

## FACTORS INFLUENCEING TO SUSTAINABILITY BRANDING OF PROFESSIONAL WUSHU, CHINA

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### Abstract

This study explores the core factors that affect the sustainable development of Chinese professional martial arts brands, and proposes optimization strategies to promote its long-term stable development. By means of literature review, questionnaire survey and case analysis, this paper selects representative event brands such as "Wulin Wind" and "Kunlun" and systematically analyzes the key variables of brand development, including sports competition control, event quality and brand image. The results show that risk management, diversified cooperation and information management are the core elements of event operation, and the reliability, responsiveness and security of event quality directly affect brand image and consumer loyalty. Lack of internationalization, lack of standardization and shortage of talents are the main obstacles restricting brand development. Based on this, suggestions are put forward to optimize risk management, strengthen diversified cooperation, use information technology to improve the quality of events and promote internationalization strategy, so as to realize the organic unity of cultural inheritance, economic benefits and international influence of the brand.

**Keywords:** Professional Martial Arts Brand; Sustainable Development; Quality of the Event; Brand Internationalization.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The brand construction of Chinese professional wushu competition is the key practice of the combination of wushu culture and market economy. In recent years, with the promotion of national sports industry policy and the sharp increase of national sports consumption demand, the commercialization and branding of martial arts events have gradually become an important issue in the sports industry.

The branding of martial arts events can not only meet the growing cultural consumption needs of the people, but also enhance the market competitiveness and social influence of the event through the improvement of the quality of the event, the optimization of risk management and the construction of the brand image.

However, the branding of wushu events is faced with many challenges, including the absence of event management policy, the limitation of brand development mode and the lack of marketization. These realistic difficulties not only restrict the sustainable development of professional martial arts competition brand, but also hinder the international dissemination of

martial arts culture. Based on this, through the systematic analysis of the current branding status of martial arts events and related policies, this study aims to explore the core factors that affect the sustainable development of professional martial arts brands, and put forward the theoretical framework and practical path to optimize brand building, in order to provide guidance for the healthy development of Chinese martial arts events brands.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Policy Background**

In recent years, the construction of Chinese professional martial arts brand has ushered in a major development opportunity under the promotion of national policies. In terms of policy background, the "Several Opinions of The State Council on Accelerating the Development of the sports Industry and Promoting sports Consumption" clearly proposes to cancel the approval of sports events and create branded events in order to release market vitality and enrich the supply of events. This policy not only provides institutional guarantee for the development of martial arts brands, but also creates a good environment for its branding and professional development.

The Guiding Opinions of The General Office of the State Council on Accelerating the Development of the fitness and Leisure Industry further emphasized the importance of the sports and leisure industry, proposed measures such as deepening institutional reform, promoting innovative development, and strengthening market supervision, laying a solid foundation for the sustainable development of martial arts brands.

The Guiding Opinions of The General Office of the State Council on Accelerating the Development of the Sports Competition and Performance Industry focus on the diversification of events, the expansion of market players and the internationalization of brands, and propose to create 100 well-known events and 100 independent brands.

The implementation of these policies has strongly promoted the optimization and improvement of Chinese professional martial arts brands in organizational management, resource allocation and market operation. With the implementation of the "Martial Arts Industry Development Plan (2019-2025)", the specific tasks of martial arts brand construction are further clarified, including the creation of professional competitions, the construction of competition systems and the development of professional leagues, so that the social value and commercial value of martial arts brands are increasingly prominent. The comprehensive support of the policy provides a clear strategic direction and realistic path for the sustainable development of Chinese professional martial arts brands

### **2.2 Wushu competition brand status**

The branding status of professional wushu competitions in China presents a pattern of coexistence of diversified development and core challenges. In recent years, with the growth of policy support and market demand, Chinese professional martial arts events have gradually moved from regional traditional events to the direction of branding and internationalization.

Branded events such as "Wulin Wind" and "Kunlun Decision" have become industry benchmarks, and through holding high-level events and strengthening brand publicity, these brands have established a high level of visibility and influence in domestic and foreign markets (Figure 1).

However, the actual promotion of wushu event branding still faces problems such as lack of standardization, uneven quality of events and lagging commercial development. Some organizers have insufficient understanding of the brand characteristics and construction objectives, and the brand positioning is vague, resulting in limited market competitiveness and audience appeal of the event.

The disconnection between the retirement of star athletes and the training of the new generation of athletes has further affected the continued popularity of the event. However, with the gradual advancement of international cooperation and the integration and optimization of event resources, the branding of Chinese professional martial arts events is moving towards a new stage. By improving the quality of the event, strengthening the brand strategic planning and promoting diversified cooperation, the future professional martial arts event brand is expected to occupy a more important position on the international stage, so as to achieve the organic unity of social value, cultural inheritance and economic benefits.



**Figure 1: Current situation of Sanda brand in China**

### 2.3 Relevant theoretical basis

The relevant theoretical basis plays a key role in the research of the sustainable development of professional martial arts brand, providing a systematic analytical framework and theoretical support.

Sustainable development theory advocates the ability to meet the needs of future generations while meeting the needs of the contemporary, emphasizing the three principles of fairness, sustainability and commonality, which is of great significance for the long-term development strategy of professional martial arts brands in cultural inheritance, environmental protection

and economic development. Rational behavior theory provides the basis for understanding consumers' psychological decision-making in wushu brand selection by exploring the relationship between attitude, subjective norm and behavioral intention.

On this basis, planned behavior theory adds the dimension of perceived behavior control, further reveals the influence of external conditions on consumer behavior, and helps design more targeted brand promotion strategies. System management theory emphasizes the integration of complex factors from a holistic perspective, regards martial arts brand building as an organic system composed of culture, society, economy and environment, and emphasizes dynamic coordination and resource optimization.

These theories together build the theoretical foundation of professional martial arts brand research, not only enrich the academic system of brand construction, but also provide scientific guidance for its practical development.

### **3. RESEARCH METHODS**

#### **3.1 Research scope**

The research scope covers many aspects of Chinese professional martial arts events, including the host place of the event brand, key variables and research objects.

The research focuses on the selection of four representative professional martial arts competition brands and their host cities, namely "Wulin Feng" (Taiyuan, Shaanxi Province), "Kunlun Battle" (Beijing), "Warrior Glory" (Xinxiang, Henan Province) and "Emei Legend" (Chongqing), and systematically analyzes the operation mode, market performance and brand development strategy of these competition brands in the host places.

The study variables involved four potential variables of sports competition control, sports event quality, brand image and sustainable brand, and measured sports competition control through risk management, diversified cooperation and information management.

The quality of the event was assessed by reliability, responsiveness, tangibility, empathy and safety (Table 1); Portray the brand image with brand identity, brand personality and brand association; The sustainability performance of the four aspects of economic, environmental, social and cultural protection is analyzed comprehensively.

In terms of the selection of research objects, the focus is on the managers of commercial martial arts event organizers, athletes and spectators, and diversified data are collected through interviews and questionnaires.

Combined with the opinions and analysis of local sports management departments, this paper tries to comprehensively understand the diversified development and sustainable development potential of martial arts brands in different regions, so as to provide scientific basis for the optimization of Chinese professional martial arts competition brands.

**Table 1: Dimensions of branding quality of professional wushu sports in China**

Scholars	Year	Dimensions of influencing the brand quality of Wushu competition in events				
		Reliability	Responsiveness	Tangibility	Empathy	Safety
1.Bitner M.J.	1992	√	√	√		
2.Bijmolt T.H.A. & Wedel M	2019	√		√	√	√
3.Bolton R.N. & Drew J.H.	2001	√	√		√	√
4.Brady M.K. & Cronin J.J	2019	√	√	√		

### 3.2 Data collection and analysis methods

In the study of professional wushu brand, the selection of data collection and analysis method is very important. Based on relevant research theories and practical needs, a systematic research framework is constructed, including the combination of literature review, questionnaire survey, interview and case analysis.

In the literature review stage, academic articles, policy documents and industry reports related to the theme were searched through domestic and foreign databases to comprehensively sort out the theoretical basis and policy background of martial arts competition brand development and lay theoretical support for the research. Through structured questionnaire design, extensive data collection was carried out for event organizers, athletes and spectators to ensure the representativeness and diversity of sample data.

The contents of the questionnaire focus on the influence factors of the event brand, including the core variables such as sports competition control, event quality and brand image. Through in-depth communication with industry experts and relevant stakeholders, the interview method excavates hidden problems and innovative insights to supplement the quantitative data. Case analysis selects representative martial arts competition brands, such as "Wulin Wind" and "Kunlun", and carries out in-depth analysis from multiple dimensions such as event organization, promotion mode and brand management, in order to reveal the key path of its sustainable development.

In terms of data analysis, quantitative and qualitative methods are comprehensively applied, and analysis tools such as SPSS and NVivo are used to test the variable relationship and summarize the model, so as to ensure the scientificity and practicality of the research conclusions and provide empirical support and theoretical guidance for the sustainable development of professional martial arts brands.

### 3.3 Research variables and hypotheses

The construction of research variables and hypotheses aims to identify the core factors and mechanisms that affect the sustainable development of Chinese professional martial arts brands. Variable design is based on analysis combining theory and practice, involving independent variables, dependent variables and mediating variables. The independent variables are sports competition control and sports event quality, the former including risk management, diversified cooperation and information management, the latter covering reliability, responsiveness, tangibility, empathy and security five dimensions; The dependent variable is

sustainable brand, which integrates the dimensions of economic, environmental, social, cultural protection and governance transparency. The mediating variable is brand image, including brand cognition, brand association and brand personality. Based on theoretical support, it is proposed that both sports competition control and event quality have a positive impact on brand image and sustainable brand, and brand image also has a significant positive effect on sustainable brand. The research takes the structured model as the framework and empirically tests the relationship between variables to provide a scientific basis for the sustainable development of martial arts brands (Figure 2).

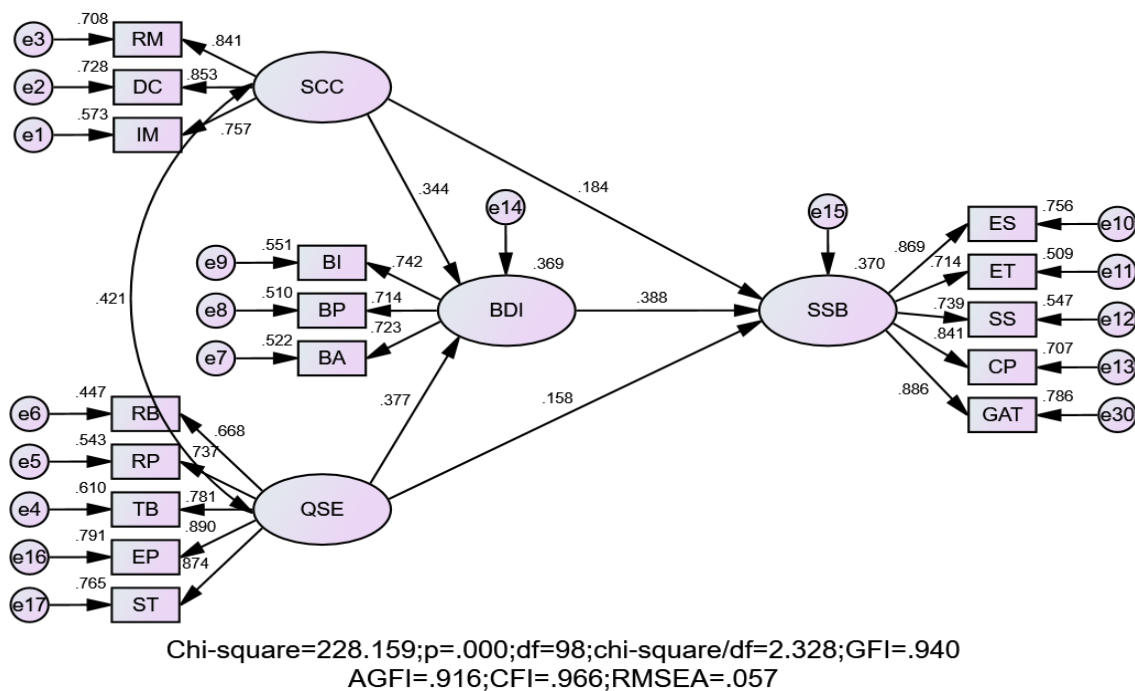


Figure 2: Structural equation modeling of factors affecting event intent

#### 4. RESEARCH RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

##### 4.1 Status quo of Chinese professional martial arts brands

The development status of Chinese professional wushu brand shows the characteristics of diversification and scale, but it still faces many challenges. In recent years, with the national policy to vigorously support the sports industry, martial arts competition as an important part of it gradually attracted attention. Professional martial arts competitions represented by brands such as "Wulin Wind" and "Kunlun Determination" not only improve the commercial value of martial arts, but also promote the branding development of the event. Through professional operation, these events have successfully attracted the attention of domestic and foreign audiences and enhanced their social influence. However, on the whole, there is still a gap between the commercialization degree of professional martial arts brands and the international level, especially in the process of event standardization, marketing and internationalization.

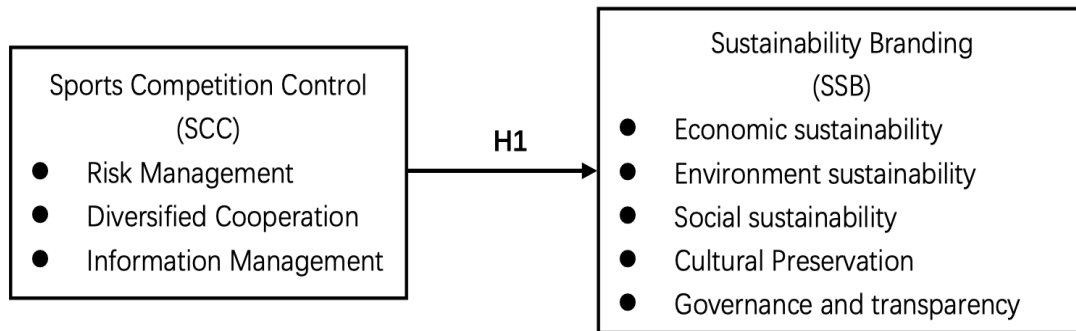
The uneven distribution of resources and the loss of talents in the operation of the event have further restricted the sustainable development of the brand.

At the market level, the popularity and market scale of professional martial arts brands have continued to grow in recent years, but compared with mainstream sports such as football and basketball, the audience base and consumption power of martial arts events are still relatively limited. Most competition brands still rely mainly on the local market, insufficient international promotion, and fail to give full play to the cultural value and international appeal of Chinese martial arts. The risk management and diversified cooperation mechanism in the event operation are not perfect, which affects the long-term development potential of the brand. In order to achieve the sustainable development of professional martial arts brand, it is necessary to further optimize the quality of competitions, strengthen brand building, and enhance the cultural communication and economic value of martial arts through cross-industry cooperation, laying the foundation for the comprehensive development of martial arts industry.

#### **4.2 Main factors affecting sustainable brands**

The main factors affecting the sustainable brand of professional martial arts involve many aspects, including sports competition control, sports event quality and brand image. The core of sports competition control is to realize the coordination of risk management, diversified cooperation and information management through manual intervention in the whole process of sports competition. Risk management aims to assess and avoid various potential risks in the course of the event, and reduce the probability of loss in the event operation by deploying relevant personnel and measures in advance; Diversified cooperation enhances brand innovation ability and market competitiveness by introducing cross-industry, cross-border and industry-university-research cooperation models; The function of information management is to optimize the organization and resource allocation of the event through modern information technology, and enhance the fairness and transparency of the event. These controls ensure the organisational efficiency and social benefits of the event, laying the foundation for sustainable brand development.

The quality of sporting events directly affects a brand's market appeal and consumer trust, as measured by reliability, responsiveness, tangibility, empathy and safety (Figure 3). The reliability reflects the professional competence and brand reputation of the event organization; Responsiveness reflects the event's immediate response and support to the needs of the audience; Tangibility refers to the physical performance of event facilities and services; Empathy emphasizes the competition's attention to consumers' emotions and psychology. Security ultimately ensures the safety and harmony of the competition environment. These factors work together to determine the brand's reputation and long-term vitality in the market. The brand image, as a bridge connecting the quality of the event and the market response, is the comprehensive embodiment of brand association, brand recognition and cultural value. Only in the competition control, competition quality and brand image of the three aspects of the formation of the sustainable development of professional martial arts brand can be truly realized.



**Figure 3: Direct impact of sports competition control on sustainable brands**

### 4.3 Case Analysis

In recent years, the development of Chinese professional martial arts brands has gradually emerged a number of typical cases, including "Wulin Peak", "Kunlun Resolution", "Warrior glory" and "Emei Legend". Relying on regional characteristics and cultural inheritance, these event brands have gradually formed their own unique business models by integrating resources and optimizing management. Among them, "Wulin Peak" successfully attracted a large number of spectators with its transnational events and diversified events, and promoted the development of regional economy and tourism with Taiyuan, Shaanxi Province as the core city. Through innovative marketing strategies and high-level events, "Kunlun" quickly established its position in the international fighting market, and also expanded its audience through digital platforms. "Warrior Glory" relies on the local culture of Xinxiang, Henan Province, and is committed to the mode innovation of integrating traditional martial arts and modern competition, while "Emei Legend" is based in Chongqing, emphasizing the cultural connotation and performance value of martial arts, and has achieved good response in domestic and foreign markets. These cases fully reflect the linkage effect between the event host city and the brand event, and provide practical experience for the sustainable development of professional martial arts brands.

Despite these remarkable achievements, these brands still face a number of challenges, including the diversified requirements of brand positioning, the need to improve the operational standards of events, and the increasing competition in the international market. For example, the depth and breadth of branding needs to be strengthened, especially in the absence of a systematic global communication strategy for a wider audience. The degree of specialization of the event itself is not balanced, and some events still have traditional operation models and uneven quality of participants, which restricts the overall competitiveness of the brand. The shortage of talents and the lack of technical innovation ability have also emerged, restricting the pace of internationalization of martial arts competitions. Therefore, to promote the sustainable development of professional martial arts brands, it is necessary to continuously optimize the event operation, brand management, resource integration and cultural output in order to cope with the dynamic changes in the market and policy environment, so as to achieve the long-term development of the brand.



## 5. DISCUSSION

### 5.1 Key challenges of sustainable brand building

The brand construction of Chinese professional martial arts is facing significant challenges with diversified development. The policy support and standardization mechanism are insufficient in the process of event branding. Although The State Council and the General Administration of Sport have issued a number of documents to promote the marketization of sports events, the fragmentation of policies at the specific implementation level and the lack of uniformity in local standards have made the operation of sports events uneven. Martial arts brands have weak competitiveness in the context of globalization. Although the traditional martial arts culture has a profound heritage, the lack of commercialization and modernization leads to the limited international communication ability of the brand. Especially in terms of brand promotion, limited by the shortage of resources and technology, most of the events are difficult to compete with other international comprehensive sports event brands, and the loss of audience and the decline of attention also weaken the foundation of sustainable development of the brand.

Another important challenge is the lack of organizational complexity and resource integration in event management. Professional martial arts brands need to coordinate the interests of organizers, athletes, spectators, governments and enterprises, etc., but due to the lack of diversified cooperation mechanisms, the utilization efficiency of cooperative resources is low, affecting the sustainable development of event operation and brand image. The multi-dimensional management ability of event quality needs to be improved, including security, empathy and tangibility, which directly affects audience satisfaction and brand loyalty. There are also deficiencies in the risk management mechanism, especially after the expansion of the scale of the event and the application of new communication channels, the ability to predict and respond to potential operational risks needs to be strengthened. The existence of these problems limits the long-term and stable development of Chinese professional martial arts brands, and more comprehensive solutions need to be proposed at the theoretical and practical levels to promote the modernization and internationalization of the brand.

### 5.2 Policy Suggestions

The strategy suggestion should integrate various factors to ensure the sustainable development of professional wushu brand. First of all, the brand management of the event should be optimized, and the potential problems in operation should be reduced by standardizing the risk management mechanism to ensure the safety and stability of the event. This requires the establishment of a sound risk assessment system, and the fine control of capital flow, event process and personnel scheduling, so as to enhance the reliability of the event and the trust of the audience. Secondly, we should promote diversified cooperation models, unite universities, scientific research institutions and social resources, and build cross-border cooperation platforms. Through the combination of industry, university and research, it can not only achieve technological innovation, but also inject cultural connotation into the brand and increase the attractiveness and competitiveness of the event. Modern information technology should be

used to strengthen information management, build an intelligent event platform, and realize the closed-loop management of data collection, analysis and feedback. Through big data technology, we can deeply understand consumer needs, optimize event content and service quality, and enhance user experience and brand loyalty. Finally, focus on international development, promote Chinese professional martial arts brands from a global perspective, combine cultural output and commercial operation, and improve the international influence of the brand with international events and media resources. Only in the strategy, technology, culture and other levels to achieve comprehensive and coordinated development, can promote the long-term stability of professional martial arts brand.

## 6. CONCLUSION AND PROSPECT

The sustainable development of Chinese professional wushu brand is an important combination of wushu culture inheritance and marketization. Under the strong promotion of national policies and the gradual release of market demand, professional martial arts brands have achieved initial results, but their long-term development still faces many challenges. The research shows that the quality of events, competition control and brand image are the key factors to determine the sustainable development of brands, while risk management, diversified cooperation and the application of information technology are the core means to achieve brand optimization. In the future, it is necessary to continue to make efforts to enhance the specialization of the event, strengthen the integration of resources and improve the international promotion mechanism, so as to achieve the organic unity of social value and commercial value. Brand building needs to integrate modern technology and cultural export strategy to enhance its global competitiveness and cultural influence. With policy guidance and multi-party cooperation, Chinese professional martial arts brands are expected to occupy a more important position in the international sports market, and promote the innovative inheritance and global dissemination of martial arts culture.

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