

# Brand Culture and Sports Consumption Behaviour: Drivers and Economic Effects - The Case of the NBA

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**Abstract.** Basketball is one of the hottest sports in the world and there are a large number of basketball enthusiasts around the globe who love to play the game. Therefore, sports products related to basketball have always received a lot of attention from many basketball enthusiasts. Especially with the birth of business leagues such as the NBA, businesses have been able to advertise their products around the world more easily and increase the value of their products through endorsements from basketball superstars with large fan bases. However, most of the companies that can benefit at once are leading companies. It is difficult for small sports industries to develop their own industries by launching brand new products in the same way as they are monopolised by the leading companies. So the author will analyse how this approach can benefit more small businesses from the perspective of the drivers of consumer spending and the economic effects it brings.

**Keywords:** NBA; Basketball; Brands; Sports Culture; Sports Industry; Fans-Consumers.

## 1. Introduction

Basketball is one of the most attractive sports globally, especially driven by the commercial league led by the NBA, which has produced many influential super international stars such as Kobe and James. Under their influence, fans tend to understand and learn the basketball culture on the players because they like to do so, and under this cultural impact, the related sports industry also gains. However, the sports industries that benefit from the star effect are often the leading industries in the industry, such as Adidas, Nike and other established industry leaders. These companies use the star effect to increase the added value of their own products, using the star's huge fan base to make their own products can be better sales. The name of the ball player as a new product line, such as James, Kobe, Owen series of sneakers. However, it is worth noting that the industries that have been able to launch a line of products for ballplayers are giant companies in the global sports industry. They monopolise the stars with large fan volume in the world, which makes it difficult for small international sports industries to launch star series products through the cultivation effect to enhance their own industries. Therefore, how to solve the problem of making basketball culture cover most of the sports industries so that small sports industries can also develop their own industries through the star effect is a very meaningful research. The author will go through how brand culture influences fans' consumption behaviour and purchasing decisions? What specific factors drive the influence of NBA brand culture on sports consumption, and what are the specific economic values of NBA brand culture on fans' consumption behaviour? Several aspects to analyse the driving factors and economic effects of brand culture and sports consumption behaviour.

## 2. Formation of NBA Brand Culture and Monopoly of Leading Companies

The impact of culture on the sports economy is undoubtedly significant. A good culture is often spread by people with greater fame associated with it, as they have the highest authority in these areas, leading fans who enjoy the culture in question to imitate their behaviour, which in turn leads to the creation of a culture. These cultures are often not linked to related products, as the dissemination of culture requires physical substances, and therefore culture can lead to the development of the sports economy. On the one hand, the star effect drives the consumption of sports products through cultural



dissemination and promotes the development of related industries. According to the research of Li Zhaohui, the influence of culture on sports consumption is particularly significant, playing a fundamental and decisive role to a certain extent [1]. The global spread of basketball culture has led to a significant increase in the market and brand value of sporting goods and the formation of a large economic system. However, this impact is mainly concentrated in a few big international brands, and fails to fully benefit all sports brands and related industries. From the hottest Jordan line of sports products from related related brands to the recent hit Kobe, James Harden and other stars' line of sports products. All are Adidas and Nike two sports industry with their co-operation. The rest of the sports industry, although there are some enterprises occasionally appear star series products, such as ten years ago Li Ning and Wade cooperation launched the 'Wade Way' series of sneakers. Although Li-Ning got the cooperation of the superstar Wade, the influence of the product is far less than that of the same series of products of Nike and Adidas. Although this may be a gap between the influence of the stars and the enterprise, it also shows that other small sports industries want to develop their own industry in this way is very difficult, the only way is to learn from the leading industry's marketing approach to create a better development of small businesses belonging to the marketing approach is the king's way. On the other hand, basketball culture spreads values through the star effect, which enhances fans' love for basketball and promotes the consumption of related products. According to Zhu Congqing, the global promotion of the NBA spread American cultural symbols and values, such as individual heroism and consumerism, to fans around the world, driving the consumption of a range of related products [2]. This cultural diffusion not only enhances the popularity of the stars and the league, but also strengthens the brand's market competitiveness. However, the economic effects of brand culture have not yet been fully realised in small Chinese sports brands. The influence and market share of small Chinese brands in the global market is still limited, and strategies and methods of cultural communication need to be further explored and enhanced. With the long cycles and small number of influential stars in the NBA market, and countless sports industries around the world, this more undemanding phenomenon is also a reflection of the fact that other smaller sports industries should be looking at other, more effective marketing avenues. Finally, although basketball culture has a significant contribution to the development of the sports industry, how to comprehensively enhance the driving effect of basketball culture on the whole sports industry is still an urgent problem. Big international brands have achieved significant economic benefits through the star effect and cultural dissemination, but how to let more small brands and related industries also benefit from it is an important direction for future research and practice. What's more, as basketball continues to grow, countries are focusing more on their own national stars, as evidenced by the recent 2024 Olympics, where the Yugoslavian nation from Eastern Europe, the French nation from France, and the Canadian nation are all in competition with the United States. Therefore, the future of the enterprise may be in the global development strategy of the regionalisation of a segregated market. Different regions have different professional basketball leagues that are of interest to different regions. Taking the NBA commercial league as an example, discovering different stars in different regions is more conducive to alleviating the 'oversupply' problem mentioned above. If China has the CBA and Taiwan Basketball League, then other small industries in China can further enhance their influence through cooperation with these stars. For example, Jeremy Lin's arrival in China from the NBA to play in the CBA professional league some years ago has generated a lot of attention from fans in China. Then Chinese sports brands such as Anta and Li Ning can actively contact them to co-operate with them and make use of this public opinion to further promote their products. The same applies to other countries and regions. It is an effective way for the global sports industry to take advantage of its geographical location to maximise the benefits of its products.

### **3. Case Reduction: The Formation, Development and Impact of NBA Brand Culture**

As the world's top basketball league, NBA is not only a representative of sports events, but also a symbol of culture and brand. The formation and development of its brand culture has gone through decades of accumulation, and it has developed from an early regional league to a global sports brand.

In today's global economic integration, the NBA as a dual representative of the U.S. economy and culture, because of its unique economic value and cultural value gradually towards the pinnacle of the development of globalisation, the globalisation of the NBA is a movement from economic to cultural, a cultural expansion, a convergence of the American culture and national spirit, and an infiltration of U.S. ideology and values. The NBA has successfully established a strong brand image through high level economy, the moulding of star players, diversified marketing strategies and extensive media coverage. Its brand culture covers various aspects such as competitive spirit, teamwork, individual heroism and community responsibility, and these elements constitute the NBA's unique brand culture.

In the 80's Jordan came out of nowhere, through his world-class basketball talent, he perfected the NBA competitive spirit, teamwork, individual heroism and other NBA brand culture propaganda to all over the world. Especially in the 90's the Bulls to create Jordan as the leader, Pippen, Kerr and other stars more with the composition of the dynasty team is still countless basketball fans talk about. Bulls in the playoffs during this period played countless exciting games, many times through Jordan's superb personal skills and the help of other teammates, successfully dismantled other teams want to dismantle the Bulls dynasty's fierce offensive, defending their own and the team's glory, but also to further consolidate the NBA's unique brand culture.

Therefore, NBA brand culture and star brand culture and benefit from the most successful case is Jordan and AJ1, Jordan as the NBA history so far the title of the first person has never changed, when Nike and Jordan launched the AJ series of sneakers. From the day Jordan came to China, Beijing's major sporting goods counters every day to sell more than 200 pairs of new shoes, and each pair of sneakers on the market price of 1,450 yuan. In addition, Jordan set off the craze has also led to other 'JORDAN' and NIKE products sell well, and these products with the Flying Man came to China are hot trend. In addition, although the operation of Jordan to China NIKE company on Jordan's appearance fees, accommodation standards, transport costs and so on, but according to expert estimates, Jordan came to China and caused by tourism, transport, consumption of high-grade sports products and so on the economic benefits brought far beyond imagination [3]. The success of the Jordan series of sports products also led to the subsequent other industries began to focus on co-operation with NBA stars. Followed by, the Kobe series, James series star products also appeared. And it has developed to this day.

It should be noted that the brand culture of the NBA has had a positive impact on the sports industry and sports consumption. The commercial mechanism of star players - the ball game is broadcast and digital media - diversified marketing activities - the development and sale of sports peripheral products - the pulling effect of sports tourism. These basketball stars travel to various countries around the world every year to participate in activities, and companies signing players can only wear the signing company's sports products to attend the activities, fans want to get the autographs of the stars, but also can only buy sports products related to the signing company, so that the idol in this signature.

#### **4. Case Study: The Impact of NBA Brand Culture on Fans' Consumer Behaviour**

The NBA's annual regular season, playoffs, and draft system have given birth to many different styles of players. Through digital media broadcasts and media hype, these stars now have fans all over the world. The sports industry can add value to their products and make them more sought after by having different products endorsed by different stars. In addition, because of its unique brand culture, the NBA attracts countless fans from all over the world to local venues for almost every game, hoping to experience the atmosphere of the game in person, and also hoping to meet with their favourite players on the spot, which boosts the economic benefits of the local tourism-related industries. According to Nike's financial report, Jordan Brand creates \$5.1 billion in revenue for Nike in 2022, which is still up from \$4.8 billion in 2021, and under the partnership agreement between Jordan and Nike, he will personally receive 5 per cent of that, or \$256.1 million in annual revenue [4]. Jordan series of basketball products is undoubtedly the most successful development of the NBA sports brand over

the years. Now the AJ series of sneakers is no longer a sports product, but the development of a tide brand, buy this series of sneakers consumers are not only NBA fans, many consumers even Jordan just heard. As a result, the Jordan series has become the target for subsequent ballerina ranges to follow.

## **5. Theoretical Refinement: Brand Culture and the Inner Mechanisms of Sports Consumption Behaviour**

The NBA's unique brand culture can drive countless products in the sports industry to have higher earnings, but some of the top names in the sports industry use monopoly to cause other sports counterparts' products can't eat the relevant dividends. The monopoly phenomenon can not be changed, then these industries can start from other sports culture. For example, brand identity, through a variety of ways to make some NBA athletes who are not stars to wear their products in the game with broadcasting rights. Let the fans who like to watch the NBA know and create the mentality that even NBA athletes are wearing their products. Thus deepening their identification with the product brand. In addition, customers can also focus on the quality of the product, and then by reducing the price of the launch of inexpensive products, so that the product has a better reputation in the folk basketball enthusiasts, and in the performance of the product continues to make improvements, which is a good way to let consumers produce emotional connection to the product is not bad, so that the product can also make a better income. Players with the action interpretation of 'everything is possible'

The Li Ning company signed the NBA player Damon Jones, since the 1998-1999 season into the NBA, has been the league's uncompromising wanderer, he has never been on a team, stayed more than a year. But before joining the Cavaliers, Damon Jones' three-point shooting percentage ranked fifth in the league. 2004-2005 season, Damon Jones played a career-best 521 shots, hit 225, three-point shooting percentage of 43.2 per cent. Last season, the Cleveland Cavaliers shot only 33.2 per cent from three-point range [5]. By signing contracts with such ordinary players to avoid the monopoly of leading enterprises, creating products with product quality as the core, and globalising product awareness through quality and other factors in the way of 'encircling the city from the countryside', our own enterprises will gradually have the tendency to compete with the leading enterprises. And James had already made a name for himself in the league during the 2004-2005 season, attracting a large number of fans to follow the Cavaliers' games. If any Chinese fans in the audience find out that their company's sporting goods have been approved by NBA players to be worn on the field of play, they are likely to subconsciously recognise it as a good product. Then there will also be curiosity about such products and subsequent purchases. Through fan purchases and spreading the word in private basketball circles, the product's popularity can expand greatly in China.

On the other hand, nowadays it seems difficult to discover basketball stars in the NBA, such as Kobe and James, who have a great influence and a long period of time, and various countries and regions pay more attention to the basketball culture and basketball stars within their own nation.

So this is an important opportunity for other small businesses to capitalise on the diversification of basketball culture. Nowadays, each country has different football stars within their nation, using their influence in each region to innovate and produce different products with local national culture in each country, which is more conducive to the industry to enter the market of each country in a peer-to-peer manner, thus realising the globalisation of the industry.

## **6. Conclusion**

This paper points out the phenomenon that the NBA star effect drives the development of sports industry, and analyses the formation process of NBA brand culture and the local economic development driven by culture. Through the influence of NBA brand culture on consumer behaviour, the sports industry can develop its own sports brand through sports culture from another perspective of culture. Such as brand identity, emotional connection and social identity of the three aspects of all sports industries can let sports culture drive the development of sports economy. Through different

sports industries in different countries and regions, corporations can further expand and improve the benefits of our own sports products by exploiting the market with the geographical advantages of our own location.

However, the three perspectives mentioned above sports and other industries leading enterprises can also do, whether they are through these perspectives in other aspects of the product also appeared monopoly phenomenon, Will they be able to overcome the disadvantage of the geographical factor to beat other small sports industries through the huge global reach of their own industry and continue the monopoly that exists today. this is a worthy of continuing to explore the issue, the author will therefore be in the small sports industry in the future how to break the phenomenon of monopoly of the leading enterprises to do continue to study.

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