Research on Influencing Factors of Competitiveness of Rural Boutique Homestay in Guangzhou, China

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to investigate the greater competitiveness of rural homestay tourism among respondents, as well as the relationship between environmental factors, operator factors, product characteristic factors, marketing strategies, and customer satisfaction. With the homestay in Guangzhou as the research object, based on the network evaluation and spatial data, this paper try to explore the homestay's competitiveness evaluation method. The corresponding evaluation system and evaluation model was constructed for competitive homestay estimates by analyzing the characteristic of the competitiveness of the homestay in Guangzhou and development potential, and corresponding Suggestions are put forward on the Guangzhou homestay competitive optimization. It also provides a reference for the transformation and development of domestic homestay during the deepening of cultural and tourism integration.

1. Introduction

Homestay belongs to the emerging economies of tourism industry, market saturation boom from 2013 to 2018, and is affected by the outbreak of the new champions league since 2019 the market fall, development course is short, and the business model is given priority to with decentralized, small scale, the internal pressure of competition, higher operating costs, needs to upgrade to make vulnerable spots in trouble of homestay. And part of the civil dormitory administrator management problems, environmental problems have been repeatedly criticized. At present, it has not explored the effective management path to enhance competitiveness.

At present, the development of the homestay industry in Guangzhou is facing a bottleneck. It is necessary to use various resource endowments to identify competitive advantages to break through barriers and to promote the competitiveness of individual and overall homestay through differentiated and diversified development. At the same time, before managers formulate reasonable management and optimization plans for residential dormitories, they also need to comprehensively evaluate the overall situation and individual differences of the competitiveness of homestays in tourist destinations and take the competitiveness status of homestays at different levels and gradients as the basis and premise for decision-making.

Notably, the research's sample is among boutique rural Guangzhou homestays. However, the recent spread of Covid-19 has had a detrimental effect on service sectors worldwide, most notably

the tourism sector [1], as travelers' trust in destinations' response to pandemic dangers has been eroded [2]. The epidemic has frustrated the homestay industry. Many homestays are single or small-scale chain operations, and their ability to withstand pressure is not strong. Therefore, under the epidemic situation, a large number of homestay related companies have been canceled or transferred. Of course, after the epidemic is over in 2023, new homestay companies will join the industry.

2. Literature Review

In terms of theoretical research, scholars at home and abroad pay more and more attention to the development of the homestay industry. Judging from the search results, foreign research on homestays mainly focuses on the homestay market, the relationship between owners and tourists, accommodation issues, homestays and rural tourism, etc. In contrast, in China, academic research on the homestay industry began in 1990 and rose around 2014. The research is more attached to the emerging development focus of tourism such as rural tourism, homestay economy, village revitalization, and global tourism. It also pays attention to the quality of homestay services and the experience of tourists.

The research found that the rise of the homestay in the UK is inseparable from the active promotion and development of the owners. In the homestay industry in the UK, the owners are both owners and operators [3]. Taking homestay owners in South Africa as the survey, we learned that the obstacles to the development of the local homestay industry mainly come from problems such as high crime rate, lack of business skills, and lack of funds [4]. The research pointed out the five forces that trigger homestay competition, which are suppliers and customers under the relationship of supply and demand, and potential, existing and substitute competitors under the relationship of competition [5]. It is found that young women with higher education levels and middle-income levels are the main consumer groups of homestays [6]. Set indicators from the three aspects of comprehensive evaluation, basic services and hotel facilities, and construct a hotel service quality evaluation model with the path of constructing indicators-collecting comments-five-level quantitative comment attitude-statistical analysis [7]. Domestic homestays first appeared in the form of "farmhouse fun", which is the material carrier of culture and customs and makes an important contribution to the rural tourism economy [8]. Based on the tourist questionnaire data, the five indicators of location, service, accommodation facilities, catering and environmental comfort are screened out, and the factor loads of the index factors are measured to determine the weight, so as to construct the evaluation model of accommodation satisfaction [9]. The research jumped out of the traditional data collection method and chose to use User-Generated Content (UGC) to test the homestay owners' feelings on tourists' online comments, and subdivided four perception groups: neutrality, disgust, support and appreciation. The test found that the emotional responses of homeowners to positive comments were significantly different [10]. It is proposed that in the trend of integrated online and offline operations, homestays need to enhance their competitiveness through strategies such as precise marketing, personalized services, and brand optimization [11]. It is believed that homestay is a new carrier of cultural and creative industries and a key factor in shaping the cultural IP of tourist destinations [12]. Combining the evaluation data and spatial data, the competitiveness of high-end hotels in Wuhan is estimated by means of index construction and superposition calculation, and the competitiveness is included in the spatial layout analysis to build a competitiveness distribution model [13]. Based on regional scale, group dimension, experience reference and practice mode, the domestic homestay research framework is constructed, and it is believed that factors such as informatization, networking and personalization drive the transformation of homestay experience management mode [14]. The competitive advantage of

homestays belongs to the category of management and operation, and the shaping of competitiveness is reflected in all aspects from design to operation [8] [14]. Based on the five aspects of price, popularity, location, satisfaction and accommodation reception, the competitiveness evaluation index system of Gulangyu homestay is constructed, and the AHP method is used to divide the index weights, and the evaluation model is established to calculate the score of homestay competitiveness [15].

Through the comparative analysis of the above evaluation models on the competitiveness of rural hotels, it can be found that several factors such as natural resources, operators, product characteristics, marketing strategies, and customer satisfaction are the most frequently mentioned and relatively high recognition factors for each model. These factors have a high overlap with the four factors in Porter's diamond model, namely, production factors, market demand, related and supporting industries, corporate strategic structure and competition in the same industry. In terms of the influence and applicability of the model itself, the Porter Diamond Model is relatively more mature. Porter's diamond model has a strong guiding role in the evaluation of the competitiveness of rural homestays.

Although Porter's diamond model is relatively mature, it focuses on the macro level. At the beginning, it evaluates national competitiveness. Therefore, when determining factors, the macro characteristics of the factors are more obvious, such as corporate strategy, structure and competition in the same industry. This model reflects the integration considerations of the industrial scale and the corporate scale. However, the country house has its own characteristics, and the diamond model needs to be improved in combination with the characteristics of the country house. According to Porter's diamond model theory, this study re-deconstructs and improves the six elements that affect the competitiveness of the industry, which are suitable for the country hotel industry, and summarizes the following four main influencing factors. There are environmental factors, operator factors, product characteristic factors and Marketing strategy factors.

Customer satisfaction is a critical indicator of a rural homestay's quality. Customer satisfaction has a significant impact on tourists' willingness to purchase homestay again, which is also an intuitive expression of tourists' opinion of homestay, making it beneficial to study the components of their competitiveness [16].

In this study, the core issue is to identify the factors that influence the homestay's competitiveness of Guangzhou in China homestay industry. Five primary attributes had been chosen as the independent variables, which act as the influencer of homestay's competitiveness. These factors are environmental factors, operator factors, product characteristic factors, marketing strategies, and customer satisfaction. All of the influencers will be tested throughout the research process to examine whether they impact the improvement of the homestay's competitiveness.

3. Research Methodology

This is a quantitative study. In terms of objectives, this is an explanatory study. Looking into the sampling methodology, the population in this study is homestay. The sample in this study refers to the luxury and boutique homestays from Guangzhou. In terms of the sampling methodology, this study had used a systematic sampling methodology.

The object of this study is not homestay consumers, but homestay enterprises.

As of July 2023, after searching on the Ctrip website, choosing to locate in Guangzhou, a total of 695 homestays were selected. On this basis, the filter condition is added as the price is more than 600 yuan, and the search results are 252. Because there is no standard or professional homestay rating system, if you want to obtain the data of boutique homestays, you still need to rely on price to filter. If the screening condition is more than 600 yuan, it can guarantee that the homestay has at

least one room type with a sales price of more than 600 yuan. This method can roughly filter out the scope of boutique homestays, and it is necessary to exclude urban homestays, and then browse the website of each homestay, and finally get 252 rural boutique homestays in Guangzhou, China.

After obtaining online and offline data through questionnaire survey, this study used Statistical Package for Social Science Automatically (SPSSAU) for descriptive statistical analysis of the data, and conducted data normal distribution test for all observed variables. Then use the AHP method to study and analyze the evaluation indicators of the competitiveness of the rural boutique homestay in Guangzhou. Statistical Package for Social Science Automatically (SPSSAU) will be used in this paper to calculate the weight of each index and conduct consistency check. After that, this study will use Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS). Pearson correlation test was conducted for each variable. On study the influence relationship between variables, analyze the influence mechanism of the competitiveness of boutique homestays in Guangzhou, China, and then test the research hypothesis.

4. Data Analysis

According to the calculation results, Environmental Factors accounted for 13.435%, Operator Factors accounted for 3.482%, Product Characteristics accounted for 50.282%, Marketing Strategy accounted for 6.778%, and Customer Satisfaction accounted for 26.023% [17]. Among the many influencing factors of rural tourism market competitiveness, the weight of B3 Product Characteristics among the five first-order influencing factors is 50.282%, accounting for the highest proportion, which belongs to the factor with great influence. It should be related to people's increasing preference for personalized and characteristic homestay design in recent years. The weight of B2 Operator Factors is 3.482%, accounting for the lowest proportion, which should be related to the impact of the business model of homestay chain brands on traditional family homestay.

According to the calculation results, among the 34 second-level influencing factors, C22 theme creativity and C23 personalized brand account for 20.951%, accounting for the highest proportion. They are the most influential factors. The weight of second-level influencing factor C29 in the overall score of first-level influencing factor B5 Customer Satisfaction is 15.844%, accounting for a relatively high proportion, which is also a factor with a relatively large influence. The weight of C15 operators' sense of identity with local resources of B2 Operator Factors was 0.061%, accounting for the lowest proportion. Among the first-order Factors B1 Environmental Factors, the weight of second-order factor C6, the number of beds, is 0.062%, which is relatively low.

4.1 Evaluation Results of homestay Competitiveness

Table 1: Competitiveness Score Descriptive Statistics

Homestay level	N	Maximum	Minimum	Mean	Std. Deviation
first level	27	92.52	80.05	83.5176	3.22099
second level	48	79.85	70.01	74.9994	2.95797
third level	82	69.82	60.19	64.0475	2.85352
fourth level	78	59.95	50.18	55.4732	3.00939
fifth level	17	49.91	40.28	45.6664	2.65454
total	252	92.52	40.28	64.3257	10.85983

Substituting the raw data processed by dimensionless quantification and the weight value of each indicator into formula, the total competitiveness score of the homestay can be obtained. The total score table of competitiveness of 252 rural boutique homestays in Guangzhou. According to the evaluation results of homestay competitiveness Table 1, among the 252 homestays selected in the

research, the highest score of competitiveness is 92.52 points, the lowest score is 40.28 points, and the average score is 64.33 points.

The competitiveness of homestay samples is divided into five levels with scores above 80 points, above 70 points, above 60 points, above 50 points and above 40 points.

The standard deviations of the first and fourth levels are relatively large, and the distributions are 3.22 and 3.01. This shows that the dispersion of competitiveness scores in these two levels is relatively large. On the contrary, the standard deviations of the second, third and fifth levels are compared small, the competitiveness score is relatively concentrated.

4.2 Analysis of factors affecting the competitiveness of homestay

This study has given certain weights to various indicators when the evaluation index system was constructed in the early stage. However, in order to further verify the key factors that cause differences in the level of competitiveness of homestays, this study will use the Spearman correlation coefficient to analyze the correlation between indicators and scores after obtaining the statistical results of homestay competitiveness. According to the results of the correlation coefficients Table 2, the degree of correlation between various indicators and level competitiveness is judged.

Table 2: Correlation Analysis of Homestay Competitiveness Score

			Homestay Competitiveness	Environmental Factors	Operator Factors	Product Characteristics	Marketing Strategy	Customer Satisfaction
Spearman's rho	Homestay Competitiveness	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.330**	.576**	.907**	.645**	.238**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
		N	252	252	252	252	252	252
	Environmental Factors	Correlation Coefficient	.330**	1.000	.199**	.094	.149*	.204**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.001	.137	.018	.001
		N	252	252	252	252	252	252
	Operator Factors	Correlation Coefficient	.576**	.199**	1.000	.597**	.579**	-.159*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.001	.	.000	.000	.011
		N	252	252	252	252	252	252
	Product Characteristics	Correlation Coefficient	.907**	.094	.597**	1.000	.650**	-.018
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.137	.000	.	.000	.771
		N	252	252	252	252	252	252
	Marketing Strategy	Correlation Coefficient	.645**	.149*	.579**	.650**	1.000	-.076
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.018	.000	.000	.	.227
		N	252	252	252	252	252	252
	Customer Satisfaction	Correlation Coefficient	.238**	.204**	-.159*	-.018	-.076	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.001	.011	.771	.227	.
		N	252	252	252	252	252	252
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).								
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).								

It can be seen from Table 2 that the competitiveness of homestays has a significant positive correlation with five influencing factors: environmental factors, operator factors, product characteristics, marketing strategy, and customer satisfaction. Among them, the product characteristics factor has the largest correlation coefficient and the strongest influence. Customer Satisfaction has the smallest correlation coefficient and the smallest influence. This result shows that for the group of rural boutique homestays, personalized and characteristic design can improve

the competitiveness of homestays. For boutique homestays, the vast majority of customers have high satisfaction, which are basically praise and recommendations, but have little impact on the competitiveness of homestays.
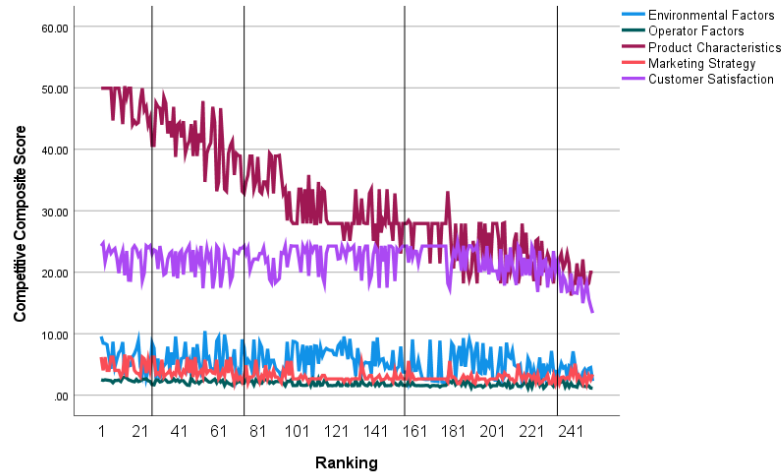

Figure 1: Score trend chart of various indicators of homestay competitiveness

What leads to the formation of obvious hierarchical divisions of competitiveness often lies in individual key factors. Grasping key factors plays a vital role in improving the competitiveness of homestays at the same level as a whole. The factors affecting the competitiveness of homestays at different levels are also different. These factors may have positive effects, such as homestays whose ratings are far ahead of other levels will increase the overall score of this level, and may also have negative effects, such as scores far lower than other homestay level groups will lower the overall score of this level.

The correlation between the competitiveness level and each index factor can be seen in Table 2, the correlation between each index factor within the competitiveness level and the total competitiveness score, but the influencing factors between levels cannot be seen. Therefore, this study further constructs a visualization graph of descriptive statistics for analysis. As shown in Figure 1, the homestays at the first and second levels are in the leading position in terms of product characteristics, and the scores of the homestays at the third level tend to be stable, but the scores of this indicator are somewhat lower for the homestays at the fourth and fifth levels. Although this indicator has a positive correlation effect on all levels, Figure 1 reflects that the product characteristics factor scores did not exert a stable positive influence in the fourth and fifth levels, and the scores showed a fluctuating downward trend, especially after 181, the product characteristics factor scores remained at a low level. Therefore, it can be basically judged that the key factor for dividing the first and second level competitive homestays is the factor of product characteristics. Customer satisfaction has a significant positive correlation with the scores of the fourth and fifth levels of homestays, but Figure 1 reflects another problem, that is, although it is known through the correlation test that the key influencing factors of homestays in the fourth level include customer satisfaction, this factor has not played its due role in improving the score, and is at a disadvantage in the overall scores of the levels. , the score of this indicator has an obvious downward gradient. However, the scores of the fourth-level and fifth-level homestays are the same as those of the third-level homestays in terms of other indicators except customer satisfaction and product characteristics. Therefore, the preliminary judgment that the decisive factor leading to the competitiveness of some homestays at the last level lies in the customer satisfaction evaluation. To sum up, the summary analysis of the factors affecting the competitiveness of rural boutique homestays in Guangzhou is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Analysis of Factors Affecting homestay Competitiveness

	Influencing factors within the hierarchy	Influencing factors between levels
Competitive first level homestay	Product Characteristics	Product Characteristics
Competitive second level homestay	Product Characteristics	Product Characteristics
Competitive third level homestay	Operator Factors,Product Characteristics,Marketing Strategy	None
Competitive fourth level homestay	Product Characteristics,Customer Satisfaction	Product Characteristics,Customer Satisfaction
Competitive fifth level homestay	Operator Factors,Product Characteristics,Customer Satisfaction	Product Characteristics,Customer Satisfaction

5. Conclusion

Boutique homestays are usually located near A-level scenic spots, with beautiful environment and convenient traffic conditions. If it is not possible to choose a location close to the scenic spot, it is necessary to increase the richness of tourism products of the homestay, such as providing hot springs, fishing, boating, swimming, picking and other entertainment items, in order to attract more people to stay. At the same time, the homestay gathering area will give tourists an overall image, and this large-scale image will be more impressive and representative than independently distributed homestay spots. Therefore, these homestays should optimize the internal hardware facilities and service functions accordingly, so that the service quality of the entire homestay group area can reach a similar level.

With the transformation and upgrading of the homestay industry from single homestays to brand homestays and boutique homestays, the traditional family workshop management method is no longer suitable for the large-scale and professional development of boutique homestays. Homestay operators should improve their management and service levels, or cooperate with professional management service agencies to create a more humane and characteristic service concept. Homestay operators should strengthen their sense of identity with local resources, increase the added value of boutique homestay products, and integrate into local culture, so as to reflect local characteristics in the business development model of boutique homestay. At the same time, the operators strived for financial guarantee and intellectual support to resolve the pressure on the operation of homestay space.

Using regional resources to build a characteristic homestay brand. Guangzhou has rich historical and cultural heritage resources and scenic spots. These unique natural scenery, unique hot spring resources, magnificent Lingnan culture and other scenic spots have become tourists' preference. At the same time, many homestays are built near A-level tourist attractions, and these homestays themselves are the material carriers and cultural image representatives of local characteristics. Therefore, in the context of cultural and tourism integration, homestay operators should make full use of various material and cultural resources in the region to build a characteristic homestay brand with the function of historical and cultural communication.

With the rapid development of the rural hotel industry, it is necessary to strengthen the differentiated marketing of rural hotel characteristics in combination with the development trend of the Internet. This differentiated homestay development is oriented to the various consumption needs and consumption behaviors of different tourists. The benefits of differentiated product supply can only be achieved when the individuality of homestay service products can make tourists form a highly favorable image in their consciousness and remind them of the benefits of purchasing a specific product. Therefore, the benefit of tourists to homestay products is not limited to a certain aspect. Improving competitiveness does not mean that the service products of the second, third, and

fourth-tier homestays should be consistent with the level of the first-tier homestays, but that the key factors of each level must be grasped. For example, location, price, popularity, etc., in order to achieve differentiated development, provide different types of products to tourists, and give tourists more homestay choices.

At present, third-party platforms on the Internet are developing rapidly. Almost every homestay booking platform website has a user evaluation and scoring system, and customer satisfaction can be well displayed on the third-party platform. So, the operators pay attention to the scores of tourists on the Internet, and realize the interaction with tourists through the network platform. Through the network platform to achieve interaction with tourists. The online evaluation of tourists is not only the feedback of tourists themselves after experiencing the service, but also a channel for other tourists to understand the information of homestays. Tourists may not first feel the real service performance of the homestay, but first see the image of the homestay built by the merchants on the Internet. Therefore, homestay managers should pay full attention to the comments and ratings of tourists on the online trading platform, and deal with feedback in a timely manner and provide corresponding after-sales services. Attract more tourists by creating a positive network image of homestay.

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