

Tourism Image Upgrading and Transformation of Sub-tourist-destination

A Comparative Study Based on Heishan Valley and Jinfo Mountain in Chongqing

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Abstract—The development and transformation of sub-tourist-destination (STD) has been currently a hot topic in academia. This article firstly demonstrates the importance of tourism image in upgrading of scenic spot. Then, it combs the evaluation system of STD based on the point of tourism image. And thirdly, there is a comparison of tourist market, tourism image and local resident's attitude between Jin fo Mountain Scenic Spot and Heishan Valley Scenic Spot in Chongqing. Qualitative evaluation to resort resource of Heishan Valley has been made. According to this research, Heishan Valley Scenic Spot has typical attribute of STD which can be upgraded by its predominant resort resources. To get out of STD dilemma, the new tourism image of different tourist market and rich-in-experience products must be explored.

Keywords—*sub-tourist-destination; image upgrading; Heishan Valley; Jinfo Mountain*

I. INTRODUCTION

It should be considered from the aspects of tourism resources grade, tourist preference and tourist route design to determine whether the Tourism Destination is in the “sub-state”. In the fierce market competition today, different types of STDs are trying to explore the transformation way out of the stands, especially how to get rid of the “image mask” from the same type scenic. To achieve scenic image of innovation and attract more tourists has become the general trend of such a tourist destination for transformation and upgrading.

A. Foreign Literature Research

Foreign scholars tend to study the image of tourism destination by field study. Angela Phelps, a scholar focus on tourism image early, took the example of Menorca Spain in

1986 to assess the Holiday Destination Image, and proposed an assessment method which would influence the secondary impression of resort decision making [1]. William C. Gartner (1986) argues that the image is not simply a matter of cognition, as the recognition of brand and different attributes of attraction are intertwined to form a complex state image, just like the short-term impact of image changes may affect the product positioning [2]. Enrique Bigné Alcañiz (2009) analyzed the cognitive component of the destination image from the tourist's overall perception of the destination and future behavior intention [3]. Subsequently, Seyhmus Baloglu (1999) used path analysis to show that the image of resort formation depends on Stimulus Factors and Tourist Characteristics [4]. Standing on the image of a destination perceived by tourists and their behavioral intentions on post-purchase evaluation of the Valencian coast in Spain, Bigne JE (2002) and others studied the relationship between visitor satisfaction, visitor recommendation and repeat visitors by using the structural equation model [5].

In recent years, marketing, branding, customer loyalty and stakeholders have become the starting point for foreign scholars to pay attention to and study the image of tourism. Using a diversified descriptive analysis, Antonio Manuel Martins de Almeida (2010) build a rural tourism image to attract more tourists to participate in the local rural tourism industry, taking the Madeira as an example, based on socioeconomic, travel-related factors, cognitive and emotional factors [6]. Pan Bing, Li Xiang (2011) takes China as an example to examine the linguistic structure of Chinese destination image, and the author believes that the image of the destination is not only controlled by many popular words, but also particularly important in some small niches [7]. Areej Shabib Aloudat (2013) used questionnaires to analyze the attitudes of visitors to Jordan's tourism image pre-and post-visit Jordan [8]. From the perspective of American travel agencies and tourism experts, Fabiana Gondim Mariutti (2013) uses qualitative research methods to reveal the diversity and ambiguity of Brazilian tourism image, then analyzes the positive and negative effects of its tourism image [9].

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B. Domestic Literature Research

At present, the upgrading and transformation way of tourism destination image has become hot topic of domestic planning and tourism scholars, with the research focused on tourist satisfaction, tourism evaluation system and market competitiveness. Representatives of the academic point of view there are: Wang Xi (2006) proposed the ternary core structure of the tourism destination image system, that is, the realistic image, the media image and the perceived image, based on which he explained the basic path of tourism destination real image promotion [10]. Li Xiaoli (2007) summarizes the impact of the event on the tourism image of the host city, and analyzes the changes in the tourism image perception of the tourism destination during the ten years before and after the event [11]. For clues of food, shelter, travel, entertainment, and shopping, Guo Jia (2009) survey tourists satisfaction in Harbin, constructed tourist satisfaction and the local tourism image between the structural equation model [12]. Taking Chen Zhou of Hunan Province as an example, Xiao aiping (2011) used the fuzzy comprehensive evaluation model and method to carry on quantitative research on the transformation and upgrading of tourism destination, and used AHP method to determine the evaluation index system of tourists' satisfaction [13]. Xu Feng, Li Jing (2013) analyzed the excellent tourism destination evaluation system constructed by the World Excellent Destination Center from four aspects: function orientation, type classification, index establishment and process design, then practice test of the comprehensive application based on 7 important Tourism destinations [14]. In addition, as the starting point on tourist destination image, Liu Lijuan (2013) built a tourist destination brand equity model, including regional image, destination brand awareness, destination brand image [15].

C. Literature Review

From the number of literature, the research on tourist destination image has aroused great interest of scholars at home and abroad, resulting in a large number of research results. From the research content, the emerging theory and models of tourism image upgrading is endless. However, there are relatively few literature on tourism destination upgrading and transformation from the perspective of STD image. As the inevitable trend of development and upgrading of China's tourism industry, scholars and industry should pay more attention to the STD theory. Especially such problems of nature identification, upgrading path, the regional competition and cooperation model should be the study direction of tourism, with planning and government departments and other stakeholders together.

II. EVALUATION SYSTEM OF SUB-TOURIST-DESTINATION

Combined with the Image Shading Theory, the STD generally refers to that, tourists usually tend to visit the scenic area with higher visibility and tourism image when they compared with the same level of tourism resources or similar types of tourist sites in two or more, While the same type of scenic spots remained surrounding are more difficult to become the source of choice for tourists, which is called STD.

To solve the bottleneck of STD development, we must first understand its evaluation system. As an important part of the tourist destination, the objective evaluation of STD must rely on the tourism destination evaluation system. Tan Lin and Li Guangjin (2001) used the value chain as a research perspective to analyze the dominant factors of tourism destination, such as tourism service facilities and tourism image [16]. However, as an important part of the tertiary industry, the evaluation of the tourist destination should include the recessive factors besides the explicit evaluation factors, such as scenic development and environmental protection, community service and regional development. The author has presided over more than 10 tourism planning projects, survey more than 200 scenic spots, fully grasp the formation causes and performance of STD. This paper combines the basic characteristics of STD, sorting out the six hidden factors, as shown in "Fig. 1":

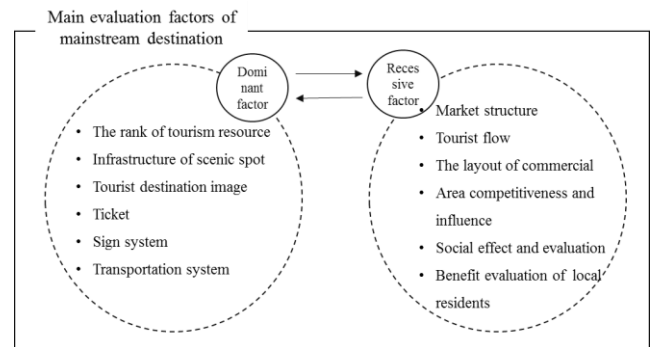


Fig. 1. Evaluation factors of sub-tourist-destination.

The evaluation of STD needs to consider its relatively stable external features and changing internal characteristics. In a certain period of time, the former has been relatively stable and predictable, more easily perceived by tourists, such as the quality of scenic tourism resources, tourism publicity image, scenic consumption, scenic identification system, destination accessibility and other dominant factors, which are often the main considerations for evaluating mainstream tourism destinations; the latter is usually to adapt to the development of scenic areas and dynamic changes, such as the expansion (or reduction) of tourist market, the growth (or decrease) of tourist volume, the prosperity (or recession) of commercial activities, and the strength of regional competitiveness (tourist route design). In addition, the evaluation of the STD should also take into account the factors such as the ecological protection awareness of the scenic area management, the environmental carrying capacity of the scenic area, the tourism service for the local residents and income generation.

III. CASE STUDIES

A. Basic Situation of Research Object

Chongqing forest resort is rich in resources, each year from April to October, summer attractions earn much tourists attention in the city, due to climatic reasons. From June 20 to July 15, 2014, the members of the research group conducted a questionnaire survey and field study on the scenic area of Chongqing Nanchuan Jinpo Mountain and Wansheng

Heishan Valley (hereinafter referred to as ‘two scenic spots’). The two scenic spots are not only belong to the leisure resort, with the most overlapped source market, but also laid in Chongqing “one hour economic circle”. Whether from the type of tourism resources, geographical location or the nature of tourism, the two scenic spots have a more intense market competition. As this survey, the research group aims to investigate the market structure of the two scenic spots and the factors affect the tourists’ (especially foreign tourists) destination perception when they choose leisure summer in Chongqing. So as to find out a way to break the bottleneck, in through tourism image upgrading or image reshaping of STD.

B. Survey Methods

The survey mainly relied on interviews and questionnaires to the two scenic spots’ visitors, with total of 300 questionnaires while two scenic spots of the 150. 278 cases were recovered from this survey, while 137 were collected from Jinfo Mountain, 141 were in Heishan Valley, and the effective questionnaire was higher than 90%.

C. Analysis of Results

According to the main factors of STD evaluation system "Fig. 1, the research group has carried on the contrastive analysis to the tourism resources characteristic, the tourist traffic, the tourist market and the tourism image of the above two scenic spots.

TABLE I. COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE TWO SCENIC SPOTS’ MAIN EVALUATION FACTORS

Evaluation index	Jinfo Mountain	Heishan Valley
Comprehensive evaluation	World Natural Heritage, 5A scenic spots	5A scenic spots
Tourism image	Mountain is the Buddha, the Buddha is the mountain	Health Heishan valley, explore the ancient stone forest
Source market	Chongqing, Nanchuan and surrounding counties (62%), Southwest (19%), Other provinces and cities (16%), Overseas (Southeast Asia) (3%)	Chongqing, Wansheng and surrounding areas (82%), Southwest (9%), Other domestic provinces and cities (9%)
Tourist flow	About 1230 persons / day	About 920 persons / day
Regional competitiveness	Strong competitiveness in Chongqing, does not have obvious advantages in the southwest region, as Emei Mountain, Qingcheng Mountain and many other scenic spots covered.	In the Wansheng and surrounding areas have a certain reputation, 38% of the visitors will be willing to Heishan valley as the first choice for Chongqing leisure, of which 85% of local tourists in Chongqing.
Business type	Specialty shops, restaurants, hotels, farmhouse, recreational facilities, scenic traffic, tourism real estate	Hotels, a few specialty shops and restaurants, scenic traffic, tourism real estate

We know from "Table I" that the two scenic spots have a certain similarity in the tourism resources level, tourism image publicity, the source market structure and etc. On the one hand, the scenic spots are characterized by forest resources, and the higher level of resources to health, leisure,

summer as the main function; on the other hand, its main source are from the local market in Chongqing, which formed the more intense regional competition pattern. In the commercial format, regardless of the type of industry or the number and level, the Jinfo Mountain are slightly better than the Heishan Valley. Although the latter is 5A scenic spot, but its leisure activity just like catering and entertainment is quite poor, with low tourist participation almost only sightseeing activities that allow visitors to travel through the “canyon”. It not only caused the economic income of scenic areas mainly rely on tickets and the district traffic system, but also weakened the commercial format in the scenic area in a reasonable layout.

TABLE II. FACTORS OF RESIDENT’S ATTITUDE

Economic benefits		J	Traffic facilities are richer
A	Increased personal income	K	Road transport more convenient
B	Provide employment opportunities	I	Outside links more open
C	Attracting foreign investment	Social benefits	
D	Extends the product chain	M	Residents have improved quality
E	Enrich the commercial category	N	Social order is safer
F	Optimize the industrial structure	O	Residents are more harmonious
Environmental benefits		P	Traditional culture has developed
G	The urban environment improved	Q	Public facilities are built
H	Community environment improved	R	Social and cultural more diversify
I	Good urban resources protection		

TABLE III. RESIDENTS ATTITUDE TO LOCAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT (UNIT %)

	Quite Approval		Approval		Neutrality		Oppose		Quite Oppose	
	Jinf o	Heisha n	Jinf o	Heisha n	Jinf o	Heisha n	Jinf o	Heisha n	Jinf o	Heisha n
Economic benefits										
A	35	23	38	40	10	17	11	15	6	5
B	25	15	32	18	20	46	15	16	8	5
C	18	25	46	37	23	32	13	6	0	0
D	12	3	26	23	42	46	16	15	4	13
E	43	32	32	53	24	15	1	0	0	0
F	30	18	41	23	26	40	1	16	2	3
Environmental benefits										
G	32	24	31	23	32	35	2	18	3	0
H	12	8	23	12	28	25	26	46	11	9
I	22	6	38	23	29	51	11	17	0	3
J	11	15	32	26	30	18	18	32	9	9
K	44	40	46	55	10	5	0	0	0	0
L	37	27	47	49	15	20	1	2	0	2
Social benefits										
M	11	17	47	39	21	30	18	11	3	3
N	6	12	11	30	62	48	10	6	11	4
O	5	8	6	22	72	62	13	5	4	3
P	22	3	37	13	38	20	3	40	0	24
Q	38	13	39	15	21	53	2	13	0	6
R	9	14	12	27	23	39	31	17	25	3

From the results of the survey "Table II", we know that the identity on local tourism development of two places’ residents has a certain similarity. In the area of economic income, more than half of the residents in both scenic areas

believe that the development of tourism has increased its personal (or household) income, and effectively promoted local employment. Mainly reflected in the increase in sales of local specialty products and farmhouse accommodation, food consumption, which is an important reason of the two residents generally agree and support the local development of tourism. In the tourism industry's positive impact on the environment, 35% of the residents of the Jinfo Mountain think that the development of tourism enhanced the community environment, as well as the Heishan Valley area only 20%. In addition, both residents recognized that the tourism industry has improved the local road conditions, but there is no significant improvement in the types and levels of vehicles.

The differences in residents' attitudes towards tourism development are mainly reflected in the development and inheritance of local culture. 59% of the residents in the Jinfo Mountain area believe that the tourism industry development has carried forward the local minority culture and Buddhist culture, and to a certain extent, led the integration of minority culture and tourism of the surrounding Tujia and Miao people. While only 16% of the residents in the Heishan Valley region agree that the tourism industry has a positive impact on its traditional culture. 64% of the residents think that the development of the tourism industry has not made much contribution to the development of Hong Miao culture and Yelang culture "Table III".

The survey found that local residents' support for tourism development was closely related to their own benefit. The proportion of "retailers" involved in the tourism industry was "13% (Jinfo Mountain)" and "4% (Heishan Valley)" among the two residents surveyed; the ratio of people as "staff members" in the area management and operation were "18% (Jinfo Mountain)" and "12% (Heishan Valley)". As the recognition degree of economic benefits of the tourism industry, the former is also significantly higher than the latter. It can be seen that the greater local residents benefit from in the development of tourism, the higher rate of positive support for tourism development, on the contrary, the less. Residents' benefits and channels have become one of the criteria for evaluating the nature of tourism destinations.

D. Transformation and Upgrading of STD

According to the theory of tourism life cycle and the concept of tourism destination shadowing, relative to the higher visibility, tourism image enjoys popular tourist destination. STD in the development process more prone to competitors and substitutes, the source market attention force is more vulnerable to transfer, which divert scenic tourists. Therefore, for the surrounding similar types of scenic spots, establishing an independent and innovative tourism image in improving the competitiveness of tourism is particularly important.

1) Positioning the source market, segment tourism image: The lack of single and amusement items of scenic tourism products has greatly reduced the participation and experience of tourists, while the lack of attractiveness to tourists has led to the expansion of the tourist market. This

has caused a big influence of Heishan Valley which relatively high depend on the local market. Innovation tourism image, optimize the source market structure, is the first step in the transformation and upgrading of the scenic area.

Research data show that there are unreasonable source structure in Chongqing leisure mountain resort area. With the gradual reduction of the primary market and secondary or third tier market difficult to open up, the scenic spots relied on local tourists as the main source maybe come into the STD. And the effective way to avoid this bottleneck is to find the image of tourism market positioning based on different sources market, when it is in the early stages of develop and operate.

If the tourist image is an important basis for tourism destination which gave tourist first impression of attractions and selection, then the development of high-experience tourism product chain is necessary for meeting the tourists' expectations and vision. The problem that Heishan Valley faced in the process of transformation and upgrading is the tourism product development and construction after image upgrading " Table IV".

TABLE IV. TOURISM IMAGE UPGRADING AND TOURIST MARKET ADJUSTMENT OF HEISHAN VALLEY

	Current source market	Current tourism image	After the upgrade source market	Recommended tourism image
<i>Primary market</i>	Chongqing local tourists	Southwest Shennongjia;	Western tourists	Leisure and summer Heishan Valley
<i>Secondary market</i>	Other Southwest tourists	Biological gene bank; Mountain city summer palace	Visitors from other parts of the country	Above the landscape, southwest of the valley
<i>Third tier market</i>	Visitors from other parts of the country		Foreign tourists	Explore the southwest, health landscape

2) Improve tourism products, rich tourist experience: One of the fundamental problems in transformation of Heishan Valley is to improve the participation of visitors. The key lies in relying on natural landscape, digging deep scenic culture, improving the tourism product chain. On the development of Yelang culture and Red Miao culture, Heishan Valley scenic area mainly reveal in carnival, bonfire show and other festivals, with a certain limitation. For carrying forward the local culture and enhancing the visitors experience, the cliff, stone ladder, piers, passages and other where tourist must pass along should be decorated with the two cultural and cultural symbols. But also developing the tribal characteristics of the totem, the story of legends, customs, etc. into souvenirs or participated tourism activities.

3) Subdivide the target market, create high-end holiday system: As mentioned earlier, Heishan Valley has a superior forest resort resources, but low utilization. Scenic areas can be subdivided at all levels of market, to create

high-end holiday products, making up for the current stage of tourism products system deficiencies in the future. For the elderly market area can create health and recreational sports products, such as rural vacation apartments, landscape health museum, forest health and sanatorium; for groups of young people it can develop honeymoon spa, forest fountain, waterfalls pool swimming pool, forest sports base, water theme hotel; for the family market, it may develop children's paradise water park, forest maze of parents and children, artificial crop circles and so on; in addition, for other source market, it could develop national life performances, tribal customs experience, forest SPA, wedding base, miniature plant landscape, national hand experience museum and other diversified tourism products.

IV. CONCLUSION

The country gives strong support for the development of tourism, coming along with the motivation of our residents and spending power continues to increase, so that the domestic STD ushered in a new round of development opportunities and upgrading challenges. How to grasp the law of tourists' market, shape the tourism image to meet the psychological needs of tourist market, and use scenic resources to create a diversified product system meeting the tourist experience has become the core problem of sub-state-destination upgrading and transformation. But to solve these problems is not a matter overnight, just like in this paper, the Heishan Valley area as an example of STD to upgrade the empirical analysis is still inadequate. First, the data in this paper only reflect the research situation of the scenic area at that time, which may be lack accuracy; second, due to space reasons, the proposed scenic area development strategy is not yet comprehensive. We will continue to follow the development of scenic areas in order to further study the inadequacies of the article.

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