

Development of Sports Tourism in China from the Perspective of Industrial Integration

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Abstract

Original Research Article

With the increasing popularity of domestic sports and fitness and the increasing popularity of tourism and leisure, it is an inevitable trend for the sports industry and the tourism industry to continue to interact and develop across the country. Through literature research, this paper sorts out the related concepts of industrial integration, and the basic motivations and paths of the integration of sports industry and tourism industry. Combined with the development status of sports tourism industry, this paper discusses the characteristics, obstacles and opportunities of domestic sports tourism development. The study found that in the process of interaction and integration between the sports industry and the tourism industry, there are limitations like regional personality difference, as well as advantages like resource complementarity. Active policy support and an open market environment contribute to the in-depth integration of the sports industry and the tourism industry. In particular, attention should be paid to two important development paths of technology integration and market integration.

Keywords: sports tourism, industry integration, development mechanism, tourism industry, sports industry.

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, domestic and international tourism activities have become more and more popular, and tourism has become an important symbol of people's living standards. The development of society has continuously promoted the release of people's travel and holiday needs. More and more people are no longer satisfied with the old-fashioned tourism, and the demand for in-depth experience is becoming more and more prominent. At the same time, the increasing taste of people's lives requires the improvement of the quality of tourism products. Tourism needs to incorporate new quality content to meet people's novel consumption needs. When people are no longer satisfied with simple sightseeing tours, the operators of tourist destinations or the supplier of tourism products requires to brainstorm ways to attract or retain customers. First of all, they need to be aware of the changes in tourism consumption demand, deepen the market segment to understand the potential power of tourism market development, and then open up new market development paths according to the new needs of tourism consumers.

It is not difficult to find that the integration of theme culture is the key to enhancing the core competitiveness of tourism products. For example, Disneyland is backed by a vivid story behind its cartoon

characters and characters. The joyful theme created by the park attracts waves of visitors every year. In addition, it can be found that the new business formats such as health tourism, film and television tourism, industrial tourism, rural tourism, wedding tourism, exhibition tourism, etc., are the result of the interactive development of the tourism industry and other industries. The continuous enrichment of the tourism industry content is also the embodiment of the new demand for tourism consumption. From the perspective of pan-cultural, sports also have a wide range of cultural connotations. Some scholars have also explored the sports tourism culture that has changed with the changes of the environment[1]. In modern society, people pay more and more attention to physical fitness and cultural experience. The development of tourism can strengthen the injection of sports elements to enrich their content and meet the increasingly diverse and personalized needs of people.

The 2018 FIFA World Cup in Russia had pushed local sports tourism to a new wave. The coming XXIV Olympic Winter Games in Beijing is also expected to promote the development of ice and snow tourism projects. At the national government level, the integration of sports industry and tourism industry is also deeply emphasized. Relevant departments also provide scientific guidance and strong guarantee for the

further development of sports tourism in policy formulation. For example, the publicly released government documents pointed out that it is necessary to optimize the structure and layout of the fitness and leisure industry. It mentions that it is necessary to play the leading role of major sports tourism projects and develop a number of sports tourism demonstration bases. Sports tourism is welcoming its highly regarded stage of development. Exploring its development motivations and paths from the perspective of industrial integration is conducive to understanding the development mechanism of sports tourism and inspiring its further development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Format Innovation and Industrial Integration

Format Innovation

The term “format” originated from the description of the business model of the retail industry, and scholars also have their own opinions on the interpretation of the tourism format. Shi Zijiao [2], starting from the development characteristics of tourism industry, believes that the generalized tourism format refers to the business format formed by the mutual integration, evolution and development of tourism and related industries. Industry innovation is the future trend of the development of the industry, and new styles will be created through innovation. When the old format cannot meet the updating needs, it is necessary to carry out innovations in the format to enhance the vitality of the business. Industry innovation can also be divided into many levels, and industrial integration is the highest level of tourism jumping out of tourism and other industries. Among them, business innovation can be regarded as a prelude to industrial integration, and industrial integration can also be regarded as an implementation approach of business innovation, which in turn leads to new formats.

Industry Integration

Industrial integration is an economic phenomenon arising from the informationization practice of the digital technology revolution in the late 1970s. Since the 1990s, with the further development of communication technology, industrial integration has gradually become a research hotspot in the academic world. Domestic and foreign scholars have different definitions of industrial integration. They define it as a dynamic development process as well as an economic phenomenon. The authority of the domestic industry integration research field has defined that industry integration refers to the dynamic development process of different industries or different products within the same industry that permeate each other, cross each other, and finally integrate into one another and gradually form a new industry [3]. Liu Xiaoming [4] concluded that industrial integration is an economic phenomenon in which the industrial boundaries of different industries or different industries within the same industry are blurred due to mutual integration,

mutual intersection and mutual penetration. Among them, many scholars mentioned that industrial integration is dynamic, that is, it is advancing with the times.

Sports Tourism Tourism Industry

There is still some controversy about whether tourism is an industry. This paper believes that tourism can be used as an industry to carry out research. The academic circles have different definitions for the tourism industry from different angles, and one of the characteristics that needs to be grasped is that the tourism industry is a cross-regional and cross-industry industry, and its boundaries are ambiguous. The scope of the industry is based on the evolution of tourism forms. Any industry that provides direct or indirect services for tourism activities is considered an integral part of this industry. It can be seen that the ambiguity of the boundary of the tourism industry and its continuous evolution have provided many possibilities for interaction with other industries.

Sports Industry

The traditional sports industry is based on the production angle. This is different from the tourism industry, which is based on the consumption angle. Wang Yawei [5] believes that the collection of production and service organizations that satisfy consumers' needs for sports activities, performances, events, and participation in this is the sports industry. The sports industry is generally divided into two categories: sports service industry and sporting goods manufacturing industry. When it comes to sports services, one of the characteristics of the sports industry is that consumers can directly feel the services they provide, such as participating in sports events, watching competitive performances, experiencing sports activities, etc., which have many couplings with tourism activities.

Sports Tourism from the Perspective of Industrial Integration

At present, the related research on sports tourism from the perspective of industrial integration is limited. Much of the published research has focused on the field of sports discipline, and few have conducted in-depth research from a perspective of tourism discipline. Among them, there are talks about the integration and development of the sports industry and the tourism industry, and some also discuss the industrial integration of the sports tourism industry as a whole. Combined with the concept of industrial integration introduced previously, if the sports tourism industry is a fixed emerging industry, its integration could be understood as the dynamic development process that, mutual penetration of different products in the sports tourism industry and other industries or within sports tourism industries only, which changes the characteristics of the original industrial products and market demand, thus blurring the industrial boundaries and gradually forming the new industries. Yang Qiang

[6] defines the “industry integration of sports industry and tourism industry” from the perspective of economic integration of industry as a new service format. Through the mutual penetration of the industrial value chain, the sports industry and the tourism industry focus on sports and leisure projects, sports events, large-scale gymnasiums (fields) and other sports ontology resources, with tourism-related elements as the carrier. It is a new service format that combines the characteristics of sports and tourism through technology integration, business integration and market integration. The domestic government public documents also mentioned that sports tourism is an emerging industrial form and a series of economic activities with various forms and purposes. Therefore, the sports tourism industry is an emerging industry in which the sports industry and the tourism industry infiltrate and cross each other.

MOTIVATIONS AND PATHS OF INTEGRATION OF TOURISM INDUSTRY AND SPORTS INDUSTRY

Motivations

The motivations for the integration of tourism industry and sports industry can be divided into internal motivations and external motivations. The internal motivations is based on the degree of correlation within the two industries. First of all, the tourism industry and the sports industry have high industrial relevance, and both could be regarded as one of the “life service industries”. Secondly, the resources of the two can be shared in many aspects, such as venue resources, event resources, etc. Specifically, a mountain bike or hiking event could be held in a natural tourist attraction. In turn, the venues for major events such as the Olympics and the World Cup would become an attractive tourist destination. Finally, the tourism industry can provide a basic service platform for the sports industry. For example, some travel agency agencies would provide marketing and ticketing services for an event.

The integration of two industries with such high correlations can not smoothly develops without the external demand. This article has mentioned the background of the changes in the consumer demand for tourists. People's tourism demand has gradually shifted from scenic spots sightseeing to a more advanced holiday experience. Different from traditional sightseeing tours, more and more people pay more attention to participatory and experiential sports tourism. Activities such as hiking, diving, and skiing are more popular among travel consumers and better meet the needs of their holiday experience. In addition, the formulation of relevant government-level incentive policies has also provided strong support for the integration and development of the two industries.

Paths

The term “path” comes from the concept of geography, which can be understood as the way and pattern to achieve the integration of sports and tourism.

From the literature currently available, different scholars have different classifications and definitions of path. From the perspective of the restructuring of the industrial value chain of the sports industry and the tourism industry, the integration paths of the two sides mainly include technology integration, business integration and market integration. Among them, technology integration is very important, and can create a good development foundation for the integration and development of the tourism industry and the sports industry. Its basic conditions are “standard norms” and the implementation means is “planning design”. Some scholars have also divided the path into resource integration, technology integration and market integration from different angles[7]. It is not hard to find that technology and market are two important integration path choices.

CHARACTERISTICS AND ADVANTAGES OF INTERACTIVE DEVELOPMENT OF SPORTS TOURISM

Adaptation to Local Personality

Not every destination can carry a specific sporting event or activity. That is to say, in the process of interaction and integration with the tourism industry, the sports industry will also generate some specific integration paths or integration patterns due to geographical or regional personality characteristics difference. The geographical characteristics of different regions mentioned above can be understood as the climate characteristics, geographical features, economic characteristics, cultural characteristics and social environment characteristics of a certain region. For example, from the perspective of climate and geographical features, it is suitable for the interaction and integration of the ice-snow tourism industry and the skiing industry in the northern part of the country, while the southern coastal areas are suitable for the development of water sports for coastal tourism. Generally, it is better to adapt to local conditions. Of course, there are also some capricious exceptions, such as the oasis in the desert - Dubai has built the world's largest indoor ski resort. And as science and technology continue to mature, many of the impossible will gradually be realized.

In the research on integration and development of tourism industry and sports industry, many scholars have discussed the development of a specific sports project in a certain region. Lin Yongge [8] proposed that the development of sports industry that adapts to the development of coastal tourism industry requires the development of a unique coastal sports industry, making it a new economic growth point for coastal tourism and providing more space for tourism development. Many scholars have carried out research on ice-snow sports tourism in Heilongjiang Province. For example, Zhang Yanwei [9] believes that the idle ice-snow sports venue resources can be rationally utilized to promote the development of ice-snow tourism industrialization.

Advantage of Interaction

The interaction and integration between the sports industry and the tourism industry reflects many resource advantages that can help each other and complement each other. The development of tourism requires ample influx of people, and many tourist destinations will face an off-season problem. At this time, the fans attracted by specific factors in sports industry can be used to make up for the lack of off-season. For example, especially those tourist destinations that are prone to hit the off-season in winter, organizing sports events or organizing winter sports activities are conducive to bringing new visitors. At the same time, the sustainable development of tourism also requires a stable tourist consumer group. Many tourists may only visit once or twice in a tourist destination. Thus, it is possible to attract repeat customers and promote the sustainable development of tourism destinations by regularly holding a series of sports events at this tourist destination or by making the destination a certain a resort for sporting event. In addition, the tourism industry can provide venue resources for sports events or sports activities. On the one hand, it can reduce the cost of the sports industry to a certain extent, and on the other hand, it can help promote the event host place. For example, a travel agency offers a product of crossing the Heipaijiao and hiking the intoxicating coastline in Shenzhen. It makes this product more popular by locating the hiking activity in these type of natural tourist areas. In turn, the spread of new media also makes many people know this strange but attractive tourist destination in Shenzhen.

OBSTACLES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE INTEGRATION OF TOURISM INDUSTRY AND SPORTS INDUSTRY

Obstacles

The previous article introduced that market demand is an important driving force for promoting the integration of tourism industry and sports industry. In the follow-up operation, it is also necessary to realize whether this market demand is sufficient and whether sufficient to support its sustainable integration development or not. For example, challenging sports activities like diving, parachuting, skiing and so on, not only can be acceptable by fewer people, but also have

higher requirements on the venue and the environment. This kind of sports tourism may already have a fixed crowd market, and this group of people may already have several familiar and exclusive travel destinations for the sport. Taking diving tourism as an example, many Chinese tend to dive in the waters like Southeast Asia's, where have high quality water and good diving environment. The author personally also feels good in an overseas diving experience. So, if an investor wants to develop a domestic diving resort in an unsatisfactory coastal area with sos-o water quality, it may not work. Because there will not be enough market demand to support it.

At the same time, although more and more people are attracted by the sports tourism with high participation and high sense of experience, and the government attaches great importance to the overall planning, in reality, the technical docking between the tourism industry and the sports industry may take time to break in. People also need time to adapt to this change from the concept and habits. In the process of integration of tourism industry and sports industry, relevant responsible departments are required to conduct effective communication and exchanges, so that relevant staff can reach strategic consensus and implement plans. In addition, through the media to spread the benefits of sports and leisure, to cultivate people's awareness of the demand for sports tourism, can help promote the continued development of this emerging format.

Opportunities

With the development of international friendly exchanges, the introduction of international brand sports events could bring great impetus to the domestic and international markets for the development of sports tourism. In addition, the government's emphasis on sports tourism also provides development momentum and policy guarantee for the interaction and integration of the two, which also indicates the golden opportunity for the integration of sports industry and tourism industry. For instance, Shanghai hosted a considerable number of international sports events in 2018, which injected sufficient momentum into the in-depth development of local sports tourism.

Table: Domestic important sports events in 2018

| Event | Time | Host city | Organizer Type |
|--|----------|-----------|-------------------------------------|
| Xiamen Marathon | January | Xiamen | Government |
| World Sprint Speed Skating Championships | March | Changchun | International Association |
| China Cup Football Championship | March | Nanning | Association, Enterprise, Government |
| 2018 Formula 1 Chinese Grand Prix | April | Shanghai | Association, Government |
| 2018 Badminton Asia Championships | April | Wuhan | Government, Association |
| IAAF Diamond League Shanghai Station | May | Shanghai | International Association |
| 2018 BWF World Championships | July | Nanjing | International Association |
| Shanghai Tennis Masters | October | Shanghai | Asian Association |
| China Cup International Regatta | November | Shenzhen | Association, Government |
| FINA Short Course World Championships | December | Hangzhou | International Association |

Industrial integration has a profound role in promoting the in-depth development of tourism. On the one hand, the marketing promotion of sports activities can enhance the popularity of tourist destinations. For example, the marathon competitions in various cities and towns have now polished the tourist image of many cities. On the other hand, the further integration of the industry can accelerate the in-depth development of the scenic spots, such as the implantation of a sports event or event in the off-season to promote the development of destination's anti-season tourism, and promote the improvement of local tourism facilities and the improvement of service standards. Nowadays, rural tourism development is at the time. It is also a good development path to integrate some local characteristics into some leisure and fitness sports, or to integrate local resources to develop sports tourism towns in a concentrated manner. The integration of sports and tourism has created more and greater opportunities for the further development of each other.

CONCLUSIONS

Through the related literature review and current situation analysis, this paper sorts out the background, motivations, paths and characteristics of the interactive development of tourism industry and sports industry from the perspective of industrial integration, and then discusses the possible integration obstacles and development opportunities of the further integration of sports industry and tourism industry. The study found that sports tourism is in a golden age of integration development. The sports industry and the tourism industry have many complementary areas in terms of market demand and resource use. Besides, active policy support and an open international market play an important role in promoting the development of sports tourism integration. In particular, we must pay attention to the development path of technology integration. In addition, effective strategies are needed to address the market shortages and technical docking issues that may be encountered during the integration process to further motivate and standardize the sports tourism market.

In line with the characteristics of the development of the times, the integration of sports and tourism industry can inject some innovative thinking. In addition to the interaction and integration within its range, it can also bring in "Internet +", and expand the scope of publicity with advanced information technology and extensive network platform[10]. To increase awareness and promote further in-depth interaction and integration. For example, mobile terminals can be used to promote sports tourism, mine big data, maintain customer relationships, etc. In daily life, there is a very popular fitness app called Keep which could be used to market relevant sports tourism to potential customer groups through advertising. Secondly, the adaptation to local characteristics of the integration of the sports industry and the tourism

industry analyzed previously also provide inspiration for the future development of the two. That is, to give full play to the geographical advantages and create a sports tourism destination with high visibility and high influence. The 2022 Winter Olympics will soon be settled in Beijing. In addition to the famous brand effect of the Olympic Games, some of the events host venue will be held as an important winter destination. Finally, since many sports activities may involve more tourists' safety issues, such as the bad weather of snow and ice or the biological attacks of coastal sports, it is necessary to pay attention to improving the safety awareness of tourists and strengthen the safety management of related parts. With the change of tourism consumption demand, it is believed that under the correct guidance of policies and the active cooperation of various departments, the integration and development of sports industry and tourism industry will usher in an era of rapid development.

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