

A Study on the Relationship Path of Impact on Brand Attachment by Cultural Atmosphere*

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With the continuous improvement of people's material living standards, people are increasingly pursuing the cultural connotation of the destination in the process of tourism. At the same time, with the continuous development of China's cultural and tourism integration, the cultural atmosphere of the tourist destination is also increasingly affecting the development of urban tourism. This study summarizes the Shanghai cultural atmosphere, brand cognition, brand satisfaction and brand attachment in Shanghai and explores the influence path of cultural atmosphere on tourist brand attachment to their destination in Shanghai. This research used AMOS software to quantitatively analyze the relationships among cultural atmosphere, brand cognition, satisfaction, and brand attachment. The results show that: Firstly, Shanghai cultural atmosphere has a significant direct positive influence on Shanghai brand cognition, brand satisfaction and brand attachment; secondly, the brand cognition of visitors to Shanghai has a significant direct and positive effect on brand satisfaction, and then indirectly has a positive effect on brand attachment; thirdly, Shanghai cultural atmosphere indirectly has a positive effect on brand attachment through brand satisfaction.

Keywords: cultural atmosphere, city brand, brand attachment, Shanghai culture

Introduction

The integration of cultural and tourism industry is an important part of stimulating the consumption potential of cultural tourism in China. Cultural atmosphere is increasingly affecting the development of urban tourism. Natural scenery and characteristic buildings are the attraction of tourist cities. And cultural connotation can inject soul and spiritual connotation into destination. With the continuous improvement of consumption level, in the process of tourism, people are not only satisfied with the product itself, but also pursue the cultural connotation of the tourism destination. When purchasing tourism products, they also rely on the atmosphere of shopping spots. A good tourism destination should make tourists feel the distinctive and tasteful tourism cultural atmosphere everywhere and at all times.

As one of the most developed regions in China, Shanghai is one of the main destinations for tourists at home and abroad. At the same time, "Shanghai" is also a brand to attract tourists. The construction of Shanghai urban tourism brand is considered as an important part of promoting the high-quality development of Shanghai

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tourism and building a world-famous tourism city by Shanghai government. In 2019, the Shanghai government had put forward the goal of speeding up the building of an international cultural metropolis, making full use of Shanghai culture and other resources to construct a group of Shanghai cultural brands (Shanghai Municipal Administration of Culture and Tourism, Shanghai Municipal Administration of Radio and Television, & Shanghai Municipal Administration of Culture Heritage, 2019). Also, in the past year, Shanghai Municipal Administration of Culture and Tourism continued to focus on the brand “Shanghai Culture” and resolutely promote it, while releasing the “14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025) for Building a World-Famous Tourism City” to promote the development of urban tourism in Shanghai (Shanghai Municipal Administration of Culture and Tourism, Shanghai Municipal Administration of Radio and Television, & Shanghai Municipal Administration of Culture Heritage, 2021).

With the substantial increase of domestic and foreign tourists in Shanghai and the growth of consumption, it is of great significance to study the tourists’ perception of cultural atmosphere and their attachment to the brand of Shanghai tourism city. Therefore, based on the brand theory, this paper intends to explore how tourists’ perception of Shanghai style cultural atmosphere affects their perception of Shanghai city brand, and then affects their attachment to Shanghai city tourism brand, so as to deeply understand the path relationship mechanism of Shanghai style cultural atmosphere, brand satisfaction and brand attachment. This paper analyzed the influencing factors of tourists’ satisfaction and brand attachment to Shanghai city brand, and put forward management suggestions.

Literature Review and Theoretical Hypothesis

Literature Review

Atmosphere usually refers to the atmosphere and style in a certain environment. This feeling comes from the spirit of perception in a specific environment. When it is used as a market tool, it is to cause customers positive behavior in the consumption environment (Li, Ma, & Zhao, 2013). Kotler (1973) emphasized that the atmosphere was an artificially specific situation in order to increase the possibility of consumers’ purchase and the atmosphere of the place of consumption was also an important factor in consumers’ purchase decision. An atmosphere of trust, care and cultural coherence could attract and retain customers (Evans & Greenberg, 2006). Creating a cultural atmosphere can transform the cultural elements of spiritual form and behavior form into audio-visual feelings of material form, and highlight the edifying and infectious power of culture (H. Y. Zhao, 2017). Shanghai as an international cultural space (Li, 1999), its style culture, as the characteristic culture and brand of Shanghai, contains rich and diverse cultural and artistic connotations and values, which are reflected in food, housing, travel, shopping and entertainment in Shanghai (Liu, 2014).

Hendrickson (1981) defined cognition as a process of people’s cognition and understanding of external things. Brand cognition is the overall impression of consumers on the quality of goods and related services of a particular brand (Zhang, Wu, & Zhong, 2016), including consumers’ understanding of the connotation, personality and product value of the brand. It is an important indicator for consumers to understand the differences of a brand and is also the ability of consumers to identify a specific brand and correspond to their products (Aaker, 1991). Brand cognition is usually divided into brand awareness, brand reputation, product knowledge, brand personality and other dimensions (Wu, 2012; Li, 2011).

Satisfaction comes from a psychological evaluation of customers after experiencing products (Zhang et al., 2016). It is a judgment of consumers’ satisfaction with service and products (Oliver, 1980). It is not only the

result of comparison with customers' expectations (Yu, 2015), but also a kind of customers' cumulative satisfaction (Suchanek & Kralova, 2018). Brand satisfaction is the consumer's satisfaction perception of a certain brand, which not only integrates cognitive factors, but also contains emotional factors. Brand satisfaction is the psychological state brought by the gap between the input and consumption of the products or services that consumers should bring based on the previous experience, and then compare with the actual value of the products (M. M. Zhao, 2017).

Consumers will form attachment to their belongings, brands and other objects. Consumer attachment has spontaneity and emotion (Schultz, Kleine, & Kernan, 1989). Brand attachment reflects the closeness of the long-term relationship between consumers and brands. It is the maintenance of an emotional relationship between consumers and brands (Liu, Kou, & Guan, 2019). Personal brand attachment can be used to meet different needs from experiential consumption to functional consumption (Park, Macinnis, & Priester, 2007). The cultivation of consumption attachment between enterprises and consumers is conducive to enhancing consumers' purchase intention and improving enterprise value (Kaufmann, Petrovici, Filho, & Ayres, 2016).

Theoretical Hypotheses

Cultural atmosphere and brand satisfaction, brand cognition and brand attachment. As an important factor affecting tourists' experience, cultural atmosphere helps to enhance visitors' unforgettable memory. From the perspective of tourists, various cultural activities and cultural atmosphere can make tourists feel the differences of regional culture in the process of tourism, so as to enhance their awareness and identity of the cultural brand and destination (Wang, Zeng, & Zhang, 2020). As a component of environmental factors (Baker, Grewal, & Parasuraman, 1994), atmosphere can have an impact on satisfaction in the market environment (Wakefield & Blodgett, 1994). Zhu (2016) constructed a systematic measurement index of cultural atmosphere in tourism destinations, and found that cultural atmosphere has a direct positive impact on emotion. Evans and Greenberg (2006) found that a positive atmosphere of trust, love can attract and retain customers. The cultural atmosphere of tourism destination has a positive impact on tourists' emotion and behavior, and can also cultivate the sense of attachment (Huang, Liu, & Zhang, 2018). Thus, this research proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: Cultural atmosphere has a positive influence on brand cognition.

H2: Cultural atmosphere has a positive influence on brand satisfaction.

H3: Cultural atmosphere has a positive influence on brand attachment.

Brand cognition, brand satisfaction and brand attachment. Brand cognition is the standard to measure tourists' recognition and understanding of brand connotation and value (Zhang et al., 2016). And brand satisfaction needs brand knowledge as the basis (Yang, 2010). When consumers have a high degree of understanding of the brand, it indicates that, to some extent, the brand image in consumers' memory is consistent with consumers' self-consistency. Based on self-concept consistency and brand cognition, customers choose the brand for consumption, which is easier to produce satisfaction (Park, Macinnis, Priester, Eisingerich, & Iacobucci, 2010). In addition, customers' brand cognition, brand association and brand memory come from customers' long-term word-of-mouth communication, product experience, or information inquiry and understanding of the brand. These activities are the accumulation process of customers' cognition of the brand. Therefore, such an in-depth understanding and cognition will make consumers have emotional attachment to the brand (Deng, Guo, & Zhou, 2018). Thus, this research proposes the following hypotheses:

H4: Brand cognition has a positive influence on brand satisfaction.

H5: Brand cognition has a positive influence on brand attachment.

Brand satisfaction and brand attachment. Customers' satisfaction can significantly predict the brand loyalty and attachment of consumers (Geng, 2009). When consumers buy products, there will be satisfaction evaluation. For satisfied products, it is likely to achieve continuous purchase (Tang, 2020). As an important part of the product, the better the customer experience and satisfaction with the brand, the higher the repurchase rate of the brand (Winzar, Baumann, & Chu, 2018). Liu et al. (2019) also found that brand attachment is positively affected by consumer perception and consumer satisfaction. Thus, this research proposes the following hypothesis.

H6: Brand satisfaction has a positive influence on tourists' brand attachment.

Methodology and Sampling Survey

A questionnaire was used to collect data. The questionnaire used in this study was designed based on the literature review and through in-depth interviews with tourism experts, combined with the actual situation of Shanghai city and Shanghai style culture. The formal scale was formed through pre-surveys and preliminary tests. The formal questionnaire is divided into six parts. The first part is the tourist respondents' perception of Shanghai style cultural atmosphere, mainly referring to Zhu's (2016) research. The second part is the measurement of the tourism respondents' perception of Shanghai brand cognition, mainly referring to the research of Aaker (1996) and Deng et al. (2018). The third part is the measurement of the satisfaction degree of tourism respondents to Shanghai city brand, mainly referring to the research of Wang (2018) and R. Xu and L. R. Xu (2019). The fourth part is the measurement of brand attachment of tourists, mainly referring to the research of Abou-Shouk, Zoair, El-Barbary, and Hewedi (2018). The fifth part is the information of tourists' behavior characteristics, including the number of trips to Shanghai, stay days, tourism consumption, tourism form and purpose. The last part is the respondent's personal information of the interviewees, including gender, marriage, age, education level, monthly income, occupation, etc. The items of the questionnaire were measured by a 5-point Likert scale.

This research took Shanghai city and Shanghai culture as an example to test the model. In this study, tourists to Shanghai were selected for data collection, and representative tourist spots with a dense population were selected for questionnaire distribution. The survey was conducted mainly by questionnaires, and the data collection process was completed on September 2 to 6 in 2020 in Shanghai, such as Chenghuang Temple. Two students conducted face-to-face investigation on the tourists to Shanghai, distributed and hand drawn on the spot. A total of 300 questionnaires were distributed, excluding the uncollected and invalid questionnaires, a total of 260 valid questionnaires were collected. The effective questionnaire recovery rate was 87%.

To clarify the sample characteristics, Table 1 shows the demographics of the participants. Male and female respondents constituted 39.2% and 60.8% of the sample, respectively. Furthermore, the majority (65.4%) of respondents were aged 20-29. The largest group was college graduates (56.5%) and the second largest was educated to master's degree level or above (27.7%). Most of the respondents were students (39.6%), followed by the state owned enterprise staff (12.3%). Forty-nine point two percent of the respondents stay in Shanghai for more than five days, and 31.9% of the respondents stay in Shanghai for two to three days. The times of visiting Shanghai mainly distributed in once (30.4%) and more than four times (43.5%).

Software of AMOS 20.0 and SPSS 20.0 were used to analyze the validation factors of the data and test the model. The cultural atmosphere, brand attachment, brand cognition and brand satisfaction were taken as non observation variables, and the other factors after dimension reduction were taken as observation variables. The results showed that χ^2/df was $1.789 < 3.0$ ($\chi^2 = 37.750$, $df = 21$) and RMSEA was $0.055 < 0.08$ (CFI = 0.992, NFI = 0.981), which indicated that the four factors had a good fit with the model. The combined reliability of CR and Cronbach's α coefficient of each variable were all greater than 0.7, indicating good stability in the measurement. Construct validity is mainly embodied by aggregate validity and discriminant validity. The aggregate validity was tested by the factor load of the observed variables and its significance. As shown in Table 1, the standardized factor loads of the test items were all greater than 0.7, which showed good aggregate validity. The discriminant validity was achieved by calculating the square roots of the average variance extracted (AVE) values, which measure the average variance shared between a construct and its measures, and by calculating the correlations between different constructs. The correlation coefficient between any two variables was less than the AVE square root of each variable itself, indicating that there is sufficient discriminant validity among the measuring items. As shown in Table 2, the square root of AVE of all latent variables in this study is greater than the correlation coefficient with other latent variables, which indicates good discriminant validity between variables.

Table 1

Measurement Model Test

Latent variable	Observed variables	Normalized factor load	CR	AVE	α coefficient
Cultural atmosphere	Material cultural atmosphere	0.854***	0.8686	0.7678	0.868
	Spiritual cultural atmosphere	0.898***			
	High brand awareness	0.704***			
Brand cognition	Brand association easiness	0.765***	0.7717	0.5302	0.771
	Know more about tourism brand	0.714***			
Brand satisfaction	Brand contentment	0.899***	0.9049	0.8263	0.904
	Brand preference	0.919***			
Brand attachment	Brand positive emotional connection	0.921***	0.9011	0.8291	0.901
	Brand kindly emotion	0.890***			

Note. *** indicates significant at 0.001 level.

Table 2

Discriminative Validities and the Correlations of Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4
1. Brand satisfaction	0.951			
2. Brand cognition	0.772**	0.878		
3. Brand attachment	0.866**	0.746**	0.949	
4. Cultural atmosphere	0.800**	0.734**	0.826**	0.879

List $N = 260$

Note. ** indicates significant correlation at 0.01 level (bilateral).

Data Analysis

In this study, AMOS 20.0 and SPSS Structural Equation Model (SEM) is a model method to establish, estimate and test causality. Through SEM, we can clearly analyze the relationship among dependent variables,

potential variables, measurement variables and individual indicators. In this study, the maximum likelihood method is used to estimate the parameters of the structural model. The fitness evaluation criteria and test results are shown in Table 3. The fitting test of the model meets the standard, which indicates that the model and data fit well. Once the model achieves well fit, it can provide statistically significant parameter estimates. When the significance level p is less than 0.05, it is significant, indicating a significant positive or negative relationship between the two non-observed variables. Table 4 shows the hypothesis test results of path analysis: H1, H2, H3, H4 and H6 are true; and H5 is false.

Table 3

Structural Equation Model Fit Test

Fitting index	χ^2/df	RMSEA	CFI	GFI	AGFI	RMR	IFI	TLI	NFI
Standard	≤ 3	≤ 0.06	≥ 0.9	≥ 0.9	≥ 0.9	≤ 0.1	≥ 0.9	≥ 0.9	≥ 0.9
Output value	1.798	0.055	0.992	0.969	0.933	0.016	0.992	0.986	0.981

Table 4

Path Coefficient Test Result

Hypothesis	Standardized path coefficient estimation	S.E.	C.R.	p	Result
Brand cognition < --- Cultural atmosphere	0.894***	0.072	11.628	***	Accepted
Brand satisfaction < --- Cultural atmosphere	0.338*	0.19	2.202	0.028*	Accepted
Brand satisfaction < --- Brand cognition	0.633***	0.216	3.861	***	Accepted
Brand attachment < --- Cultural atmosphere	0.401***	0.141	3.3	***	Accepted
Brand attachment < --- Brand satisfaction	0.687***	0.177	3.642	***	Accepted
Brand attachment < --- Brand cognition	-0.096	0.238	-0.494	0.621	Rejected

Note. * indicates significant at 0.05 level, ** at 0.01 level, *** at 0.001 level.

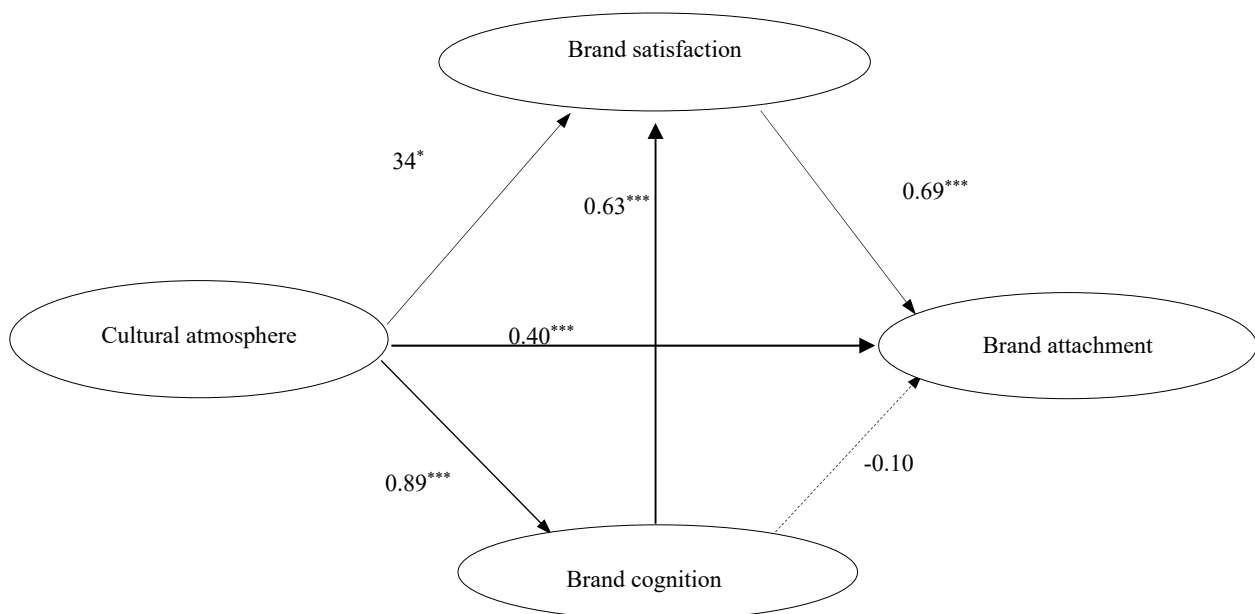


Figure 1. Results of the model.

Note. * indicates significant at 0.05 level, ** at 0.01 level, *** at 0.001 level.

Conclusions and Managerial Implications

Conclusions and Discussions

First, cultural atmosphere has a significant positive impact on brand attachment. It means that the stronger the tourists' perception of Shanghai culture atmosphere, the stronger the tourists' attachment to Shanghai city brand. This shows that Shanghai, as a tourist city, has its unique Shanghai style culture, which is an important factor for tourists to form emotional attachment to Shanghai city brand, whether it is the material or spiritual Shanghai style cultural atmosphere. This is because atmosphere, as one of the market tools, aims to cause positive emotions and behaviors of consumers in a specific consumption environment, and the cultural atmosphere of tourism destination can have a positive impact on emotions. Tourists' perception of the cultural atmosphere of the destination can more easily cultivate tourists' attachment emotions. On the one hand, the stronger the cultural atmosphere of Shanghai style, the more tourists can feel the extraordinary cultural experience of Shanghai style. This kind of atmosphere can attract tourists to travel to Shanghai; at the same time, it can retain tourists, and make tourists have an emotional attachment to the city brand of Shanghai. On the other hand, the stronger tourists' perception of Shanghai style cultural atmosphere means that the more local Shanghai style culture they come into contact with in the process of traveling in Shanghai, the more authentic their sense of experience and participation. The tourism products with culture can fully integrate tourists into the Shanghai style cultural atmosphere and make them have a better understanding of Shanghai brand image.

Second, cultural atmosphere has a significant positive impact on brand cognition and brand satisfaction. First of all, for brand satisfaction, on the one hand, the consumption environment of different cultural atmosphere causes the emotional changes of tourists. The unique cultural atmosphere can stimulate the positive emotions of tourists and make them feel the uniqueness of the destination, so as to improve their satisfaction with the tourism. On the other hand, the cultural atmosphere can meet the spiritual and cultural needs of tourists. With the development of material economy and tourism, people have higher requirements and expectations of the special culture and atmosphere of the destination. Therefore, when the tourists feel more special culture and atmosphere of the destination, their spiritual and cultural needs would be satisfied, so as to make the tourists have higher satisfaction with the tourism brand. Secondly, for brand cognition, on the one hand, the characteristic culture of tourism destination can make tourists form impressive memory points, and the successful construction of the cultural atmosphere of destination can also bring lasting memory to tourists. Therefore, when tourists to Shanghai experience the unique Shanghai style culture from all aspects in Shanghai, they can feel the regional differences and Shanghai brand characteristics between Shanghai and other cities and tourist destinations. At the same time, they can form unique memory points to strengthen tourists' cognition of Shanghai tourism city brand. On the other hand, a positive cultural atmosphere can improve brand reputation, and then improve brand cognition. Shanghai style culture is increasingly prosperous and unique in China and even in the world. For tourists who come to Shanghai to carry out tourism and leisure activities, the open and positive Shanghai style cultural atmosphere can make tourists have a positive response to the brand of Shanghai and improve the reputation of Shanghai style culture and Shanghai brand.

Third, brand cognition has a significant direct positive impact on brand satisfaction, but has no significant effect on brand attachment. For brand satisfaction, on the one hand, tourists' choice of tourism destination is based on the understanding and cognition of city brand. When potential consumers with tourism intention

choose destination, the more they know about different destination brands, the more they will have different tendencies towards each destination. Therefore, when tourists choose Shanghai as a tourist destination, they have a full understanding and recognition of the city brand. Therefore, when tourists choose Shanghai brand, their satisfaction with the brand has a cognitive basis. On the other hand, tourists' good cognition of Shanghai brand can establish correct expectation. The satisfaction of traveling to Shanghai is determined by the difference between tourists' expectation and their real experience in the process of traveling. Therefore, when tourists have a higher and more real cognition of Shanghai city brand, it indicates that tourists have a more correct psychological expectation of the tourism experience in Shanghai. In the process of traveling, the tourists' tourism experience is more in line with the expectation, and they will be more satisfied with the tourism and Shanghai city brand. For brand attachment, the direct impact of brand cognition on it was not supported in this study. This study believes that because of the special status in China and its remarkable popularity, Shanghai brands are familiar to Chinese tourists. Therefore, there is no significant correlation between the degree of emotional connection and recognition of Shanghai city brand.

Fourth, brand satisfaction has a significant positive impact on brand attachment. On the one hand, based on the consistency of emotion driven, tourists, as consumers, are generally not completely rational and driven by emotion. The satisfaction they perceive in the process of tourism and the attachment emotion driven by satisfaction are positive and consistent. On the other hand, the sense of pleasure can stimulate emotional value. When tourists experience and feel happy and satisfied in the process of tourism, it will bring pleasure to tourists. This feeling can well stimulate emotional value, and the emotional value stimulated by the sense of pleasure can bring happiness to tourists. At the same time, it can produce self connection with the brand and attachment emotion.

Managerial Implications

First, Shanghai should strengthen the construction of cultural atmosphere and make Shanghai style culture tangible. The profound cultural atmosphere and heritage are important factors for a tourist city to form a good tourism brand and reputation. Therefore, Shanghai as a tourist destination should be based on the theme of Shanghai culture. For example, Shanghai could pay attention to the external material, like the landscape, streets, objects and buildings, and also pay attention to the internal spiritual culture, establishing and publicizing the cultural consciousness and confidence of local residents, making the residents and service personnel become the representative of local Shanghai culture image. Shanghai should materialize its unique and intangible cultural concept through materialization, scenalization and other measures, such as architectural style, catering characteristics, characteristic tourist souvenirs, etc.

Second, Shanghai should strengthen the construction of Shanghai city brand, highlight the brand image and memory points to improve the brand awareness of tourists. Brand is one of the important symbols of Shanghai's tourism industry as a tourist destination, so it will greatly affect the satisfaction and revisit rate of tourists to Shanghai. Therefore, the improvement of tourism quality should be included in the content of Shanghai's urban tourism brand construction. At the same time, it is important to do a good job in Shanghai city brand marketing, adopt various ways to carry out multi-directional brand marketing, use big data to carry out market segmentation, and publicize Shanghai city brand image through different advertising media, so as to make tourists be attracted and gradually understand and like the brand image, and to enhance tourists' cognition and memory.

Third, a tourism destination should enhance tourists' brand attachment through cultural atmosphere and

brand cognition. On the one hand, Shanghai's urban tourism destination should mobilize tourists' positive emotions through a strong Shanghai style cultural atmosphere, so as to make tourists have emotional attachment to the tourism destination brand. On the other hand, the brand attachment of tourists to Shanghai is based on the interaction between tourists and city brand. Positive interactive experience can enhance tourists' cognition of the connotation of Shanghai brand and generate strong feelings for Shanghai brand. Therefore, tourist destinations should provide diversified interactive experience opportunities to enhance the tourists' cognition of the destination city brand and establish the emotional connection and memory between the tourists and the city brand.

Limitations and Future Study

The current research may have some limitations. Firstly, the samples of this study are mainly tourists from Shanghai. In the future research, we can further expand the sampling objects, so that the conclusions have better universality. Secondly, due to different gender, age and other social demographic characteristics, as well as different travel behavior characteristics, such as travel mode and travel time, there will be differences in cultural atmosphere, brand cognition, brand association and brand attachment among tourists. Follow-up research can conduct classified research and market segmentation research.

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