

# THE CURRENT SITUATION OF SKI CUSTOMER BEHAVIOR IN CHINA

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## Abstract

Since Beijing's successful bid to host the 2022 Winter Olympics, the state has introduced relevant policies to promote the rapid development of China's ski industry. In recent years, the number of ski resorts, the number of ski trips, and the output value of ski related industries in China have all shown an increasing trend, and while ski resorts have ushered in good development opportunities, they have also ushered in fierce market competition. How to convert experiential ski customers into loyal customers has become the focus of the development of ski resorts. Based on the above background, this paper will discuss the current situation of ski customer behaviour in China and how to enhance the engagement behaviour of Chinese ski customers based on the literature review and provide targeted recommendations for ski resorts and the government.

**Keywords:** Ski customer; Customer behavior; ski resorts

## Introduction

In 2022, the 24th Winter Olympic Games were held in Beijing, making Beijing the first city in history to host both the Summer and Winter Olympics (China Sports Daily, 2017). President Xi Jinping succinctly summarized the new positioning and functions of sports development in the new era, endowing the Beijing Winter Olympics with profound significance for promoting high-quality development of China's skiing industry (Zhao, 2018).

By reviewing relevant literature, it is found that most scholars typically study ski consumption from the perspective of enterprises or markets, with fewer studies from the viewpoint of customers and consumers (He, 2018). Although some scholars have addressed customer perceived value in the ski consumption field, few have combined ski consumers' perceived value with customer satisfaction and loyalty. In the context of skiing, consumer perception and experience throughout the entire consumption process should be emphasized. Numerous studies have shown that the key factor determining customer satisfaction and loyalty is perceived value. This study introduces the concept of customer perceived value from the economic field, as an important theoretical basis for perceiving and evaluating consumers' products or services, into the ski consumption field. On the one hand, from the perspective of ski consumers, this study systematically researches ski consumer loyalty using relevant theories from marketing, management, and consumer behavior (He, 2020). It aims to advance research on ski consumption behaviors, further improve and enrich the research system of ski consumption, and provide theoretical and academic research value. Based on the theories of perceived value, satisfaction, and loyalty, this study specifically discusses the influence relationships among customer perceived value, satisfaction, and loyalty at the ski consumer level (Dai, 2020). It constructs a conceptual model of "perceived value-customer satisfaction-customer loyalty" in the ski consumption field, verifying that ski customer perceived value

directly influences customer loyalty through customer satisfaction, further expanding the research ideas and methods on such issues (Wu, 2019).

This study investigates the population participating in ski consumption. From the perspective of ski consumers, it deconstructs the dimensions of ski consumers' perceived value, gaining an in-depth understanding of their actual needs and personal experiences. By constructing and empirically analyzing models of customer perceived value, satisfaction, and loyalty, the results can help ski resorts accurately grasp changes in customer needs and key points of focus during the consumption process (Zhang, 2019). This, in turn, can increase customer loyalty to skiing, provide references for ski resorts to formulate effective management strategies to enhance loyalty, thereby improving the core competitiveness of ski resorts, refining marketing strategies, stimulating China's ski consumption, and promoting the development of the ice and snow industry.

### **Research objective**

- 1) Study the current situation of Ski customer behavior in China.

## **Literature review**

### **1. Customer behavior**

Behaviour can also be called behavioural willingness, behavioural tendency or intention, and its concept was first derived from attitude theory. In the field of academic research, behavioural intention, as an important concept in behavioural research, has been researched by many foreign scholars as early as the 1970's. Fishbein & Ajzen (1975) firstly pointed out that behavioural intention is the "subjective probability or likelihood that an individual will want to engage in a particular behaviour" and the reaction shown to this behaviour. this behaviour to show a reaction. Subsequently, King G W (1977) defined behavioural intention as 'a perceived relationship between oneself and a behaviour'. Smith (1982) defined behavioural intention as the likelihood or attitudinal tendency to act or not to act in the future based on Ajzen's (1975) research. Crompton (1990) suggests that behavioural intention refers to a person's motivation to perform a certain behaviour, which is the direct driving force of behaviour, and also refers to the behavioural tendency towards certain products and services. Scholar Claes Fornell (1992) showed that behavioural intention is not only a specific behavioural tendency of customers after purchasing products and services, but also a kind of subjective feeling, and it can be predicted through the behaviour of consumers' behavioural intention. Gollwitzer C (1996) divided behavioural intention into two different phases, the first one is the stage of planning or planning (goal intention), and the second one is the stage of implementation or execution (goal intention), and the second one is the stage of implementation or execution. James (2005) and Feng Q et al. (2009) believe that behavioural intention is an individual's subjective judgement or prediction that a certain behaviour is likely to occur in the future. Liu (2010) summarized the relevant studies of foreign scholars and pointed out that behavioural intention is used to indicate the tendency of the user's intention to take a certain behaviour.

With the in-depth study of behavioural intention, many scholars began to introduce the concept of behavioural intention into the study of skiing behaviour. J. swan (1989) proposed that skiing behavioural intention is a tourist's personal expectation of skiing in the future or planned skiing behaviour. Zeithaml & Berry (1996) proposed that ski customer behavioural intention is the likelihood that ski customers will revisit a destination or recommend a destination. recommendation and other behavioural possibilities. Cheng (2006) suggests that ski customer behavioural intention refers to the attitude or willingness of a customer to revisit a place after experiencing it, to recommend it to others, or to advertise it positively by word-

of-mouth, while Chen & Tsai (2007) suggest that customer behavioural intention refers to the likelihood of the customer's revisit to a place or his/her intention to do so, and Jin (2013) suggests that customer behavioural intention is the likelihood of the customer's revisiting a ski destination or recommending it to his/her relatives or friends. likelihood of recommending a ski destination to relatives, friends, etc. Liu (2018) argues that ski behavioural intention for potential customers is the idea of whether or not to go skiing after being influenced by external factors that create a desire to go skiing, and for existing customers it is the intention to revisit or recommend a destination after the skiing experience. Jeong-Yeol Park (2019) defines that customer behavioural intention is the word-of-mouth, revisit intention, and recommendation intention that a skier may have in the future based on his or her self-judgment based on the experience and the experience. actions such as evaluation, revisit intention and recommendation intention. Yu (2021) defined customer behavioural intention in the study of rural lodging as the behavioural tendency of customers to stay again and recommend lodging after experiencing and evaluating the elements of lodging products and services.

After reading and summarising the relevant research results of domestic and foreign scholars in the past, it is found that, depending on whether the behaviour occurs or not, early scholars and middle and late scholars have slightly different definitions of behavioural intention and the scenarios of its use. Most foreign scholars and some domestic scholars in the early stage believe that behavioural intention is the likelihood that an individual plans to carry out a specific activity or to occur a specific behaviour, and it is a behavioural or attitudinal tendency before the action occurs. Research on it can make effective speculation on whether people will perform a particular behaviour in the future. Some foreign scholars and most domestic scholars believe that behavioural intention is the tendency and subjective feeling of specific post-purchase behaviours such as re-purchase, recommendation, etc., which are generated by customers after purchasing products and services in the middle and late periods. Most scholars do not clearly distinguish or define the difference between the definition of behavioural intention in the two states of 'before behaviour' and 'after behaviour', and even confuse the use. Only a few scholars divide customers into potential customers and existing customers to distinguish the two states of behavioural intention. In either case, it is possible to predict customers' future behaviour from their current behavioural intentions.

## **2. Ski customer behavior in China**

Yang (2022) found that although China has experienced a new era of economic development from getting richer to getting stronger, the public's ideology has not developed at the same time. The public still lacks the logic that they need to participate in sports through consumption to make their bodies healthier, and most of the consumption of snow and ice sports is still in the stage of curiosity of 'tasting', and has not formed the habit of skiing, and there are data showing that in the new population of skiing, the proportion of beginners and one-time experiencers is as high as 77.4%. Wu (2022) through the study of the development of the Japanese ski market experience found that not only the development of new ski consumers, but also should be more effective maintenance of the existing ski participants, through the enhancement of the existing ski participants in the sense of the experience and customer satisfaction to enhance the re-entry rate of ski customers. The reason behind the difficulty of the sustainable development of China's skiing career is due to the barrenness of the skiing facilities and venues, the shallow awareness of the mass skiing culture, and the lack of professional skiing talents. But the success of the Beijing Winter Olympics, brought the policy dividend and market activity for the development of China's skiing career to bring vitality. In addition to promoting the development of mass skiing in China, the Beijing Winter Olympics also brought new development space for China's ski industry. Compared with other countries, China's ski industry started late and is still in the initial stage of development, so the products

and services on the supply side of China's ski industry are still to be enriched and improved. Wang (2018) pointed out that in addition to the reform of the supply side of the ski industry, it is also necessary to focus on the optimisation and upgrading of the demand side to achieve a dynamic balance in order to promote the sustainable development of the ski industry. Cultivating the main body of the ski market with the policy opportunities under the Winter Olympics and guiding consumption upgrading at the same time are important tasks for the development of the ski industry in China at present. Similarly, Lv & Chen (2017) pointed out in their article that the Beijing Winter Olympics can promote the progress and improvement of skiing products, services and equipment, and at the same time, under the impetus of national policies, the skiing fever will be surged to the tip of the wave. Therefore, we should seize the opportunity of this Winter Olympics in Beijing, combined with the Internet big data technology, through a variety of channels to promote the skiing competition, so that skiing deep into the public's field of vision, and further promote the development of the ski industry. Winter Olympic period also set off a ski tourism boom, however, China's current stage of ski tourism but there is a low rate of conversion of the ski crowd, mass participation is not wide and other problems, the main factors affecting the problem depends on the psychology and willingness of participating ski customers. Wang (2022) investigated the residents of Beijing, the host city of the Winter Olympics, and found that under the influence of the Winter Olympics, the emotional impact of ski destinations, the constraints of skiing trips, and negotiation strategies have a direct impact on the residents' ski tourism behavioural intentions. Under this conclusion, government departments and ski destinations should mobilise their motivation and stimulate their ski touring intentions due to precise marketing during the Winter Olympics boom period to improve the conversion rate of ski touring crowds and guide residents to actively participate, especially those in the Winter Olympics hosting areas.

Through the combing of the above literature it is not difficult to find that after the successful bidding and holding of the Beijing Winter Olympics, the government has actively played its role in introducing a series of policies and systems to promote the development of the skiing business, vigorously publicising the Winter Olympics through the television media, the Internet and other channels to bring skiing into the public's field of vision, and using a variety of marketing methods to stimulate the public's participation in the enthusiasm, which led to the development of skiing in various regions.

## **Conclusion**

In summary, the current participation behaviour of Chinese ski customers is mostly 'experiential' skiing, and the conversion rate of loyal customers is low, for this phenomenon, the following discussion.

In terms of ski resorts, improving the facilities of ski resorts, providing quality services and ensuring safety measures can make customers more willing to participate in skiing more frequently. Ski resorts should pay attention to details, such as providing more comfortable equipment rentals and simplifying the navigation of ski resorts, to ensure an enjoyable customer experience. Ski resorts can also organise regular ski activities and events, training camps or social events to increase customer engagement. In terms of promotion, ski resorts enhance online interaction and strengthen interaction with customers through online platforms such as social media and WeChat apps. Ski resorts can share ski tips, activity previews, event reports and other content through these channels to keep in touch with customers and motivate them to participate in ski related activities online or offline. Finally, although skiing is a seasonal activity, ski resorts can maintain continuous engagement with skiing by creating four-season ski resorts or adding ski-related summer activities so that customers can participate in

skiing not only in the winter, but also in other seasons with ski simulators, rollerblading, and skateboarding.

In terms of government policy support and guidance, the government can introduce policies that target the promotion of skiing, especially among youth groups. For example, it can provide schools with financial support for skiing programmes and encourage them to incorporate snow and ice sports such as skiing into the physical education curriculum so as to cultivate more potential ski enthusiasts. In addition, the government can support the construction and renovation of ski resorts through policy subsidies, especially in areas where ski resources are relatively underdeveloped. Encouraging the opening of more ski resorts reduces the travelling costs of customers and enhances the convenience of skiing. Increase investment and optimisation of transport infrastructure around ski resorts, such as building more convenient motorways, railways and even air routes. Improve hotels, catering and other service facilities around ski resorts to enhance the overall experience of ski customers. The government can also introduce policies to support the development of skiing-related industry chains, such as ski equipment manufacturing, ski training services, event organisation and so on. Provide these industries with policy support such as tax incentives and loan interest subsidies to promote the rapid growth of the entire snow and ice industry, thus motivating more people to participate in skiing. In terms of cultivating skiing talents, strengthen the training of ski coaches and related professionals, provide relevant vocational training and qualification support, and ensure that ski resorts have high-level ski coaches and professionals to provide quality services and guidance to ski customers.

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