



Zhang Zhongjing Cultural Brand Construction from the Perspective of Traditional Chinese Medicine Culture and Wellness Tourism

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CMNP 2023;3:e51–e55.

Abstract

Nowadays, traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) culture and wellness tourism are developing toward integration with an inherent and inevitable basis. A new business mode of TCM wellness tourism bred has emerged, injecting new vitality into the development of TCM culture and innovation of tourism. As the cultural representative of TCM industry, Zhang Zhongjing culture should seize the opportunity to make a breakthrough in its brand construction with the help of wellness tourism. The main construction strategies include actively launching books or films and television dramas based on the deeds of Zhang Zhongjing and other famous TCM doctors, turning herbs cultivation bases into special tourism and sightseeing parks, establishing research and dissemination bases of TCM culture, and building TCM wellness tourism bases that integrate learning, rehabilitation, and tourism, using information technology and cultural media platforms to introduce Zhang Zhongjing culture to the world.

Keywords

- ▶ TCM culture
- ▶ wellness tourism
- ▶ brand building
- ▶ famous doctor's deeds
- ▶ TCM
- ▶ Zhang Zhongjing

“Traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) contains the philosophy and practical experience of maintaining the health of the Chinese nation for thousands of years and is the treasure of Chinese civilization.”¹ Since 2015, when the state proposed to vigorously develop the TCM wellness tourism industry, more than 10 TCM tourism demonstration zones, nearly 100 demonstration bases, and thousands of demonstration projects have been initiated in China, and the strategic concept of using demonstration zones to promote TCM wellness tourism consumption and expand new business modes of TCM services has begun to take shape.² The maturity and sustainable development of any industry requires investment in both facilities and talent training as well as the cultivation and promotion of cultural brands.

As a new form of creative cultural industry, the attention and influence of the cultural brand of TCM industry is not prominent enough. How to promote the TCM culture and enhance the national TCM cultural brand with the new mode of wellness tourism is an important and urgent realistic issue for the development of TCM industry in China in the new era. Zhang Zhongjing is the recognized image ambassador of TCM culture, and Henan Zhang Zhongjing Pharmacy Co. Ltd. named after Zhang Zhongjing is also famous in China and abroad. Today, with the accelerated development of information technology, it is of great significance to further highlight and promote Zhang Zhongjing cultural brand by narrowing the distance between TCM and the public, which

received

October 24, 2022

accepted after revision

December 15, 2022

DOI <https://doi.org/>

10.1055/s-0043-1770073.

ISSN 2096-918X.

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Georg Thieme Verlag KG, Rüdigerstraße 14, 70469 Stuttgart, Germany

is essential for the social popularization of TCM culture in China, accelerating the rise of TCM industry and promoting the internationalization of national TCM industry.

Current Status of Research on the Relationship Between Traditional Chinese Medicine Culture and Wellness Tourism

Since the beginning of the new century, with the improvement of China's comprehensive national power, the Chinese national cultural industry represented by TCM has begun to revive and a new trend of industry integration has emerged.³ According to the trajectory of the integration development of TCM and wellness tourism in China by relevant scholars,⁴ it has shifted from a new fashion of medical and recreational tourism emerging in the context of internationalization at the end of the last century to a stage of great integration of related industries to meet the diversified health needs of the masses and then to a new phase of TCM cultural tourism with digital creativity derived from the extensive use of internet technology. And then, with the increasing practices of wellness tourism in China, many scholars began to research the mode of TCM wellness tourism. According to reports, four types of TCM wellness tourism modes are outlined as health management mode, medical tourism mode, health preservation club mode as well as health preservation and leisure mode, which provide important references for the classification research and practice innovation of wellness tourism modes.⁵

In addition, some researchers have discussed the relationship between TCM culture and wellness tourism from a theoretical perspective, pointing out the intrinsic relevance and importance of both toward integration. They believed that the integration of TCM culture and wellness tourism lies in nature and ecology. TCM culture focuses on the "preventive treatment of disease" and emphasizes that health comes from a natural and health-preserving lifestyle by "cultivating the body and nurturing the mind." The basic concept of wellness tourism is also to let people return to nature, to get rehabilitation and self-healing in a good ecology. The organic combination of the green healing method of TCM and the good ecology of nature is an effective way for people to restore their health and experience a healthy lifestyle. Moreover, from the standpoint of mutual industry coupling and mutual profitability, TCM culture opens a new creative growth point for tourism, while the flourishing of wellness tourism industry feeds the traditional TCM industry and promotes the inheritance and advancement of TCM culture with the times, both of which complement each other.

Countermeasures for Zhang Zhongjing Cultural Brand Building

Launching Books or Films and Television Dramas Based on the Deeds of Zhang Zhongjing and Other Famous Traditional Chinese Medicine Doctors

Cultural brand is the cohesion of the spiritual value, academic value, and economic value of culture.⁶ The construction of

Zhang Zhongjing cultural brand is inseparable from the spiritual and academic values of Zhang Zhongjing culture. And the spiritual and academic values of Zhang Zhongjing culture require the collection and research of ancient TCM books and historical materials by researchers of TCM culture and history and the joint efforts of book planners, film and television industry planners, and publishers. To build the Zhang Zhongjing cultural brand, we should pay attention to the collecting the life story and deeds of the famous TCM doctors represented by Zhang Zhongjing, excavating their pioneering spirit of dedication to the cause of TCM, and the popularizing and narrating Zhang Zhongjing's life and deeds, noble sentiments, and medical achievements to readers. In addition, we should also broaden the circle of readers and write some children's books and cartoons that highlight Zhang Zhongjing culture, so that readers can learn and understand TCM at an early age and cultivate their love for TCM culture and appreciation of Zhang Zhongjing culture.

The creation of Zhang Zhongjing cultural brand must first pay attention to the collection of deeds and cultural creations of TCM pioneers represented by Zhang Zhongjing. For example, he lived in Nanyang at the end of the Eastern Han Dynasty and worked as an official in Changsha for many years. He witnessed the plague epidemic at the end of the Eastern Han Dynasty and the war and typhoid epidemic during the Jian'an period. To save people, he worked hard and devoted himself to the study of typhoid fever and finally wrote the magnificent work *Treatise on Cold Damage and Miscellaneous Diseases (Shang Han Za Bing Lun)*. The life stories, noble feelings, and medical achievements of Zhang Zhongjing and other famous TCM doctors should be sorted out into books and compiled into film and television plays, children's books, cartoons, and so on, which is of inestimable value for the spread of TCM culture and can play an indispensable role in establishing Zhang Zhongjing TCM cultural brand.

Developing the Herb Planting Base of Henan Zhang Zhongjing Pharmacy Co. Ltd. into Characteristic Tourism Parks

In Henan, for example, Henan Zhang Zhongjing Pharmacy Co. Ltd. in Zhengzhou and Henan Wanxi Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd. in Nanyang are the two pioneers of Zhang Zhongjing TCM industry. Henan Wanxi Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd. is located in Xixia, Nanyang City. They adhere to the branding concept of "good herbs, good medicines" and make a solemn commitment to society, namely, the "three kinds of reassurance" to reassure the old TCM doctors, the common people, and their ancestors. Most of the authentic herbs used by Henan Wanxi Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd. are produced in the hinterland of Funiu Mountain, which is known as the "natural herb storehouse" with beautiful scenery, where there are herb planting bases of Shanzhuyu (Corni Fructus), etc. Since 1998, Henan Wanxi Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd. has successively established six herb planting bases in Xixia of Nanyang City, Wenxian of Jiaozuo City, Yuexi and Nanling of Anhui Province, and Pengshan of Sichuan City, based on the six ingredients of Liuwei Dihuang Wan, namely Shanzhuyu (Corni Fructus),

Dihuang (*Rehmanniae Radix*), Shanyao (*Dioscoreae Rhizoma*), Mudanpi (*Moutan Cortex*), Fuling (*Poria*), and Zexie (*Alismatis Rhizoma*) and obtained the national GAP certification. To popularize TCM culture, promote people's understanding of the unique value of TCM, and deepen people's awareness of ecological environment protection, it is necessary to establish characteristic tourism routes based on the herbal cultivation bases of TCM. With the help of wellness tourism, people can go to the origin of precious herbs, personally feel the charm of the original ecological and natural environment, and realize that good herbs and good ecological environment are inseparable. Thus, people can generate love for TCM culture, be full of confidence in the future of TCM industry, and be full of confidence in building an international Zhang Zhongjing cultural brand.

Establishing Traditional Chinese Medicine Cultural Research and Dissemination Bases Based on Traditional Chinese Medicine Cultural Venues

Zhang Zhongjing cultural brand construction and emphasis on the foundation and cultivation of TCM culture need to focus on the combing, research, and communication of Zhang Zhongjing TCM culture. For this reason, taking the brand construction of TCM in Nanyang, Henan Province as an example, Nanyang can rely on cultural venues such as Zhang Zhongjing University of Chinese Medicine, Nanyang Medical Sacred Temple, and Rangdong Zhang Zhongjing Memorial Museum, set up many research teams focusing on Zhang Zhongjing TCM culture, extensively carry out academic TCM research. As the hometown of Zhang Zhongjing, Nanyang is constantly enriching the comprehensive strength of TCM culture research, constantly opening up a new world for TCM to keep pace with the times, and further enhancing the influence of Nanyang Zhang Zhongjing cultural brand. At the same time, it is necessary to actively carry out domestic and international dialogues and exchanges in TCM, disseminate the latest TCM research achievement to the local community and the international community, and in the process promote the Zhang Zhongjing TCM cultural brand to the world.

Constructing a Zhang Zhongjing Traditional Chinese Medicine Convalescent Care Tourism Demonstration Base with Learning, Healing, and Tourism as a Whole

To build Zhang Zhongjing TCM convalescent care tourism demonstration base with learning, healing, and tourism as a whole and establish TCM college, academic exchange center, and vacation park with unique Zhang Zhongjing characteristics, so that tourists can learn the knowledge of health maintaining, feel the Zhang Zhongjing culture, deepen their understanding of TCM, and create a social atmosphere of believing in TCM, learning TCM, using TCM, and loving TCM. To acquire physical and mental health, study the healthy lifestyle in TCM wellness tourism, and master the TCM health maintaining methods in physical and mental care, to realize and be sure of the unique value of TCM culture, and even generate love for TCM culture, and make efforts to inherit and carry on TCM.

To achieve this goal, it is necessary to build a wellness tourism experience route, which can be achieved from the following aspects. First, the experience activities of the technology, method, and effectiveness of TCM in Henan, such as planting authentic herbs such as chrysanthemum and moxa grass, making TCM tea drink of TCM such as Zhang Zhongjing's San Gen Drink (roots of Wubeizi [*Galla Chinensis*], Cangerzi [*Xanthii Fructus*] and Chunpi [*Ailanthi Cortex*]), processing TCM medicinal wine, and simulating production of medicinal food, such as Danggui (*Angelicae Sinensis Radix*), Shengjiang (*Zingiberis Rhizoma Recens*), and mutton soup, so that tourists can practice and explore the charm of Chinese herbal medicine in nature. Second, the establishment of a communication platform of Chinese traditional culture is based on TCM culture, such as academy culture, Buddhist culture, Taoist culture, Confucian culture, wine culture, poetry culture, etc. in the combination of modern technology, with the help of Songyang Academy, Huazhou Academy, Shaolin Temple, Zhongyue Temple, Laojunshan, Hanguguan, and other prototypes, as well as the relevant knowledge of TCM in Dukang wine making legend and ancient poems. It is advisable to create a simulated augmented reality (AR) environment, combine TCM culture with traditional Chinese culture, and build a unique communication center where tourists can experience the charm of TCM culture and build cultural self-confidence. It is necessary to build a holiday park with the theme of healthy TCM lifestyle, with experience galleries of moxibustion, paste formula, traditional back therapy, TCM health maintenance exercises (such as Taijiquan, Baduanjin, Daoyin, massage, etc.), and other TCM diagnosis and treatment rooms, to enrich the connotation of tourists' rehabilitation. In addition, it is also necessary to build a TCM vacation park with the characteristics of Zhang Zhongjing, combining vacation with recuperation, Zhang Zhongjing's view of health preservation runs through the whole process of prevention, treatment, and prognosis, emphasizing that people should pay attention to health preservation and disease prevention when not sick and pay attention to recuperation when the disease is cured. Zhang Zhongjing attaches great importance to nourishing after an illness. For example, in *Treatise on Cold Damage (Shang Han Lun)*, he discusses the prevention of disease recurrence from the aspects of excessive sexuality, exhaustion of mind, overexertion, and improper diet, suggesting good care can help to be healthy as soon as possible.⁷ Therefore, the construction of a TCM vacation park with the academic characteristics of Zhang Zhongjing and the combination of vacation and recreation is not only conducive to the spread of Zhang Zhongjing theory and culture, but also beneficial to the health of tourists. Fourth, in combination with the natural climate and the 24 solar terms and health, it is a good idea to launch health-preserving activities with different styles and rich contents in different seasons, such as drinking willow leaf tea at the Ching Ming Festival, smearing realgar wine at the Dragon Boat Festival, drinking osmanthus tea at the Mid-Autumn Festival, drinking chrysanthemum tea at the Double Ninth Festival, eating Zhang Zhongjing dumplings at the Winter Solstice Festival, and so on. It is also

a good idea to offer suggestions on solar conditions and health maintenance, recommend herbal diet, combine TCM with the four seasons, and integrate it into life, making TCM lifestyle daily, interesting, and universal. In addition, the basic health principles of “searching for the primary cause of disease in treatment,” “expelling evil and supporting vital qi,” and “harmonizing yin and yang” can be popularized to tourists in a simple way, and homologous prescriptions such as Danggui Shengjiang Niurou Decoction, Gancao Dazao Decoction, and Jupi Decoction in *Treatsie on Cold Damage and Miscellaneous Diseases (Shang Han Za Bing Lun)* can be introduced for tourists to help them to understand the composition, function, and use of Zhang Zhongjing’s medicine and food homologous prescription, and experience it on the spot. Eventually, tourists can use these recipes to dispel diseases and maintain good health.

By participating in TCM wellness tourism activities, tourists cannot only rely on the power of nature to restore physical functions and eliminate unhealthy or subhealthy conditions, but also experience the healthy lifestyle advocated by the health-preserving culture of TCM. Tourists can learn the practical exercises of health care such as Taijiquan and Baduanjin, and also try the physical and mental conditioning methods of daily health care of TCM such as diet therapy, bath therapy, movement cure, acupuncture, massage, etc.⁸ Through this special experiential wellness tourism research activity, TCM has been wholeheartedly recognized by the majority of tourists, and the local advantages of TCM resources can be transformed into economic advantages, and the national brand of TCM culture marked by Zhang Zhongjing and other famous Chinese doctors can be fundamentally enhanced.⁹

Using Network Cultural Communication Platforms to Introduce Zhang Zhongjing Culture to the World

The ultimate goal of establishing Zhang Zhongjing cultural brand of TCM is still to guide people to learn the knowledge of TCM and the characteristic recuperation and health-preserving methods of TCM, so that people can take good control of their body and have the ability to maintain better health to enjoy a free, healthy, and happy life. Therefore, Zhang Zhongjing’s concept of TCM health preservation, Zhang Zhongjing’s TCM methods of diagnosis and treatment, and the prevention and treatment techniques of different diseases all need to be popularized and promoted safely and reliably in society after scientific research. For example, it is advisable to invite excellent scholars of TCM regularly to give lectures and exchanges, to explain their research achievement and apply to the public, especially the systematic research achievement of TCM classics such as the *Treatise on Cold Damage and Miscellaneous Diseases (Shang Han Za Bing Lun)*, so that the TCM culture can benefit people and the construction project of Zhang Zhongjing TCM culture can be truly implemented. TCM can get a reputation only when ordinary people get real benefits, and Zhang Zhongjing cultural brand can be fundamentally built and win lasting support and respect. Only in this way can we inspire generations of young people who

are interested in TCM to devote themselves to the study, research, and innovation of TCM and thus realize the intergenerational inheritance of Zhang Zhongjing cultural brand. Especially in the information age, with the help of internet technology, TCM culture can be spread faster, more timely, and more accurately.¹⁰

Prospect

During the outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), Chinese medicine has shown its advantages, especially Qingfei Paidu Decoction in treatment. Qingfei Paidu Decoction is composed of four modified formulas, namely, Ma Xing Shi Gan Tang (Ephedra, Apricot Kernel, Gypsum, and Licorice Decoction), Shegan Mahuang Tang (Belamcanda and Ephedra Decoction), Xiao Chaihu Tang (Minor Bupleurum Decoction), and Wuling San (Poria Five Powder) in Zhang Zhongjing’s *Treatise on Cold Damage and Miscellaneous Diseases (Shang Han Za Bing Lun)*. It can clear the lung and calm panting, dissolve phlegm and suppress cough, dissipate cold and dissolve phlegm, reconcile cardinal, warm yang and promote qi transformation, disinhibit dampness and move water, and promote the flow of dampness and urine, and is suitable for patients with mild, moderate, and severe pneumonia infected by a novel coronavirus. According to a related study,¹¹ the recurrence rate of COVID-19 patients cured by TCM is extremely low, and this finding has attracted TCM much attention at home and abroad and provided a good opportunity for the development of TCM industry and the promotion of cultural brand of Zhang Zhongjing in the postepidemic era. However, it should also be noticed that the development of TCM-related industries is still in the exploration and decentralization stage. No unified standard has been formed in various aspects, and the industrial chain after the industry gathering and integration also needs to be further optimized and integrated. Therefore, entering the new era, the cultural brand building of Zhang Zhongjing still has a long way to go and needs to seize the opportunity and stick to the road of innovation and development.

CRedit Authorship Contribution Statement

E.X.: Conceptualization; project administration, writing—original draft. B.L.: Methodology and writing—original draft. M.B., Y.L., Y.L., B.W. and Y.D.: Supervision and investigation. Y.C. and M.X.: Writing—review and editing.

Funding

This study was funded by the Henan Provincial Traditional Chinese Medicine Culture and Management Research Project (TCM2022004).

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest. Editor note: EX is Editorial Board members of Chinese Medicine and Natural Products. The article was subject to the journal’s standard procedures, with peer review handled independently of these Editorial Board members and their research groups.

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