

Research on the Market Development of Cultural Peripheral Products: A Case Study of Animation Derivative Products

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Abstract:

Today, animation and comic derivative products are one of the most popular branches of cultural and creative peripheral products. With the rapid development of the foreign animation industry, animation derivative products have made much profit for people. At the same period, it also becomes one of the vital research topics. Researchers found rich progress in derivative products. However, the issue of improving the development of Chinese animation and comics is still a lack of unified explanation and cognition. Therefore, this thesis aims to research the item of animation and comic derivative products market development through literature analysis and case study. The research found that the changes in consumers' purchase intention, imperfect industrial chains, narrow audience groups, and difficult animation propagation are the main factors leading to the dilemma of animation derivative products. Therefore, Chinese animation should perfect the animation and comic industry chain by promoting content, derivative products' marketing approaches, and breaking down single industrial barriers and limitations.

Keywords: Animation; derivative products; market development; consumers' performance.

1. Introduction

The animation and comic industry and its derivative products as novel and creative new industries are the popular fields favored by young consumers. Animation and comics possess incredible charm due to their diversification of forms, contents, and appealing character settings. Most animation and comic lovers are addicted to this kind of sense of being fueled. Even some of them regarded the characters in animation and comics as their examples and heroes to prove their self-identification [1]. Therefore, the animation & comic industry brings much margin, and it can lead to the widespread of domestic national culture to strengthen the soft power of the country. With the flourishing and booming development in the foreign animation and comic industry, its derivative products can make much profit, and uncountable Chinese focus on this new industry. However, too native and domestic comic content and deepened cultural core make these works cannot win everyone's love, particularly international viewers who possess little Chinese knowledge [2]. What is more, the backstage of the animation and comic industry: the purchasing power of derivatives, as well as external marketing, is not ideal. China has a few masterpieces that are well-known to international animation fans. In this way, this thesis focuses on the changes in Chinese and foreign consumers'

purchase intentions and their performance on animation derivative products [3]. Also, the thesis includes information on foreign countries' animation and comic market development strategies and suggestions for China to make itself welcome in the international animation market Chinese animation to open the market and profit by learning from other mature strategies and combining them with Chinese advantages and unique culture. This research is of great significance for the future development strategy of China's animation market. The thesis is mainly carried out from the aspects of Chinese and foreign animation consumer behavior, derivatives market performance, and market development strategy. Using the literature analysis method to search and read the related data and literature is beneficial for people to analyze the current factors the Chinese animation market lacks and compare other countries' development strategies to help Chinese animation find the imperfect part of the industrial chain. In addition, the case study is also applied to this research to conduct an in-depth analysis. Like the example of *BLUELOCK*, analyzing this animation work embodied the international football culture to prove the reason why other countries' works can be well-known by the international animation market and the importance of reducing the cultural gap and barriers [2]. These two research methods are conducive to research. Although previous researchers have done

a lot of research on the animation market and its derivative development strategies. There are few about Chinese national and novel strategies China's animation industry can take, which leads to the research gap. The ultimate research goal of this study is to design a series of feasible strategies for the future development of China's animation market by learning from the successful animation market development strategies of other countries and adjusting them according to their own national culture, in combination with the changes in the behavior and purchase intention of today's animation consumers.

2. Definition and Classification

2.1 Definition and Classification of Derivative Products

Although the word "derivative" means various in different fields such as mathematics, chemistry, art, and finance, it can be represented almost with a general explanation: a derivative is something produced and designed based on its original object or item accompanied by innovation. The initial object also determines the derivative's value [4]. Although different fields will define "derivatives" with various meanings, one of the most popular classifications of derivatives is animation & comic peripheral products.

2.2 Definition of Animation and Derivative Products

Animation & comic derivative products are similar to animation & comic peripheral products, and they are one of the most significant branches of derivatives. Based on the financial definition of derivative, animation & comic peripheral products can be regarded as merchandising derived from animation's underlying properties. For example, television animation, online animation, game animation, comic books, comic magazines, and other IPs are parts of the derivative products' underlying assets [5]. However, comics and animation are two entirely different art forms, but they are usually considered to be related to each other and appear orderly or simultaneously. They share a common aspect in that they are all made up of images arranged in chronological order [6]. Research that took place in Tamanan, Kalasan District, Sleman, with fourth-grade students at elementary schools in cluster 2, showed the attraction difference between comics and animation. The result of this research revealed that the learning method based on animation was more effective than comics, which can infer that the animated comics seem to become more attractive than the ones that did not animate. More people are willing to watch the animation after the changes [7]. When dates back to the 1990s, was a vital golden time for China animation derivatives due to the

wide opening of China policy. With the rapid development of animation in Japan and America, amount of people in China gradually focused on the animation and comic market, which belong to the commodity derivatives branch. At the same time, many foreign animation and comic production companies were introduced to China. They occupied a large place in China's animation and comic derivative products market and made 80% profits in it [8].

3. Consumer Behavior Research

Compared with mature and international commercial animation & comic derivative products in Japan and the United States, Chinese animation and its derivative products seem too local to catch international animation viewers' eyes. The deepened contents, excessive unique characters, and not enough globalization make non-national animation and comic lovers can only gain a sight comprehension of the main core culture Chinese animation wants to convey [2]. Therefore, the most main consumer groups of China's animation & comics and their derivative products are Chinese domestic teenagers. In the general group, the low-age generation consumers occupy a dominant position. The corresponding animation and its derivative product styles produced by The Times are one of the reasons for the current phenomenon of younger consumers.

3.1 Other Countries' Animation Derivatives Market Performance

Nowadays, Japan and America are considered successful examples of derivative products and consumer globalization. In Japan, "anime" is used specifically to describe the animation style which is defined by animation its artistic style and variety of themes. This kind of animation style is spread over all the world and has a wide range of ages audiences. During the same period, various domestic animation companies in Western countries such as Disney in America received the shocks from Japanese anime industry style. These phenomena determined the potential rise of the animation market globalization [9]. Disney through signifying its animation and derivative products represents Disney's bizarre fantasy and childlike innocence statement. This way the fantastic concept becomes actualization and makes the consumer feel personally on the scene. In this way, the consumer will be inspired by their desire to purchase the derivative products which can bring them a sense of belonging and identity. However, when purchasing derivative products, most consumers no longer just focus on the practical function. On the contrary, they spend a lot of money on the symbol of each character which made by Disney. It can also refer to the consumption of self-worth and self-actualization. For example, StellaLou is a dancer character in the form of a rabbit. She always

holds a dream to become a dancer, and she never gives up. Disney uses the pitiful and cute stereotypical rabbit image to attract children's naive and pure hearts. What is more, dancing as an occupation most little girls want to do in the future, successfully attracts these girls' love. Consumers who spend money on StellaLou derivative products want to prove their potential dream and their self-identification [1]. These phenomena cause people conspicuous consumption of Disney and many other derivative products such as Marvel Comics and Detective Comics' animation consumption of hero characters.

3.2 China Animation Derivatives Market Performance

China's animation and comic derivative market always possesses a large number of consumers. At present, the increase in China's animation industry is as high as the total volume. Animation and comic viewers as the main consumer groups, the number of these consumers is more than 100 million. Among these users, teenagers and students are the main consumers in the animation and comic derivative products market. Their behavior and preferences can give people discussion and provide the animation industry with some development strategies. The research involving 537 questionnaires answered by college students showed that the price of animation derivatives is negatively correlated with consumers' purchase intention. However, derivative products' characteristics, brand, consumer demand, and marketing activities are positively correlated with consumers' purchase intention [3]. In this way, the most common reason consumers spend money on derivative products is to satisfy their self-identity, which also causes them to consider whether the price is affordable.

4. Discussion Market development Strategies and Suggestions

Compared with well-completed development strategies in Japan and other countries in Europe and the American animation market, the market development strategy of Chinese animation is a little immature. Chinese animations could boost their tactics by learning from those successful countries, but not exactly copying their development strategies.

4.1 Other Countries' Development Strategies

Japan is an important example for people to research animation market strategies due to its famous developed anime industry. One of the Japanese development strategies focuses on the popularization and globalization of animation works' content, which can further promote the globalization of animation derivative products. Japanese

animation and comic works are filled with their own national culture and various other countries' cultures. These kinds of cultural fusion animation works perfectly adapt the international viewers' interests [2]. For example, like Japanese sports comic and animation work *BLUELOCK*, which is filled with rich Japanese national culture and other international sports culture. Many characters in this animation are shaped based on famous players in the real world. Ryo Miyaichi, a Japanese football player, is the prototype of Chigiri Hyoma the author decided in the interview. Both of them have the advantage in speed and strong attacking ability. What is more, they experienced many of the same events and both suffered from the leg injury. In this character design, the writer specially combines the Japanese football culture with his works. In addition, like the protagonist of this comic and animation, Isagi Yoichi. His prototype football player seems like Filippo Inzaghi, an Italian football athlete. These two athletes not only have the nearly pronunciation of the name, but they also possess the same strategies and style of play. Additionally, Inzaghi works for Associazione Calcio Milan (AC Milan), which is also the prototype club Isagi Yoichi works for. These characters are full of inspiration from global football players, which gives international audiences a better understanding when they watch the comic and animation. In this way, the Japanese culture represented by this work will also be well disseminated. What causes this benefit is that animation and comics use cultural integration and some well-known and easy-to-understand content to break the wall between non-national viewers and national works. Japan is very tolerant of different cultures and willing to learn from them. That also makes them outstanding in the international animation and comic market. Therefore, one of the Japanese development strategies learned is being welcome to global culture in animation, and make the content easier to understand due to the core of Chinese culture is too complicated [2]. Another example of applying splendid animation & comic strategies is Marvel Comics company. Marvel's market strategies are global and international. Its consumers and subsidiary of the companies are all over the world. Therefore, the marketing strategy of the American animation company represented by Marvel is very worthy of learning and reference. Marvel was originally an animation & comic company, which has a completed mature production chain: create comics, make the comics animated, and make it be adapted for film. Under the function of this market chain, Marvel succeeds in becoming a crossover company by introducing original animation and comic industries into movies. The Marvel Cinematic Universe gradually replaced the original industry which only specializes in animation and comics, and became the

dominant Marvel industry, becoming the biggest movie franchise ever. This form helps Marvel make fat profit in the film industry [10]. When animation and comics are introduced to film, the celebrity effect also makes a great margin for Marvel Comics. For example, Marvel uses celebrities' impact, like the actors of Spider-man, Captain America, and Iron Man to attract their fans to pay for the movies and their anime derivative products. A survey involving 1,030 respondents from a national panel of consumers in China, showed that celebrities' endorsement is one of the most important factors for consumers to consider whether they buy the products [11]. Therefore, Marvel's marketing strategies are beneficial for Chinese animation to learn from. They connect the animation and comic industry with the film market. By continuing to invite different celebrities to their film series to increase the benefit, they can make much profit on different stages. There are many more examples, such as DC's hero films and Disney's live-action princess series. By symbolizing derivative and using celebrities' impact, many consumers will be attracted to pay for self-identification and endorse products [1].

4.2 China's Innovative Development Strategies in the Animation and Comic Market

The Chinese animation industry is not as mature as Japan's and America's. Learning from that, China should focus on improving the animation industry chain. The animation derivative products are in the back section of the animation industry. China, as one of the most populous countries in the world, should consider its particularity and superiority, and apply these qualities to animation market construction. Instead of only concentrating on derivative products themselves and how to become more attractive, China is supposed to facilitate the whole industrial chain up to down. To improve the animation derivative products industry, China should first perfect and protect the content and characters of animation works. Cartoonists and writers are supposed to make full use of profound cultural and historical deposits and national characteristics in part of animation and comic content. There are some successful figures molded in existing Chinese animation and comics, such as Sun Wukong, Panda, and Dragon. In the selection of the item of animation works, especially in sports animation and comics, Chinese cartoonists and writers need to focus on the theme that can represent China's image and inspire citizens' passion. Like table tennis, kung fu, and Chinese intangible cultural inheritance. In addition, laws and regulations on animation and comic works should also be more stringent. Just like the Japanese industry, it attracts various original cartoonists due to its completed laws and supporting measures. A straight-

way animation filled with rich positive power and national characteristics comics, animations, and their derivative products will not only be of great educational value to the younger generation but also give the citizens a sense of strong national identity. What is more, appropriate novel development strategies can help China facilitate and increase its soft power to promote cultural integration and exploit the new road of foreign business trade.

After perfecting the animation content, the Chinese animation industry can consider combining the film industry with its original animation industry. Real human animation film works will cause celebrities impact and make much profit. Different celebrities will have various influences, their support and advocacy not only can attract the support of fans of the original comic books but will also attract the fans carried by the stars themselves. In this way, the profit of the animation industry will not be limited to animation and comic consumer groups but spread over all fields [3].

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the central findings of this research showed that the Chinese animation and comic industry has some vital issues that result in China being limited in the phenomena of the current international animation market. The variation of consumers' purchase willingness, faulty industrial chain process, too small targeted groups, and the lack of representative works are the major reasons for the dilemma of animation derivative products. Based on the research findings, the thesis further draws the conclusion that the Chinese animation industry's opportunities and challenges coexist. Learning from other mature completed strategies and adjusting the animation content becomes easier to attract international animation and comic viewers' interest. Therefore, the content of Chinese animation works can be spread more widely with the integration of Chinese national culture and international cultures. In addition, the market development strategies are supposed to facilitate by combining the film industry and animation industry to create celebrities' impact, which can break the barriers between the animation industry and other fields. Therefore, due to cultural transmission and the improvement of international influence, China's soft power will be enhanced, and the happiness of the people will increase dramatically. China's new industry represented by the animation industry, for example, live streaming and street vendors will receive greater support and benefits from the government. Various valuable references significance will also be provided for the future research in the relevant field because of this research. The research has a significant influence on Chinese future animation and comic

market development strategies and the whole industrial chain. Future research should focus more on derivative products that can be designed for all ages and let consumers of all ages get involved in the animation market to make these consumers feel the purchase is meaningful. Whether can connect the animation and comic industry with the world's intangible cultural heritage, some traditional activities (like Peking Opera), and so on needs to be researched further.

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