Chapter 10

Tourism Revitalization of Historic District in Perspective of Tourist Experience: A Case Study of San-Fang Qi-Xiang in Fuzhou City, China

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ABSTRACT

Presently, similar development mode and analogical tourist experience as two key problems have appeared to tourism development in domestic historic districts. This chapter discusses the new thought of tourism revitalization in historic districts in the perspective of tourist experience. Firstly, based on the deep analysis of tourist experience’s essential elements in historic districts, 6E experience mode is established to summarize the tourist experience, which includes Estheticism and nostalgia, Education and culture, Entertainment and leisure, Exchange and communication and Emotion sublimation. Meanwhile, how to build up and enhance every single experience of 6E model in tourism revitalization of historic district is also explained. Secondly, the application of 6E model is demonstrated elaborately in the case of Conceptual Planning of Tourism Development in San-Fang Qi-Xiang Historic District in Fuzhou City. Considering the hierarchy and comprehensibility of tourist experience and combined with site environment analysis, San-Fang Qi-Xiang historic district is divided into four function divisions: Nanhou old street mall, Warmth and leisure lane, Antai water-front zone and Residential blocks for minority customization. The four divisions are distinguished by degrees of bustling and tranquility as well as the hierarchy of experience. This chapter concludes that it is beneficial to utilize 6E model to segment function division and plan products in tourism revitalization of historic districts, because it helps to revitalize and create a fresh appearance with historical continuation in cultural, social and economic aspects. Therefore, it is perceived as a sustainable thought of development.

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INTRODUCTION

The multiple inner values of historic districts, including aesthetic, artistic, historic, cultural and humanistic value, have made them become significant cultural heritage. With the contradiction of rapid economic development, historic district protection and residents’ living demand, tourism revitalization has been regarded as an efficient way of embedding historic district into the modern city in terms of spatial and temporal pattern. Tourism function was introduced to historic district reconstruction and renewal in western countries in the early time and tourism has become a leading role in historic district protection and economic revitalization (Cleland, 2002). Since 1960s, tourism revitalization has been widely practiced in domestic historic districts and this way has been approved by some researchers. However, some problems, including similar development mode, analogical tourist experience and tourism product, have occurred in tourism development of historic districts and destroyed both their unique value and urban individuality. With these problems, tourism revitalization could not meet tourist demand to some degree. Because of its specialty of tourism resource, historic district development is always placed in an extremely sensitive environment which is influenced by so many complicated factors. This paper will discuss the new thought of tourism product design and function allocation in historic districts, in order to reduce the contradiction between protection and development as well as to fulfill the tourists’ satisfaction.

Currently, most of the researchers have focused their studies on demonstration and analyzed how to use cultural heritage, attract tourists and facilitate urban rejuvenation (Tiesdell & Heath, 2006). How to balance social benefit with economic benefit and how to resolve the conflict between protection and development has been paid close attention (Tiesdell, 1995; Sim, 1996; Caffyn, 1999). Principles of tourism exploitation and tourism product design were concluded (Chang, 2005; Lui, 2000). Some researchers pointed out two developing models which were ‘host and guest amalgamation’ model and ‘low density, high quality’ model in the perspective of tourist consumption experience and historic district protection (Shen et al, 2003). However, only a few theses have been focused on the study of historic district revitalization in terms of tourist experience. By building up specified model, some foreign researchers put forward that tourism product and services should be supplied according to tourists’ involvement and ‘place attachment’ in order to meet tourist expectation (Gross, 2008). Some domestic researchers suggested that human involving activities and the form experience should be placed attention on in the process of historic district revitalization (Zhang, 2002) and the idea of shaping commercial characteristic in Qing Hefang historic district of Hang Zhou was proposed based on the investigation of field work (Wang & Chen, 2008). The previous study mainly emphasized on general tourist experience and discussed the reuse of historic districts. How to analyze tourism revitalization from the perspective of the tour experience in historic districts and put forward some new thought of tourism function allocation and product design is the key point of this paper.

TOURIST EXPERIENCE AND 6E EXPERIENCE MODEL

Definition and Characteristic

Basically, experience is a period of time that people spend in an individual way and earn a series of memories worth remembering (Pine & Gilmore, 2002). Experience is natively existed in travelling and it is perceived as an inherent feature of tourism, because people travel for a pursuit of unforgettable tourism experience and memories (Li, Zhang & Zheng, 2005). Therefore, tourism experience can be described as a process
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