BRAND POSITIONING MANAGEMENT OF CHINESE Cun BA EVENT VIA SPECTATOR BRAND AWARENESS

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Abstract

With the gradual development of material conditions in society, the fulfillment of spiritual and cultural needs has become a goal that people are pursuing. Sports is an important way to satisfy people's spiritual and cultural needs, and plays an important contribution to the development of the country. As a core product in the field of sports, competition performance naturally occupies a certain space in the national policy. Basketball, as one of Chinese "three major sports", has a solid and large mass base, regardless of age, gender, and region, you can see fans shouting for basketball everywhere. Sports event are an important carrier for people to participate in sports activities, and the development of sports event in the countryside is in a bottleneck stage. The "Beautiful Countryside" series of Chinese Cun BA event in Qiandongnan, Guizhou Province, has been a hot success, providing effective reference value for the development of rural revitalization with the help of sports event. It provides an effective reference value for the development of rural revitalization through sports event. As a new sports industry, the Chinese Cun BA event has not yet established its brand effect. In the face of the vast and commercially valuable domestic market, it is the most important task for the future development of Cun BA to correctly position its brand, conform to the mind of potential customers and compete for consumers. As a result, this study helps to understand the current brand awareness status of China Cun BA event audiences, the current situation of event brand positioning, related influencing factors and model promotion and application, and plays a certain theoretical and practical role in the development of China Cun BA event brand positioning.

Keywords: Brand Positioning, Chinese Cun BA event, Spectator sport, Brand Awareness, Brand identity, Perceived value.

1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

1.1 Introduction

Since the release of the Guiding Opinions of the General Office of the State Council on Accelerating the Development of the Sports Industry in 2010, the governments of various districts have been attaching greater importance to the sports consumer market year by year,

and the opinions have collectively provided detailed guidance on Chinese fitness market, the development of the sporting goods industry, the market for sports competitions and performances, and sports intermediary organisations, etc., with a view to strengthening the leadership of the development of the sports industry and encouraging the support of mass sports organisations. (State Council, 2010)

The government has simplified and decentralised its administration, creating loose conditions for further accelerating the construction of brand event. This is a clear signal that Chinese sports industry has risen to the level of national strategy in its future development, and its performance in the market is gradually attracting attention. On 2 September 2019, the Circular on the Issuance of the Outline for the Construction of a Strong Sporting Nation put forward the idea of encouraging localities to strengthen the branding innovation of sports event, and to cultivate a batch of amateur boutique event with great social influence and high visibility. To create a number of well-known sports enterprises with international competitiveness and independent sports brands with international influence, and to support advantageous enterprises, advantageous brands and advantageous projects to "go out". And will "create national fitness event and activities brand" in the major projects column of this document. Basketball, as one of Chinese "three major balls", has a solid and huge mass base, regardless of age, gender, region, everywhere you can see the basketball fans shouting for basketball.

1.2 Research Objectives

In order to have a more comprehensive understanding of the current research status of brand positioning of Chinese Cun BA event, This study uses literature method, quantitative analysis method and semi-structured interview method to construct a structural equation model for analysis, summarise and sort out relevant research results at home and abroad, aiming to deepen the theoretical understanding of brand positioning and provide theoretical references to enhance the brand positioning of Chinese Cun BA event. As a result, there are three research goals for this study. 1) To investigate the current situation of the Chinese Cun BA event's brand positioning. 2) To analyze the relationship of factor brand awareness, brand identity, and perceived value on Chinese Cun BA event's brand positioning in China. 3) To create the model of brand awareness, brand identity, and perceived value on Chinese Cun BA event's brand positioning in China. 4) To evaluate the model of brand awareness, brand identity, and perceived value on the brand positioning of Chinese Cun BA event in China.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The concept of Cun BA event and related research

Taipan Village is an administrative village in Taipan Township, Taijiang County, Qiandongnan Prefecture, Guizhou Province, where the traffic is more convenient, but the village size is not large, the population is not much, only two natural cottages, four villagers groups of more than 1,100 people, of which the largest population of Miao people, accounting for 92%, Han Chinese accounted for 8 per cent. However, in mid to late July 2022, in such a small village deep in the mountains, a "June 6" Eat New Festival Village Basketball Match exploded all over the

Internet, attracting a great deal of attention from all walks of life. As the event was organised by villagers, the venue was in the countryside, the participants were villagers, and the atmosphere of the court was warm, it was figuratively called "Cun BA" by netizens.

Scholars such as Jiang Cheng have analysed it from the cultural level, arguing that the popularity of "Cun BA" seems to be accidental but is actually inevitable, reflecting the strong demand for spiritual and cultural life in rural areas (Jiang & Tian, 2022). Yang Guangneng analyses from the level of new media communication that the reason why "Cun BA" can continuously get attention is due to the planning and deployment of the Qiandongnan Integrated Media Centre, which treats "Cun BA" as a "breaking point" through the combined effect of internal and external propaganda. Through the combined effect of internal and external propaganda, "Cun BA" was treated as "breaking news" to maximise the dissemination effect (Yang & Li, 2022a). Guan Xiuxue analyses from the emotional level that empathic communication refers to the formation of similar or common emotions, in which the villagers' emotions towards the "Cun BA" are revealed in the online media, which will deepen the public's awareness of the "Cun BA" and stimulate the masses to develop similar or common emotions, which will lead to the development of the "Cun BA" news. This will deepen the public's awareness of the Cun BA and stimulate the public to feel similar or the same emotions, arousing empathy (Guan & Wang, 2022). Peng Fangrong concluded that the current popularity of "Cun BA" is the result of the combined effects of grassroots sports construction in Guizhou Province, traditional sports culture of ethnic minorities in Qiandongnan, and media publicity. (Peng, 2022)

To sum up, the popularity of "Cun BA" in Taipan, Guizhou Province is an inevitable result of the combined effects of grass-roots sports construction in Guizhou Province, the traditional sports culture of the Qiandongnan ethnic minorities, and the media's publicity

2.2 The concept of brand positioning and related research

The term positioning was coined by Rees and Trout First introduced and popularised in 1972, it is one of the most fascinating terms in the field of marketing and communication today, and has been widely used in the field of marketing ever since it was introduced. Positioning theory requires products to be customer-centred and "positioning first" based on distinctiveness. According to Rees and Trout, "Positioning is not what you do with the product, it is what you do with the intended customer. In other words, you have to position the product in the minds of the intended customers. The basic approach to positioning is not to create something new and different, but to change what already exists in people's minds, to reconnect those pre-existing connections (Trout & Ries, 1972).

In summary, positioning theory is closely related to consumers and ultimately aims to differentiate and enhance brand equity. This study understands brand positioning as the establishment of a consistent, unique and clear image for a brand with the aim of occupying a special position in the minds of target consumers so that they are more likely to choose this brand over others. Brand positioning is a key concept in brand management and refers to the process by which a company differentiates itself from its competitors and meets the needs and

desires of its target market by clearly defining the brand's unique position and image in the minds of consumers.

2.3 The concept of brand awareness and related research

In 1991, David A. Aaker proposed the Brand Equity Model. The theory was first introduced in his book Managing Brand Equity: Capitalising on the Value of a Brand Name. The Brand Equity Model divides the value of a brand into five key dimensions to help organisations better understand and manage the value and impact of their brands (Aker, 1991). In 2003, Keller's review found that the scope of research on branding was too narrow, focusing on a single perspective. Therefore, based on the theory of associative network structure, Keller redefined the concept of brand awareness as a mesh of associations constructed by consumers when they relate to the descriptions and memories associated with the brand (Keller, 2003).

Comprehensive the above literature, domestic and foreign scholars on brand awareness research perspective, although there are differences, but most of the research is based on brand equity or consumer awareness psychology perspective, brand awareness and brand equity has a close relationship, most scholars believe that the brand awareness is the consumer's subjective attitudes or awareness and awareness of the brand.

2.4 The concept of brand identity and related research

Identity first originated in the study of social psychology, which articulated a close affinity, both for others with similar interests and for acquiring social roles through imitation and role-playing (Michael, 2013). Subsequently, scholars in the field of marketing extended the study of brand identity from the relevance of identity to consumers' self-concept and self-image. Brand identity research emerged in the 1980s and 1990s, with Sirgy's "self-concept-brand congruence" (Sirgy, 1985) and Aaker's complementary "brand personality" theory attracting a range of researchers. (Aaker, 1992a) have attracted a range of scholars to the field. The well-known self-image congruence-product image congruence theory suggests that consumers are more likely to buy brands and products whose brand image is congruent with their self-image. Although the theory of brand personality has long been proposed, Aaker's subsequent proposal of brand personality dimensions has had a much wider impact on the field of branding research. The theory builds a theoretical framework for brand personality based on a psychological dimensional approach to research and identifies the number and nature of brand personality dimensions. Brand personality includes brand personality and demographic characteristics, and product-related attributes have symbolic and self-expressive meanings. (Aaker, 1992a)

2.5 The concept of perceived value and related research

In the last century, with the intensification of market competition, enterprises pay more attention to the awareness of customers' individual needs and the awareness of value, so as to improve the competitiveness of enterprises.In the 1980s, with the rapid development of the market economy, the market competition has become increasingly fierce, and the consumers have gradually taken the initiative after the consumption ability has been improved, while the merchants have to actively enhance their own competitive advantages in order to In the

background of consumers gradually taking over the consumer sovereignty, the research on perceived value came into being, and the research results on the concept of perceived value have been remarkable over the years.

In contrast, the domestic research on the theory of perceived value started later, and most scholars agree with Zeithaml's view. Dong was the first to propose in the domestic academic community that consumers can perceive a certain amount of utility in the process of purchasing and using a product, and that perceived value is the comparison between utility and the cost paid (Dong & Quan, 1999). Fan suggested that perceived value is the consumer's awareness of the specific value brought by a product or service and has five characteristics such as subjectivity, hierarchy, multidimensionality, contingency and comparison (Fan & Luo, 2003). According to Bai consumers will assess the gains and losses of product and service consumption behaviour and judge whether it meets their expectations, and thus form a certain perceived value (Bai & Liao, 2001). Dynasty Hui proved through empirical research that consumers will measure their benefits in economic, social and emotional aspects, and the result of measuring with the money, time and risk paid is the perceived value (Wang & Lu, 2011). Kelly Liu researched that in the online context, perceived value is the overall evaluation and subjective feeling of the product or service obtained by the consumer during the whole process of shopping in an online shop.(Liu, 2016)

2.6 Concept of spectator sport

Spectator sport refers to sports competitions or sporting event that attract a large number of spectators and spectator, where the role of the spectator is primarily to enjoy the competition by watching, rather than to participate in it directly. This type of sport is more than just a competition between athletes; it is a recreational and social experience with wide-ranging cultural, social and economic implications.(Ross, 2006)

Spectator sports can be played in a variety of stadiums, sports venues, performance venues, and through media such as television and webcasting. These activities include a wide range of sports such as football, basketball, baseball, football, ice hockey, rugby, tennis, golf, and motor racing. Spectators are entertained and emotionally fulfilled by watching the athletes play, the skills and strategies they display, and the competition between teams.

In conclusion, spectator sport is a form of activity that combines sports competition, entertainment and socialising. It not only brings entertainment and passion, but also has a wide range of social, cultural and economic impacts, becoming an important force in connecting people, shaping values and promoting economic development.

2.7 Research Framework

The purpose of this study is to explore the relationship between Chinese Cun BA event spectator's brand awareness, brand identity, perceived value and Chinese Cun BA event brand positioning. Furthermore, it aims to examine how brand identity and perceived value influence the extent to which independent and dependent variables interact.

The following are assumptions:

H1: Brand awareness has a significant effect on brand positioning of Chinese Cun BA event.

H2: Brand awareness has a significant effect on brand identity.

H3: Brand awareness has a significant effect on perceived value.

H4: Perceived value has a significant effect on brand positioning of Chinese Cun BA event.

H5: Brand identity has a significant effect on brand positioning of Chinese Cun BA event.

H6: Perceived value as a mediating variable has a significant effect on brand positioning of Chinese Cun BA event.

H7: Brand identity as a mediating variable has a significant effect on brand positioning in Chinese Cun BA event.
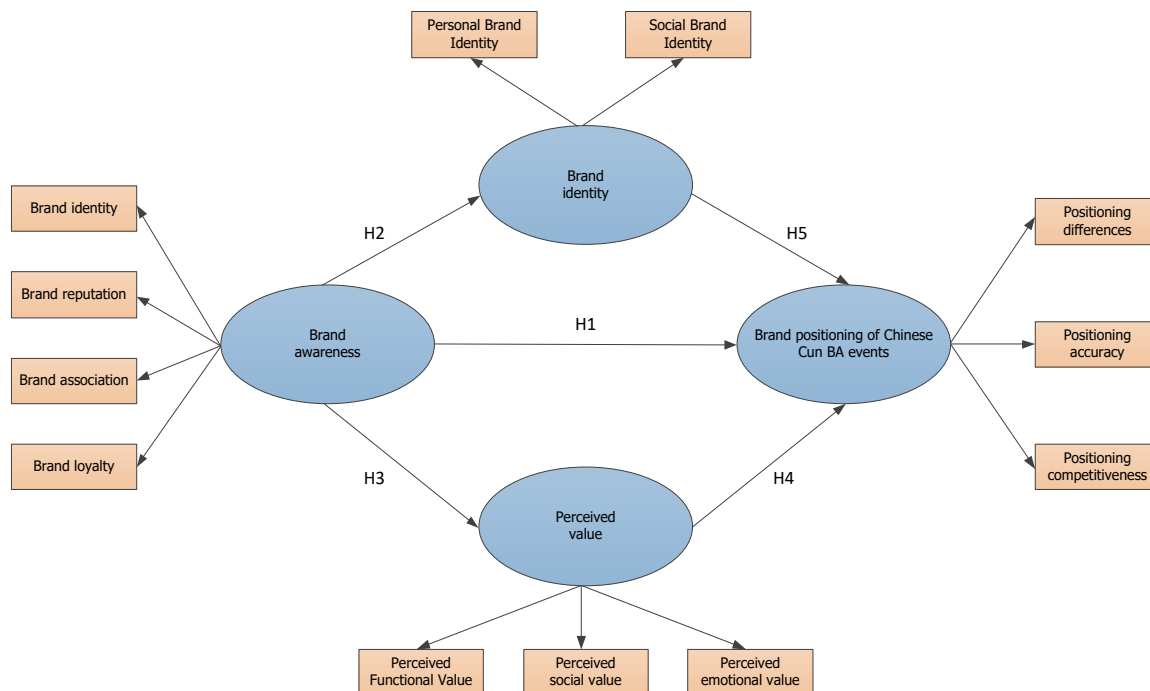

Figure 1: conceptual model

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Sampling Methodology

The researcher conducted a pre-research related to the online and offline Chinese Cun BA event through the GM Yang(Yang & Li, 2022b). Liu(2022a) and other scholars' literature, and combined with the relevant reports of the event, it can be learnt that the offline spectators (Yuan & Hua, 2022) attending the Chinese Cun BA event in Taipan Village, Guizhou Province, from 2021-2023 were 25,990, 35,600, and 42,500, respectively. 2020 was the year when the event was discontinued because of the global epidemic, so the authors took the average value of the

number of spectators of the last three years as the research object by taking the average of the last three years, about 34,700 offline spectators who are over 18 years old as the research object. Modeling the Structural Equation Model (SEM) with a multivariate method should have a threshold for determining the sample size of 20 times the observable variables used for defining the samples in the program (Lindeman et al., 1980), these research were 20 observable variables, therefore, the sample size was at least (12 x 20) = 240 samples. In fact, the researcher surveyed 303 people as a sample.

Taking into account the recovery rate of the follow-up questionnaires, i.e. 15 per cent of respondents completing the questionnaires, the authors increased the sample size to 1.1 times the sample size, 240 * 1.1= 260.(Holtom et al., 2022)

Earl Babble (2000) believes that the effective recovery rate of the questionnaires for graduates is generally 60% to 70%, and the effective recovery rate of education research questionnaires in the Chinese situation is generally higher (Zhang, 2009).

3.2 Measurement instrument

The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire, which was divided into two parts:

The first part is a questionnaire about the general situation of the survey respondents (event spectators), i.e., closed-ended questions on gender, age, education, occupation, income, etc., totalling six questions.

The second part is a questionnaire about the factors affecting the brand positioning management of Chinese Cun BA event. The researchers collected and compiled the questionnaire on the factors affecting brand positioning management of Chinese Cun BA event by analysing the relevant literature. The questions were categorised according to the sub-items/indicators of the questions.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter largely focuses on data analysis, using structural equation modeling and AMOS to evaluate the measurement model. First, we evaluate the measurement model's constructs for validity and reliability. Second, by investigating the structural equation model, the researcher examines the connections between the constructs.

4.1 Descriptive statistical analysis

From the gender composition of the sample, the male spectator is predominant, accounting for 75.25%, and the female spectator is only 24.75%, which is in line with common sense, because most of the population who like to play basketball in life are boys. In terms of the age composition of the sample, the 18-25 age group has the most spectator, with 131 people, a proportion of 43.23%; the 51-60 age group has the least spectator, with only 26 people, a proportion of 8.58%. In terms of the composition of the sample's education level, the number of people with a college or bachelor's degree is the largest, with 237 people, accounting for 78.22%; the number of people with a graduate degree or higher is the smallest, with only 6 people, accounting for 1.98%. In terms of the occupational composition of the sample, farmers

and fishermen have the largest number of people, with 80 people, accounting for 26.40%; professional and technical personnel, general office workers, self-employed, freelancers, and general workers in the business/service/manufacturing industry have similar numbers of people, with a proportion of about 15%. In terms of the monthly income composition of the sample, the number of people earning $2,000 or less was the highest, with 137 people, or 45.21%; followed by those earning $2,000-4,000, with 105 people, or 34.65%; and the number of people earning $8,000-10,000 was the smallest, with only 5 people, or 1.65%. In terms of the composition of the sample's place of residence, the number of people living in rural areas is the largest in number, with 118 people, accounting for 38.94%; followed by the number of people living in cities, with 96 people, accounting for 31.68%; and the number of people living in towns and counties is about the same, with a ratio of 15.18% and 14.19%, respectively.

In this part, the AMOS algorithm is utilized to evaluate the measurement model. Examining the developed model's validity and reliability is part of the assessment process. As indicated in Table 1, the main metrics used to measure reliability and validity are Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE).

Table 1: Reliability and Convergence Validity test

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Brand Awareness (BA)	0.849	0.878	0.646
Brand Identity (BI)	0.831	0.811	0.684
Perceived Value (PV)	0.708	0.736	0.487
Brand Positioning of Chinese Cun BA Event (BP)	0.896	0.629	0.378

Although convergent validity generally requires AVE to be greater than 0.5, some scholars believe that AVE between 0.36 and 0.50 is also acceptable (Li et al., 2018; Purnomo, 2017; Zhang, 2021). In summary, the convergent validity level of this research model is acceptable.

Cronbach's alpha, CR, and AVE values are shown in the above table. Cronbach's alpha values should be greater than 0.60 in accordance with the advised norms for statistical applicability (Hair et al., 2012). Cronbach's alpha values for each construct are greater than 0.70, indicating strong reliability and statistical acceptance. The average variance extracted (AVE) for each dimension is greater than 0.5, and the composite reliability (CR) for each construct is greater than 0.7. This meets the standards established by Black et al. (2010; Sharma et al. (1996), which demand that CR be larger than 0.7 and AVE be greater than 0.5. As a result, each construct's convergent validity is supported. The structure thus passes the validity and reliability tests, enabling additional data analysis.

4.2 Discriminant validity

Measuring discriminant validity entails contrasting the correlation coefficients between the construct and other components with the square root of the AVE (Average Variance Extracted). It is thought to have excellent discriminant validity if the square root of AVE is greater than the correlation coefficient between the concept and other components (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

According to Table 2, the AVE square root values of the four variables (brand awareness, brand identity, perceived value, brand positioning) are higher than the correlation coefficients between them and other factors. This indicates that the variables have discriminant validity.

Table 2: Discriminant validity test

	BA	BI	PV	BP
BA	0.858			
BI	0.272	0.811		
PV	0.259	0.099	0.736	
BP	0.424	0.304	0.366	0.629

4.3 Overall fit evaluation of structural equation model

In this study, the path map was created using the AMOS software, the fit of the research model was tested using the maximum likelihood approach, and the fitting index of the model as well as the estimated value of each path coefficient were computed. According to Table 4, which is employed in this work, common indicators like CMIN/DF, GFI, AGFI, RMR, RMSEA, NNFI, CFI, and IFI were used to assess how well structural equation models fit the data (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Black et al., 2010).

Table 3: The result of Model fitting

Adaptation Index	Criteria or Thresholds for Adaptation	Statistic	Adaptation Results
χ^2	the smaller the better	1029.988	/
χ^2/df	Between 1 and 3	1.222	ideal
GFI	>0.9, ideal	0.870	acceptable
	>0.8, acceptable		
AGFI	>0.9, ideal	0.855	acceptable
	>0.8, acceptable		
NFI	>0.9, ideal	0.837	acceptable
	>0.8, acceptable		
IFI	>0.9, ideal	0.966	ideal
	>0.8, acceptable		
CFI	>0.9, ideal	0.966	ideal
	>0.8, acceptable		
RMR	<0.05, ideal	0.095	acceptable
	0.05-0.1, acceptable		
RMSEA	<0.05, ideal	0.027	ideal
	0.05-0.08, acceptable		

## 4.4 Overall fit evaluation of structural equation model

To test H1- H7, this part use the bootstrapping method. The results of the direct and indirect hypotheses are provided in Tables 4, respectively, and the findings of the structural equation model analysis are displayed in Figure 2.

Table 4: Direct path coefficients between latent variables and hypothesis testing results

Path			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P-value	Std Regression Weights	Result
PV	<---	BA	0.365	0.069	5.313	***	0.478	Support
BI	<---	BA	0.383	0.089	4.295	***	0.372	Support
BP	<---	PV	0.661	0.141	4.673	***	0.552	Support
BP	<---	BI	0.218	0.071	3.058	**	0.246	Support
BP	<---	BA	0.272	0.082	3.341	***	0.298	Support
Note :***(P<0.001),**(P<0.005),*(P<0.01),								

Note：*** indicates a significant difference at the level of 0.001; * indicates a significant difference at the 0.05 level.
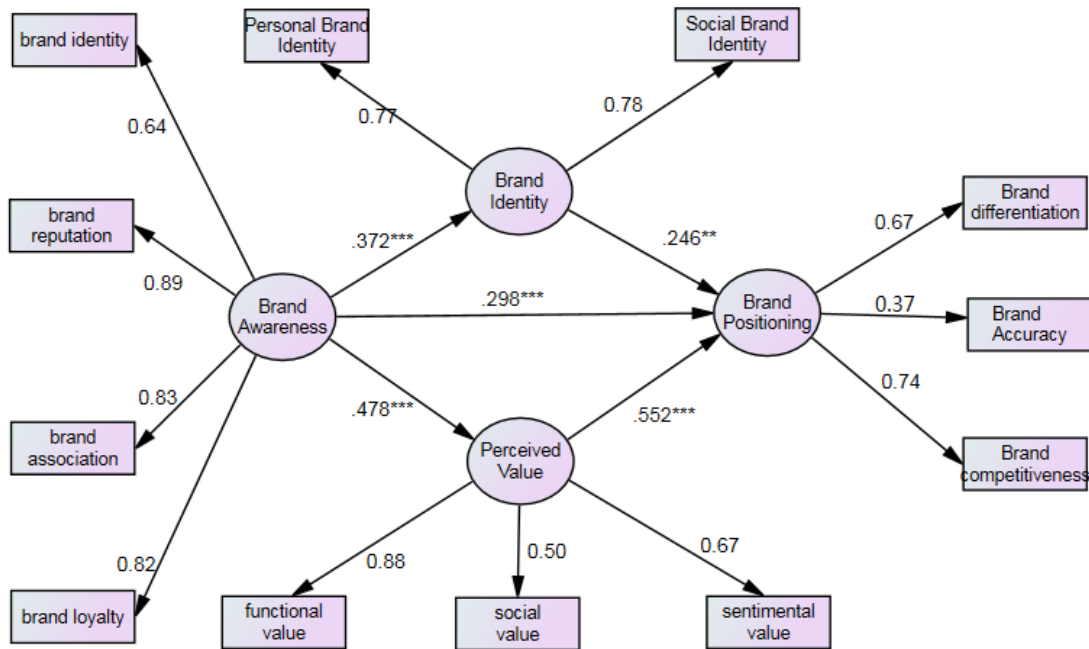
Note:*** indicates a significant difference at the 0.001 level;
** indicates a significant difference at the 0.01 level;

Figure 2: Conceptual Model

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

5.1 Conclusion

This paper takes the Chinese Cun BA spectator as the survey object, and studies the influence of spectator brand awareness, spectator brand identity, and spectator perceived value on the brand positioning of the Chinese Cun BA event. Based on the research on brand awareness, brand identity, perceived value, brand positioning, event branding, Chinese Cun BA and other related literatures, this paper tries to find out the important factors affecting spectators' brand awareness and verify the mediating role of brand identity and perceived value.

5.2 Suggestion

5.2.1 Suggestions for applying the research results

1) Take traditional festivals as an opportunity to create a good competition atmosphere

Sports event and traditional festivals are integrated to enrich the content of traditional festivals, enhance national cohesion, and create a good atmosphere for the game.

2) Adhere to the localization of farmers and prevent capital intervention

The Chinese Cun BA event originates from the countryside and serves the masses. Adhering to the localization of village sports to ensure that village sports serve the farmers, village sports and cultural activities should be emotionally linked with the rural public, so that they will be loved and supported by the farmers, and the rural public will participate in them enthusiastically. The reason why the Cun BA event has gained so much attention is that the biggest point is to adhere to the localization of farmers.

3) New media as a means of communication to expand brand influence

With the development of social science and technology, new media communication technology has been rapidly popularized, and information dissemination technology using new media as a carrier has entered into the life of the public, and the combination of online and offline information dissemination has become the most popular way of dissemination, and all kinds of short-video APPs have become the most effective means of dissemination through the live broadcasting channel.

4) Improving the network of rural fitness organizations

Organization is an important medium to integrate scattered resources. In order to facilitate the management of the event, the representatives of the villagers of Taipan Village have created a localized basketball association, which consists of 50 to 60 members, mostly young people who play together in the village.

5) Strengthening the construction of rural sports talent team

The key to rural revitalization is the revitalization of talents. The smooth operation of rural sports event requires not only the participation of villagers' spontaneous organization, but also the guidance of professional sports talents. The relevant departments should increase the training of "China's rural social sports instructors".

5.2.2 Suggestions for further research

1) The integration of sports and tourism as a means to inject new momentum for rural sports

With the rapid development of the economy, the combination of sports and tourism is now a way of behavior of a healthy life, rural sports and tourism integration can promote rural economic development, bear the important mission of rural revitalization, sports and tourism integration for narrowing the gap between urban and rural areas put forward a new path to build

a tourism base around the upgrading of the basketball court in Taipan Village, will pull Taipan Township area of the food and beverage industry consumption of more than 40 million yuan, the village sports Tourism has a broad prospect.

2) Shape the exclusive brand and enhance the internal driving force for brand development

With the development and growth of sports event in various countries, China has clearly proposed to promote the development of professional event, create a number of attractive international, national and regional event, strengthen the management and use of sports organizations, venues and logos, and move forward in the direction of a sports powerhouse: in the process of the development of rural sports, it is necessary to pay attention to the protection of intellectual property rights to achieve the dual development of the rural economy and sports, and to create a characteristic rural sports brand.

3) Improve the government's multi-sectoral synergy mechanism and build a development system

On June 7, 2023, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs and the General Administration of Sport issued a notice deciding to organize and carry out the National Harmonious Countryside Basketball Competition (Cun BA), which is divided into three phases, with the final (Cun BA finals scheduled to be held in October in Taijiang County, Guizhou Province. "The development and growth of the Cun BA event brand cannot be separated from the synergy of the government and various departments, with the government taking the lead and social organizations participating in the construction of the Cun BA event. The government should take the lead and social organizations should participate in building the development system of the Chinese Cun BA event brand.

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