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Impact Study of the Major Sports Events, the Life Cycle of Tourist Destinations and the Competitiveness of Urban Tourism

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Abstract: Major sports events have far-reaching and wide-ranging implications on the promotion of tourism economy. The research takes tourist destination lifecycle as mediating variables, by analyzing the 543 random surveys and the structural equation modeling, the study found: Major sports events have significant positive impact on the tourist destination lifecycle, the expected impact, the degree of relationship awareness and support and the structure of tourism products. It also has positive impact on market promotion degree and tourism resource competitiveness.

Key words: Sports tourism, tourist destination lifecycle, competitiveness of urban tourism

INTRODUCTION

With the improvement of people's living standards and the promotion of fitness activities in recent years, China's sports tourism industry obviously shows a trend of rapid growth. However, the relevant research of sports events and sports tourism is still far away from the actual requirement of the development, especially the empirical systematic study of the delayed impact of the major sporting events on tourism. So, research team takes Hang Zhou city as a sample, starting from the impact of large-scale sporting events, focusing on the relationship between the large-scale sporting events and tourist destination lifecycle and city tourism competitiveness, through analyzing of domestic and foreign research, this article scientifically assessed the Competitiveness of urban tourism and proposes effective sports tourism marketing strategy.

"Events and event tourism" theory was put forward in the 1990s (Getz, 1997). Events also often were translated as "activity" which means that a series of activity program happened in a transient time. Based on the theory of Getz, this study think that sports events is a kind of planned and organized sports competition which is in a certain time, region and scale. It can be divided into three types: ONE is the major sports events; it refers to possess an international influence, the radiating surface wide, huge economic impact (Margaret *et al.*, 2004). Most of Major sports events are "audience drive type" sports event, it takes their own sports culture as the unique attraction and the audience will be from the residence to the event site, such as Olympic Games (Danny, 2006), World Cup, all kinds of federations' world championships and intercontinental single sports event. The research

mainly refers to this kind of events. Sports tourism research of five European countries (Glyptis, 1982) is considered to be a significant literature in the study of sports tourists travel motivation.

RESEARCH FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESIS

The life cycle of tourism industry development is embodied in the life cycle of tourism, tourist destination life cycle theory is brought out by Canadian scholars Butler in 1980, the main point of view is that a tourist destination development process generally undergo six stages, Butler also introduced an "S" type curve to describe lifecycle six stages (Fig. 1). Butler pointed out that tourism destination life cycle is relevant to a lot of factors, such as urban tourism resources, location and traffic conditions, urban tourism theme image and so on. Positive stimulus activities can slow fading, prolong the life cycle. Based on the theoretical analysis, the hypotheses were put forward:

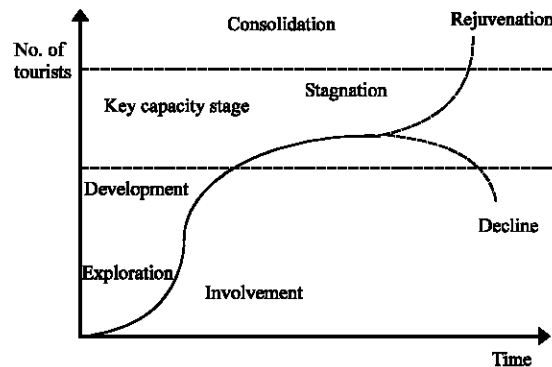


Fig. 1: Six stages of tourist destination life cycle

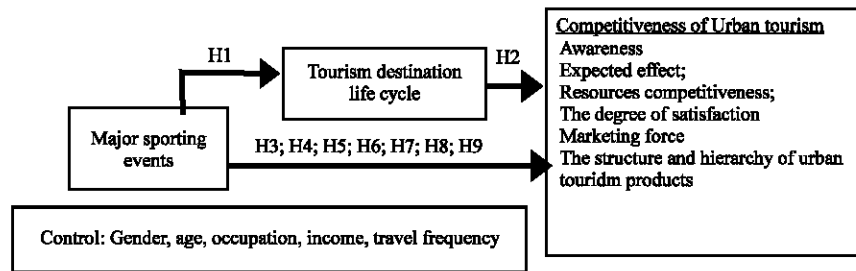


Fig. 2: Conceptual model of impact research of large sports events on the life cycle of tourism destination and tourism city competitiveness

H1: major sports events tourism has significant positive influence on tourism destination (host city) life cycle

Urban tourism competitiveness is an important part of urban competitiveness, also the power source of the city tourism sustainable development (Andrew, 2005). It is an open and friendly system, it through the city structure or the change of urban system to achieve the purpose of self-organization and self-operation, fused in the tourism destination life cycle. Therefore, the life cycle of tourism destination is one of the important factors which have huge impact on urban tourism competitiveness. Based on the theoretical analysis, we put forward the hypothesis:

H2: tourist destination (host events) life cycle of urban tourism competitiveness have significantly positive influence

Late last century, tourism activities induced by sports events become the focus of the study of sports tourism scholars, including the construction of event site, the construction of brand competition, etc., according to Heather j. Gibson, sports tourism can generate an income of \$27 billion in America (Bramwell, 1998), in addition, Margaret j. Daniels point out the main purpose of sports events in the area of the tourism research is to establish a method to measure the influence of sports events and income. The research introduces urban tourism competitiveness variable. It refers to a city's capability by using its own tourism resources advantages and opportunities, organizing department of tourism and tourism enterprise, making management strategy, developing the domestic and foreign tourism market (Kelley and Turley, 2001). Generally speaking, the stronger the urban tourism competitiveness, the more obvious sports event tourism would brings positive promoting effect and vice versa (Kim and Chalip, 2004). According to previous research and this research needs,

this study will divide urban tourism competitiveness into seven dimensions: Expected effects, resources competitiveness, support degree, awareness, existing satisfaction and marketing force and tourism product structure and hierarchy. Based on the above theoretical analysis, we propose hypothesis:

H3: Major sports events tourism has significant positive influence on expected effects

H4: Major sports events tourism has significant positive influence on resources competitiveness of urban tourism

H5: major sports events tourism has significant positive influence on the support of urban tourism

H6: Major sports events tourism has significant positive influence on perceived awareness of relationship

H7: Major sports events tourism has significant positive influence on the existing satisfaction of urban tourism

H8: Major sports events tourism has significant positive influence on marketing force of urban tourism

H9: Major sports events tourism has significant positive influence on the structure and hierarchy of urban tourism products

Conceptual model: According to the theoretical analysis and the research hypothesis, this study built the conceptual model of the moderating influence of tourism destination life cycle, as Fig. 2 shows:

METHOD

Sample data collection: The research mainly uses the questionnaire survey method for data collection. Firstly, we made a group discussion research study in the team and then we conducted a questionnaire survey in September 2012 to December 2012 in Hubei province for tourists home and abroad. Research team issued a total of 598 questionnaires, divided into live and online two parts. The Internet respondents includes Shaanxi, Guangdong,

Zhejiang, Henan, Hunan, Hainan provinces and cities, live data collection are from two famous scenic spot in Hangzhou: East lake and the yellow crane tower. Receiving effective questionnaire of 543 copies, the valid questionnaire recovery was 90.9%. In 543 questionnaires, male 48%, female 52%; tourists from Hubei province are accounted for 64.6, 25.3% of other provinces in china, foreign tourists 10.1% (Table 1).

Measures: Same as most of the similar studies, this research mainly adopts seven-point scales using “strongly disagree” and “strongly agree” as the anchors.

Analyses: SPSS11.5 was used to analyze the data. First, the descriptive statistics was examined, used exploratory factor analyses and computed internal consistencies according to their composite reliability (Fornell and Bookstein, 1982) and the results indicate that, all the reliability of the measurement scale is higher ($\alpha = 0.783$). To explore the external validity of our main construct, expert investigation method was adopted. Research team invited experts in the field of tourism to make a logical analysis and inspection, evaluate content validity, construct validity, etc. On the base of that, we made little modification; the results have shown that the questionnaire is more reasonable.

RESULTS

More than 90% of the investigators’ age concentrated in Twenty to fifty years old, this is fitted with the actual situation, they are energetic and enjoying traveling, having a certain time and the economic basis, is the backbone of the tourism activities. It can clearly see that above 90% of the respondents said major sports events will have a positive impact on Hangzhou tourism,

Table 1: Travel frequency in a year

Frequency	Number	No. of percentage	Cumulative percentage	a
1 time and below	385	70.9	70.9	-
2~3 times	102	18.8	89.7	-
3~5 times	45	8.3	98.0	-
Above 5 times	11	2.0	100.0	-
Total	543	100.0	-	0.783

Table 2: Variables correlation analysis results

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 Aawareness	1.000						
2 Satisfaction	0.241**	1.000					
3 Support	0.325**	0.438**	1.000				
4 Resources competitiveness	0.187**	0.326**	0.426**	1.000			
5 Marketing degree	0.236**	0.157**	0.337**	0.154**	1.000		
6 The product structure	0.485**	0.321**	0.464**	0.189**	0.209**	1.000	
7 Expected effect	0.775**	0.103**	0.253**	0.141**	0.235**	0.327**	1.000

it also shows that promoting strategies are in line with the requirements. The analysis results show that, Hangzhou tourism still has a lot of room to improvement.

From the statistical results (Table 1), we found tourists traveling 2-3 times in a year was the largest, accounting for 70.9% and the number of 1-3 times combined reached 89.7%, this result shows that the vast majority of tourists control their traveling within three times a year for various reasons, time should be gathered in the National day, International Labour Day, winter and summer vacation and during the Spring Festival, this travel demand characteristics should be the key of the travel agencies.

According to the survey results, awareness, support degree, resource competition, marketing degree and product structure has a single correlation, namely, the more public support, the stronger the resources competitiveness is, the greater the marketing efforts are and products structure will became more reasonable. At the same time, we also can find that expected influence and awareness, support degree, product structure is very relevant and marketing degree, tourism resources competitiveness is weak correlation and not related to the degree of satisfaction. This suggests that, regardless of the tourists’ satisfaction at present, most people would think major sports events tourism in Hangzhou city would have a significant impact.

Through the correlation analysis, the variables are related, but this is just a statistical relationship between two variables, still not sure the function relationship between each other, so, we used the regression analysis to determine the major sports events tourism and urban tourism competitiveness variables and the functional relation between the variables have further quantitative relationship and prediction and relationship. Then, six factors were put in the regression analysis, Y1 (expected effect), x1 (product composition), x2(awareness), x3(support degrees), x4 (tourism resources competitiveness) and x5 (marketing degrees), the result is as follows:

Then we made regression analysis again, Y2 (satisfaction), x1 (product composition), x3 (support degrees), x4(tourism resources competitiveness) and x5 (marketing degree), the result is as follows:

Table 3: Coefficients Related to major sports events tourism impact

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	0.633	0.315	-	3.107	0.002
Product composition	0.036	0.061	0.063	1.009	0.003
Awareness	0.478	0.054	0.617	9.930	0.000
Support degrees	0.069	0.065	0.039	0.572	0.005
Tourism resources competitiveness	0.038	0.057	0.053	0.945	0.000
Marketing degrees	0.021	0.046	0.040	0.672	0.013

a. Dependent Variable: expected effect. $Y1 = 0.036 * x1 + 0.478 * x2 + 0.069 * x3 + 0.038 * x4 + 0.021 * x5 + 0.633$

Table 4: Coefficients related to satisfaction

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	0.478	0.458	-	1.225	0.222
Support degrees	0.227	0.099	0.198	2.386	0.018
Tourism resources competitiveness	0.136	0.089	0.162	2.276	0.024
Marketing degrees	0.124	0.072	0.085	1.152	0.028
Product composition	0.235	0.090	0.105	1.410	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: satisfaction. $Y2 = 0.227 * x3 + 0.136 * x4 + 0.235 * x1 + 0.124 * x5 + 0.478$

Through the above two function relation, we can get the quantitative relationship between the Competitiveness of urban tourism and major sports events tourism.

CONCLUSION AND ENLIGHTENMENT

Conclusion and discussion: Expected effect and awareness, the degree of support and tourism product structure is very relevant, At the same time, the satisfaction, support degree, marketing degree, resources competitiveness and tourism product structure is very relevant, so seven factors are directly or indirectly related they all composite the competitiveness of urban tourists. Certainly, the impact of major sports events to the host city’s tourism industry is varies from place to place, a number of studies show that major sports events bring tangible impact is likely to be more far-reaching and profound than tangible influence.

Managerial implications: This study is also relevant to managers. Through this major sports events tourism, prolong the life cycle of tourism destination. Firmly, grasp the theme of the sports events and carry out the national marketing propaganda, promoting international entry and exit tourism development. Through a series of activities, the spirit of sports and theme deepening in public life. Gym’s positioning should as much as possible use, multi-function and close to the community. According to the actual situation of tourism in Hangzhou, managers should promote and enhance the quality of the industry. Such as: service skills, personnel management level and the legalization of the industry standard, etc.

LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

Our study has several limitations. First, due to the research conditions and capacity constraints, the sample of data is partially not enough; it may have certain effect to the results of the survey. Second, the impact factors in the design are lack of theoretical basis, the results may produce a certain deviation and this is a deficiency in this study. The third one is assumptions may have deviation with the actual produces, questionnaire research and investigation is in a variety of hypothesis, so any man-made, natural disaster events are likely to cause a certain degree of influence to prospective study. From the discussion above, it is known that the key difficulty of predicting and analyzing sports tourism impact is the determination of “reference condition”. Further research is needed to establish multivariate event tourism prediction and evaluation model, make wide and deep theoretical and empirical research.

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