

# Study on the Influence of Brand IP Marketing on Consumers' Purchase Intentions--The Case of "Nezha"

Xinying Lin<sup>1, \*</sup>, Chenyang Liu<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> College of Communication, Fujian Normal University, Fuzhou, Fujian, China

<sup>2</sup> College of History and Culture, Tianjin Normal University, Tianjin, China y

\* Corresponding Author Email: 129032022021@student.fjnu.edu.cn

**Abstract.** This study takes "Ne Zha" as a case to investigate the impact mechanism of brand IP marketing on consumer purchase intention. Based on the field theory model, through a questionnaire survey and mixed research methods, to explore the modernization and translation path of local cultural IP and its driving effect on consumption behavior from the perspectives of emotional resonance, cultural identity and symbolic transformation. The findings reveal that the Ne Zha IP successfully activates consumers' cultural identity through narrative reconstruction and visual innovation, yet its premium pricing strategy significantly inhibits the commercial conversion of symbolic value. The research uncovers an emotion-driven "attitude-behavior gap": while most respondents experience cultural pride through the IP, actual purchasing behavior is constrained by price sensitivity, with low-price strategies significantly enhancing consumption willingness. Accordingly, the study proposes a "dynamic equilibrium" strategy: short-term solutions involve tiered pricing and cross-border collaborative designs to improve conversion efficiency, while long-term strategies require building a content-product-community ecosystem and exploring virtual derivatives to bridge the emotional-behavioral divide. This paper aims to address theoretical deficiencies in domestic cultural IP research and the lack of quantitative analysis on the underlying mechanisms of consumer emotional resonance.

**Keywords:** Brand IP marketing; Consumer purchase intention; Nezha; Emotional resonance; Symbolic transformation.

## 1. Introduction

Under the wave of accelerated digital transformation of the global cultural industry, the mode of production, dissemination and consumption of cultural products is undergoing profound changes. The popularization of streaming media platforms, social media and virtual reality technology not only breaks the boundaries of traditional media, but also gives rise to the rise of "cross-media narrative", making cultural IP (Intellectual Property) become the core carrier connecting diversified scenarios and aggregating users' emotions. International IP giants represented by Disney and Marvel have built a huge business ecology through the layout of the whole industry chain, including movies, derivatives and theme parks, which proves the strategic value of IP marketing in global competition. At the same time, China's cultural industry has ushered in the outbreak of local cultural IP under the dual role of policy support and market drive. As a typical sample of the modernization and transformation of traditional Chinese cultural IPs, the practice of "Nezha" IP provides an entry point for research on the above issues. 2019, "The Descent of Nezha" topped China's animated film market with 5 billion yuan at the box office, and its subversive character reshaping (such as smoky make-up and rebellious personality) and narrative reconstruction ("My life is up to me, my destiny is up to me.") have made it the most important film in China's animation industry. Its subversive character reinvention (e.g., smoky makeup, rebellious personality) and narrative reconstruction (the theme of individual awakening, "My destiny is mine but not heaven's") successfully broke audiences' stereotypical perceptions of classic myths. 2025's Ne Zha's Demon Child Splashes the Sea exceeded 15 billion yuan, and its IP license fee was as high as 9 million yuan. However, if compared with the average 30% derivation contribution rate of Disney's IP, it still needs to be developed.

Against this background, this study takes field theory as an analytical framework and tries to answer the question of how local cultural IPs should effectively drive consumers' purchase intention by means of emotional resonance and symbolic transformation mechanism, so as to realize sustainable commercial value. Specifically, the theoretical contribution of this paper is to apply the field theory to the study of Chinese cultural IPs, revealing the logic of consumers' "symbolic competition" and "capital transformation" in the cultural field; on the practical level, empirical data are used to provide a framework for the development of IPs such as tiered pricing, cross-border co-branding and virtual derivatives. On the practical level, the empirical data will provide the basis for IP stratified pricing, cross-border pricing, co-branding and virtual derivatives development strategies, which will help local IPs to break through the predicament of "praised for its popularity but not its popularity."

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. The Lack of Quantitative Modeling of Emotion**

Although scholars emphasize the importance of emotional resonance, there is still a lack of empirical support for its path of action. Existing literature mostly adopts qualitative methods (e.g., text analysis) to interpret consumer emotions, but it is difficult to quantify the marginal contribution of "cultural pride" to purchase intention [1]. A few quantitative studies attempted to construct affective-behavioral models, but the samples were focused on Western IPs, and the conclusions have limited explanatory power for local scenarios [2]. For example, Chinese consumers' "national wave" sentiment may include both cultural identity and social bragging motives, which to be deconstructed by mixed methods (questionnaire + experiment).

Overall, there are two core logics in the academic consensus. The first one is that emotion is more important than function, which means that the essence of consumers paying for IP is to buy an emotional experience and cultural identity. The second point is participatory consumption, shifting from passive acceptance to active co-creation (e.g., second creation, crowdfunding), with Generation Z as the core driving force.

### **2.2. Theoretical Basis**

Field Theory in cultural industry communication originates from the sociological research of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. The field of the cultural industry can be regarded as a relatively independent "playground", in which the participants compete for resources, discourse power and legitimacy. Nezha is in the movie industry. In order to quickly capture consumers' attention and keep them on their toes, the image of Nezha in the movie overturned traditional perceptions, with his smoky makeup image, creating a unique brand IP image. When consumers gradually become fans of this IP, they will not only actively consume it, but also spontaneously publicize it to attract more potential consumers.

Field theory also suggests that when consumers come across cultural IPs, they will recognize and judge them based on their own cultural background and values [3]. Therefore, Nezha's movie contains a lot of traditional cultural elements, which evokes a sense of cultural belonging and cultural pride in the hearts of Chinese consumers. At the same time, the slogan of the rise of national comics and guiding consumers to pay attention to the ranking of the world's movie box office consumers' patriotic feelings.

## **3. Research Methods**

Questionnaire survey method is used to design a questionnaire to collect data on consumers' emotional resonance, cultural identity and purchase intention. Mining consumer emotional projection and cultural identity logic. The research object is randomly distributed, and its age is not limited, gender is not limited, and geographical area is not limited. However, after the questionnaires were

collected, there was a phenomenon that the age group of the target was concentrated in 18-25, so we also focused on the study of this age group.

The questionnaire was designed to cover 15-20 questions, focusing on consumers' preferences for which IP elements they like and the factors that influence their purchasing decisions, and set up a scale of questions in terms of cultural identity, emotional resonance and purchasing intention. The questions were categorized into single-choice, multiple-choice, degree and open-ended questions. The questionnaires were distributed through Questionnaire Star in the circle of friends, and a total of 115 questionnaires were recovered, of which 115 were valid, with an effective rate of 1.5 percent.

After obtaining the data, the quantitative data were statistically analyzed to verify the path relationship of "emotional resonance→cultural identity→purchase willingness", and to analyze price sensitivity, category preference, etc. The qualitative data were thematically analyzed to explore the consumers' emotional projection of traditional cultural symbols.

## 4. Research Findings and Discussion

### 4.1. Sample Background Information

Table 1 shows that there are 115 respondents in the sample. Among them, there were 89 females, accounting for 77.39% of the total; 21 males, accounting for 18.26% of the total; and 5 others, accounting for 4.35% of the total. This indicates that the population participating in the survey is mainly young women. In terms of age distribution, the age group is concentrated between 18 and 25 years old, accounting for 80.87% of the total, which is in line with the core user profile of Generation Z. Under the age of 18, there are 3 people, accounting for 2.61%. There were 8 people aged 26-35, accounting for 6.96%. There are 5 people aged 36-45, accounting for 4.35%. There were 4 people aged 46-55, accounting for 3.48%. There were 2 people aged 55 and above, accounting for 1.47%. These statistical data can help us understand the basic characteristics of the samples, analyze how they are influenced by the brand IP marketing of Nezha and thus purchase more derivative products.

**Table 1.** Sample Background Information.

Name	Option	Frequency	Percentage(%)
Your gender	Female	21	18.26
	Male	89	77.39
	Others	5	4.35
Your gender group	Under 18 years old	3	2.61
	18-25 years old	93	80.87
	26-35 years old	8	6.96
	36-45 years old	5	4.35
	46-55 years old	4	3.48
	55 years old and above	2	1.74
Total		115	115

### 4.2. Modernized Transcreation of Symbols and Its Commercialization Barriers

The reconstruction of cultural symbols is the core link in the modern translation of traditional cultural IP. This study found that 84.35% of the respondents believe that "Nezha IP successfully integrates traditional culture with modern values", and it has achieved the modern translation of cultural symbols through narrative reconstruction (such as the spirit of "defying fate") and visual innovation (Chinese style + technological design). This kind of translation not only activates the cultural identity of the young group, but also provides a solid foundation for the cross-media narrative of IP. However, 66.09% of the respondents gave up purchasing derivatives due to their excessively high prices, indicating that the value of the symbol needs to match the payment ability. As table 2 shows. Logistic

regression analysis indicated that price sensitivity had a significant inhibitory effect on purchasing behavior (OR=0.30,  $p<0.01$ ), suggesting that there was a significant trade-off between cultural identity and economic rationality among consumers. The modern translation of cultural IP needs to consider both cultural depth and market feasibility. The Nezha IP successfully activated the cultural identity of the young group through visual symbols and narrative reconstruction, but the high pricing strategy weakened the commercial conversion efficiency of the symbols.

**Table 2.** Logistic regression Results of Price Sensitivity and Purchasing Behavior.

Variable	95% confidence interval				
Price sensitivity (high)	-1.203	0.342	0.3	[0.15, 0.59]	<0.01
Constant	0.892	0.211	2.44	[1.62, 3.68]	<0.001

### 4.3. The Threshold Mechanism of Emotion-Behavior Transformation

As mentioned above, emotional resonance is an important factor for cultural IP to attract consumers. Although 75.66% of the respondents developed a sense of cultural pride due to Nezha IP, only 20% purchased derivatives. See table 3. Cross-analysis showed that when the price was lower than 200 yuan, the purchase intention increased to 52.17% ( $\chi^2=12.34$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). In addition, consumption behavior is stratified: 56.53% of the respondents are willing to share content for free, but their paid behavior is limited by design attractiveness (59.14% recognize the lack of innovation) and price rationality. This indicates that although emotional resonance can stimulate interest, the actual purchasing behavior is still significantly restricted by economic factors. The weak correlation between cultural pride and purchasing behavior reveals the limitations of emotion-driven. The price threshold (200 yuan) and design attractiveness (63.48%) constitute the consumption decision-making formula: Purchase intention = cultural resonance  $\times$  design impact/price sensitivity. Zhang Qi and Chen Gang also mentioned that "satisfying spiritual needs has gradually become the main purpose for consumers to purchase derivatives", further confirming the importance of price and design in consumer decisions [4]. It is suggested to lower the consumption threshold through low-priced practical items (such as stationery), and at the same time, utilize social media (79.12% rely on social channels) to strengthen emotional connections and enhance the overall experience of consumers.

**Table 3.** Cross-distribution of price ranges and Purchasing behaviors.

Price range	Purchase of derivatives		Total	Purchase rate
	(yes)	(no)		
200-500 yuan	10	40	50	0.25
	31	29	60	
	1	3	4	
	1	0	1	
	43	72	115	

### 4.4. Differentiation Strategies for Intergenerational Consumption

Generation Z exhibits symbolic consumption characteristics: 80.87% recognize domestic trends as cultural confidence, but 39.13% question their commercial motives. In contrast, the older group (over 36 years old) places more emphasis on cultural legitimacy, tends to view film adaptations critically, and rarely pays for them. This indicates that there are significant differences among different generational groups in terms of cultural identity and consumption behavior. Therefore, we propose that symbolic consumption represented by the IP of Nezha should implement a differentiated strategy. Promote low-priced goods in the mass market and develop limited edition products in the high-end market to meet the collection demands. For the older group, it is necessary to preserve the orthodox narrative of culture (such as the restoration of classic characters) to avoid resistance caused by modern

adaptations. Yang Shuo also pointed out in "The Presentation of Chinese National Cultural Symbols and IP Development in the Film 'Nezha: The Demon Child's Rebellion in the Sea'" that respecting the connotation of traditional culture is of great significance for enhancing the recognition of film IPs among different generations of groups [5]. This differentiation strategy helps to meet the needs of different generational groups and enhance the market adaptability of IP.

#### **4.5. Dynamic Balance Path of IP Commercialization**

60.87% of consumers pay attention to cross-border collaborations due to design aesthetics, but 59.13% of consumers support IP independence, noting that excessive commercialization should be avoided. Therefore, we believe that the long-term development of IP requires seeking a dynamic balance between cultural inheritance and business innovation. Short-term popularity can be maintained through co-branded cooperation and social viral growth, but in the long term, it is necessary to build a "content-product-community" ecosystem. Zhang Yi pointed out in "The Logic and Approach of Cross-Cultural Communication of Disney Animated Film Super IP" that Disney has successfully achieved cross-cultural communication of its animated film brand IP through the comprehensive connection of online platforms and the innovative scene communication of digital technology, which provides a useful reference for the long-term development of the Nezha IP [6]. Virtual derivatives (such as interaction in metaverse scenes) can not only avoid the controversy of excessive commercialization but also enhance user stickiness, injecting long-term vitality into IPs. This "light commercialization" path helps to maximize commercial value while maintaining the cultural core.

### **5. Conclusion**

Based on the above analysis, it can be concluded that the Nezha IP has effectively stimulated consumers' cultural identity through narrative reconstruction and visual innovation. However, its high pricing strategy has significantly inhibited the commercial transformation of symbolic value. Further analysis reveals that although many respondents develop a sense of cultural pride due to the Nezha IP, their actual purchasing behavior is often limited by price sensitivity, while adopting a low-price strategy can significantly enhance their willingness to consume. Thus, this study proposes a "dynamic balance" strategy. In the short term, it is recommended to implement tiered pricing and carry out cross-border collaborative design to improve the conversion efficiency. In the long term, it is necessary to build a "content-product-community" ecosystem and explore virtual derivatives to bridge the gap between emotions and behaviors. This research achievement is dedicated to filling the deficiency of theoretical research on domestic cultural IP and is of great significance for promoting the marketing practice and theoretical development of local cultural IP. However, we have to admit that the sample regions are concentrated in places such as Tianjin (41.7%) and Fujian (24.3%), and the age group is single (18-25 years old accounting for 80.87%), and the universality of the conclusion is limited. In the future, it is necessary to expand the sample diversity and deepen the research on behavioral mechanisms in combination with the interview method. Vertically track the relationship between IP iteration and user stickiness. Conduct cross-cultural comparisons, such as the comparison between "Hua Mulan" and "Nezha", and distill the global innovation path of the cultural and creative industry.

#### **Authors Contribution**

All the authors contributed equally and their names were listed in alphabetical order.

#### **References**

- [1] H. Jenkins, S. Ford, J. Green, *Spreadable Media: Creating Value and Meaning in a Networked Culture* (2013).
- [2] C. Tryon, *On-Demand Culture: Digital Delivery and the Future of Movies* (2013).

- [3] Y. Wang, X. Li, The Technological Modernity and Cultural Subjectivity of "Nezha: The Demon Child's Rebellion in the Sea": A Breakthrough of China's Animation Industry - A Multi-Dimensional Analysis Based on Narrative Reconstruction, Industrial Synergy and Philosophical Metaphor, Yiyuan (2025) 7-11.
- [4] Q. Zhang, G. Chen, Research on the Current Situation and Trends of the Development of Film Derivative Industry in the New Era, China Film Market 06 (2024) 19-26+31.
- [5] S. Yang, Presentation of Chinese National Cultural Symbols and IP Development in the Film "Nezha: The Demon Child's Rebellion in the Sea", River arts (2025).
- [6] Y. Zhang, Disney animation film super IP cross-cultural communication logic clue, media 12 (2024) 54-56.