

Examining experience economy approaches to tourists' anticipated

experiences: Mainland Chinese travellers consider Australia

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Abstract

The present study seeks to explore and compare the perceived importance of Pine and Gilmore's experience realms and Schmitt's categorisations of experience in a tourism context. These approaches to experiences are chosen because they are widely cited, yet rarely compared. The empirical component of the work is based on Chinese tourists who were asked to anticipate their experiences in Australia. Would be travellers in the regions of Guangzhou, Shanghai and Beijing, accessed through an extensive snowball sampling procedure, responded to a detailed and literature-informed set of activity and experience items in a questionnaire format. The study provided evidence that the systems can be seen as joint contributors to understanding experience; the Pine and Gilmore work offers a more holistic appraisal and the Schmitt system presents a more fine-grained rendition of the desired experiences. Aesthetic and sensory experiences were shown to be of the highest importance. Experience analysis offers insights and the approach in the study develops a pathway to pursue empirical studies so that researchers can provide benefits for marketers in tourism.

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Keywords: Experience economy; experience analysis; Chinese tourists; anticipation; Australia; comparative systems

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