

MODEL ANSWER
Final Examination (EAS)
Entrepreneur & Management Research
 Comprehensive Research Evaluation

Case: Threads of Sumba 2.0 - Growth, Trust, and Ethical Cultural Marketing

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This document provides a structured academic model answer arranged according to Questions 1-8. The answer emphasizes methodological alignment, strong argumentation, responsible interpretation, and ethical sensitivity in a community-based cultural enterprise context.

Model Answer

Threads of Sumba 2.0: Growth, Trust, and Ethical Cultural Marketing

1. Comprehensive Problem Diagnosis

a. Three research-relevant symptoms and two managerial concerns

Category	Answer
Research-relevant symptom 1	Brand awareness and sales increased after the 2025 digital campaign, but conversion quality remains weak. This indicates that visibility does not automatically lead to meaningful purchase decisions.
Research-relevant symptom 2	Repeat purchase remains low. This suggests that the problem is not only attracting customers, but also building trust, satisfaction, and long-term customer retention.
Research-relevant symptom 3	Public questions about authenticity, pricing transparency, cultural commodification, and benefit-sharing continue to appear. This indicates a trust and ethical legitimacy problem.
Managerial concern 1	Management needs to decide whether Strategy A or Strategy B should be prioritized to improve marketing performance.
Managerial concern 2	Management must ensure that digital growth does not harm cultural dignity, misrepresent weavers, or weaken public trust in the enterprise.

b. Distinction between managerial problem, practical business problem, and academic research problem

Type of problem	Explanation
Managerial problem	Which content strategy should management choose to improve marketing outcomes?
Practical business problem	Awareness and sales have increased, but conversion quality and repeat purchase remain low.
Academic research problem	It is still unclear how cultural storytelling and process-transparency content influence perceived authenticity, perceived transparency, trust, customer value, purchase intention, repeat purchase intention, and ethical perceptions of cultural representation.

c. Final research problem statement

This study examines how cultural storytelling and process-transparency content strategies influence perceived authenticity, perceived transparency, trust, customer value, purchase intention, and repeat purchase intention in a community-based weaving social enterprise. It also investigates how customers and weavers evaluate the ethical quality of cultural representation, pricing transparency, and benefit-sharing communication.

2. Research Questions and Objectives

a. Academic problem statement paragraph

Loka Tenun Prai Madeta has experienced stronger awareness and increased sales after its digital campaign in 2025. However, this improvement has not been followed by strong conversion quality and repeat purchase. This situation suggests that reach alone is not sufficient to explain successful digital marketing performance. The two strategies tested by management represent different communication mechanisms. Strategy A emphasizes motif meaning, tradition, and cultural identity, while Strategy B emphasizes production process, pricing logic, and value-sharing transparency. Cultural storytelling may increase perceived authenticity, but it may also create ethical risk if the culture is exoticized or simplified.

Process transparency may strengthen trust because customers can better understand how products are made, why prices are set at certain levels, and how benefits are shared with weavers. Therefore, the issue is not simply which strategy is better, but how each strategy affects authenticity, transparency, trust, customer value, purchase intention, and ethical cultural representation. A scientifically defensible study is needed to evaluate both marketing effectiveness and cultural responsibility.

b. Three aligned and researchable research questions

- How do cultural storytelling content and process-transparency content differ in their effects on perceived authenticity, perceived transparency, trust, customer value, and purchase intention?
- To what extent do perceived authenticity and perceived transparency influence trust, and how does trust affect purchase intention and repeat purchase intention?
- How do customers and weavers interpret the ethical quality of cultural representation, pricing transparency, and benefit-sharing communication in Loka Tenun Prai Madeta's digital content?

c. Two research objectives

- To analyze the effects of cultural storytelling and process-transparency content on perceived authenticity, perceived transparency, trust, customer value, purchase intention, and repeat purchase intention.
- To evaluate customers' and weavers' perceptions of ethical cultural representation, pricing transparency, and benefit-sharing in the digital marketing of a community-based weaving social enterprise.

d. Why the research questions are appropriate

The research questions are not too broad because they focus on two specific content strategies, one social enterprise context, and clearly defined constructs. They are not normative because they do not merely ask what management should do based on opinion; instead, they ask what relationships can be examined through evidence. They are answerable with data because the researcher can collect digital analytics, customer survey responses, customer interviews, weaver interviews, and public comment data.

3. Research Paradigm and Evidence Logic

a. Most suitable paradigm

The most suitable paradigm is the pragmatic paradigm.

b. Justification

A pragmatic paradigm is appropriate because the case requires both measurement and interpretation. On one side, management needs quantitative evidence about reach, saves, shares, click-through rate, inquiries, conversion, perceived trust, and purchase intention. On the other side, the case also involves cultural meaning, ethical representation, weaver concerns, and public perceptions of commodification.

A purely positivist approach may provide useful numerical comparison, but it may ignore the voices of the weavers and the ethical meaning of cultural

representation. A purely interpretivist approach may provide deep cultural understanding, but it may not give management enough comparative evidence about the effectiveness of Strategy A and Strategy B. Therefore, pragmatism is the strongest paradigm because it allows the researcher to use the methods that best answer the problem: quantitative evidence for marketing performance and qualitative evidence for cultural and ethical interpretation.

c. What counts as evidence within the pragmatic paradigm

Evidence type	Specific data
Digital analytics	Reach, impressions, saves, shares, comments, click-through rate, inquiries, conversion rate, and repeat purchase records.
Survey data	Scores of perceived authenticity, perceived transparency, trust, customer value, purchase intention, and repeat purchase intention.
Qualitative data	Interviews with weavers, customers, and management about cultural meaning, trust, pricing, representation, and benefit-sharing.
Content and public response data	Captions, visuals, comments, questions from audiences, and community review of whether cultural stories are represented respectfully.

d. Methodological risk if a mismatched paradigm is chosen

If the researcher uses only a positivist paradigm, the study may conclude that one strategy is better only because it produces higher conversion, while ignoring whether the content harms cultural dignity or misrepresents the weavers. If the researcher uses only an interpretivist paradigm, the study may become rich in meaning but weak in managerial evidence because it may not clearly compare the performance of Strategy A and Strategy B. A mismatched paradigm would weaken the alignment among problem, evidence, method, analysis, and conclusion.

4. Literature Review as Strategic Mapping and Gap

a. At least six relevant literature keywords

- Cultural storytelling marketing
- Perceived authenticity
- Transparency-based trust
- Ethical cultural marketing
- Social enterprise branding
- Customer engagement quality
- Purchase intention
- Repeat purchase intention

- Cultural commodification
- Benefit-sharing transparency

b. Simple literature map

The literature map below shows how content strategy is connected to authenticity, transparency, trust, customer value, and purchase intention. Ethical cultural representation is treated as a contextual condition that can strengthen or weaken the relationship between content strategy and trust.

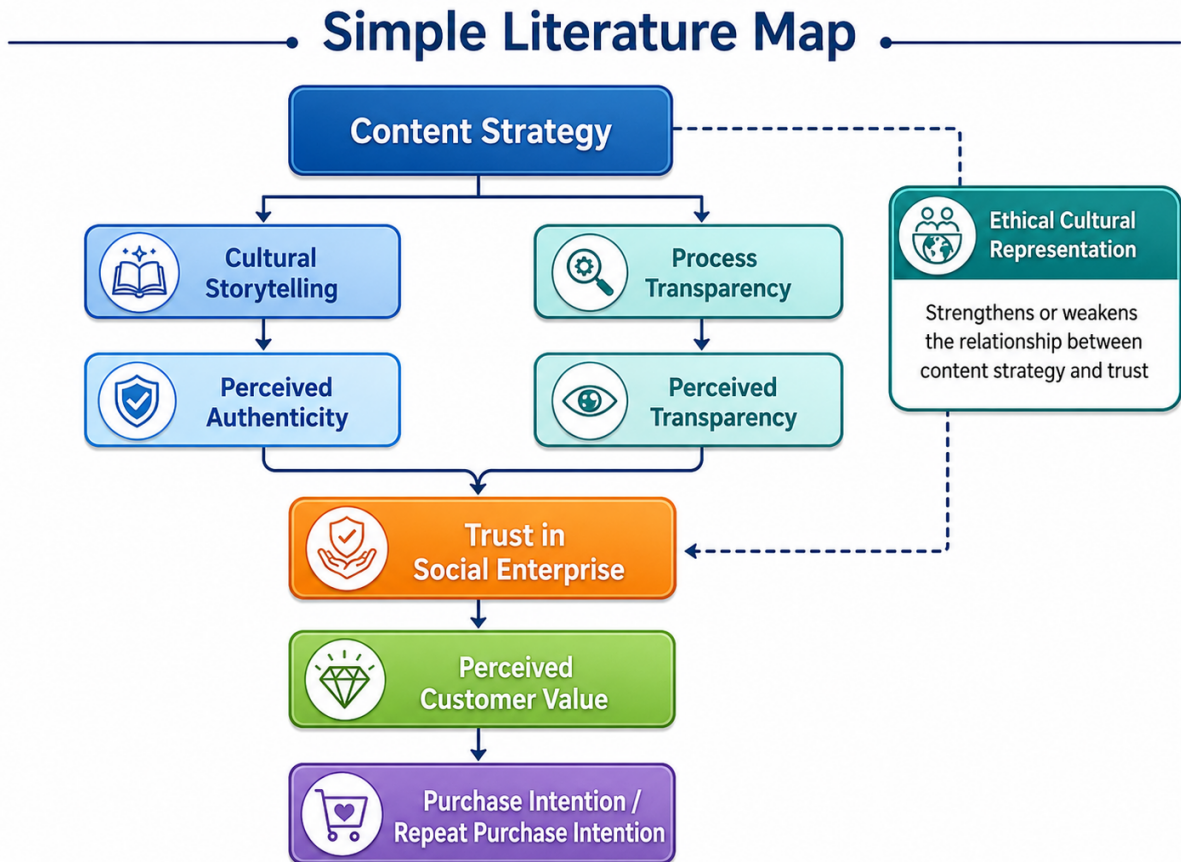


Figure 1. Simple Literature Map

c. Research gap and its importance

The research gap is that many digital marketing studies focus mainly on reach, engagement, conversion, and purchase intention, but fewer studies explain how community-based cultural enterprises can balance digital marketing effectiveness with authenticity, transparency, trust, and ethical cultural representation. This gap is academically important because it connects digital marketing, social entrepreneurship, cultural authenticity, transparency, and ethics in one integrated framework. It is managerially important because Loka Tenun Prai Madeta cannot evaluate success only by sales or reach. The enterprise must also

protect the dignity of weavers, communicate benefit-sharing fairly, and avoid turning cultural identity into a shallow promotional object.

d. Operational definitions of core constructs

Construct	Operational definition
Perceived authenticity	The degree to which customers perceive the story, motif explanation, cultural identity, and product narrative as genuine, credible, and connected to Sumba weaving traditions. It can be measured through survey items such as: The content feels authentic; The motif explanation feels culturally credible.
Perceived transparency	The degree to which customers perceive the production process, pricing logic, and benefit-sharing information as clear, honest, and understandable. It can be measured through items about clarity of process, price, and value distribution.
Trust	The customer's belief that Loka Tenun Prai Madeta is honest, reliable, fair, and respectful toward the weaving community.
Purchase intention	The likelihood that customers intend to buy the product after seeing the content. It can be measured through intention scales, inquiries, clicks, or purchase-related actions.
Cultural sensitivity	The extent to which customers and weavers perceive the content as respectful, non-exoticizing, accurate, and approved by the community.

5. Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses/Propositions

a. Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework below explains the relationship between Strategy A, Strategy B, perceived authenticity, perceived transparency, trust, customer value, and purchase intention. Ethical cultural representation functions as a moderator that influences whether the content strategy strengthens or weakens trust.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

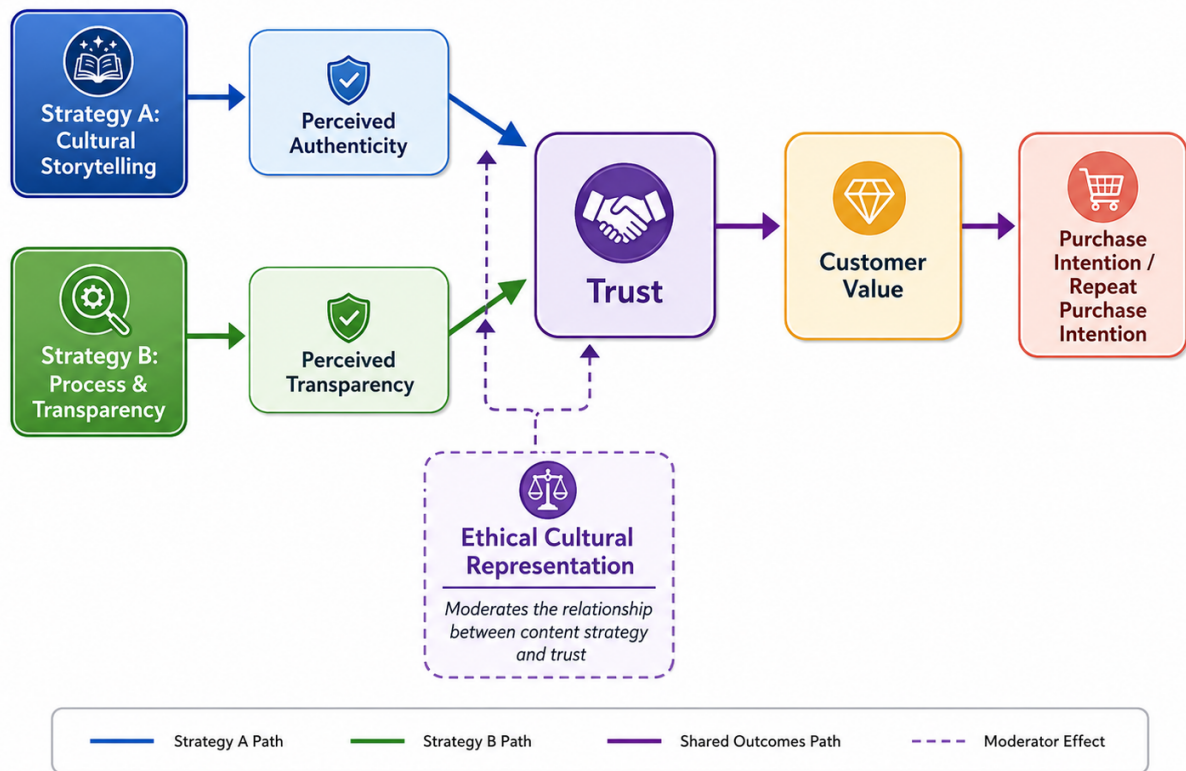


Figure 2. Conceptual Framework

b. Direction and logic of relationships

Strategy A is expected to increase perceived authenticity because it communicates motif meaning, tradition, and cultural identity. However, cultural storytelling will only build trust if the story is perceived as accurate, respectful, and not exoticizing. Strategy B is expected to increase perceived transparency because it explains how the product is made, why the price is set at a certain level, and how value is shared with the weavers. Transparency can reduce customer suspicion and strengthen trust. Trust then increases customer value because customers may feel that buying the product has aesthetic, social, and ethical meaning. Higher customer value is expected to increase purchase intention and repeat purchase intention.

c. Hypotheses and propositions

- H1: Cultural storytelling content has a positive effect on perceived authenticity.
- H2: Process-transparency content has a positive effect on perceived transparency.
- H3: Perceived authenticity and perceived transparency have positive effects on customer trust.

- H4: Customer trust has a positive effect on purchase intention and repeat purchase intention.
- H5: Trust mediates the relationship between content strategy and purchase intention.
- Proposition 1: Weavers will perceive cultural marketing as ethical when motif meanings, cultural identity, and traditional narratives are represented accurately and with community consent.
- Proposition 2: Customers will perceive pricing and benefit-sharing transparency as fairness signals that strengthen their trust in the social enterprise.

d. Why this framework is stronger than simply comparing Strategy A vs Strategy B

This framework is stronger because it explains the mechanism behind each strategy rather than merely declaring one strategy as the winner. Strategy A may be stronger in building awareness and authenticity, while Strategy B may be stronger in building transparency, trust, and conversion quality. A simple comparison between Strategy A and Strategy B would not explain why customers respond differently. By including authenticity, transparency, trust, customer value, purchase intention, repeat purchase intention, and ethical cultural representation, the framework provides a more scientific, responsible, and managerially useful evaluation.

6. Research Design, Sampling, and Ethics

a. Research design

The most appropriate design is a mixed-methods sequential explanatory design. The first phase is quantitative, using A/B testing and customer surveys to compare the effects of Strategy A and Strategy B. The second phase is qualitative, using interviews with weavers, customers, and management to explain the quantitative results and evaluate ethical issues. This design is suitable because the case requires both performance evaluation and cultural interpretation. The quantitative phase answers whether the strategies differ in measurable outcomes, while the qualitative phase explains why those differences occur and whether the strategies are ethically acceptable.

b. Data collection techniques and justification

Technique	Justification
A/B content testing	To compare audience responses to Strategy A and Strategy B under relatively similar campaign conditions.
Digital analytics	To measure reach, saves, shares, comments, click-through rate, inquiries, conversion, and repeat purchase indicators.
Customer survey	To measure perceived authenticity, perceived transparency, trust, customer value, purchase intention, and repeat purchase intention.
Weaver interviews	To understand weavers' perceptions of cultural representation, consent, benefit-sharing, and possible exoticization.
Customer interviews	To understand why customers trust or distrust the brand and how they interpret authenticity and transparency.
Comment analysis	To capture public interpretation of the content, including questions about authenticity, price, and fairness.

c. Population, unit of analysis, sampling frame, sampling technique, and inclusion criteria

Component	Answer
Population	Potential customers, social media followers, previous buyers, and the 42 women weavers working with Loka Tenun Prai Madeta.
Unit of analysis	Individual customers for the survey, individual weavers for interviews, and digital content posts for engagement analysis.
Sampling frame	Lists of followers exposed to the content, previous buyers, marketplace or website visitors, and the list of active weavers.
Quantitative sampling technique	Purposive sampling or quota sampling of customers who have been exposed to Strategy A or Strategy B. If possible, random assignment in A/B testing should be used to strengthen causal inference.
Qualitative sampling technique	Purposive sampling of weavers, selected customers, and management representatives who can provide rich information.
Inclusion criteria	Participants must be at least 18 years old, have seen one of the campaign contents or interacted with the brand, be willing to participate, and provide informed consent. For weavers, participants must be directly involved in production or cultural storytelling used by the enterprise.

d. Two key ethics considerations

First, the study must protect cultural representation. Motif meanings, cultural stories, and weaver identities should not be used merely as promotional materials without consent. Weavers should be involved in reviewing whether the content is accurate, respectful, and free from exoticization. This is essential because the product is not only a commercial item but also a cultural expression.

Second, the study must ensure informed consent, community protection, and benefit-sharing transparency. Participants must understand the purpose of the research, the type of data collected, how the data will be used, and whether their identities will be shown or anonymized. The study should not extract knowledge from the community without giving value back. A responsible output may include ethical content guidelines, transparent benefit-sharing communication, and feedback sessions with the weavers.

7. Data Analysis Plan

Because the chosen design is mixed-methods, the analysis should include both quantitative and qualitative components.

a. Quantitative analysis plan

Element	Plan
Independent variable	Content strategy: Strategy A = cultural storytelling; Strategy B = process transparency.
Mediating variables	Perceived authenticity, perceived transparency, and trust.
Dependent variables	Customer value, purchase intention, repeat purchase intention, inquiries, clicks, and conversion.
Moderator/context variable	Perceived cultural sensitivity or concern about exoticization.
Control variables	Age, previous purchase experience, familiarity with Sumba weaving, price sensitivity, and platform used.

Measurement can use a 1-5 or 1-7 Likert scale. Example survey items include: The content feels authentic; The pricing explanation is clear; I trust this enterprise; Buying this product has social value; and I intend to buy this product.

Validity should be checked through content validity, expert review, community review, and pilot testing. Reliability can be tested using Cronbach's Alpha. If the sample size is sufficient, factor analysis may be used to examine construct validity. The researcher can use descriptive statistics, independent sample t-test or Mann-Whitney test, regression analysis, mediation analysis, and, if appropriate, PLS-SEM.

Results would support the hypotheses if Strategy A produces higher perceived authenticity, Strategy B produces higher perceived transparency and trust, and trust significantly predicts purchase intention and repeat purchase intention. Results would reject or weaken the hypotheses if no meaningful difference appears between the two strategies or if trust does not significantly influence intention.

b. Qualitative analysis plan

Qualitative data should come from weaver interviews, customer interviews, management interviews, public comments, and content review. The analysis can use open coding, axial coding, and thematic coding. Initial codes may include authenticity, trust, price fairness, cultural pride, exoticization concern, community consent, value-sharing, and respectful representation.

Credibility should be strengthened through triangulation, member checking, and audit trail. Triangulation means comparing survey results, analytics, interviews, and comments. Member checking means asking selected weavers to review whether the researcher's interpretation reflects their experience accurately. An audit trail means documenting how data were collected, coded, and interpreted. Qualitative evidence becomes convincing when similar themes repeatedly appear across different data sources and help explain the quantitative patterns.

8. Interpretation, Reporting, and Defense Readiness

a. Two examples of overclaiming and responsible rewriting

Overclaiming	Responsible claim
Strategy B is the best strategy for all cultural products.	In the context of Loka Tenun Prai Madeta's tested campaign and audience, Strategy B appears to generate stronger trust and conversion-quality indicators than Strategy A.
Customers do not care about culture because Strategy B performs better.	The findings suggest that transparency may have a more direct relationship with trust and purchase intention, while cultural storytelling remains important for building authenticity and cultural identity.

b. Results-to-implication paragraph

If the study finds that Strategy A generates higher reach while Strategy B generates more saves, shares, trust, and purchase intention, management should not treat reach as the only indicator of success. Strategy A may still be valuable for building awareness, cultural identity, and emotional attraction. However, Strategy

B may be more useful for improving trust and conversion quality because it explains the production process, pricing logic, and benefit-sharing more clearly.

The findings imply that customers need both cultural meaning and fairness information before making a stronger purchase decision. Therefore, Loka Tenun Prai Madeta should consider a hybrid content strategy that combines respectful cultural storytelling with transparent process and value-sharing explanations. All cultural narratives should be reviewed with weavers to avoid exoticization and inaccurate representation. One limitation is that the results may only apply to the tested platform, audience, and campaign period, so further testing across different platforms and customer segments is necessary.

c. Three tough reviewer questions and strong answers

Reviewer question	Strong answer
How can you prove that Strategy B causes higher trust, rather than merely being associated with it?	If random assignment is used in the A/B test, causal inference becomes stronger. If randomization is not possible, I would avoid strong causal claims and describe the finding as an association while controlling for posting time, audience type, prior purchase experience, and familiarity with Sumba weaving.
How do you ensure that perceived authenticity is culturally valid?	I would adapt measurement items from relevant literature, conduct expert review, pilot the instrument, and involve weaver representatives to review whether the items reflect local cultural meaning accurately.
Why is mixed-methods better than a survey-only design in this case?	A survey can measure relationships among variables, but it cannot fully capture weavers' concerns about cultural representation, consent, and exoticization. Mixed-methods provides both measurable marketing evidence and ethical-cultural understanding.

Final Conclusion

A strong answer should not simply choose Strategy A or Strategy B. A scientifically defensible answer must explain the mechanism through which each strategy works. Strategy A is likely stronger in building perceived authenticity and cultural identity, while Strategy B is likely stronger in building perceived transparency, trust, and conversion quality. The most responsible managerial implication is to develop a hybrid strategy: culturally accurate storytelling approved

by the community, combined with transparent explanations of production process, pricing, and benefit-sharing. This approach allows Loka Tenun Prai Madeta to pursue growth while protecting cultural dignity, community trust, and ethical legitimacy.