

The Construction of Foshan Consumption Center City from the Perspective of Cultural and Tourism Integration

Chunhui Dong*, Xueliang Xu, Wenyan Li, Li Jiang

Foshan University, Foshan 528000, Guangdong Province, China

*Corresponding author: Chunhui Dong, 498474748@qq.com

Copyright: © 2023 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is cited.

Abstract: Satisfying the rising need for upgraded consumption among residents is not only a vital aspect of consumption, and it also drives the development of cities. The integration of culture and tourism is an important starting point for the construction of consumption center cities. The role of the integration of culture, tourism, and commerce in the construction of consumer-oriented cities is studied in this paper. Foshan's urban consumption environment and the challenges and problems faced in the construction of Foshan's consumption center cities, the path of cultural and tourism integration of consumer resources, consumer space, and consumer environment and consumer brands are analyzed in this paper. Some suggestions on how to promote Foshan consumption center city by integrating culture and tourism are then put forward.

Keywords: Cultural and tourism integration; Consumption center city; Foshan

Online publication: June 28, 2023

1. Introduction

On October 14, 2019, the Ministry of Commerce and 14 other departments jointly issued the “Guiding Opinions on Cultivating and Building International Consumption Center Cities,” which is not only an important measure to meet the increasing consumer demand, but also an effective way to drive the development of cities. The national “14th Five-Year Plan” and the 2035 vision also regard “cultivating international consumption center cities” as an important part of building a strong domestic market and initiating a new development pattern^[1]. Foshan takes culture and tourism consumption as an important starting point to build a regional consumption center city, and the integration of culture and tourism can better develop emerging consumption hotspots and enhance the power of consumer market and experience value. Therefore, in this paper, the relationship between cultural and tourism integration and consumption center city construction is studied, the problems and challenges of cultural and tourism integration in promoting the construction of Foshan consumption center city is analyzed, and suggestions for promoting the construction of Foshan consumption center city are put forward.

2. The role of cultural and tourism integration in the construction of consumption center cities

With the continuous urbanization of China, urban functions are changing from “production” to “consumption.” The transformation into a “consumption” city can better face the severe challenges of consumption environment, consumption safety, consumption quality and other issues arising in the process of urbanization, enhance the driving force of consumption to drive the economy, and promote industrial

transformation and upgrading ^[2].

The tourism industry has also developed from simple scenic spot tourism to global tourism. Tourism promotes the integration of various departments and industries in different regions, makes full use of regional resources, realizes the coordinated development of tourism economy and the construction of a harmonious society, promotes industrial integration, and forms a new model that drives the integrated development of urban and rural areas ^[3]. "Promoting tourism with business, literature with tourism, and business with culture" can effectively smoothen the flow of people, logistics, capital flow, and information flow, and promote the "optimization of urban commercial system, construction of urban public recreation spaces, and production of urban cultural spaces." Through realizing "cultural tourism of physical commerce and the commercial life of cultural tourism," a new and lasting multi-value network can be built, and the superimposition of "commercial value, recreational value and cultural value" can be achieved, and thus both commercial "flow" and tourist "retention" can be achieved ^[4].

3. Current situation of urban consumption environment in Foshan

3.1. A solid economic foundation and huge potential for consumption

The economy of Foshan is developing steadily and its consumption capacity has increased. In 2021, Foshan's economic aggregate reached 1,215.654-billion-yuan, ranking 17th in China and 3rd in the province. The economy grew by 8.3% annually, which is higher than the national and provincial growth rates, and the industrial added value ranked 5th in the country. Its global free trade "circle of friends" is growing, the import and export volume is growing rapidly, and the foreign trade competitiveness ranks 13th in the country. The total retail sales of consumer goods in the city was 355.666 billion yuan, which was an annual increase of 8.1%, ranking 26th in the country and 4th in the province.

3.2. Abundance of consumer brands and high-end elements

More and more brands are going global. Foshan produces household appliances, home furnishing, building materials, ceramics, food, and many other products. Besides, many top consumer goods manufacturing companies are also situated in Foshan, such as the world's first ceramic and electric fan producer. The city has two Fortune Global 500 companies including Midea and Country Garden, eight China Top 500 companies, and 76 Guangdong Top 500 companies, Hisense, Galanz, Haitian, Jianlibao, and other brands that are sold worldwide.

Foshan permeates into the international consumption circle through exhibition + industry. By organizing exhibitions like Foshan (International) Ceramics and Sanitary Ware Fair, China (Foshan) International Automobile Industry Expo Exhibition, Dragon Furniture Exhibition, and other brand exhibitions, domestic and foreign businessmen will be encouraged to participate in these exhibitions and make procurements.

4. Challenges and problems faced in the construction of Foshan consumption center city through the integration of cultural and tourism industries

4.1. The relationship between industrial cities and tourist cities

As the city progresses into the post-industrial era, backward and heavily polluting industries will be phased out. As a result, the tourism and leisure industry has become a long-term driving force in transforming the city into a service-oriented and quality-oriented direction. Considering that tourism and leisure activities have become part of the normal lifestyle of urban residents, the efficient and reasonable development of the tourism and leisure industry is not only the key to improve the quality of urban development but is also crucial for improving the happiness index of urban residents and the experience value of foreign tourists ^[5]. There is no contradiction between the development of an industrial city and a tourist city. The construction

of consumption center city transformed from traditional consumption center city - production center city - post-industrial consumption center city. Production orientation and consumption orientation are not mutually exclusive in the post-industrial consumption center cities. The mutual promotion of resource endowment accumulation and consumption radiation force will smoothen the consumption and production cycle, improve the trend of consumption, strengthen the construction of independent brands, promote rich cultural and tourism products, create a safe consumption environment, drive the development of urban manufacturing industry, and create and cultivate new growth poles. In addition, the overall attractiveness and competitiveness of the city will also be increased ^[6].

4.2. The neighborhood effect of consumption under the integration of Guangzhou and Foshan

Spatial proximity effect refers to the impact of spatial relation between various economic activities within a region or between different regions on their mutual interactions. It means that populations, enterprises, and communities clustered in adjacent areas can collectively utilize each other's public goods, facilities, and services, thereby promoting economic development. Guangzhou and Foshan have strong industrial complementarity, close spatial proximity, cultural affinity, and intensive personnel exchanges. In April 2021, the "Plan for the Guangzhou-Foshan Integrated Development during the 14th Five-Year Plan Period" was issued, marking a new stage in the comprehensive integration of Guangzhou and Foshan. Due to the convenient transportation network and efficient infrastructure of the two cities, the consumer market has expanded. Foshan's manufacturing industry is well-developed, with a highly competitive market in furniture, appliances, and other consumer goods. There are many commercial districts in Guangzhou like Tianhe Road and Huan Shi Dong, where numerous internationally renowned brands can be found. Guangzhou and Foshan complement each other in terms of consumer structure, making it possible for the two cities to achieve differentiated development by collaborating in the consumer market.

Castells pointed out that in the network society, advanced service systems (including business and productive services) tend to be concentrated in a few metropolitan nodes ^[7]. Under the co-city of Guangzhou and Foshan, a neighboring effect can be achieved, with spatial spillover and siphon effects in mutual consumption. The siphon effect refers to the fact that regions with superior conditions will attract surrounding funds, talent, technology, and other resources, thus delaying the development of surrounding areas ^[8]. Due to its long-term decentralization, Foshan's commercial service system has not been fully developed. Foshan's infrastructure lags behind in terms of attracting and agglomerating consumption, and the city lacks high-end consumer districts reflecting fashion, internationalization, and modernization.

5. Ideas and suggestions for promoting the development of Foshan as a consumption center city through the integration of culture and tourism

In view of the challenges and issues faced in the construction of Foshan as a consumption center city, it is necessary to gather Foshan's cultural, commercial, and tourism resources, leverage the advantages of Foshan's urban manufacturing industry and Lingnan culture, and seize the significant opportunities presented by the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, the integration of Guangzhou and Foshan, and the construction of Guangzhou as an international consumption center city. Through the integration of culture, tourism, and commerce, it is important to promote the development of consumer resources, consumer spaces, consumer environments, and consumer brands, and to facilitate the construction of Foshan as a consumption center city.

5.1. Integrating cultural and commercial travel resources to cultivate regional consumption characteristics

It is important to make full use of Foshan's manufacturing industry by transforming the industrial heritage,

industrial process, industrial environment, factory style, and corporate culture into tourism attractions. In this way, tourists will have the opportunity to understand the history, skills, and spirit behind the product. Hence, the integration of culture, business and tourism can be achieved through the operation of commercial resources.

To create “the first city of industrial tourism in China,” it is necessary to make use of Foshan’s advantages in the field of pan-household industry, advanced equipment manufacturing, food and other fields, and design and develop high-quality tourist routes that integrate natural landscape, historical culture, and emerging industrial civilization. Industrial brand enterprises should be encouraged to open exhibition halls to the public, become the highlight of industrial tourism routes, and export corporate brand culture. Vending machines should be installed at scenic spots, hotels, major commercial blocks, industrial tourism route points, Internet-famous places, etc., to sell and promote cultural and creative intellectual property (IP) derivatives and animation merchandise or toys, especially with the idea of creating “China’s first industrial tourism city.”

5.2. Create a consumer business circle and build a cultural tourism consumption cluster

Equipped with ancestral temples, Jihua Road, Guilan Road, and other core business districts as well as distinctive urban clusters, a brand-concentrated group can be created, and distinctively characterized high-quality commercial blocks can be built to form a unique consumption spatial pattern, so as to activate and expand local consumption, attract external consumption, and promote the return flow of mid-to-high-end consumption.

5.2.1. Enhancing the concentration of consumption in core business districts

While considering the layout and planning of commercial facilities, the brands of key business districts should be improved, so as to create large-scale business districts dominated by light luxury and high-end brands. The transformation and upgrading of existing commercial complexes into cultural, commercial, tourism, and sports complexes should be promoted, so as to improve the concentration of consumption, integrate international high-quality brand resources, encourage brand entry to achieve creative localization, and cultivate new consumer patterns and services. Besides, core business districts should include well-known brands, cinemas, compound bookstores, cultural and creative shops, and new amusement performance spaces.

5.2.2. Building exemplary leisure pedestrian street areas to a high standard

The overall commercial quality of Lingnan Tian Di, Creative Industry Park, Qian Deng Lake, and other pedestrian street areas should be improved. The brands of retail stores in the area should be upgraded, and a retail brand system mainly composed of fast fashion brands, high street fashion brands, light luxury, and niche brands should be developed. It is also encouraged to cultivate and develop Foshan’s own brand stores and time-honored stores and create a distinctive brand image for the street area with Lingnan characteristics. The development of new retail formats and mixed-use formats in the blocks that attracts traffic should be encouraged, and child-oriented and leisure and entertainment-oriented business formats should be increased. The structure of the catering industry should be transformed by introducing mid-to-high-end leisure catering and quality restaurants.

5.3. Promoting the deep integration of culture, tourism, and implementing consumer brand projects

The distinctive resources of the five districts in Foshan should be integrated and innovation should be driven by the combination of “culture, tourism, and technology.” Modern information technologies such as the internet and artificial intelligence should be utilized to promote the deep integration of culture, tourism, and

the digital economy. The unique characteristics of Foshan should be integrated, and consumer brand projects should be implemented to enhance the competitiveness of Foshan as a consumption center city.

5.3.1. Home Decor Foshan brand project

Home Decor Foshan consumer project was constructed with Shunde and Chancheng as the core. This project aimed to showcase Foshan's home furnishing culture and creative design through furniture exhibitions and other means. By constructing projects such as China Home Furnishing Expo City and International Home Furnishing Culture Forum, the integration of culture, commerce, and tourism can be promoted to facilitate the development of the Home Decor Foshan brand and establish a home decor cultural industry chain with Foshan characteristics.

5.3.2. Taste Foshan brand project

With the goal of building Foshan and Shunde as the “Capital of Food,” Foshan's culinary history, culture, and various eco-friendly ingredients should be explored. High-quality resources such as culinary techniques should be integrated and a city-wide training system should be established to train “Cantonese cuisine masters.” Moreover, it is important to focus on industry and standard development, promote the deep integration of culture, tourism, commerce, and the “Cantonese cuisine masters,” to showcase Foshan as a culinary destination and develop Foshan's unique culinary path.

5.3.3. Kung Fu Foshan brand project

In line with the development of Foshan as the “World Kung Fu City,” Foshan's rich Kung Fu resources should be explored. Through the deep integration of culture, tourism, and commerce, the value of Kung Fu culture should be promoted, and a Kung Fu cultural industry chain should be established in Foshan. More Kung Fu centers, martial arts industrial parks, and martial arts themed towns, should be built. Besides, distinctive Kung Fu cultural and creative, sports and fitness, and tourism products should be developed. Influential Kung Fu film and television brand events should also be organized, so as to fully integrate digital technology with Kung Fu creativity and stage arts and create new IP for Foshan's Kung Fu performances.

Disclosure statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

References

- [1] Xu H, 2022, Research on the Promotion of Tianjin's International Consumer Center City Construction through the Integration of Culture and Tourism. *Journal of Tianjin University of Commerce*, 42(1): 3–14.
- [2] Zhong L, 2013, Discussion on the Creation of an “Appropriate Consumption City”: A Case Study of Foshan City. *Consumption Economics*, 29(5): 72–77.
- [3] Bi D, Tian W, 2021, Integration and Development of “Culture, Commerce, and Tourism” in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area under the Background of High-Quality Development: Model Innovation and Optimization Path. *Urban Observation*, 2021(5): 44–51.
- [4] Feng X, Xia J, 2018, Evaluation of the Development Level of China's Comprehensive Tourism and Its Spatial Characteristics. *Economic Geography*, 38(4): 183–192.
- [5] Li W, Chen T, Ma X, 2020, Spatial Hotspot Characteristics and Formation Mechanism of Urban Tourism and Leisure Formats in Xi'an. *Acta Geographica Sinica*, 40(3): 437–446.

- [6] Li C, 2022, Research on the Construction Path of Consumer Center Cities under the New Pattern of “Dual Circulation”: Taking the Synergistic Cities in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area as an Example. *Journal of Hubei University of Economics*, 20(1): 28–38.
- [7] Lin G, 2011, Reconstruction of Consumption Space in Metropolitan Areas: A Case Study of Guangfo Integrated Development. *Modern Urban Research*, 2011(6): 15–19.
- [8] Li Z, Huang L, Liao W, 2019, Research on the Development Path of Tourism in Zhenjiang under the Background of Ningzhenyang Integration: Based on the Analysis of Nanjing’s Tourism Siphon Effect. *Journal of Liaoning Higher Vocational College of Communications*, 21(5): 32–36.

Publisher’s note

Bio-Byword Scientific Publishing remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.