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Abstract: The regional public brand of agricultural products is an important style of characteristic agricultural product brands. How to build the regional public brand of agricultural products has always been the focus of attention, and it is of great practical significance to explore the brand relationship quality improvement path of the regional public brand of agricultural products. This study adopts the fsQCA method based on the perspective of causal complexity configuration to construct the conditional configuration model of brand relationship quality for agricultural product regional public brands, using 30 agricultural product brand cases in the China Agricultural Brand Catalog 2019 Regional Public Brands of Agricultural Products as the research objects. The results show that there are five paths driving high brand relationship quality and six paths driving non-high brand relationship quality with causal asymmetry with the path of high brand relationship quality.

Keywords: fsQCA; brand relationship quality; brand reputation; media attention; user attention.

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1 Introduction

Since the rural revitalisation strategy was put forward, rural construction has been regarded as an important task throughout the country (Zeng et al., 2021). The Strategic Plan for Rural Revitalisation (2018–2022) also points out that it is necessary to focus on building agricultural brands. The establishment of agricultural brands has become an important driving force for industrial revitalisation (Lv and Yu, 2021). In the specific cultivation of agricultural brands, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs pointed out that the construction of the regional public brand of agricultural products is an important way. The regional public brand of agricultural products is an important style of characteristic agricultural products brand. Only by developing and popularising the regional public brand of agricultural products can we help agricultural revitalisation and rural development (Li et al., 2022). However, in the process of building regional public brands of agricultural products, there are problems in China such as small scale of agricultural industry, inadequate brand promotion, unclear subject of brand responsibility and lack of maintenance (Song et al., 2022), which lead to uneven quality of agricultural products and damage the word of mouth and brand reputation of agricultural products. In addition, regional public brands of agricultural products are also faced with the problems of low brand awareness (Liao et al., 2021) and limited information dissemination, and brand communication needs to be improved. A good brand reputation influences consumers' trust in the brand positively and contributes to a certain extent to the formation of a good consumer-brand relationship (Molinillo et al., 2022). Therefore, maintaining brand reputation, spreading brand reputation and establishing a good relationship between consumers and brands have become an important issue in the construction of regional public brands of agricultural products.

With the rapid development of the internet era, social media plays an indispensable role in consumers' lives (Sreejesh et al., 2020). Brands can connect with customers through different social media networks and easily reach them to promote their products and establish a positive image in the minds of consumers (Thaker et al., 2020), forming a deeper connection with brands. Popularity is one of the important factors of brand competitiveness. The placement of advertisements can win the attention of certain social media and attract the attention of consumers (Miah et al., 2022). Tran et al. (2020) proposed that advertising for brands with strong personalities has an indirect positive impact on the quality of brand relationships. Therefore, media attention is an important factor affecting brand reputation communication and brand relationship building. Attention has become a particularly scarce resource for many users (Rieser and Furneaux, 2022). Users with high attention control can effectively assign attention to behavioural

tasks, while users with low attention control are more easily disturbed by external factors (Cheng and Liu, 2022). For consumers, high attention input means paying more time and resources to interact with the brand in depth. For example, when users and consumers interact with the page through likes or comments, they are more likely to be loyal and willing to know the brand (De Fano et al., 2022), thus strengthening their relationship with the brand. Based on the above, it is necessary to explore the path to improve the brand relationship quality of regional public brands of agricultural products from the perspective of media attention and user attention.

Under the background of the regional public brand of agricultural products, previous studies have focused on brand building (Zheng et al., 2022), brand communication (Lu and Zheng, 2022), etc., and have begun to explore the factors that influence the brand relationship quality (Robertson et al., 2022). However, two major research gaps remain. Firstly, in the era of social media, brands attract the attention of their audience through media, triggering active user engagement, such as likes, shares, comments, etc. (Gómez et al., 2019), thereby building close brand-user relationships. Current research often only starts from a single perspective, with some scholars focusing on the impact of media attention on brand relationship quality (Shukla et al., 2021); while others focus on user attention (Abdullah and Siraj, 2018) and lack direct evidence to support the joint effect of media attention and user attention on brand relationship quality. Secondly, it has been shown that brand reputation helps consumers and brands build long-term relationships (Safeer and Le, 2023). But, as a collective product, the regional public brand of agricultural products inevitably leads to the problem of 'free riding', causing some enterprises (farmers) to privately reduce product quality, which in turn leads to damage to the reputation of the regional public brand (Dong and Qian, 2022). As a result, it is difficult to obtain lasting brand relationship quality based on brand reputation alone. In the social media environment, companies need to compete for consumer attention with the help of intelligent communication technologies (Liu, 2021). In addition, consumer opinion leaders can significantly guide others' consumption attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours (Liao et al., 2021), thereby deepening their participation in brand content. Although there may be relevant practices in the business community, there is still relatively insufficient research in the academic community on the impact mechanism of brand relationship quality by combining brand reputation, user attention, and media attention. Therefore, this paper constructs a research model including brand reputation, media attention and user attention, and examines the driving factors of brand relationship quality of regional public brands of agricultural products from a multifaceted and holistic perspective, aiming at solving the following problems.

How to improve the quality of the regional public brand relationship of agricultural products through brand reputation, media attention and user attention? This is not only an important problem, but also a real problem to be solved urgently. Therefore, this study adopts the Fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis (fsQCA) based on the causal complexity configuration perspective, and takes 30 brand cases in the China Agricultural Brand Catalog 2019 Regional Public Brands of Agricultural Products as the research objects. This paper constructs a configuration model of brand relationship quality conditions of regional public brands of agricultural products and discusses how seven factors including image of origin, product performance, word of mouth, media attention, advertising, user directed attention and user focused attention affect the brand relationship quality of regional public brands of agricultural products.

Our study makes three important contributions to previous literature. First, in the context of agricultural products, integrating user attention and media attention elements, exploring how multiple factors affect brand relationship quality from a dual attention perspective, enriches research on the antecedents of brand relationship quality. Second, this article adopts a configuration perspective and the fsQCA method to identify the driving paths that generate high and non-high brand relationship quality. The research results have important theoretical and practical significance for deepening consumer brand relationships and enhancing the value of regional public brands of agricultural products. Third, our study focuses on explicating the impact of different types of attention on brand relationship quality, the application of attention theory in the fields of brand marketing and brand management has been expanded.

The rest of this paper is structured as follows: First, the related theories are elaborated. Then, the literature is reviewed, and the conceptual model is constructed on this basis. Next, the process of the research methodology and the analysis of the results are described. Finally, we discuss the conclusion, theoretical and practical implications, point out the limitations of our research, and put forward some suggestions for future development.

2 Theoretical foundations

2.1 Brand reputation

Brand reputation is a characteristic of consumers' attitude towards reliable brands. It is defined as consumers' perception of product quality related to brand names (Rindell and Oriol, 2014). The development of brand reputation means maintaining customer satisfaction, which is what the company earns over time, and how different audiences evaluate the brand (Choi and Burnham, 2021). On the one hand, brand reputation is an important reference for consumers to make purchase decisions, and on the other hand, it is crucial to establish a good consumer-brand relationship. Foroudi et al. (2019) proposed that a lasting brand image ensures a good brand reputation. Brand reputation is also affected by good word of mouth and high brand status (Agmeka et al., 2019). Drawing on the research of previous scholars, this paper studies brand reputation from three aspects: image of origin, product performance and word of mouth. A good brand reputation will amplify the perceived brand value of consumers, thus improve consumer satisfaction, and ultimately promote the healthy development of the relationship between consumers and brands, and improve the quality of brand relations.

2.2 Attention economy

The concept of attention economy was first put forward by Herbert Simon, who pointed out that in an information-rich environment, the attention of information recipients is scarce (Van Krieken, 2019). When people put scarce attention into something, it has value, and the value comes from the scarcity of attention (Doyle and Roda, 2019).

In the internet era, with massive information and various media flooding our network life, how to attract people's attention to the brand has become an important topic for brand operators to learn. As far as media attention is concerned, the number and prominence of brands reported by the media affect the communication effect of brands

and the public's cognition of brands, and then have an impact on the connection between consumers and brands. On the one hand, the media will actively report prominent brand activities, on the other hand, it is also the carrier of advertising. To sum up, the media will attract public attention to the brand (Nixon, 2020). In terms of user attention, individuals endow brands with value through the investment of cognitive resources and time. When an individual interacts with a brand through such means as 'like', 'comment' and 'share', individuals turn their attention to the brand, strengthening the connection between the brand and the individual and helping to improve the quality of the brand relationship in the long run.

2.3 Brand relationship

One of the first scholars to study brand relationships was Blackston (1992), who proposed that brand relationships refer to the interaction between consumers' attitudes toward the brand and the brand's attitudes toward the consumer. In this study, the brand relationship we discuss refers to the relationship between consumers and brands, and the establishment of the brand relationship is only the foundation. Brand owners need to focus on the quality of the brand relationship if they want to benefit from the brand relationship. Based on the views of Fournier (1998), this study regards brand relationship quality as the strength and development ability of the brand-consumer connection. Japutra et al. (2018) believed that brand relationship quality includes satisfaction, trust, commitment and social benefits. Brand relationship quality is a kind of psychological commitment and emotional intimacy that has a positive impact on the brand (Jang and Arens, 2023). Drawing on most scholars' research, this study measures brand relationship quality in terms of satisfaction, trust, and commitment. When consumers establish a good relationship with the brand, their loyalty will increase. They not only form a positive understanding of the brand, but also support the brand in action, which helps to increase brand assets.

3 Literature review and conceptual model

3.1 Brand reputation factors and brand relationship quality

Brand reputation is the brand evaluation formed by consumers in long-term contact with brands, and a good brand reputation is an important antecedent for establishing high-quality brand relationships. This study explores the influence of three factors on brand relationship quality: image of origin, product performance, and word of mouth.

The image of origin refers to the overall impression of consumers on the origin of products (Rauyruen and Miller, 2007). One of the distinctive characteristics of agricultural product regional public brands is regionalism. The characteristic agricultural products grow in a specific geographical environment, which is influenced by the image of origin. At the same time, the development of characteristic agricultural products strongly promotes the promotion of the popularity of the place of origin of agricultural products. It is found that the image of the place of origin affects consumers' perception of the products of the place of origin and the brands to which the products belong (Bilkey and Nes, 1982), and will further affect consumers' impression of the place of origin, and ultimately affect the consumer evaluation of other products or brands of the place of

origin (Gürhan-Canli and Maheswaran, 2000). Therefore, in the construction of regional public brands of agricultural products, improving the image of the country of origin is very helpful to promote the friendly interaction between consumers and agricultural product brands, maintain brand reputation, and promote the establishment of a good relationship between consumers and agricultural product brands.

Product performance refers to the quality characteristics of products. Consumers will regard product performance as an important aspect of brand evaluation, so product performance is an important part of brand image (Schwaiger, 2004). In the construction of regional public brands of agricultural products, the quality of agricultural products varies from time to time, which damages the brand reputation of agricultural products to a great extent. It is found that brands providing consumers with high-quality products can improve consumer satisfaction, and then have a positive impact on consumer trust and loyalty (Moulard et al., 2021). When consumers perceive that the quality of agricultural products is excellent, they will have a good evaluation of the brand in the process of purchasing products (Zhang et al., 2021), which will not only generate the willingness to repurchase but also probably recommend it to people around them, thus promoting the spread of positive word of mouth of agricultural products brands (Huang, 2022). Therefore, excellent product performance is an important basis for maintaining and enhancing brand reputation, and an important antecedent for improving the quality of the relationship between agricultural brands.

Word of mouth is the oral, non-commercial communication between communicators and recipients about a brand, product or sales service (Fombrun et al., 2000). The research found that word of mouth is a very convincing brand information, which can become an important reference source for individuals to make consumption decisions (Al-Adwan et al., 2022), while improving consumer brand awareness (Choi et al., 2020) and consolidating consumer-brand relationships. In daily life, consumers share their knowledge, experience and views with potential consumers, thus affecting the purchase intention of other consumers (Meilatinova, 2021). In the process of brand communication of agricultural products, word of mouth communication is an important influencing factor for the formation of the brand reputation of agricultural products. At the same time, word of mouth communication promotes the interaction between consumers and brand attitudes toward agricultural products, deepens the connection between consumers and brands, and becomes an important driving factor for improving the quality of agricultural brand relationships.

3.2 Media attention factors and brand relationship quality

Media attention refers to the quantity or prominent degree of something or an event reported by the media. Media attention is an important influencing factor in brand reputation communication and brand relationship building. This study discusses the influence of media attention and advertising on brand relationship quality.

Media attention refers to the number of reports and the prominence of reports on a thing or problem (Amenta et al., 2009). With the growth of the internet, the influence of internet media is increasing (Sreejesh et al., 2020). Under the realistic background of low popularity and insufficient brand influence of regional public brands of agricultural products outside the province, it is particularly important to attract media attention by holding such activities as exhibition and marketing festivals and online agricultural products promotion meetings (Orellana-Rodriguez and Keane, 2018), which in turn

attract consumers. The study found that media attention plays a role in attracting audience attention and creating brand memory (Trielli and Diakopoulos, 2019). In the process of building regional public brands of agricultural products, media attention builds bridges for consumers to understand the brands (Hanaysha, 2022) and plays an important role in spreading brand reputation and building good consumer-brand relationships.

Advertising means publicity, which aims to inform the target group of something. In this study, we discuss economic advertising, mainly commercial advertising, which is a means of communication to promote products or services to target groups through media based on payment by advertisers (Ketelaar et al., 2017). Advertisement is like a big net to capture the attention of the audience, and When consumers see advertisements containing core brand information, they not only know these brands, but also establish a stronger relationship with them (Tran et al., 2020). For regional public brands of agricultural products, advertising not only helps brands to present their brand image and spread their reputation; it also has a positive effect on brand attitude formation and brand relationship building (Smith and Fischer, 2021). Therefore, agricultural product brands can try to catch consumers' attention by putting more advertisements than competitors.

3.3 User attention factors and brand relationship quality

User attention refers to resources and time that users invest in something. This study discusses the impact of user directed attention and user focused attention on brand relationship quality.

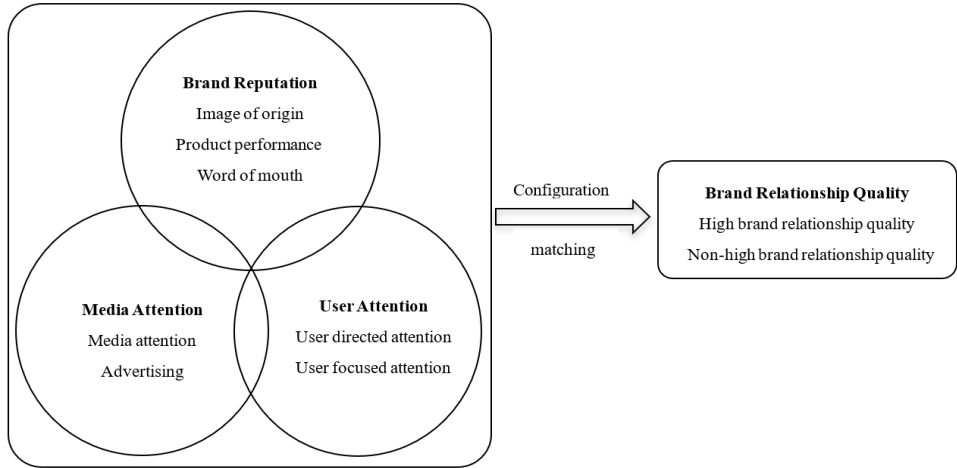
The higher the number of likes and ratings of a brand product, the more attention the product receives and the higher the brand loyalty of the user (Mayrhofer et al., 2020). Likes are a manifestation of mental activity directed toward a brand, a lower level of engagement (Gavilanes et al., 2018), and a trace of directed attention. The engagement of directed attention reflects the user's active participation in the brand's content, which leads to an emotional connection between the user and the brand, which in turn promotes the formation of a good relationship between the user and the brand (Thai and Wang, 2020). When users comment under a brand product, other users are likely to follow (Krebs and Lischka, 2019), the brand gains more and more attention, and the end user and the brand can build a strong relationship. Users writing reviews indicate that users are engaged in a deeper dimension of awareness (Tafesse and Wood, 2022), a behaviour that can be seen as a sign of focused attention (Fiss, 2011). Focused attention is a sign of deeper engagement with the brand content, which can attract more users to interact with the brand content. In the brand relationship building of agricultural regional public brands, attracting users' attention helps deepen the connection between users and the brand, and also attracts more users to participate in the brand content, realising the improvement of the quality of the consumer-brand relationship.

3.4 Conceptual model

This study examines the driving factors of brand relationship quality of regional public brands of agricultural products from a multifaceted and holistic perspective, among them, the image of origin, product performance, and word of mouth are the variables of brand reputation, media attention and advertising are the variables of media attention, and user directed attention and user focused attention are the variables of user attention. Brand reputation, media attention and user attention synergistically promote or inhibit brand

relationship quality. The result variable is brand relationship quality. This study explores the causal complexity of high and non-high brand relationship quality. Because inductive and deductive methods are adopted, and there is no theoretical motivation for specific interaction, we avoid putting forward transcendental propositions. According to the practice and theoretical study of the regional public brand building of agricultural products, the conceptual model is constructed, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Conceptual model



4 Methodology

4.1 fsQCA

fsQCA adopts a holistic perspective and is committed to exploring the effects of multiple factor configurations rather than individual factors on results, and the symmetry of causality is broken (Brubaker and Wilson, 2018). Unlike traditional statistical and qualitative analysis methods, the fsQCA responds to the doubts about the ‘generalisability’ of qualitative analysis in a few cases and to some extent compensates for the shortcomings of large sample analysis in qualitative change and phenomenon analysis (Du et al., 2020).

In addition, complexity theory focuses on the pattern of factor combinations, which can deeply analyse the causal relationship between the combination of preconditions and the results, and can be used to prove the interactions between variables that cannot be solved by simple linear methods in complex systems (Ragin, 2009). This study aims to explore the driving mechanisms of brand relationship quality, which is particularly suitable for the fsQCA due to the complexity of the process of brand relationship quality formation and the less pronounced influence of a single antecedent variable on the outcome variable, which fits with the complexity theory’s assumptions that causality is nonlinear and that the occurrence of social phenomena is the result of a combination of multiple factors. The 30 cases selected for this study belong to a medium sample size, which matches the fsQCA method (Cheng et al., 2019).

4.2 Data collection

4.2.1 Case selection

This study is based on the China Agricultural Brand Catalog 2019 Regional Public Brands of Agricultural Products, which is published by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs, China Agricultural Products Market Association and China Rural Magazine, and is representative and authoritative. 300 regional public brands of characteristic agricultural products from all over the country have been selected for the catalogue, which ensures sufficient data collection sources and guarantees the data quality of the case studies. This paper follows the following procedures for case selection:

- 1 the cases are ranked according to the Baidu News and Information Index, the number of advertisements placed in the media, and the number of likes and comments
- 2 based on meeting the above conditions, try to avoid having too many cases in the same category as much as possible to meet the balance of sample distribution
- 3 two brand managers in the field were invited to validate the final selection of 30 cases.

4.2.2 Data sources

The variable data in this study is partly derived from questionnaire surveys and partly from objective data. Questionnaire distribution is mainly divided into two stages: the first stage, the pretest. After the initial questionnaire is completed, 20 students are invited to participate in the pre-survey. The pre-survey results show that the reliability and validity of the questionnaire are good, so the questionnaire can be officially issued. In the second stage, the questionnaire was officially issued. The survey questionnaire is distributed through a questionnaire star, mainly targeting social media users who participate in topics related to public brands in agricultural product regions. These users possess relevant interests and knowledge, represent potential consumer groups, and can provide diverse data. 351 questionnaires were collected, 51 invalid questionnaires were deleted, and finally, 300 valid questionnaires were obtained. The basic information of samples is shown in Table 1.

The objective data sources are as follows: first, in terms of media attention, this study takes the Baidu News and Information Index of each brand as the raw data of media attention. Because Baidu, as the largest Chinese search engine in China, has a strong representativeness in its index. Secondly, in terms of advertising, this study uses the number of advertisements placed by regional public brands of agricultural products in 21 media under the four channels of Headline, Tencent, Baidu and Alibaba. Then, for user directed attention, this study uses the popularity value (number of likes) of branded agricultural products on Taobao, while user focused attention is measured based on the number of reviews obtained by branded agricultural products on Taobao.

Table 1 Demographic characteristics (N = 300)

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Gender	Male	136	45.33
	Female	164	54.67
Age	18–25	78	26
	26–30	48	16
	31–40	59	19.66
	41–50	60	20
	51–60	47	15.67
	> 60	8	2.67
Monthly income/RMB	< 1,000	78	26
	1,000–3,000	96	32
	3,000–5,000	60	20
	> 5,000	66	22

Table 2 Measurement scale

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Measuring item</i>	<i>Source</i>
Image of origin	I think the origin of this agricultural product has unique geographical conditions and mature production technology	Le et al. (2017)
	I think the origin of this agricultural product reflects the high quality of the product to a certain extent	
	I think the agricultural products of this origin have a good external image and eating experience	
Product performance	I think this brand of agricultural products has high-cost performance	Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001), Li et al. (2008)
	I think this brand of agricultural products has a good eating experience	
	I think the packaging design of this brand of agricultural products is very good	
Word of mouth	I often hear people praise the agricultural products in this place of origin	Hartline and Jones (1996)
Brand relationship quality	My actual experience with the brand is not much different than expected, and I have a better experience with the brand compared to other brands	Rauyruen and Miller (2007)
	The brand makes me feel safe and assured and the brand will be responsible for its actions	
	Even if my life has changed and the trend has changed, I will still choose this brand	

4.3 Measures

This study explores how seven factors, such as image of origin, product performance, word of mouth, media attention, advertising, user directed attention and user focused attention, affect the brand relationship quality of regional public brands of agricultural products. The questionnaire design refers to the scale of origin image of Le et al. (2017), the division of product performance of Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) and Li et al. (2008), the research of word of mouth by Hartline and Jones (1996) and the measurement of brand relationship quality by Rauyruen and Miller (2007) and is adapted in combination with the product situation of regional public brands of agricultural products. Table 2 shows the items of the measurement scale in this study.

4.4 Reliability and validity analysis

From Table 3, we can see that Cronbach's α and CR of the image of origin, product performance, and brand relationship quality are all greater than 0.8, which shows that the questionnaire used in this study has good reliability. At the same time, in the process of confirmatory factor analysis, we found that the standard load coefficients of ten items under three factors were all greater than 0.7, and the AVE of three dimensions were all greater than 0.5, which reflected that the questionnaire had good aggregation validity.

Table 3 Reliability and validity test results

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Dimension</i>	<i>Loading</i>	<i>Cronbach's α</i>	<i>CR</i>	<i>AVE</i>
Image of origin	Geographical conditions and production technology	0.718	0.870	0.871	0.630
	Product quality	0.804			
	Praise	0.818			
	External image and eating experience	0.829			
Product performance	Cost performance	0.754	0.833	0.822	0.607
	Eating experience	0.769			
	Packaging design	0.813			
Brand relationship quality	Satisfied	0.841	0.880	0.864	0.680
	Trust	0.836			
	Commitment	0.795			

4.5 Variable calibration

This study uses the method of Fiss (2011) to set the '95% quantile' as full membership, the '50% quantile' as the intersection point, and the '5% quantile' as full non-membership. By setting these three thresholds, fsQCA converts these values into fuzzy scores of 0-1. For the condition column where the fuzzy set membership score is 0.5, increase 0.001 to ensure that no cases are deleted in the fuzzy set calculation.

5 Data analysis and results

5.1 Necessary condition analysis

At the beginning of fsQCA analysis, we first analyse the necessary conditions. If the necessary conditions are not analysed first, the necessary conditions may be simplified in the subsequent reduced solution (Xu et al., 2020). The analysis results of necessary conditions for high/non-high brand relationship quality are shown in Table 4.

According to the consistency of necessary conditions in Table 4, excellent product performance (PP) is a necessary condition for producing high brand relationship quality (consistency 0.953, $0.953 > 0.9$), and lack of excellent product performance ($\sim$ PP) is a necessary condition for producing non-high brand relationship quality (consistency 0.953, $0.953 > 0.9$). After completing the necessary condition analysis, the next step of this study is to incorporate antecedent conditions into fsQCA and then explore the configurations that produce high brand relationship quality/non-high brand relationship quality.

Table 4 Analysis of necessary conditions

Conditional variable		Result variable	
		High brand relationship quality	Non-high brand relationship quality
Brand reputation	IOO	0.872	0.370
	$\sim$ IOO	0.413	0.896
	PP	0.953	0.348
	$\sim$ PP	0.370	0.953
	WOM	0.871	0.357
	$\sim$ WOM	0.397	0.894
Media attention	MA	0.638	0.438
	$\sim$ MA	0.627	0.809
	Ad	0.595	0.444
	$\sim$ Ad	0.654	0.788
User attention	UDA	0.674	0.415
	$\sim$ UDA	0.583	0.824
	UFA	0.670	0.439
	$\sim$ UFA	0.592	0.806

5.2 Configuration analysis

Using fsQCA3.0 software to analyse the data of 30 regional public brands of agricultural products, the case frequency threshold is set as 1, the consistency is greater than 0.8, and the PRI consistency is greater than 0.75. It is concluded that there are five configurations that produce high brand relationship quality, and the consistency indexes of five configurations are 0.986, 0.988, 0.954, 0.984 and 1.000, respectively, showing high consistency. The coverage of the model solution is 0.644, which shows that the five configurations explain the main reasons for the high brand relationship quality. The

configuration that produces high brand relationship quality is shown in Table 5. The following is a detailed analysis of each configuration that produces high brand relationship quality.

Condition configuration H1 shows that whether media attention and user focused attention exist or not, having the excellent image of origin (marginal condition), excellent product performance (core condition), high word of mouth (core condition), high advertising (core condition), and high user directed attention (marginal condition) can produce high brand relationship quality. For example, Wuyishan Dahongpao Tea under this condition is produced in Wuyishan, a famous Danxia Mountain, its great reputation of origin has laid a congenital advantage for Dahongpao's fame. At the same time, Wuyishan Dahongpao Tea is listed as 'Top Ten Famous Teas in China', and its growth, picking, and processing are managed by special tea farmers. The quality of tea is excellent and enjoys a good reputation in China. In recent years, led by Wuyixing, a leading tea enterprise, Wuyishan Dahongpao Tea has been advertised through Weibo, WeChat, Baidu, and other platforms, and its brand awareness and influence have been continuously improved, attracting a large number of users' attention, thus improving the brand relationship quality of Wuyishan Dahongpao Tea.

Table 5 Configurations that produce high brand relationship quality

Conditional variable	Generate high brand relationship quality configuration (high BRQ)				
	H1	H2	H3	H4	H5
Image of origin (IOO)	●	●	●		⊗
Product performance (PP)	●	●	●	●	●
Word of mouth (WOM)	●	●	●	●	⊗
Media attention (MA)			●	⊗	●
Advertising (Ad)	●	●	⊗	●	●
User directed attention (UDA)	●		⊗	●	●
User focused attention (UFA)		●		●	●
Consistency	0.986	0.988	0.954	0.984	1.000
Coverage	0.492	0.471	0.317	0.351	0.199
Unique coverage	0.049	0.030	0.081	0.003	0.019
Consistency of solutions			0.967		
Coverage degree of solution			0.644		

Notes: ● = core condition exists, ⊗ = core condition is missing, ■ = edge condition exists, ⊗ = edge condition is missing. Spaces indicate that the condition variable is insignificant (it can or cannot appear).

Condition configuration H2 shows that whether media attention and user directed attention exist or not, having the excellent image of origin (marginal condition), excellent product performance (core condition), high word of mouth (core condition), high advertising (core condition), and high user focused attention (core condition) can produce high brand relationship quality. Under this condition, the origin of Lycium barbarum in Ningxia is Ningxia Plain. Since Ningxia Plain is the alluvial plain of the Yellow River,

with fertile soil, abundant light and heat, Ningxia has been considered a good producing area of Chinese herbal medicines since ancient times. Ningxia Lycium has been favoured by people for its immune enhancement, eye brightening, and beauty enhancement effects. It has a good reputation and has always regarded advertising as an important way of brand promotion. When people choose traditional Chinese medicines, they often collect information from many aspects, actively interact with traditional Chinese medicine brands, and leave comments under the official account to deepen the relationship with the brand, which has effectively promoted the quality of the brand relationship of Ningxia Lycium barbarum.

Conditional configuration H3 shows that no matter whether user focused attention exists or not, lack of high advertising (marginal condition), lack of high user directed attention (marginal condition), excellent image of origin (marginal condition), excellent product performance (core condition), high word of mouth (core condition) and high media attention (marginal condition) can produce high brand relationship quality. The Korla fragrant pear under this condition is produced in Korla, Xinjiang, and is a famous fruit town. Korla Municipal Government and Korla Fragrant Pear Association jointly hold product promotion conferences every year. Korla Fragrant Pear also frequently participates in agricultural trade fairs and other exhibitions, so as to obtain a large amount of media reports and promote the in-depth promotion of the brand. When people buy fragrant pears that meet their expectations, they have a good impression of the brand and then recommend them to others, promoting the establishment of a good brand reputation. Therefore, even if the online advertising of Korla Fragrant Pear is insufficient, it can still build brand reputation and improve brand relationship quality through the spontaneous word of mouth propaganda of consumers.

Condition configuration H4 shows that no matter whether the image of origin exists or not, lack of high media attention (marginal condition), excellent product performance (core condition), high word of mouth (core condition), high advertising (core condition), high user directed attention (marginal condition) and high user focused attention (core condition) can produce high brand relationship quality. For example, Xinjiang Hetian Jade Jujube under this path has a big sweet, crisp and good quality. When people taste it, they often recommend it to friends or relatives, which has formed a good reputation. In recent years, Xinjiang Hetian Jade jujube has participated in some product promotion conferences, but it has not held its brand of red jujube promotion conferences like Ruoqiang Red Jujube, which has not received high media attention, but focuses on advertising and has put more advertisements on Taobao, TikTok and other platforms. Because of the high nutritional value of jujube, consumers pay attention to collecting product information. Even though consumers search for less media reports, they can obtain valuable information from its good reputation, advertising and other aspects, thus forming a good impression, realising the deep connection of brand relationship, and improving the quality of high brand relationship quality.

Conditional configuration H5 shows that lack of excellent image of origin (marginal condition), lack of high word of mouth (marginal condition), excellent product performance (core condition), high media attention (marginal condition), high advertising (core condition), high user directed attention (marginal condition) and high user focused attention (core condition) can produce high brand relationship quality. For example, Panjin rice under this configuration, and its image of origin is not as prominent as Dahongpao in Wuyishan. However, the rice made of Panjin rice tastes smooth with fragrance, which makes consumers have positive feelings for it. Because of the fierce

competition in the rice market, Panjin rice is also influenced by Wuchang rice in the process of word of mouth communication, so its word of mouth advantage is not so obvious. However, Panjin Rice holds tasting activities every year and often participates in product promotion conferences, which attracts many media reports and shows its brand image to the people of the whole country. At the same time, Panjin Rice complied with the tide of the new media era, and put advertisements in TikTok, Baidu, Taobao and other windows, which made the brand intuitively displayed in front of the internet audience, attracted more consumers' attention, so that consumers actively collect brand-related information and invest in the interaction with brands, thus enhancing the development ability of brand relationship and promoting the improvement of brand relationship quality.

At the same time, it is analysed that there are 6 configurations that lead to non-high brand relationship quality, as shown in Table 6. The consistency indexes of the six configurations are 0.990, 0.989, 0.995, 0.973, 0.992 and 0.976 respectively, the overall consistency is 0.982 and the coverage is 0.810, which explains the main reasons for the non-high brand relationship quality. Configurations that produce non-high brand relationship quality are shown in Table 6. The following is a detailed analysis of each configuration that produces non-high brand relationship quality.

Table 6 Configurations that produce non-high brand relationship quality

Conditional variable	Generate non-high brand relationship quality configuration (non-high BRQ)					
	NH1	NH2	NH3	NH4	NH5	NH6
Image of origin (IOO)	⊗	⊗	⊗		⊗	⊗
Product performance (PP)	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗
Word of mouth (WOM)	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗	⊗
Media attention (MA)		⊗	●	⊗	⊗	⊗
Advertising (Ad)		⊗	⊗	●	●	●
User directed attention (UDA)	⊗		⊗	●	⊗	
User focused attention (UFA)	⊗	⊗		●		●
Consistency	0.990	0.989	0.995	0.973	0.992	0.976
Coverage	0.714	0.603	0.350	0.252	0.321	0.285
Unique coverage	0.087	0.024	0.006	0.001	0.000	0.007
Consistency of solutions	0.982					
Coverage degree of solution	0.810					

Notes: ● = core condition exists, ⊗ = core condition is missing, ⊕ = edge condition exists, ⊖ = edge condition is missing. Spaces indicate that the condition variable is insignificant (it can or cannot appear).

Condition configuration NH1 shows that if the brand lacks excellent image of origin (marginal condition), excellent product performance (core condition), high word of mouth (core condition), user directed attention (marginal condition) and user focused attention (marginal condition), the brand relationship quality is not high. For example, Xuyi lobster under this condition has been found to contain furacilin and other pharmaceutical ingredients, and heavy metals have also exceeded the standard, which led

to a serious decline in its reputation and damage to its brand reputation. At the same time, Xuyi lobster attracts less user's directed attention and focused attention, resulting in insufficient interaction between consumers and brands, making consumers unable to form a deep understanding of the brand, and ultimately making it difficult to establish a good relationship between consumers and brands.

Condition configuration NH2 shows that the brand lacks excellent image of origin (marginal condition), excellent product performance (core condition), high word of mouth (core condition), and high media attention (marginal condition), advertising (marginal condition) and user focused attention (marginal condition), which makes it difficult to produce high brand relationship quality. Feicheng peach under this condition is a special product of Feicheng City, Shandong Province, and Feicheng City, which is not well-known, does not bring a halo effect to Feicheng peach. In the planting of Feicheng peach, due to the lack of unified planning and technical guidance from the government, some peach farmers increased planting density, which affected the quality, and consumers' word of mouth began to decline. Feicheng Peach's brand awareness awakened late, media attention was lacking, and advertising was still insufficient, which greatly hindered consumers' understanding of the brand and the establishment of brand relationships.

Conditional configuration NH3 shows that regardless of the existence of user focused attention, the lack of excellent image of origin (marginal condition), excellent product performance (core condition), high word of mouth (core condition), advertising (marginal condition) and user directed attention (marginal condition) will lead to the low brand relationship quality even if there is high media attention (marginal condition). For example, Lipu taro under this route is grown in Lipu, Guangxi, and its origin is not special. The local government has taken the lead in holding a product-tasting meeting, which has attracted media reports and improved brand awareness to a certain extent. However, the growth of Lipu taro requires very strict soil conditions. The same land cannot be cultivated for two consecutive years. Some producers cannot guarantee quality because of continuous planting for short-term benefits. The word of mouth differentiation is also serious, which has seriously damaged consumers' trust in the brand and makes it difficult to form a high brand relationship quality.

Conditional configuration NH4 shows that no matter whether the image of origin exists or not, the brand has high advertising (marginal condition), high user directed attention (marginal condition) and high user focused attention (marginal condition). If it lacks excellent product performance (core condition), word of mouth (core condition), and media attention (marginal condition), it is difficult to lead to high brand relationship quality. For example, the Wenxian Iron Stick yam under this path, although the brand pays attention to advertising, in recent years, due to the decentralised production of farmers, coupled with weak quality supervision by relevant departments, there has been a problem of confusion and variety degradation. Consumers even have difficulty distinguishing the appearance of authentic Iron Stick yam, and their reputation has been severely damaged. Consumers no longer regard it as the best choice, and have begun to turn to other brands, this has damaged the relationship between consumers and the brand of the Wenxian Iron Stick yam, making it difficult for the brand to form a high brand relationship quality.

Conditional configuration NH5 shows that no matter whether the user focused attention exists, if the brand lacks excellent image of origin (marginal condition), excellent product performance (core condition), high word of mouth (core condition),

media attention (marginal condition) and user directed attention (marginal condition), even if the brand has high advertising (marginal condition), it will not produce high brand relationship quality. For example, Jinxiang Garlic under this path, in recent years, has invested a lot of energy in advertising and won certain brand popularity. However, garlic farmers have expanded the planting area after seeing the favourable situation of the garlic export market, but the quality is difficult to guarantee, which leads to the uneven quality of Jinxiang Garlic purchased by consumers, and damages the reputation and the relationship between consumers and brands. In addition, the media coverage of Jinxiang Garlic is insufficient, and the attention of users is also insufficient. The connection between consumers and brands is not strong, and it is difficult to achieve high brand relationship quality.

Conditional configuration NH6 shows that regardless of whether the user directed attention exists or not, If the brand lacks excellent image of origin (marginal condition), excellent product performance (core condition), word of mouth (core condition), and media attention (marginal condition), even if the brand has high advertising (marginal condition) and high user focused attention (marginal condition), it will still lead to low quality of brand relationship. For example, *Dendrobium huoshanense* in this condition configuration, which has a good effect on strengthening physical fitness. Because it involves health problems, consumers are extremely sensitive to the quality. It only takes one bad product experience for consumers to develop negative feelings towards the brand, which can spread negative word of mouth. In this case, even if *Dendrobium huoshanense* has carried out large-scale advertising, consumers will give up choosing the brand because of a poor purchasing experience, which makes it difficult to establish a high-quality brand relationship.

5.3 Robustness test

Referring to previous studies, raising the PRI threshold from 0.75 to 0.8 for robustness test (Cheng et al., 2019), it was found that the increase of PRI consistency threshold not only caused a slight change in H3 edge conditions and lacked configurations corresponding to NH4 and NH5, but also four configurations leading to high brand relationship quality and four configurations leading to non-high brand relationship quality in the new model were consistent with the configurations of the original model, and there was a clear subset relationship between the two model configurations (Zhang and Du, 2019), which indicated that the research conclusion was relatively stable.

6 Conclusions and discussion

6.1 Research conclusions

The conclusions of this study are as follows:

- 1 there are many conditions for the promotion and inhibition of brand relationship quality of regional public brands of agricultural products
- 2 the five configurations of high brand relationship quality, the conditions involved have a substitution relationship in explaining the brand relationship quality, that is, for regional public brands of agricultural products with excellent product

performance, high advertising, high user directed attention and focused attention input, excellent word of mouth can replace high media attention, which can lead to high brand relationship quality

- 3 six paths of non-high brand relationship quality are found, and there is causal asymmetry between them and the path of high brand relationship quality
- 4 the consistency and coverage of high and non-high brand relationship quality configuration are good, and the explanatory power is strong.

6.2 *Discussion*

6.2.1 *Theoretical implications*

This research discusses the driving path of brand relationship quality of regional public brands of agricultural products from a multi-holistic perspective, and the main theoretical contributions are as follows. First, this study comprehensively considers the factors of media attention and user attention, and integrates brand communication into the brand relationship quality improvement of regional public brands of agricultural products, which provides a new vision for the application of attention theory. Prior research has shown that both media attention and user attention have a significant impact on brand relationship quality (Shukla et al., 2021; Abdullah and Siraj, 2018). However, our study integrates media attention and user attention factors and confirms that the combination of different factors can have an impact on the quality of brand relationships, which is highly consistent with the application of attention theory (Brooks et al., 2022). In addition, Barquero Cabrero et al. (2023) pointed out that media plays an important role in brand communication, promoting interaction and emotional connection between consumers and the brand by attracting audience attention.

Second, based on a configuration perspective, this article enriches the research on the antecedents of brand relationship quality by analysing the linkage matching of factors from the three levels of brand, media, and consumers in improving brand relationship quality. Existing literature mainly analyses the net effects of individual factors on brand relationship quality, such as brand reputation (Safeer and Le, 2023), social support (Tajvidi et al., 2021), and word of mouth (Ismagilova et al., 2020), and focuses on the constant and linear impact of relevant factors on brand relationship quality. However, the formation of brand relationship quality is a complex process influenced by multiple factors (Mardumyan and Siret, 2023). Relying on the configuration thinking behind the fsQCA method, this research systematically reveals the role mechanisms image of origin, product performance, word of mouth, media attention, advertising, user directed attention and user focused attention in the formation of brand relationship quality. It summarises and refines a variety of modes for the formation of brand relationship quality, and fills in the deficiencies of the analysis of factor combinations in the existing studies.

6.2.2 *Managerial implications*

First of all, accelerate the construction of high-quality brand relations of regional public brands of agricultural products. On the one hand, in the absence of a good image of origin for agricultural products brands, the agricultural products brand industry management department can cooperate with the propaganda department to formulate a word of mouth

promotion plan to enhance the brand image, build a brand reputation, and form a linkage with advertising, thus promoting the quality of brand relationships. On the other hand, the local government can take the lead in holding harvest festivals, product promotion conferences and product tasting meetings. Agricultural product brands can also actively participate in agricultural products exhibitions inside and outside the region to gain media attention and show their brand image to consumers, encourage consumers to have a deep understanding of agricultural product brands, and then help the formation of high-quality brand relationships.

Secondly, effectively strengthens the connection between regional public brands of agricultural products and consumers. On the one hand, relevant government departments show the growth environment of agricultural products to consumers through live streaming and other ways, and hold agricultural product promotion conferences to attract media attention, strengthen the connection between consumers and brands, and improve brand relationship quality. On the other hand, the regional public brand industry association of agricultural products should build a new media advertising matrix for Baidu, Headline, Tencent and Alibaba to convey brand information to consumers through advertising, leaving a deep impression on consumers. In addition, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs and other industrial management departments should accelerate the construction of official platforms to attract consumers' attention, promote the interaction between consumers and brands, and thus improve brand relationship quality, to gain advantages in the competitive environment of agricultural products, and help the development of rural revitalisation with the construction of regional public brands of agricultural products.

6.2.3 Limitations and future research

The limitations of this study are as follows: First, due to the limited brand of advertising monitoring platform, this study selected typical cases from fruits, grain, aquatic products, tea, forest peculiar products, edible fungi, and Chinese herbal medicines, but failed to choose from oil and livestock and poultry. Second, this study explores the influence of regional attributes of regional public brands of agricultural products on the quality of brand relationship through the introduction of the image of origin but has not studied the influence of other factors such as regional cultural attributes on the quality of the brand relationship of agricultural products. Therefore, future research can supplement the cases of oil, livestock and poultry, and further explore the influence of regional cultural attributes and other factors on the quality of brand relationship of agricultural products.

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