

ROLE OF INTERVENING OPPORTUNITY IN TOURIST DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT: Intervening opportunity is an important factor in spatial interaction, and has very important impacts on tourist destination development in a region. There are few literatures on this topic in tourist researches, and especially in China fewer tourist researchers pay attention to intervening opportunity theory. This article, taking Lin'an as a case study, aims to introduce intervening opportunity theory in tourist destination development by the comprehensive analysis of some data including literatures, Internet information, longitudinal data and some tourist surveys. Both qualitative and quantitative methods are all used in this research. Firstly, the authors expatiate upon the definition of intervening opportunity, by reviewing the literatures in detail, take Lin'an of Zhejiang Province as a case study, and then analyze some necessary factors of intervening opportunity, such as regional tourist demands and supplies, tourist attractions, spatial distance and transportation, tourist images and costs, regional competition and cooperation in tourist destinations. Finally the impacts of intervening opportunity on Lin'an tourist development are analyzed in detail. The results show that intervening opportunity do not occur everywhere, and there must be some critical factors, and intervening opportunity surely plays important roles in tourist destination development. The tourist development in Lin'an is attributed to intervening opportunity of the spatial location between Hangzhou and Huangshan that are two famous tourist cities in China, and the occurrence of intervening opportunities in Lin'an is the integration of some external and internal factors.

KEY WORDS: intervening opportunity theory; spatial competition; Lin'an; Huangshan; Hangzhou

CLC number: F590

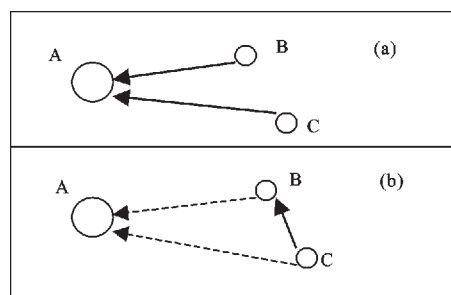
Document code: A

Article ID: 1002-0063(2005)04-0368-09

1 INTRODUCTION

Intervening opportunity theory states that the number of people traveling a given distance is directly proportional to the number of opportunity at that distance, and inversely proportional to the number of intervening opportunity or the number of chances of finding satisfaction in work or residences (STOUFFER, 1940). Most of the subsequent researchers describe intervening opportunity citing this definition.

At the same time, intervening opportunity, transferability and complementarity are the three prerequisites to spatial interaction. Assuming A, B and C as three cities in a region, there is a shopping mall in City A, and the citizens in B and C go shopping to City A (Fig. 1a). If another store is constructed in City B, then the citizens of C would go shopping to City B (Fig. 1b), when intervening opportunity occurs in City B (ZENG, 1996).



Source: ZENG, 1996

Fig. 1 Schematic model of intervening opportunity

Tourist researchers defined intervening opportunity differently from those in spatial and regional sciences. Destinations or attractions that are closer to tourist-generating markets intercept more visitors than farther competitive places, thus diminishing their likelihood of

Received date: 2005-04-13

Foundation item: Under the auspices of the National Natural Science Foundation of China (No. 40171027)

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visiting the latter when the closer places are regarded as being intervening opportunity relative to the latter places (JAFARI, 2000). In Chinese researchers' viewpoints, intervening opportunity occurs in the process of tourists decision-making when they can optionally travel to a great deal of destinations, and tourists will choose destination B rather than A when the travel time and expenditure in B are less than those in A but getting the same enjoyment (CHU, 1991).

There are some discrepancies in different researchers' viewpoints, but most studies suggest that intervening opportunity is influenced by some factors and has the following characteristics: 1) intervening opportunity occurs in some region where tourist demands and supplies coexist; 2) distance is an important factor influencing intervening opportunity; 3) there are two or more similar suppliers in some regions, such as shopping malls, resorts; 4) the suppliers nearer to market areas have more advantages than those distant ones.

The studies about intervening opportunity theory can be divided into two types, namely, the modeling and the description. Foreign researchers use mathematic models to analyze intervening opportunity theory, whereas most of Chinese studies are about descriptive. STOUFFER first put forward the intervening opportunity model in 1940, and thenceforward some literatures about this theory began to occur, such as the study of CLARK and PETERS about English citizen travel, the ones of GRUBB and GOODWIN about reservoir resorts and CHEN about Canadian parks (SMITH, 1983). Furthermore, intervening opportunity is one of the five main factors that constitute the famous competitive advantage model of PORTER (1997).

Chinese studies on this topic are mainly focused on spatial science, regional science and tourist studies, and most of tourist researches are about descriptive analyses. CHU (1991) gave the definition of intervening opportunity, and BAO (1994) considered that intervening opportunity is much important to Karst caves tourist development. Based on PORTER's competitive advantage theory, DOU *et al.* (2000) thought that intervening opportunity was the pivotal factor in regional destination competition. There were some comments within the researches about regional cooperation by QIU and ZHU (2004).

Several similar viewpoints can be drawn from the existing literatures. Firstly, at a certain extent intervening opportunity does have important impacts on tourist destination development. Secondly, intervening opportunity is beneficial to the nearer destinations. Thirdly, intervening opportunity are related to the competition in sev-

eral destinations of some region. Fourthly, regional tourist development must take intervening opportunity into account. In general, there are few studies in depth, and most of researches about intervening opportunity theory are usually hidden in other studies.

As stated above, studies about intervening opportunity theory are obviously few though its definition has been early presented. Conclusions are drawn on the basis of some particular assumptions, and there are still no unanimous viewpoints presently. The assumption of the solid lines in Fig. 1 is that consumers would go to some nearer malls for shopping, which, however, would not absolutely occur in fact. When a new shopping center is built in City B, citizens in cities of B and C would choose to consume in cities of A and B, when City B will intercept some consumers of C that shown by the dotted curves in Fig. 1. The same phenomena occur in the process of regional tourist development. Market shares must be redistributed once new destinations occur nearby some region. The result may be that the destinations near main generating origins would gain some shares of the ones in the distance. The market shares are often related to attractions of new destination, and regional tourist demands and supplies. The purpose of this paper is to attempt to explain the role of intervening opportunity in the process of tourist destination development, and the conditions and impacts of intervening opportunity. Lin'an in Zhejiang Province, China, is a typical case on this topic.

2 CASE DESTINATION SURVEY

Located in the northwest of Hangzhou, adjacent to Huangshan City of Anhui Province, with the whole area of 3126.8km², Lin'an is the largest county in Zhejiang Province. The spatial distances between Lin'an and Hangzhou, Huangshan, Nanjing, Shanghai are respectively 30.5km, 128km, 305km and 258km. Hang-Yu Road (Hangzhou-Yulingguan) is the main external traffic channel connecting Lin'an and Hangzhou, and another road, Hui-Hang Highway (Huangshan-Hangzhou) was completed in Oct. 2004 (Fig. 2).

Lin'an is an ecological demonstration town, famous for the producing area of bamboos and pignuts as well as the new eco-tourist destination in China. It became a number of the excellent tourist cities of China in 2001. There are many famous resorts in Lin'an, such as Tianmu Mountain, Huge Canyon in the west of Zhejiang Province, Qingshan Lake, Daming Mountain, Qingliang Peak, Ruijing Cave, Baishui Gully, Baima Cliff, Tianmu Rock Vally, Rocky Great Wall in the south of

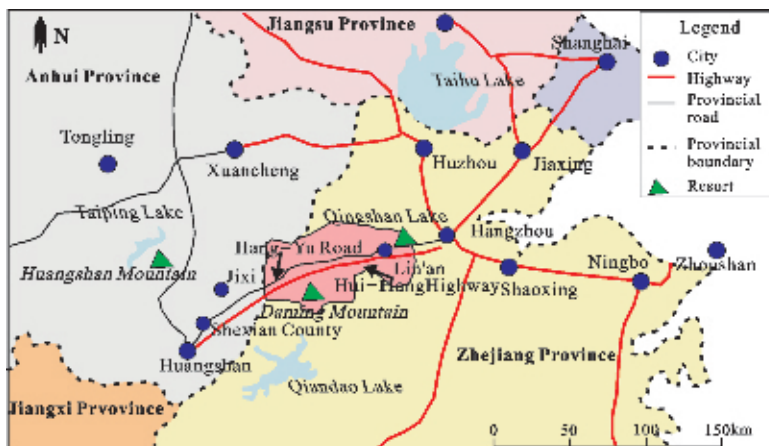


Fig. 2 Location of Lin'an

Changjiang(Yangtze) River, Linglong Mountain, Headwaters of Taihu Lake, Eastern Tianmu Mountain, Mausoleum of King Qian, the Liuxi River, etc. Most of current resorts are about natural sceneries but Mausoleum of King Qian (XIAO *et al.*, 2003). Three resorts are exceptional in Lin'an, namely Qingshan Lake, Daming Mountain and Huge Canyon in the west of Zhejiang Province. The former two lie in the side of Hang-Yu Road that is the main external traffic corridor, and especially Qingshan Lake has more prior spatial location. Huge Canyon in the west of Zhejiang Province belongs to national reservation area of Qingliang Peak, and it shares resources with Shexian County of Huangshan City and Jixi County of Xuancheng City in Anhui Province.

3 PREREQUISITES OF INTERVENING OPPORTUNITY IN LIN'AN

According to the existing studies and relative theories, intervening opportunity is based on some given conditions. This paper analyzes the process of intervening opportunity in Lin'an tourist development, such as tourist demands and supplies, tourist images, attractions, spatial distance, transportation, regional competition and cooperation in destinations.

3.1 Regional Tourist Demands and Supplies

In recent years, Changjiang River Delta, as a tourist region, has rapidly developed, and gained obviously competitive advantages compared with the other tourist regions in China. There were 6.084×10^6 international tourists, accounting for 16.53% of the total in China in 2002 and tourist foreign exchanges amount to $\text{US\$}4.011 \times 10^9$, accounting for 19.68% of the total in China, and domestic tourists totalize 243×10^6 or so, taking up 27.66% of

the total (Ji, 2003). The Changjiang River Delta is becoming a destination cluster with Shanghai taking the lead. The integration process of regional tourist is being accelerated progressively too, and cooperative measures in government administration, resources exploitation, and information intercommunion have been stipulated. Some government officials and researchers have suggested that the Changjiang River Delta should be built into a tourist region without any obstacles. In 2003, 15 cities including Shanghai, Hangzhou, Shaoxing, Ningbo, Wenzhou, Jiaxing, Huzhou, Zhoushan, Nanjing, Suzhou, Wuxi, Changzhou, Yangzhou, Zhenjiang, and Nantong in the Changjiang River Delta and Huangshan City in Anhui Province held the meeting themed "15+1 Forum", which made the spatial scope of Changjiang River Delta expand gradually. The three main tourist cities of Shanghai, Hangzhou and Huangshan are cooperating in constructing the international tourist route whose attractions include the urban scenery of Shanghai, the West Lake of Hangzhou and the world natural and cultural heritage of Huangshan. Lin'an is located between Hangzhou and Huangshan, and has obvious traffic advantages compared with Huangshan City.

The Changjiang River Delta is a main tourist market in China. At the end of 2002, the total population was up to 75 707 900 that accounted for 5.89% of the whole in China. The number of cities whose per capita disposable income exceeds 10×10^3 yuan (RMB) amounted to 8 in the 15 cities of the Changjiang River Delta in 2002. The population, employees, and average receipts of citizen of Shanghai are all higher than the other cities. Lin'an maybe becomes a jaunt destination owing to the distance advantages near to the main market areas, especially to Shanghai. Meanwhile the tourists from Anhui Province travel to the Changjiang River Delta via Lin'an, which makes the potential markets of Lin'an expand fur-

ther.

3.2 Tourist Attraction

Natural and ecological tourist resources feature largely in Lin'an attraction, which appeals to many citizens in the Changjiang River Delta on the weekend and satisfies tourists' recreation needs. The tourist supplies in Lin'an and Hangzhou are complementary to each other, the former characterizing by natural sceneries, and the latter by cultural heritages. The tourist attractions of Lin'an are similar to those in Huangshan City to some extent. Although Huangshan Mountain, Xidi and Hongcun ancient villages are the representative tourist attractions of Huangshan City, Huangshan Mountain is more important than the other two. In Lin'an, Tianmu Mountain, the Huge Canyon in the west of Zhejiang Province, Daming Mountain, the White Water Gully, Linglong Mountain, the Eastern Tianmu Mountain, the White Horse Cliff, the Tianmu Rock Hollow are about natural attractions, especially Daming Mountain, which is located near Hang-Yu Road, 70km away from Huangshan, at an elevation of 1000m above sea level, and its climate and geology are similar to those of Huangshan. Daming Mountain is not so well-known as Huangshan, but the famous resources of Huangshan, such as strangely shaped pines, spectacular rocky peaks, clouds sea, can be easily found in Daming Mountain, which has ever been named *the Small Huangshan Mountain in Zhejiang Province*. Qian-Mu Fields in Lin'an is an alpine basin sparsely distributed in the world, and there are various waterfalls. Lin'an competes with Shexian County because they belong jointly to the national reservation area of Qingliang Peak. Qingshan Lake, headwater of Taihe Lake, the Li-uxi River in Lin'an and Taiping Lake, the Xin'an River in Huangshan belong to water attractions and, seen from tourists perspectives, their characteristics and qualities are similar to each other, and tourist products they can provide are all about sightseeing and recreation.

Complementarity of attractions between Hangzhou City and Lin'an County provides opportunity for Lin'an tourist development, and similarity in resources and products makes it possible that Lin'an becomes an alternative destination of Huangshan. Huangshan City, Lin'an County and Hangzhou City can be seen as the A, B and C in the Fig. 1, of which Hangzhou and other main cities in the Changjiang River Delta are the markets area of Lin'an and they are equal to C that is consumer-generating area. Huangshan City is the A that is early exploited destination with high qualitative attractions and Lin'an is the B that is a newly developed place with similar function to A to a certain extent and is the main trans-

portation channel of A. Then the B, namely Lin'an, has gained intervening opportunity, and can intercept some tourists of Huangshan City.

3.3 Spatial Distance and Transportation

Compared with Huangshan, Lin'an has advantages in spatial distance and transportation. The relative regional location is shown in Fig. 3. Huangshan City gains its name because that Huangshan Mountain is the world natural and cultural heritage. Xidi and Hongcun ancient villages gained the title of the World Cultural Heritage in 2000, and Huangshan is an important tourist city in China too. Huangshan City and the tourism destinations in Changjiang River Delta are interdependent. The Changjiang River Delta is the main market area of Huangshan City, and on the other hand it is the important traffic channel to Huangshan, especially for domestic tourists. Shanghai, Nanjing and Hangzhou are the three important ports to Huangshan, and the former two are more advantageous than Lin'an as destinations. Hang-Yu Road and the Hui-Hang Highway are the main traffic corridors between Huangshan and Hangzhou via Lin'an. There are mainly three kinds of vehicles from Shanghai to Huangshan, which are airplane, train and automobile. Now expenditure by airplane is relatively higher, travel time by train is much longer, and the automobile is more advantageous in expenditures and travel time, with usual route of Shanghai-Hangzhou-Lin'an-Huangshan. Through Hui-Hang Highway, tourists by this route from Shanghai, Hangzhou to Huangshan would be greatly increased, and the impacts of intervening opportunity on Lin'an would be expanded.

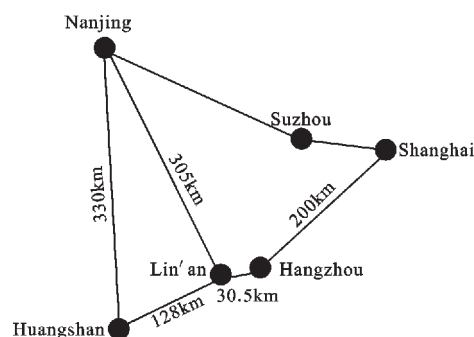


Fig. 3 Spatial relationship between Lin'an and other destinations in Changjiang River Delta

3.4 Opportunity from Competition and Cooperation

From the spatial locations, Hangzhou and Huangshan are the main competitors and cooperators with Lin'an. Their tourist development and existing problems provide opportunity and challenges to Lin'an. Hangzhou

and Huangshan are famous destinations in China attributed to Huangshan resort and the West Lake. Meanwhile there are some issues in the development of the two famous destinations facing continuously changing demands and ever-increasing new tourist locations, and promoting international positions are their main objects. Lin'an benefits from the two cities' development because of its predominant spatial location.

The issues in the development of Hangzhou and Huangshan can provide more chances for Lin'an. Now the external transportation system in Huangshan is imperfect, so by contrast, Lin'an has better accessibility, in terms of Shanghai tourist market. There are shortages in accommodation, service and management, and tourist expenses are much higher in Huangshan, which also provides opportunity for the development of Lin'an.

By the above analysis, there are some obvious characteristics in the process of Lin'an tourist development: firstly it is located in the Changjiang River Delta tourist region; secondly the potential demands in and out of region are huger; thirdly similar to Huangshan in natural attractions Lin'an can satisfy tourists as a sightseeing and recreation destination; fourthly the development of Hangzhou and Huangshan provides opportunity for Lin'an; finally the limitation in facilities, services and accessibility in Huangshan makes it possible that Lin'an becomes an alternative destination of Huangshan. Compared with the characteristics of Lin'an tourist development and the current studies of intervening opportunity theory, conclusions can be drawn that Lin'an has intervening opportunity in demands, attractions, spatial distance, transportation and so on.

4 IMPACTS OF INTERVENING OPPORTUNITY ON LIN'AN TOURIST DEVELOPMENT

Intervening opportunity exists in the process of Lin'an tourist development from the above analyses, and their impacts can be shown in a series of tourist items, such as tourist arrivals, market characteristics, tourist image and cost, etc.

4.1 Tourist Arrivals

4.1.1 International tourist arrivals

Since 1998, international tourist of Lin'an has being stably developed. The international arrivals had increased from 966 in 1998 to 4506 in 2003, but before 2002 the development was comparatively slow. And compared with Hangzhou and Huangshan, the increase in the number of international tourists in Lin'an is very slight. For example, in 2002, the number of international tourist arrivals in Lin'an was 1765, and the ones in Hangzhou and Huangshan were respectively 1056 167 and 316 100 (Table 1). From relative growth rate, the gaps between Lin'an and the other cities are less. Assumed the data in 1998 was 100%, the one in 2002 in Lin'an was 165.63%. Similarly the ones in Hangzhou and Huangshan in 2002 were 208.255% and 263.43%. In 2003 the situation was different from the other years. The international tourists in Hangzhou and Huangshan more or less reduced, but the ones in Lin'an increased, the relative growth has amounted to 466.46% (Table 1). The data analysis shows that Lin'an has no competitive advantages in international tourism. In 2003, although most destinations in China were influenced by SARS,

Table 1 International tourists of Lin'an, Hangzhou and Huangshan (1998–2003)

		1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Tourists	Hangzhou	507158	591853	707148	819403	1056167	861163
	Huangshan	119995	166000	220500	262000	316100	96900
	Lin'an	966	595	1384	1600	1765	4506
Relative growth percentage (%)	Hangzhou	100.00	116.70	139.43	161.57	208.25	169.80
	Huangshan	100.00	138.34	183.76	218.34	263.43	80.75
	Lin'an	100.00	61.59	143.27	165.63	182.71	466.46

Note: The data in 1998 are assumed as 100%, and the other years' values are the relative data to 1998

Sources: SHENG (1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003); Huangshan Statistical Bureau, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004

Lin'an tourist advanced rapidly. The relative increase in 2003 was exceptional, and the increase in other years was lower than Huangshan and Hangzhou.

From 1998 to 2002, the international receipts ratio of Lin'an to Hangzhou was under 0.2%, and the ratio of Lin'an to Huangshan wandered up and down from 0.6% to 0.8%. Nevertheless the ratio of Lin'an to

Hangzhou and Huangshan rose to 0.52% and 4.65% respectively in 2003 (Fig. 4). Those data above analyzed show that compared with Hangzhou and Huangshan, international tourist of Lin'an did not obviously increase except in 2003. There are no competitive advantages in Lin'an compared with the near tourist cities in the Changjiang River Delta.

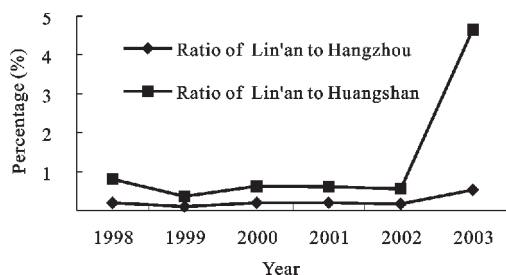


Fig. 4 Ratios of international tourists in Lin'an to those in Hangzhou and Huangshan

4.1.2 Domestic tourist arrivals

From 1998 to 2003, the number of domestic tourist arrivals in Lin'an increased from 426×10^3 to 1.31×10^6 . Although domestic tourists in Huangshan increased too, the influence of SARS to Huangshan was more serious than that to Lin'an and Hangzhou, and the tourists dropped by 18.04% in 2003 compared with 2002. Seen from relative growth rate, Lin'an had obvious advantages (Table 2). Tourists in 2003 in Lin'an already reached 3.07 times of that in 1998, but Hangzhou and Huangshan were 1.31 and 1.36 respectively. Before 2003 the growth rate of Lin'an tourist development was larger than that of Hangzhou and Huangshan, but were smaller than that in 2003.

The gaps in domestic tourists' number between Lin'an, Hangzhou and Huangshan are very obvious, and the ratios of Lin'an to Hangzhou and Huangshan are less than 25% (Fig. 5). However the differences were gradually becoming smaller, from 1998 to 2003, especially the ratio of Lin'an to Hangzhou had increased from 2.01% to 4.72%, and that between Lin'an and Huangshan had increased from 10.46% to 23.69%. The increase of ratios of Lin'an to Hangzhou and Huangshan showed that the growth of Lin'an tourism was quicker than the ones of Huangshan and Hangzhou. And the relative gaps between Lin'an and Huangshan had being gradually reduced.

By the above analysis, located in the middle of Hangzhou and Huangshan, Lin'an tourism has being developed rapidly and the gaps in the three destinations have being reduced. Especially the one between Lin'an and Huangshan is becoming smaller because the two destinations are similar in attractions and market demands.

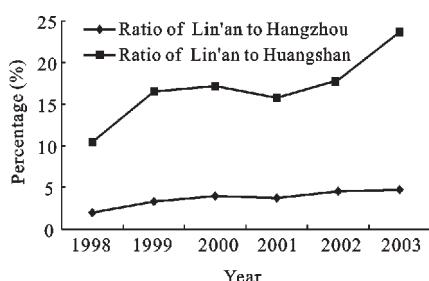
4.2 Domestic Market Structure and Other Characteristics

In 2002, tourists from the Changjiang River Delta (Shanghai, Zhejiang Province and Jiangsu Province) ac-

Table 2 Domestic tourists of Lin'an, Hangzhou and Huangshan (1998–2003)

	Area	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Tourists ($\times 10^3$)	Hangzhou	2120.17	2207.10	2305.40	2510.14	2652.36	2776.00
	Huangshan	407.50	443.40	532.95	593.80	674.67	552.98
	Lin'an	42.61	73.20	91.60	93.70	120.75	131.00
Relative growth percentage (%)	Hangzhou	100.00	104.10	108.74	118.39	125.10	130.93
	Huangshan	100.00	108.81	130.79	145.72	165.56	135.70
	Lin'an	100.00	171.79	214.97	219.90	283.38	307.44

Sources: SHENG, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003; Huangshan Statistical Bureau, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004



Sources: SHENG, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003; Huangshan Statistical Bureau, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004

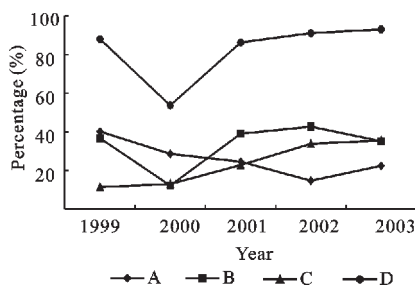
Fig. 5 Ratios of domestic tourists in Lin'an to those in Hangzhou and Huangshan

shan accounted for 61.70% and 43.24% respectively. Most tourists of Lin'an come from Jiangsu Province and Shanghai whose percentages amounted to 42.70% and 33.80% larger than that of Hangzhou and Huangshan. The ratios of tourists from Shanghai in Hangzhou and Huangshan were respectively 13.30% and 9.64%. The tourists from Zhejiang Province did not occupy a higher proportion in Lin'an market structure, and the number is only 11.10%. Compared with Huangshan, the tourist markets of Lin'an are more concentrated on the Changjiang River Delta, in which Shanghai and Jiangsu Province are the most important market areas, and in a certain degree Lin'an does not appeal to tourists within Zhejiang Province.

Since 1998, the tourists from Shanghai, Zhejiang

counted for 91.10% of all the tourists in Lin'an, while at the same time those tourists in Hangzhou and Huang-

Province and Jiangsu Province have been continuously increased (Fig. 6). The percentages of tourists from Shanghai and Jiangsu reduced in 2000, increased in the other years, and that of tourists from Zhejiang Province was continuously reduced from 1998 to 2003. From 2000, Shanghai has become the most important market origin of Lin'an, and its share has been more than Zhejiang Province. In recent years the attractions of Lin'an have been enhanced, and its market share in the Changjiang River Delta has been gradually enlarged. What is more, Lin'an is more appealing to Shanghai tourists.



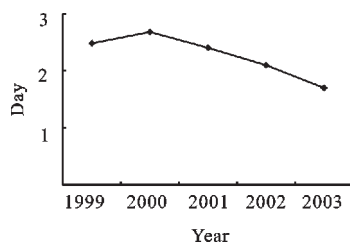
Curves A, B, and C are respectively the tourist percentages from Zhejiang, Shanghai, Jiangsu;

Curve D is the total tourist percentages from the three areas

Sources: SHENG, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003

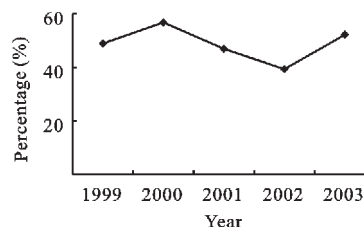
Fig. 6 Tourists spatial distribution in Lin'an

In addition, domestic tourists stayed in Lin'an for about two days, and since 2000 the time has been gradually shortened (Fig. 7). Most visitors come with the purpose of sightseeing and leisure on the weekend. In 2003 the proportion of sightseeing was 52.2% in all the tourists in Lin'an (Fig. 8). Namely domestic tourists in Lin'an mainly came from the Changjiang River Delta most of which stayed about two days for recreation on the weekend and other holidays. Compared with Huangshan, Lin'an has advantages in spatial distance to main market areas, which satisfies tourists of the Changjiang River Delta with their travel and recreation on the weekend.



Sources: SHENG, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003

Fig. 7 Days of average domestic tourist's staying in Lin'an



Sources: SHENG, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003

Fig. 8 Domestic sightseers in Lin'an

4.3 Tourist Image and Marketing

Because of the administrative affiliation, 85.35% of the perception of Lin'an tourist is related to Hangzhou, 17.75% to Huangshan and most of websites are about the introduction of Lin'an's spatial location (Fig. 9). Most resorts in Lin'an promote their attractions using the brand of famous tourist route linking Hangzhou with Huangshan. Daming Mountain and Qingshan Lake are most outstanding in all the resorts located beside the Hang-Yu Road. Daming Mountain lies near Hangzhou, and Qingshan Lake near Huangshan. The perception of the two locations in website is correlative with their spatial positions. About 30.39% of the websites about Daming Mountain are related to Hangzhou, and 40.26% related to Huangshan. About 17.65% of the websites are related to Hangzhou, and 7.72% related to Huangshan in the websites about Qingshan Lake. Those data show that Qingshan Lake is near Hangzhou, and its perception in the websites is correlative with Hangzhou. The same phenomenon occurs between Daming Mountain and Huangshan. The tourist image of Daming Mountain is "the Small Huangshan in Zhejiang Province", and promotion of Qingshan Lake emphasizes its prior spatial location. Its introduction in Lin'an tourist web is about the nearness to arterial Hang-Yu Road connecting Hangzhou and Huangshan and the convenient transportation. Most resorts in Huangshan resort to promote their tourist images, which intervenes the famous tourist route connecting Hangzhou and Huangshan.

4.4 Spatial Distance and Tourist Cost

Lin'an has advantages in spatial distance and costs to most tourists from the Changjiang River Delta, especially from Shanghai. Seen from tourist route, automobiles are the main vehicles, and the main attractions are some resorts in Lin'an or near areas, such as Yuhang District in Hangzhou, and usually tourist route is about a two-day or three-day tour. Lin'an has distance advantage because it lies in the main traffic channel of connecting Shanghai and Huangshan. The facilities of

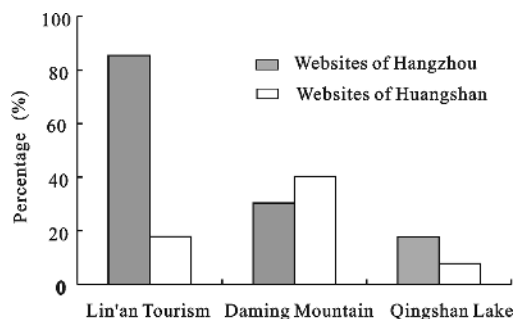


Fig. 9 Images relationship of Lin'an, Huangzhou and Huangshan

Hang-Yu Road are better at present, and the travel time by bus via Lin'an from Shanghai, Hangzhou to Huangshan is relative shorter. Owing to the affinities between Daming Mountain and Huangshan, this paper uses them as representative in the following to analyze the tourist costs and attraction qualities of Lin'an and Huangshan cities.

To Shanghai tourists, the tourist cost of a two-day tour to Daming Mountain is from 250 yuan (RMB) to 300 yuan or so, which includes transport fee, accommodation, resort tickets, insurance fee and guide service, and the one of a three-day tour to Huangshan about 400 yuan including transport, accommodation, insurance and guide service (Table 3). Compared with Daming Mountain, the package tour to Huangshan does not include the resort ticket fee, and the accommodation quality is relatively worse, which shows that Daming Mountain has comparative advantages in resort ticket and accommodation. The data collected from some locations and tour operators can validate those conclusions above. The ticket fee in Huangshan is 130 yuan per tourist, and the one in Daming Mountain is 65 yuan. The price of all the hotels in Huangshan is much higher than that of Daming Mountain, and rooms are always limited in the annual tourist peak season. Therefore famous for "the Small Huangshan in Zhejiang Province", Daming

Mountain has advantages in spatial distance and tourist costs over Huangshan, which in a certain degree makes up for the shortage in celebrity perception. Furthermore, starting from Shanghai to Huangshan via Hangzhou, the package tour has a break in the Qingshan Lake, where tourists choose freely whether to consume. So Qingshan Lake intervenes directly into the Huangshan tourist development, and becomes a node of Huangshan tour.

5 CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

Intervening opportunity do have played a very important role in the process of Lin'an tourist development. The prerequisites of intervening opportunity include regional tourist demands and supplies, tourist attractions, spatial distance and transportation, regional competition and cooperation, etc. The attraction for Changjiang River Delta tourist market origin, similarity to Huangshan that is the world natural and cultural heritage, and the comparative advantage in transportation are the keys to intervening opportunity in Lin'an tourist development. Comparatively intervening opportunity mainly impacts the domestic tourist development in Lin'an, especially intercepting most Shanghai tourists on the weekend. Furthermore, Lin'an actively promotes its spatial location advantages, and some problems appear in Huangshan tourist development, which is very important to the efficacy of intervening opportunity in Lin'an too.

Therefore, compared with the existing definitions and studies of intervening opportunity theory, some conclusions can be arrived at. When the following situations occur in destination B in some region, intervening opportunity can make function, and destination B develops rapidly, and intercepts some tourist market shares of destination A.

(1) There are more potential tourists markets, especially jaunts and excursionists, which can be assumed as the C.

(2) In tourist attractions, destination B is similar to

Table 3 Package tours in Lin'an and Huangshan

Package tour	Vehicle	Cost	Attractions	Contents
Two-day tour: Daming Mountain and the Sky Sands in the west of Zhejiang Province	Automobile	268 yuan	Daming Mountain, the Sky Sands in the west of Zhejiang Province	Air-conditioned buses; two-bed room; Main resort tickets; Insurance; guide service
Two-day tour: Daming Mountain, Drift and Bamboo Sea of Shuangxi	Automobile	268 yuan	Daming Mountain, Drift and Bamboo Sea of Shuangxi	Air-conditioned buses; two-bed rooms similar with three-star hotels; Main resort tickets; guide service
Three-day tour to Huangshan	Automobile	268 yuan	Qiankou Ancient Village, Phoenix Headwaters, Monkey Valley, Qingshan Lake (optional activity)	Air-conditioned buses; four- to eight-bed rooms with toilet and bathing room in Huangshan; two beds rooms at the foot of Huangshan; guide service

another destination A, and to a certain extent, can alternate it.

(3) Destination B has advantages of spatial distance to market C compared with destination A.

(4) Destination B can use transportation, similarity to A and other advantages to promote itself to market C.

At the same time, the case study in this paper has just proved that intervening opportunity does impact domestic tourist development, and the impacts on international tourist are not showed by this case. The more obvious discrepancies exist between two or many similar destinations, the stronger intervening opportunity influences tourist development, especially domestic and regional tourist markets.

Although this paper uses quantitative methods to analyze impacts of intervening opportunity on tourist destination development, some conclusions are inferred in description. The impacts are not peeled off from other factors, which will be the important research topic in the following studies. More researches are needed on this topic, which is beneficial to the regional tourist destinations distribution, regional competition and cooperation in destinations as well as the development of the whole region.

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