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INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ADVANCED RESEARCH (IJAR)

Article DOI: 10.21474/IJAR01/20784

DOI URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21474/IJAR01/20784>



RESEARCH ARTICLE

INTERNATIONAL PROMOTION STRATEGIES AND STUDENTS' DESIRE TO PARTICIPATE IN MARTIAL ARTS PROGRAM IN A SELECTED UNIVERSITY IN BEIJING, CHINA.

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Manuscript Info

Manuscript History

Received: 15 February 2025

Final Accepted: 19 March 2025

Published: April 2025

Key words:-

International Promotion. International
Promotion in a Selected University.

Abstract

As a martial arts professor and coach with a deep passion for Chinese martial arts, the motivation behind this research stems from a profound eagerness to promote the rich heritage and profound significance of Chinese martial arts on the global stage. Chinese martial arts, often referred to as Wushu, encompass a diverse array of disciplines that have evolved over centuries, encompassing not only physical techniques but also cultural, philosophical, and spiritual dimensions. Having dedicated years to the practice and instruction of Chinese martial arts, the researcher has witnessed firsthand the transformative power of these ancient practices in the lives of practitioners. Beyond the physical benefits of improved fitness, flexibility, and self-defense skills, Chinese martial arts instill values such as discipline, respect, perseverance, and humility. Moreover, they serve as a gateway to understanding Chinese culture, history, and philosophy, offering practitioners a holistic path to self-discovery and personal growth. Despite the profound impact of Chinese martial arts, there remains a pressing need to enhance their global recognition, appreciation, and dissemination. As a coach deeply invested in the preservation and promotion of these traditions, the researcher recognizes the importance of strategic initiatives to elevate Chinese martial arts onto the international stage. This includes leveraging digital platforms, cultural exchanges, educational programs, and collaborative partnerships to showcase the beauty, depth, and diversity of Chinese martial arts to audiences worldwide. Furthermore, the globalization and commercialization of martial arts have led to a dilution of authentic Chinese martial arts practices. In some cases, traditional techniques and principles are sacrificed in favor of flashy performances or simplified versions tailored to commercial appeal. This trend not only erodes the authenticity of Chinese martial arts but also diminishes their cultural and historical significance. Additionally, there are significant barriers to entry for individuals interested in learning Chinese martial arts, particularly those outside of China. Limited access to qualified instructors, language barriers, and cultural differences pose challenges to prospective practitioners seeking to engage with these traditions. Moreover, the absence of standardized curriculum and certification processes further complicates the learning and teaching of Chinese martial arts on a global scale. Moreover, the perception of Chinese martial arts as inaccessible or irrelevant to modern society presents a barrier to their promotion and adoption. In an increasingly fast-paced and technology-driven world, traditional practices may be seen as outdated or impractical, further marginalizing Chinese martial arts in the global arena. Addressing these pressing challenges requires a concerted effort to raise awareness, preserve authenticity, improve accessibility, and adapt to the needs of contemporary society.

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Introduction:-

Martial arts programs have long been celebrated for their holistic approach to physical, mental, and social development. In the context of modern education, universities worldwide have recognized the significance of

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incorporating martial arts into their offerings as a means to promote student well-being and holistic growth. As such, understanding the factors that influence students' desire to participate in martial arts programs has become increasingly vital for universities seeking to enhance student engagement and satisfaction.

Research in various contexts has shed light on the diverse nature of students' motivations and the factors that contribute to their engagement in martial arts training. Studies such as those by Choi et al. (2021), Gutiérrez-García et al. (2018), and Kudláček et al. (2019) have explored the physical, social, psychological, and physiological effects of martial arts participation among diverse populations. These studies highlight the importance of considering a wide range of factors, including physical fitness improvements, social interactions, psychological outcomes, and individual preferences, when designing martial arts programs tailored to students' needs.

The integration of social media platforms into martial arts education and promotion has revolutionized the way practitioners engage with the sport. Research suggests that social media plays a pivotal role in facilitating martial arts learning through various means such as video sharing, exchange of teaching materials, and interactive teacher-student communication (Xie et al., 2022).

Furthermore, to propel the entry of Chinese martial arts events into the Olympic Games, scholars advocate for leveraging social media platforms to promote events and organize competitions, thus enhancing global visibility and participation (Xie et al., 2022). Indeed, community involvement is paramount in promoting martial arts, as evidenced by studies indicating the influence of social media marketing activities, user experience, and sport attachment on participation intentions (Xie et al., 2022). By harnessing the power of social media, martial arts organizations can expand their reach, attract new participants, and foster a sense of community among practitioners (Xie et al., 2022).

Scholars emphasize the intrinsic connection between Chinese martial arts and broader cultural and philosophical concepts, advocating for leveraging international platforms to promote cross-cultural exchange and appreciation (Jennings, 2014; Wang, 2010). However, strategic considerations and challenges abound in international promotion efforts, necessitating a comprehensive approach involving government leadership, interdisciplinary cooperation, and tailored communication strategies (Yu, 2016; Qiao, 2016). By incorporating martial arts into educational settings, students not only enhance their physical fitness and self-defense skills but also develop a deeper appreciation of Chinese heritage and values (Shi, 2009; Chen, 2013).

As part of this broader landscape, students' desire to participate in martial arts programs emerges as a complex interplay of various factors. Perceived benefits, such as physical fitness improvements and mental well-being, serve as strong motivators for participation (Dahle, 2017; Gutiérrez-García et al., 2018). Additionally, the social dimension of martial arts training, characterized by communal settings and supportive relationships, plays a pivotal role in fostering continued engagement (Choi et al., 2021; Anam et al., 2024). Moreover, the motivational climate within martial arts programs, shaped by clear goals and supportive environments, influences students' intrinsic motivation and long-term commitment (Silva et al., 2019; Xie et al., 2022).

Individual characteristics and preferences contribute to students' desire to participate in martial arts programs, as they are drawn to specific styles, disciplines, and cultural backgrounds (Maor, 2019; Alsarve & Tjønnndal, 2019). By tailoring programs to accommodate diverse interests and needs, organizers can foster inclusivity and enhance engagement among students (Maor, 2019; Alsarve & Tjønnndal, 2019).

The intersection of social media, international promotion strategies, technological innovations, and students' motivations underscores the dynamic and multifaceted nature of the martial arts landscape. Understanding these interconnections is vital for stakeholders seeking to promote and sustain the practice of martial arts in an increasingly interconnected and diverse world.

Moreover, the promotion of martial arts programs on an international scale presents unique opportunities and challenges, particularly in multicultural university environments like Beijing, China. Understanding how international promotion strategies intersect with students' desire to participate in martial arts programs is essential for universities aiming to attract and retain diverse student populations. Research in this area can provide valuable insights into effective promotional approaches and program design considerations that cater to the needs and interests of both local and international students.

Therefore, this study aims to investigate the relationship between international promotion strategies and students' desire to participate in martial arts programs at a selected university in Beijing, China. Thus, the researchers seek to contribute to a deeper understanding of the factors influencing students' engagement in martial arts training within the context of international higher education settings. Through empirical investigation and analysis, this study aims to provide actionable recommendations for university administrators and program organizers to enhance student participation and satisfaction in martial arts programs.

International Promotion Strategies of Chinese Martial Arts

The promotion of folk martial arts in China faces challenges due to low community participation and enthusiasm. Despite the presence of WeChat martial arts groups, the Chinese community actively promotes martial arts through these platforms. Research suggests that social media can assist martial arts learning through video sharing, teaching material exchange, and teacher-student interaction. To accelerate the entry of Chinese martial arts events into the Olympic Games, researchers advocate using social media to promote events and organize competitions. Increased community involvement is crucial for promoting martial arts, as research confirms that social media marketing activities, user experience, sport attachment, and attitudes influence participation and purchase intentions. By utilizing social media, martial arts organizations can reach a wider audience and attract new participants to the sport. Engaging with followers through interactive content and live streams can enhance the overall experience for both current and potential practitioners. Furthermore, social media platforms provide a convenient way for martial arts enthusiasts to connect, share knowledge, and support each other in their training journey. (Xie et.al, 2022)

The international promotion strategies of Chinese martial arts represent a multifaceted endeavor aimed at enhancing global recognition, appreciation, and dissemination of these traditional practices. Scholars such as Jennings (2014) and Wang (2010) emphasize the intrinsic link between Chinese martial arts and broader cultural and philosophical concepts, including health promotion, personal development, and traditional values. These scholars highlight the importance of leveraging international platforms, such as the Confucius Institute and global sporting events, to foster cross-cultural exchange and appreciation of Chinese martial arts. By engaging in partnerships with educational institutions and cultural organizations around the world, practitioners of Chinese martial arts can further promote the rich history and values embedded within these practices. Through collaborative efforts, practitioners can ensure that the essence of Chinese martial arts is preserved and shared with a global audience, contributing to a deeper understanding and appreciation of the cultural significance of these traditions. As these scholars suggest, it is through these cross-cultural exchanges that Chinese martial arts can continue to thrive and evolve in a modern, interconnected world.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study draws upon several key concepts and perspectives from the existing literature on martial arts promotion, educational psychology, and cultural studies. At its core, the study is guided by Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which posits that individuals are intrinsically motivated to pursue activities that satisfy their basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000). In the context of martial arts participation, SDT suggests that individuals are more likely to engage in and persist with training when they perceive it as personally meaningful, enjoyable, and aligned with their values and goals.

Additionally, the study integrates elements of Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), which emphasizes the role of observational learning, social modeling, and self-efficacy beliefs in shaping behavior (Bandura, 1986). According to SCT, individuals are influenced by the behaviors and attitudes of others, particularly authority figures such as teachers and peers, as well as media representations of martial arts. Thus, the promotional strategies employed by physical education (PE) administrators and the perceptions of teachers regarding these strategies may play a significant role in shaping students' desire to participate in martial arts programs.

The theoretical framework for this study draws upon Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) to provide a comprehensive understanding of individuals' motivation and behavior in the context of martial arts participation. SDT suggests that individuals are intrinsically motivated to engage in activities that fulfill their psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, while SCT emphasizes the role of observational learning, social modeling, and self-efficacy beliefs in shaping behavior. By integrating these theories, the study seeks to elucidate the motivational factors and social influences that drive students' desire to participate in martial arts programs, as well as the impact of promotional strategies implemented by physical education administrators. Through this theoretical lens, the study aims to inform effective promotion plans and interventions to enhance participation and engagement in martial arts training.

Research Objectives

The research objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To profile the teacher-respondents in terms of sex, age, highest educational attainment, and years of coaching experience.
2. To profile the student-respondents in terms of sex and grade level.
3. To assess the teacher-respondents' perceptions of the strategies employed by physical education administrators in promoting the martial arts program, focusing on cultural heritage, governmental support, educational initiatives, legal protections, and technological innovations.
4. To determine if there is a significant difference in the assessment of the teacher-respondents on the strategies of the physical education administrators when grouped according to profile.
5. To evaluate the level of students' desire to participate in martial arts programs in terms of perceived benefits, social interactions, motivational climate, and individual preferences.
6. To investigate if there is a significant difference in the level of students' desire to participate in martial arts programs when grouped according to profile.
7. To examine the correlation between the assessment of the teacher-respondents on the strategies of the physical education administrators and the level of students' desire to participate in martial arts programs.
8. To propose recommendations for crafting a strategic international promotion plan based on the gathered data and analysis.

Statement Of The Problem

This study aims to investigate the relationship between international promotion strategies and students' desire to participate in martial arts programs at a selected university in Beijing, China. Specifically, it will venture to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the profile of the teacher- respondents in terms of:

- 1.1. Sex;
- 1.2. Age;
- 1.3. Highest Educational Attainment?
- 1.4. Years of coaching experience?

What is the profile of the student- respondents in terms of

- 1.1. Sex;
- 1.2. Grade level?

2. What is the assessment of the teacher-respondents on the strategies of the PE administrators in promoting the martial arts program in terms of:
 - 2.1. cultural heritage;
 - 2.2. governmental support;
 - 2.3. educational initiatives;
 - 2.4. legal protections; and
 - 2.5. technological innovations?
3. Is there a significant difference in the assessment of the teacher-respondents on the strategies of the PE administrators in promoting the martial arts program when grouped according to profile?
4. What is the level of students' desire to participate in martial arts programs in terms of:
 - 4.1. perceived benefits;
 - 4.2. social interactions;
 - 4.3. motivational climate; and
 - 4.4. individual preferences?
5. Is there a significant difference in the level of students' desire to participate in martial arts programs when grouped according to profile?

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6. Is there a significant correlation between the assessment of the teacher-respondents on the strategies of the PE administrators in promoting the martial arts and the level of students' desire to participate in martial arts programs?
7. Utilizing the data collected in this study, what recommendations can be proposed for crafting a strategic international promotion plan?