization of their brands may contribute to heightened interest, stronger demand, and more sustained purchasing behavior. Thus, the relationship between brand revitalization and sales demand stimulation is not merely plausible; it is theoretically expected.

Recent studies on market demand further reinforce the need to understand demand activation as an outcome shaped by intelligent branding and market responsiveness. Jiang's work on AI-driven market demand forecasting in IoT hardware, though situated in a different industry, demonstrates that demand is increasingly treated as a dynamic phenomenon requiring refined strategic anticipation and responsiveness (17). While the technological context differs from that of cultural and handicraft industries, the managerial principle remains relevant: demand must be cultivated through strategic insight rather than assumed as a stable market fact. In parallel, Vareth and colleagues show that customer orientation influences both brand loyalty and purchase decisions, indicating that commercial outcomes depend on how brands align with consumer expectations and lived priorities (18). Seddighi and Zamani similarly connect branding with electronic sales and customer purchase motivation, suggesting that branding mechanisms influence transactional outcomes through intermediate cognitive and communicative processes (19). These studies collectively point toward a larger conclusion: demand stimulation is not merely a downstream outcome of product availability; it is a brand-mediated process shaped by how consumers recognize, interpret, trust, and value the brand.

Despite this growing body of research, several gaps remain. First, much of the brand revitalization literature has focused on classic consumer brands, heritage enterprises, declining technology brands, or broad conceptual frameworks, while relatively less attention has been given to the context of cultural industries and handicrafts, especially in relation to direct sales demand outcomes (1, 8, 10). Second, prior studies often examine revitalization as a general strategic construct without sufficiently unpacking its constituent dimensions. Yet in practical settings, revitalization is rarely experienced as a single undifferentiated phenomenon; rather, it is perceived through specific brand dimensions such as awareness, image, personality, relationships, development, and reputation. Third, while some studies address brand equity, customer engagement, or loyalty, there is less focused empirical work on how the dimensions of revitalization collectively and individually stimulate sales demand in culturally embedded product markets (14, 20). This is a meaningful omission, because managers in cultural and handicraft sectors need more precise models to understand which dimensions of revitalization matter most for commercial activation.

The present topic also has practical importance because cultural and handicraft industries often operate under structural constraints. Many such brands face limited promotional resources, fragmented distribution systems, weak digital integration, and competition from standardized industrial alternatives. Under these conditions, brand revitalization may offer a strategic pathway for restoring relevance and differentiating products that are otherwise vulnerable to market marginalization. The literature on revitalization strategies suggests that organizations can pursue either customer-oriented or company-oriented approaches, but sustainable success is more likely when the brand is renewed in line with stakeholder meaning systems and market realities (7). In addition, the systematic review by Tripathi and colleagues shows that contemporary brand revitalization is multidimensional and that renewed success depends on aligning symbolic, experiential, and strategic components (2). Therefore, a model-based investigation in the context of cultural and handicraft industries can contribute both theoretically and managerially by clarifying how brand revitalization functions as an integrated commercial driver.

The study is also timely in light of current digital and post-pandemic market transformations. As digital environments reshape how consumers discover, evaluate, and share brands, revitalization strategies must increasingly address visibility, storytelling, interaction, and brand credibility across channels. Pon emphasizes that business resilience in the contemporary period depends on digital adaptation, while Shams and colleagues stress that sales strategies in the digital era require coherent brand identity supported by consumer belief (1, 13). For cultural and handicraft brands, this means that revitalization cannot be reduced to preserving tradition; it must involve strategic translation of tradition into forms that are legible and compelling within contemporary consumption environments. The challenge is not simply to modernize, but to modernize without emptying the brand of the very cultural significance that makes it distinctive. This tension is central to the revitalization of heritage-linked brands and makes the present investigation particularly relevant.

Furthermore, the study draws on the idea that brand revitalization should be evaluated through measurable dimensions that reflect the stakeholder experience of renewal. Brand awareness captures the degree to which the brand is mentally available and recognizable. Brand image reflects the associations and impressions attached to the brand. Brand personality represents the human-like characteristics attributed to it. Brand relationships indicate the depth and quality of the perceived connection between the brand and its audiences. Brand development captures the extent to which the brand is seen as progressing, adapting, and renewing itself. Brand reputation reflects the broader evaluation of credibility, esteem, and social standing. Together, these dimensions provide an analytically rich framework for examining how revitalization is perceived and how it translates into stimulated sales demand. Such a dimensional approach is also consistent with recent scholarship linking branding to market engagement, consumer interpretation, and strategic sales performance (9, 13, 18).

In this sense, the contribution of the present research lies in integrating brand revitalization theory with a demand-oriented empirical model tailored to the development of cultural industries and handicrafts. Rather than treating revitalization as an abstract branding doctrine, the study examines it as a concrete and multidimensional mechanism that may activate market demand in a sector where symbolic value and economic performance are deeply intertwined. This perspective extends the implications of prior research on revitalization, heritage branding, consumer perception, and sales strategy by applying them to a context that is commercially important and culturally distinctive (6, 11, 15). It also responds to the need for more context-sensitive evidence on how brands in traditional and culturally rooted sectors can achieve renewal without sacrificing authenticity, and how such renewal can contribute to stronger commercial outcomes (3, 10, 12).

Accordingly, the aim of this study is to develop and test a model of brand revitalization and its effect on stimulating sales demand in the context of the development of cultural industries and handicrafts.

Methods and Materials

This research is classified as both fundamental and applied in terms of its objective. From a fundamental perspective, the study aims to develop a theoretical model capable of explaining the phenomenon of brand revitalization and its underlying mechanisms. Simultaneously, it has an applied orientation because it examines the practical effects of this model on stimulating sales demand within the context of cultural and handicraft industries. In terms of methodological approach, the study follows a causal research design, as it seeks to investigate cause-and-effect relationships among the main constructs of brand revitalization, and sales demand stimulation. Regarding the temporal dimension, the research is cross-sectional, since data were collected from participants within a specific and relatively short time frame.

The spatial domain of the study is the metropolitan city of Tehran, which represents the largest urban center in Iran and provides a diverse and representative context for cultural and handicraft industries. The statistical population in the quantitative phase includes all stakeholders associated with handicrafts and cultural heritage sectors who are over the age of eighteen. This population encompasses a wide range of actors, including producers, distributors, consumers, and tourists, thereby ensuring a comprehensive representation of the relevant ecosystem.

Sampling was conducted using a cluster random sampling method, which is particularly suitable for populations that are geographically dispersed. In this approach, the unit of sampling is not an individual but a cluster of individuals. Based on the administrative division of Tehran, the city was segmented into five main regions: north, south, center, east, and west. From each region, relevant clusters related to handicrafts and cultural heritage were identified and selected for data collection. The sample size was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan table, which is appropriate for large populations exceeding one hundred thousand individuals. Accordingly, a sample size of 384 respondents was considered sufficient at a 5% margin of error, and questionnaires were distributed to achieve at least this minimum required number.

Data collection in this study was conducted using structured questionnaires specifically designed for the research objectives. The development of the questionnaire instrument was grounded in a comprehensive review of the theoretical framework and prior empirical studies related to brand revitalization, and sales demand stimulation. In addition, expert opinions from specialists in marketing and branding were incorporated to enhance the content validity and relevance of the measurement items.

The final instrument consisted of two separate sets of anonymous, closed-ended questionnaires, each corresponding to one of the main constructs of the study. The first questionnaire measured the dimensions of brand revitalization, capturing aspects such as brand identity renewal, repositioning strategies, and perceived brand dynamism. The second questionnaire focused on the construct of sales demand stimulation, assessing factors related to increased consumer interest, purchase intention, and market responsiveness.

All items were designed using a standardized response format to facilitate quantitative analysis. The questionnaires were distributed during a defined time period across the selected regions of Tehran, ensuring coverage of diverse demographic and socio-economic groups within the target population.

The data analysis was conducted using structural equation modeling (SEM), a comprehensive statistical technique that enables the simultaneous examination of relationships among latent and observed variables. In this study, latent variables represent the core constructs of the conceptual model, including brand revitalization, and sales demand stimulation, while observed variables correspond to the questionnaire items used to measure these constructs.

The analytical process began with the identification and operationalization of the main research variables based on the theoretical framework. Subsequently, measurement items were assigned to each latent construct, and research hypotheses were formulated to specify the directional relationships among these variables. A conceptual model was then designed to visually represent these hypothesized relationships.

Following data collection, the structural model was specified and tested using LISREL software. The analysis involved evaluating both the measurement model and the structural model. The measurement model assessment ensured the reliability and validity of the constructs, while the structural model evaluation tested the hypothesized causal relationships among variables. Model fit indices were examined to determine the adequacy of the model, and path coefficients were analyzed to assess the strength and significance of the relationships. This approach provided a robust framework for validating the proposed model and understanding the mechanisms through which brand revitalization influences sales demand in the cultural and handicraft industries.

Findings and Results

In this study (n = 384), the gender distribution was relatively balanced, with males comprising 54.2% and females 45.8% of the sample. The age distribution indicated that the largest group of respondents were between 30 and 40 years old (35.7%), followed by individuals aged 40 to 50 years (27.6%), those above 50 years (22.9%), and respondents under 30 years (13.8%). In terms of education level, the majority of participants held a bachelor's degree (55.5%), followed by those with a master's degree or higher (26.5%), while smaller proportions had a diploma (13.5%) or an associate degree (4.5%). Overall, the sample reflects a relatively educated population with a concentration in middle adulthood, providing an appropriate basis for analyzing perceptions related to brand revitalization and sales demand stimulation.

The descriptive findings show that all dimensions of brand revitalization, as well as the sales demand stimulation variable, were evaluated by respondents at levels above the theoretical midpoint of 3 on the five-point Likert scale. This preliminary pattern indicates that, from the perspective of the stakeholders studied, the current status of brand revitalization dimensions in the development of cultural industries and handicrafts is relatively favorable, and the perceived level of sales demand stimulation is also above average. In addition, the skewness and kurtosis values provide an initial picture of distributional form, showing that most variables have slightly negative skewness, which indicates a greater concentration of responses in the upper part of the scale. The detailed descriptive results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of the Research Variables (n = 384)

Variable	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	Minimum	Maximum
Brand development	3.43	0.812	-0.367	-0.117	1.00	5.00
Brand personality	3.33	0.861	-0.472	-0.346	1.00	5.00
Brand awareness	3.55	0.706	-0.229	-0.021	1.25	5.00
Brand image	3.46	0.711	-0.370	0.308	1.00	5.00
Brand relationships	3.51	0.696	-0.402	0.142	1.00	5.00
Brand reputation	3.53	0.806	-0.548	-0.028	1.33	5.00
Sales demand stimulation	3.28	0.962	-0.633	-0.362	1.00	5.00

As shown in Table 1, brand awareness had the highest mean among the brand revitalization dimensions (M = 3.55, SD = 0.706), followed closely by brand reputation (M = 3.53, SD = 0.806) and brand relationships (M = 3.51, SD = 0.696). Brand image (M = 3.46, SD = 0.711), brand development (M = 3.43, SD = 0.812), and brand personality (M = 3.33, SD = 0.861) also remained above the midpoint. Sales demand stimulation had a mean of 3.28 (SD = 0.962), indicating that respondents generally evaluated the extent of stimulated demand as above average, though this variable showed greater dispersion than the brand revitalization dimensions. In terms of distributional shape, the negative skewness values across all variables indicate that higher scores were more frequent than lower scores. The kurtosis coefficients were small in magnitude, suggesting no severe deviation in peakedness, although the formal normality test was required to determine whether parametric assumptions were met.

To assess the normality of the variable distributions, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov goodness-of-fit test was conducted. Because the level of significance for all variables was below 0.05, the null hypothesis of normal distribution was rejected in every case. Therefore, the distributions of all main variables were considered non-normal. This finding justified the subsequent use of non-parametric inference for assessing whether the observed levels of the variables were significantly above the scale midpoint, while structural equation modeling using PLS remained appropriate due to its robustness under non-normal data conditions. The normality test results are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2. Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test of Normality for the Research Variables (n = 384)

Variable	n	Mean	SD	K-S Statistic	Sig.
Brand development	384	3.43	0.812	0.098	0.001
Brand personality	384	3.33	0.861	0.080	0.001
Brand awareness	384	3.55	0.706	0.105	0.001
Brand image	384	3.46	0.711	0.091	0.001
Brand relationships	384	3.51	0.696	0.092	0.001
Brand reputation	384	3.53	0.806	0.144	0.001
Sales demand stimulation	384	3.28	0.962	0.156	0.001

Table 2 shows that all significance values were equal to 0.001, which is lower than the 0.05 threshold. Hence, the distributions of brand development, brand personality, brand awareness, brand image, brand relationships, brand reputation, and sales demand stimulation were all non-normal. Among the variables, sales demand stimulation produced the largest K-S statistic (0.156), followed by brand reputation (0.144), indicating that these two variables showed the greatest deviation from normality. Nevertheless, the use of SmartPLS for model estimation was methodologically justified because PLS-SEM does not require multivariate normality in the same manner as covariance-based SEM. At the same time, for one-sample level assessment, a non-parametric binomial approach was preferred over mean comparison procedures that assume normality.

Before testing the structural relations, the adequacy of the measurement model for the higher-order construct of brand revitalization was examined. Brand revitalization was modeled as a second-order latent construct composed of six first-order dimensions, namely brand awareness, brand image, brand personality, brand relationships, brand development, and brand reputation. The first-order confirmatory factor analysis results showed that all indicators loaded acceptably on their intended dimensions, and all t-values were statistically significant. In addition, the values of composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha for all first-order constructs exceeded the conventional threshold of 0.70, confirming internal consistency reliability. The average variance extracted for all dimensions was above 0.50, indicating satisfactory convergent validity. The detailed results are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Measurement Model Assessment for the Brand Revitalization Construct

Dimension	Indicators	Factor Loading Range	t-value Range	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	AVE
Brand awareness	BA1–BA4	0.688–0.802	16.141–40.927	0.852	0.771	0.592
Brand image	BI1–BI7*	0.628–0.780	17.687–33.602	0.874	0.827	0.539
Brand personality	BP1–BP8*	0.656–0.821	20.790–47.442	0.908	0.881	0.587
Brand relationships	BR1–BR6	0.702–0.795	21.448–38.636	0.882	0.839	0.555
Brand development	BE1–BE5	0.763–0.875	28.803–63.991	0.915	0.884	0.683
Brand reputation	REP1–REP3**	0.732–0.861	27.208–66.678	0.855	0.744	0.664

The results in Table 3 confirm the adequacy of the measurement model for brand revitalization. All reported factor loadings exceeded 0.30 by a substantial margin, and in practice most loadings were well above 0.60, which demonstrates a strong relationship between the observed indicators and their underlying latent constructs. Likewise, all associated t-values were far greater than 1.96, confirming statistical significance at the 0.05 level and, in fact, at much stricter levels. The strongest measurement quality was observed for the brand development dimension, which had the highest composite reliability (0.915), the highest Cronbach's alpha (0.884), and the highest AVE (0.683). Brand reputation also showed strong convergent validity (AVE = 0.664), while all other dimensions met the accepted threshold of 0.50. Overall, these results indicate that the six dimensions reliably and validly measure the higher-order concept of brand revitalization and can therefore be retained for structural analysis without modification.

The coefficient of determination for sales demand stimulation was 0.623, which indicates that the dimensions of brand revitalization explain 62.3% of the variance in sales demand stimulation. This represents substantial explanatory power. The Stone-Geisser Q^2 value for sales demand stimulation was 0.409, which exceeds the threshold for strong predictive relevance. The communality values were also all acceptable, and the overall goodness-of-fit index was 0.540, confirming that the model has appropriate overall predictive capacity. These results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Structural Model Quality Indices for the Revised Research Model

Construct	Communality	R^2	Q^2
Brand revitalization	0.526	—	—
Sales demand stimulation	0.525	0.623	0.409
Mean	0.526	0.623	0.409

Overall GOF = 0.540

The indices reported in Table 4 show that the revised model possesses satisfactory structural quality. The R^2 value of 0.623 for sales demand stimulation indicates that brand revitalization explains a large proportion of the changes in the dependent construct. Based on common interpretive criteria for PLS-SEM, values around 0.19, 0.33, and 0.67 indicate weak, moderate, and strong explanatory power, respectively; therefore, the observed R^2 suggests a moderate-to-strong level of predictive explanation. The Q^2 value of 0.409 also indicates good predictive relevance, as it clearly exceeds the threshold of 0.35. Moreover, the GOF value of 0.540 is well above the benchmark of 0.30, which demonstrates that the revised model has suitable overall fit and acceptable predictive performance for the endogenous latent variable included in the present article. Accordingly, the structural model was considered adequate for hypothesis testing.

The final stage of analysis involved testing the direct effects of the six dimensions of brand revitalization on sales demand stimulation and evaluating whether the observed level of each variable was significantly above the midpoint of the response scale. The path coefficients and their bootstrap t-values showed that all six dimensions exerted a positive and statistically significant effect on sales demand stimulation. In addition, the higher-order construct of brand revitalization as a whole had a strong positive effect on sales demand stimulation. Since the distributions were non-normal, a binomial test was used to compare the proportions of respondents scoring above versus at or below the midpoint of 3. The results showed that for every variable, the proportion of scores above 3 was significantly greater than the proportion of scores at or below 3. These combined inferential results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Hypothesis Testing and One-Sample Binomial Results for the Revised Model

Analysis Type	Path / Variable	β / Observed Proportion Above 3	t-value / Sig.	Result
Structural path	Brand awareness → Sales demand stimulation	0.311	5.242	Supported
Structural path	Brand image → Sales demand stimulation	0.415	7.970	Supported
Structural path	Brand personality → Sales demand stimulation	0.216	3.921	Supported
Structural path	Brand relationships → Sales demand stimulation	0.202	3.164	Supported
Structural path	Brand development → Sales demand stimulation	0.497	8.265	Supported
Structural path	Brand reputation → Sales demand stimulation	0.308	5.152	Supported
Structural path	Overall brand revitalization → Sales demand stimulation	0.790	36.901	Supported
Binomial test	Brand development	0.68	0.001	Above average
Binomial test	Brand personality	0.65	0.001	Above average
Binomial test	Brand awareness	0.74	0.001	Above average
Binomial test	Brand image	0.71	0.001	Above average
Binomial test	Brand relationships	0.76	0.001	Above average
Binomial test	Brand reputation	0.74	0.001	Above average
Binomial test	Sales demand stimulation	0.65	0.001	Above average

The results in Table 5 provide clear support for the main proposition of the study. At the first-order level, all six dimensions of brand revitalization had significant positive effects on sales demand stimulation, because each t-value exceeded the critical value of 1.96. Among these dimensions, brand development had the strongest direct effect on sales demand stimulation ($\beta = 0.497$, $t = 8.265$), followed by brand image ($\beta = 0.415$, $t = 7.970$), brand awareness ($\beta = 0.311$, $t = 5.242$), brand reputation ($\beta = 0.308$, $t = 5.152$), brand personality ($\beta = 0.216$, $t = 3.921$), and brand relationships ($\beta = 0.202$, $t = 3.164$). Thus, although all dimensions were significant, the most influential component in explaining stimulated demand was brand development, while the weakest, though still meaningful, effect belonged to brand relationships. At the higher-order level, the overall construct of brand revitalization had a strong positive direct effect on sales demand stimulation ($\beta = 0.790$, $t = 36.901$), indicating that a one-unit increase in brand revitalization is associated with a 0.79-unit increase in sales demand stimulation. This confirms the central hypothesis of the article and demonstrates that revitalizing the brand in the context of cultural and handicraft industries can meaningfully enhance demand stimulation.

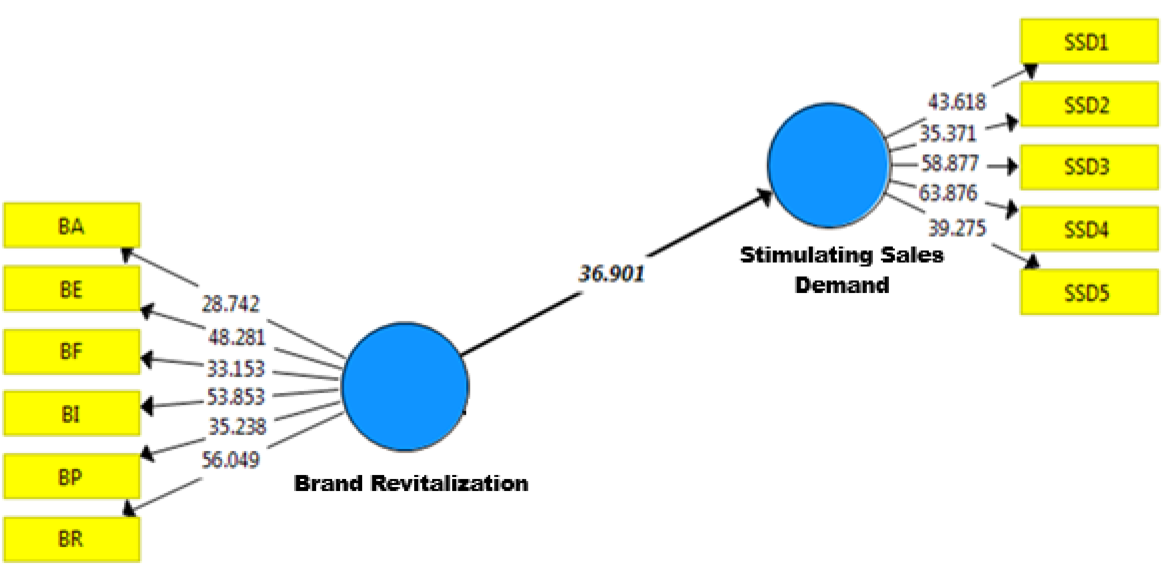

Figure 1. Model with T-Values

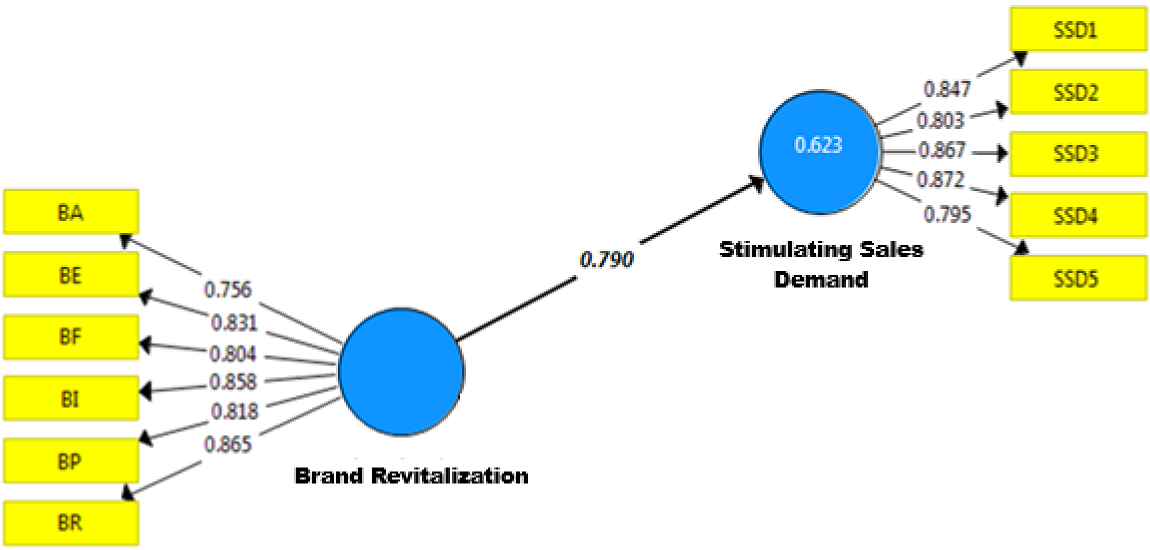

Figure 2. Model with Beta Values

The binomial results further reinforce this conclusion. For all seven variables included in the revised model, the proportion of respondents with scores above the midpoint was significantly larger than the proportion with scores equal to or below the midpoint, with significance values of 0.001 in every case. The highest observed proportion above 3 was found for brand relationships (0.76), followed by brand awareness and brand reputation (0.74 each), while brand development, brand personality, and sales demand stimulation each showed majorities well above the midpoint as well. These findings indicate that stakeholders generally perceive both the dimensions of brand revitalization and the level of sales demand stimulation to be above average. Taken together, the descriptive, measurement, structural, and inferential results consistently show that the revised model has acceptable statistical quality and that brand revitalization plays a substantial and positive role in stimulating sales demand in the development of cultural industries and handicrafts.

In summary, the findings of the quantitative phase demonstrate that the research variables are all positioned above the average level, the measurement model of brand revitalization is reliable and valid, the structural model has satisfactory explanatory and predictive power, and all proposed effects of the brand revitalization dimensions on sales demand stimulation are positive and statistically significant. Therefore, the findings support the claim that brand revitalization is not merely a symbolic or communicative exercise, but a practically effective strategic mechanism for increasing demand in the field of cultural and handicraft industries.

Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of the present study provide strong empirical support for the central proposition that brand revitalization plays a significant and positive role in stimulating sales demand in the context of cultural industries and handicrafts. At the descriptive level, all dimensions of brand revitalization, including brand development, brand personality, brand awareness, brand image, brand relationships, and brand reputation, were rated above the theoretical midpoint, and sales demand stimulation was likewise evaluated above average. These results suggest that the respondents generally perceived the focal brands as possessing an acceptable degree of renewal, relevance, and symbolic-market vitality. This pattern is consistent with the broader literature that conceptualizes brand revitalization as a multidimensional process through which brands recover market salience, rebuild meaning, and renew consumer interest (1-3). The fact that the overall levels of the variables exceeded the average threshold indicates that stakeholders in cultural and handicraft industries are responsive to revitalization signals and are able to distinguish among different dimensions of renewal in evaluating brand strength and market attractiveness. This supports the view that revitalization is not an abstract managerial construct but an experienced and measurable market phenomenon with visible implications for commercial responsiveness (4, 7).

Another notable result concerns the non-normal distribution of the research variables. Although this is primarily a methodological finding, it is also meaningful from a substantive standpoint because it suggests that respondents' evaluations were not randomly dispersed but leaned toward the favorable end of the scale. In branding studies, such clustering often indicates the presence of accumulated positive associations or relatively strong consensus among respondents about the symbolic and market standing of the brand. The suitability of PLS-SEM in this context allowed the analysis to focus on the explanatory and predictive relationships despite the lack of normality, which is fully consistent with the logic of exploratory and prediction-oriented branding research in complex market environments. More importantly, the non-parametric level tests showed that the proportion of respondents rating the variables above the midpoint was significantly larger than the proportion rating them at or below the midpoint. This confirms that the dimensions of brand revitalization and the level of stimulated sales demand are not merely statistically nonzero but meaningfully above average in practical terms. Such a finding aligns with studies showing that brands capable of renewing their symbolic and functional appeal tend to generate stronger consumer attention and purchase motivation (13, 19).

At the measurement level, the findings demonstrated that the construct of brand revitalization possesses satisfactory reliability and validity. All first-order dimensions showed acceptable factor loadings, significant t-values, and suitable levels of Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and average variance extracted. This confirms that brand revitalization can be modeled as a coherent higher-order construct composed of related but distinct dimensions. This result is theoretically important because one recurring issue in the revitalization literature is whether brand renewal should be treated as a singular strategic act or as a multidimensional experiential process.

The present findings support the latter interpretation. The dimensions of awareness, image, personality, relationships, development, and reputation appear to function as observable manifestations of a broader revitalization process. This interpretation is compatible with the literature emphasizing that brand revitalization must integrate symbolic, relational, strategic, and communicative components rather than relying on one isolated intervention (2, 4). It is also in line with research showing that revitalization outcomes depend on consumer perception and not merely on managerial intent, because the success of renewal is ultimately evaluated through how consumers interpret changes in the brand's identity and value (5, 9).

The structural results provide the strongest support for the study's conceptual model. The overall higher-order construct of brand revitalization exerted a strong positive direct effect on sales demand stimulation, with a substantial path coefficient and a very high t-value. This indicates that when brand revitalization is strengthened as an integrated strategic process, sales demand rises correspondingly. Substantively, this means that revitalization in cultural industries and handicrafts is not only associated with improved brand symbolism or greater consumer familiarity but also with tangible movement in market demand. This finding strongly corroborates arguments that branding and sales should not be treated as separate functions. Instead, revitalization appears to act as a strategic bridge between symbolic brand renewal and market activation. This conclusion aligns closely with recent studies that emphasize the interconnectedness of brand identity formation, customer belief, and sales strategy in contemporary markets (13, 14). It also resonates with work on electronic sales and purchase motivation showing that branding mechanisms shape transactional outcomes by altering the cognitive and motivational conditions of purchase (19).

The explanatory power of the model also deserves attention. The coefficient of determination for sales demand stimulation indicated that a considerable portion of the variance in the dependent variable was explained by brand revitalization, and the predictive relevance and GOF indices further confirmed the appropriateness of the structural model. These results suggest that brand revitalization is not a marginal explanatory factor but a major strategic determinant of demand stimulation in the research context. This is especially important in cultural and handicraft industries, where demand often depends on symbolic value, heritage resonance, authenticity, and experiential attractiveness as much as on price or utility. The finding that revitalization explains a substantial share of demand variance supports the argument that cultural brands can improve their market position by reworking how they are perceived, remembered, and emotionally valued. This interpretation is consistent with studies of heritage brands and destination branding that emphasize the economic importance of symbolic differentiation and identity-based communication in stimulating market participation (10, 16).

At the level of individual dimensions, the results showed that all six dimensions of brand revitalization had positive and statistically significant effects on sales demand stimulation. However, their strengths were not identical. Brand development emerged as the most influential predictor, followed by brand image, brand awareness, brand reputation, brand personality, and brand relationships. The particularly strong effect of brand development suggests that respondents attached considerable importance to signs that the brand was evolving, renewing itself, and adapting to current expectations. In markets shaped by rapid change and heightened visibility, consumers appear especially responsive to evidence that a brand is not static or obsolete. This interpretation is supported by research showing that declining or aging brands can recover market position when they renew themselves through innovation, refreshed strategic direction, and credible modernization (1, 8). In heritage and traditional sectors, development may also signal that the brand is capable of surviving contemporary competition without becoming irrelevant, which is a crucial reassurance for buyers deciding whether a culturally rooted product still fits present-day tastes and lifestyles (6, 11).

Brand image was the second strongest predictor of sales demand stimulation, indicating that the set of associations and impressions attached to the brand has a major influence on whether demand is activated. This is consistent with the idea that image functions as a cognitive shortcut in consumption settings where symbolic and aesthetic cues matter. In cultural industries and handicrafts, consumers often cannot fully evaluate quality or authenticity before purchase, so image becomes a powerful signal of desirability, value, and identity fit. The present finding accords with studies indicating that revitalization strategies are effective when they change consumer perception in favorable ways and make the brand appear more contemporary, meaningful, and distinctive (7, 9). Likewise, research on cultural sustainability in heritage enterprises highlights the importance of symbolic repositioning and renewed interpretation in making traditional brands commercially viable in the digital era (10).

Brand awareness and brand reputation also showed relatively strong positive effects, which indicates that both mental availability and perceived esteem are essential for stimulating demand. Awareness matters because consumers are unlikely to consider, search for, or choose brands that are not sufficiently salient in memory. In sectors marked by fragmented competition and low standardization, awareness can play a decisive role in moving a brand into the consumer's choice set. Reputation, by contrast, matters because it reduces perceived risk and enhances confidence in purchase. This is especially relevant in handicrafts and cultural products, where authenticity, quality, and symbolic legitimacy are closely scrutinized. The findings therefore support prior arguments that revitalization must not only refresh brand symbolism but also rebuild confidence and trust in the brand's standing (4, 5). They also align with contemporary marketing and sales research suggesting that visibility and consumer engagement are central drivers of brand-mediated market performance (14, 15).

Brand personality and brand relationships also had significant direct effects, although their coefficients were weaker than those of the other dimensions. This does not mean they are unimportant; rather, it suggests that in the present context they may operate more subtly or indirectly. Brand personality gives the brand human-like qualities that can make it relatable, emotionally resonant, and distinctive. Brand relationships reflect the perceived closeness, connection, and continuity between the brand and its audiences. In cultural and handicraft markets, these dimensions may matter greatly for long-term brand attachment and repeat engagement, even if their immediate influence on demand stimulation is somewhat smaller than that of image, awareness, or development. This interpretation is consistent with sociocultural perspectives on brand revitalization, which emphasize that brands are brought back to life not only through formal strategy but also through collective meaning-making and relational attachment (12). It also fits with work showing that customer orientation and market sensitivity influence purchase decisions partly through the broader relational environment of the brand (18).

From a theoretical perspective, the study contributes to the literature by showing that brand revitalization in cultural industries and handicrafts should be understood as a commercially consequential multidimensional construct rather than a purely symbolic branding exercise. Much of the prior literature has either discussed revitalization at the conceptual level or focused on classic, declining, or heritage brands in other sectors. By contrast, the present findings demonstrate that revitalization has a clear and measurable effect on demand stimulation in a sector where culture, craftsmanship, heritage, and market exchange intersect. This extends the relevance of prior revitalization frameworks into a setting where authenticity and modernization must coexist. In doing so, the study supports arguments that successful revitalization requires balancing continuity and change, preserving the meaningful past while renewing the brand for contemporary market conditions (3, 6, 11). It also reinforces the proposition that branding should be assessed not only through image-based or equity-based metrics but also through its capacity to activate sales demand and enhance commercial movement (13, 19).

The findings likewise carry practical implications for managers of cultural and handicraft brands. The dominance of brand development and brand image suggests that revitalization strategies in this sector should give priority to visible renewal, relevant innovation, and refreshed symbolic presentation. At the same time, managers should not neglect awareness, reputation, personality, and relationships, since all six dimensions contributed significantly. This means that effective revitalization requires an integrated strategy combining communication, positioning, storytelling, innovation, and stakeholder engagement. Such an approach is consistent with the view that revitalization is most successful when organizational action and consumer perception are aligned, rather than when firms rely on isolated tactical changes (2, 7). In the present context, revitalization appears to work best when brands are able to make themselves more visible, more contemporary, more credible, and more culturally resonant at the same time.

The limitations of this study should be acknowledged. First, the study used a cross-sectional design, which restricts the ability to make strong causal claims across time and prevents the observation of how brand revitalization and sales demand stimulation may evolve longitudinally. Second, the data were gathered from one metropolitan context, namely Tehran, and although this setting offers substantial diversity, the generalizability of the findings to other cities, rural regions, or international cultural markets should be made with caution. Third, the research relied on self-reported questionnaire data, which may be influenced by social desirability, response tendency, or subjective perception bias. Fourth, the model focused specifically on sales demand stimulation and deliberately excluded attitudinal loyalty in the revised version of the article; therefore, the broader downstream effects of brand revitalization on other behavioral and relational outcomes were not examined here. Finally, the study did not differentiate among distinct categories of handicrafts or cultural products, and the intensity of revitalization effects may vary across product types with different symbolic, aesthetic, and market characteristics.

Future research can build on the present study in several directions. Longitudinal studies would be especially valuable for examining whether the effect of brand revitalization on sales demand is stable over time or whether it fluctuates depending on market cycles, communication campaigns, tourism seasons, or digital exposure. Comparative research across different cities, provinces, or countries could also clarify the extent to which the present findings are context-bound or generalizable across cultural markets. In addition, future studies may test mediating or moderating variables such as consumer trust, perceived authenticity, digital engagement, price perception, brand heritage orientation, or tourist motivation in order to explain more precisely how revitalization translates into market demand. It would also be useful to compare different categories of cultural products, including souvenirs, artisan goods, heritage-based luxury products, and locally branded tourism merchandise, because the relative importance of awareness, image, or reputation may vary across categories. Qualitative or mixed-method designs could further enrich the field by exploring how managers, artisans, tourists, and local consumers interpret revitalization efforts and how these interpretations shape purchase readiness.

From a practical standpoint, managers and policymakers in cultural industries and handicrafts should treat brand revitalization as a strategic investment rather than a cosmetic branding exercise. The findings indicate that revitalization can meaningfully stimulate demand when it is implemented in a multidimensional and coherent way. Decision-makers should therefore prioritize visible brand development, refreshed brand image, stronger awareness-building campaigns, and the reinforcement of brand reputation. At the same time, they should cultivate a recognizable brand personality and sustain meaningful relationships with customers and stakeholders through storytelling, cultural engagement, digital communication, and consistent brand experience. For handicraft and cultural brands in particular, revitalization should preserve authenticity while translating heritage into contemporary forms that are attractive to modern consumers. Promotional programs, digital platforms, exhibitions, tourism collaborations, and packaging innovation can all be aligned with a broader revitalization strategy aimed at increasing visibility and sales demand. In this sense, the study suggests that revitalization is one of the most promising strategic pathways for enhancing the commercial vitality of cultural and handicraft industries.

Acknowledgments

We would like to express our appreciation and gratitude to all those who helped us carrying out this study.

Authors' Contributions

All authors equally contributed to this study.

Declaration of Interest

The authors of this article declared no conflict of interest.

Ethical Considerations

All ethical principles were adheried in conducting and writing this article.

Transparency of Data

In accordance with the principles of transparency and open research, we declare that all data and materials used in this study are available upon request.

Funding

This research was carried out independently with personal funding and without the financial support of any governmental or private institution or organization.

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