Academic Journal of Management and Social Sciences
ISSN: 2958-4396 | Vol. 4, No. 1, 2023

Adopting Flexible Management Strategies to Transform Traditional Street Vendors into Sightseeing Night Markets

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Abstract: Although the problems left by the traditional stall economy have been solved, there are still many loopholes. Stallers need to survive, cities need to manage, and how to better promote the development of the stall economy has become a topic that must be explored. How to achieve a balance between urban construction and maintaining the "human fireworks" has become a difficult problem, so the viewpoint is proposed to develop the traditional street stall economy in the direction of sightseeing night markets. This article uses social interviews to uncover issues related to people's livelihoods, citing literature and charts for argumentation. Based on an understanding of the historical evolution of the night market economy, starting from a demand-oriented and management-oriented perspective, it analyzes the people's welfare brought by the tourism night market in terms of consumption, employment, and culture after achieving the transformation. Finally, it reflects on the existing problems of the tourism night market and applies flexible management thinking to address the existing problems from the perspectives of culture, subject, health, space and propose feasible measures for digitization. By building a sightseeing night market, empowering the service industry with a stall economy, and managing the night market through a people-oriented flexible management strategy, the benefits are significant.

Keywords: Stall; Stall Economy; Sightseeing Night Market; Flexible Management; Social Interviews.

1. Introduction

The stall economy has always had drawbacks such as difficulty in management, potential safety hazards, and susceptibility to traffic congestion, earning it a bad reputation and even being removed from the list of urban construction considerations for a period of time. However, as the most important part of citizens' lives, the possibility the stall economy being absolutely suppressed is extremely low. Building a night market for sightseeing and bundling the service industry with street vendors is not only a way to achieve economic value and urban construction goals, but also an effective measure to manage the street vendor economy. The social equity of public administration aims to promote the shift of political rights and economic welfare towards those who lack political and economic resource support and are in a disadvantaged position in society.[1] Therefore, establishing a tourism market not only meets the needs of urban construction, but also provides more opportunities for vulnerable groups to earn income through their own labor. The shift from traditional stall economy to the tourist market may help urban managers find a balance. From the current situation, there are many existing problems with sightseeing night markets, and flexible management can better assist in building a harmonious night market economy.

2. The Historical Evolution of Night Markets

The situation of night markets originated in the Han Dynasty, rose in the Tang Dynasty, developed in the Song Dynasty, and flourished in the Ming and Qing dynasties. In ancient times, night markets served as a link between the common people and built a huge socio-economic development thread. The improvement of productivity and changes in production methods have led to a disconnect between barter and social development, resulting in class differentiation and the division of scholars, farmers, and businesses, each performing their respective duties. The court established a city to obtain the commercial tax part of the supplementary land tax. Starting from the Tang Dynasty, the square market gradually became a daily gathering place for the common people. With the increase of population, the development of commodity economy and civic culture, the strict square market system to some extent hindered economic development. Therefore, in the Song Dynasty, the square market system broke the double restrictions of time and space, and night markets entered a prosperous period. During the Ming and Qing dynasties, the dense population, smooth transportation, prosperous commerce, and constantly increasing cultural consumption demands of citizens, as well as the tolerance of social policies towards merchants, made night markets truly popular and achieved the peak of feudal society. Although privately formed street vendors have suffered a certain degree of blow in contemporary times, state-owned night markets still receive attention. Since the establishment of the People's Republic of China, based on the judgment of class and economic attributes, mobile vendors have been classified as petty bourgeoisie and semi proletariat, and policies of "utilization, restriction, and transformation" have been adopted. However, in the relevant reports of the People's Daily, it can still be seen that the state advocates for "state-owned night markets".

However, with the deepening of reform and opening up and the acceleration of globalization, urban construction has become an important task, and some big cities have gradually built "business districts" to replace the immature night market economy, which is an inevitable trend of standardized and

refined urban management. In addition, the mobility of street vendors is not conducive to the government's tax revenue, so for a long time, the street market economy has been suppressed. Later, the report of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China pointed out that China's economy has shifted from a stage of high-speed growth to a stage of high-quality development. In terms of expanding domestic demand and stimulating consumption, we have to admit that the prosperity of the night economy can further improve the development level of the service industry and increase the proportion of the service industry in that industry, which is an important driving force to promote economic restructuring and accelerate the transformation of economic development mode.

Table 1. Statistics of "night markets" reported by People's Daily during 1956-19791

Date	Title of the piece
1956.6.1 2nd edition	Rural Night Market
1959.8.14 2nd edition	A lively night market
1960.2.14 6th edition	The Wellsite Night Market
1960.3.3 2nd Edition	Fireside Night Market for Steel
1961.7.6 3rd Edition	Night Market
1961.7.18 3rd edition	Learn the practices of the "night market.
1961.12.15 2nd edition	Hold the night market about time fixed spot to drive to the village set up stalls
1964.1.7 2nd edition	The "Night Market" of Technical Collaboration
1965.5.3 2nd edition	Put more life into rural commercial work
1965.7.15 2nd edition	The "Light Night Market" in the mountains of Southern Anhui

(Credit: Wang Zhengqi)

No matter in ancient or modern times, no matter in what form of ownership, the night economy has always maintained the commercial economy of China for more than two thousand years, and is regarded as a mirror of economic prosperity and development.

3. Find a Balance between Urban Construction and Street Market Economy -- Sightseeing Night Market

3.1. Conflict between Street Market Economy and Urban Construction

The contradiction lies in the conflict between the purpose of mobile street vendors to increase their income by using the flow of people and the purpose of "creating sanitation" and urban construction in urban main roads or urban gathering areas. In order to improve their business income, most of the mobile vendors will choose to sell their stalls in the place where the flow of people gathers, and such a lot is often the "core area" in the city. The "core area" referred to by Friedman in his works generally refers to the city or urban agglomeration area, which has developed industry, high technical level, concentrated capital, dense population and fast economic growth. The motivation of groups engaged in the market economy is to increase income for individual activities. When they enter this economic activity, they have to follow the flow of people due to commercial factors, which brings about the inherent factor of mobile vendors' strong mobility and difficulty in management. The "core area" has become the ideal place for mobile vendors to sell on the street, but in a relatively fixed area, and in the case of strict urban construction requirements, the requirements for sanitation and transportation are contrary to the booths needed by mobile vendors, and because of some stereotypes of the "dirty and bad" market economy, as well as the improper implementation of management measures, mobile vendors have been resisted. As a result, the conflict evolved into a "cat and mouse game" between the urban management and the vendors that lasted for a long time.

3.2. The Way to Resolve the Conflict -- Sightseeing Night Market

3.2.1. Support the Possibility of Establishing Sightseeing Night Markets

(1) Sightseeing night market can meet the cultural needs of citizens

With the change of economic foundation, people not only pursue material satisfaction, but also pay more attention to spiritual pursuit. Sightseeing night markets usually incorporate local cultural elements, such as the Huaiyuan night market in Ningxia, where you can find distinctive Ningxia snacks and artworks such as Helan stone. Relying on culture, the sightseeing night market is no longer only of economic value, but also of great benefit to cultural inheritance and dissemination. The sightseeing night market can not only create a fireworks atmosphere for citizens, but also bring sensory satisfaction in shopping. According to statistics, 60% of consumption in our country occurs at night,[2] which shows the strong demand for consumption at night.

(2) Sightseeing night markets are conducive to standardized management

Sightseeing night markets allow itinerant vendors to settle down, which goes against their mobile nature, but can regulate the market order. Street selling varies greatly in size, time, place, and pay. It also varies in the type of labor force, goods, and services. When street vendors gather in large numbers on a street, the street takes on many of the characteristics of a market and may be called a "street market." [3] When the same type of people gathers to form a specific group, it will lead to more difficult management, and sometimes lead to traffic congestion, occupy the road business situation. What's more, the vendors move among different consumers, so the vendors do not pay much attention to the quality and safety of the products, but pay more attention to how to sell the products. Most of the goods sold by the stall economy are low in price, so when consumers find the problem of the goods, they cannot find the original vendors, but also may choose to give up their rights because of the low price. After obtaining a license and meeting the standards, it seems to be a layer of constraint, but it is actually a double guarantee: mobile vendors cannot choose the same area as before, which can not only give consumers the way to protect their rights, but also regulate the health and safety of goods, and the management procedure is also a layer of guarantee for the safety of vendors' stalls.

3.2.2. The People's Well-Being Brought by the Sightseeing Night Market

(1) Bring "active consumers"

The sightseeing night market is the best place for leisure and entertainment in the eyes of the public, and the

sightseeing night market is usually located in the "core area" of the city. At the same time, it has the support and publicity influence of the local government, which brings a steady stream of consumers in the region, so it also meets the needs of the mobile vendors for the flow of people, which does not need to actively find consumers. And do not need to hide in the "core area".

(2) Promote product diversification

The goods sold by the mobile vendors on the street have many self-made handicrafts, which are created by the vendors themselves and are non-standardized products. The sale of diversified products is conducive to promoting the diversification of night market commodities, no longer a single sale of snacks, non-staple food, but to provide more consumer choices. Personalized handicrafts or some small objects can also create new consumption hotspots and stimulate consumption potential to a certain extent.

(3) Promote employment

The size of the working-age population between 15 and 64 years old in China began to grow negatively and decline year by year after reaching a peak of 1.006 billion people in 2011. In 2019, it has dropped to 989 million people. According to the seventh census data, it will further drop to 968 million people in 2020, and the size of the working-age population will continue to shrink. The working population is decreasing, the problem of population aging is aggravating, and the gap of demographic dividend has increased the burden of social pension to a certain extent, while many groups belonging to the non-working age population are still able to afford their own lives but are shut out of the labor market, so outside the market, the market economy provides them with another choice. Entering the sightseeing night market also provides security for the elderly. Through an interview with an old man selling fruit at a sightseeing night market in Huaiyuan, Ningxia, she said: "Now many places do not hire people of our age, people are too old to work, people want young people, and we are not educated, we can make money by setting up a stall. In the past, when we set up a stall on the roadside, we always had to avoid the chengguan. Now, in the night market, the government also gives us subsidies, and it is easy to do small business." It can be seen that the night market gives some elderly people who are still able the opportunity to reduce the burden of old-age care to a certain extent.

It can be found from the survey that most of the groups engaged in the market economy at the beginning are farmers, workers, unemployed, or some people from the post-90s and post-00s who start businesses and work part-time. Under the pressure of the job market, not everyone can become a high-level talent, the street market economy gives them a chance of life, and brings them a stable income after joining the sightseeing night market. Through an interview with a young man selling drinks in Huaiyuan sightseeing night market in Ningxia, he said: "Before there was no stall, very early in the study, and then dropped out of school to do farm work in his hometown, slowly he also set up a stall, in the middle of the class, he read less books, there is no craft, I feel that it is more suitable to do according to their own ideas, but also more comfortable. But before the situation of their own stall is good and bad, sometimes they have to go to work again, since the night market in their own rented a stall after the situation is much better, now do not need to go out part-time, every day I regularly fixed in my stall to sell things can cover our family's daily expenses."

Sightseeing night markets have provided jobs for millions of ordinary people, provided opportunities for many groups who are willing to start their own businesses, injected vitality into the market economy, and become an important factor in promoting economic development.

(4) Promote night cultural and tourism consumption

As mentioned above, "the prosperity of the night economy can further improve the development level of the service industry and increase the proportion of the service industry in the industry, which is an important driving force to promote economic restructuring and accelerate the transformation of economic development mode."

With the advancement of urbanization, the pace of urban work and life has accelerated, and the night after work has become an important time for people to relax and socialize. At the same time, the function of cities has gradually shifted from production to consumption, and the consumption demand for leisure, tourism, shopping, entertainment, culture, sports, catering and other services has accelerated, and the night economy has gradually developed and grown.[4] Under this premise, with the development of cultural construction, more and more attention has been paid to the integration of culture in all aspects. Sightseeing night markets usually integrate elements of local culture. For example, the Xishuangbanna Starlight Night Market is centered on Dai culture. Distinctive Dai jewelry, clothing, snacks and so on can be seen everywhere in the night market.

Night markets in tourist cities add value through folk culture, and night markets in cities are equally valuable. The night market in the city relies on the business district to form the business district night market, which reflects the life and culture of the citizens. More importantly, there is no conflict between the night market and the surrounding shops: the product price of the night market in the business district is lower than that in the business district, and the consumer masses are not high-end consumers; Shops in the business circle, commodity prices are more expensive, for consumers who can accept higher prices. The operation between the two does not conflict, and even can transmit the flow of people to each other, and its economic value has been expanded.

4. Promote the Full Development of Sightseeing Night Markets

4.1. Apply Flexible Management Thinking to Solve Problems

Flexible management, is relative to rigid management proposed, different from rigid management to use rules and regulations to manage, flexible management is the use of non-coercive ways to gradually guide, stimulate the masses internal self-restraint, management ability. Flexible management is mainly reflected in the management theory, so this paper uses the nature of flexible management to think.

In essence, flexible management is a human-centered humanized management mode, which emphasizes respect, initiative, and human subjective initiative. In the decades-long "cat and mouse game" between street vendors and urban management, its management mode is to take care of oneself and lose others, which causes a lot of personal injuries and sharp contradictions. If street vendors want to live and the city needs to manage them, they should not take care of themselves or others. Adopting a flexible management strategy for governance can not only deal with urban governance, resolve the communication gap between vendors and the city, but also take into account the vendors' own rights

and interests to help them better integrate into the city.

4.2. Analyze the Feasible Measures to Promote the Development of Sightseeing Night Markets

Taking the four typical night markets as an example, sightseeing night markets represent different urban cultures. "Each has its own beauty and shares beauty". Seeking common ground while reserving differences is conducive to attracting consumers. Because the sightseeing night market is usually built in the "core area", it needs reasonable site planning to effectively avoid the phenomenon of traffic jams, and it also needs to pay attention to the reasonable utilization of limited space. In the development process of the sightseeing night market, it is necessary to take strong regulatory measures to effectively maintain the long-term stability of the night market. Moreover, only by co-governance of multiple subjects can the market be stable and long-term.

4.2.1. Integrating Cultural Elements to Build Cultural Travel Brand

At present, there is a common phenomenon in the night market built in China -- slightly convergence, the main functions of multiple night markets are concentrated in eating and drinking level, and there are also people to reflect that the snacks sold in the night market in many places are the same, which will make the night market economy become boring and lose its unique role.

In creating the night market, screening should be carried out to avoid homogenization competition between products. The long-term development of the sightseeing night market lies not only in its absorption of social mobile vendors, not only in the economic value it creates, but also in the microcosm of a city's civic life. The night market economy of each city should also dig the local culture with ingenuity, combine the traditional culture and modern culture creatively and develop innovatively, which is the internal reason for the long-term development of the sightseeing night market. Once again take Huaiyuan sightseeing night in Ningxia as an example, the night market integrates intangible cultural elements, the "folk area" of Ningxia sightseeing night market, the decoration style is integrated into the different cultural symbols of Ningxia Yinchuan, Shizuishan, Wuzhong, Guyuan, Zhongwei 5 cities, with its decoration characteristics zoning layout, so that the customers and tourists entering the sightseeing night market enjoy the food at the same time, Understand the local folk culture and urban style of different places in Ningxia. Its "fashion area", products are mostly for the "80", "90" and "00" sales, a collection of personalized cultural and creative products, intangible cultural heritage products, homemade food and the country, Yinchuan local popular young people's favorite original characteristic brand snacks. [5] As a Hui autonomous region, Huaiyuan Sightseeing Night Market in Ningxia makes full use of the characteristics of ethnic folklore. During festival celebrations, the night market will also stage related folk performances. Another example is Xishuangbanna Starlight Night Market, which focuses on Dai culture and embodies national characteristics around Dai traditional customs. The use of oil-paper umbrella as a booth design adds uniqueness to the night market.

4.2.2. Multi-subject Co-Governance to Strengthen Supervision

Most of the sightseeing night markets have something in common -- single management subject. The manager of sightseeing night market is single, and when the night market has problems, it cannot fully mobilize the enthusiasm of the vendors to cooperate, and it is difficult to stimulate the autonomy of the vendors' self-management, which lays hidden dangers for the management of the night market.

At the beginning of the development of management rules, cannot be too relaxed, the government should carry out the initial intervention, and then relax the rights a little bit, so that the merchants form the idea of autonomy. The initial management of the night market should improve the existing management rules and regulations, get rid of the original strict management requirements, extend the adaptive management rules, and use guidance instead of control principles. After the market economy develops steadily, deregulation can encourage the people to form a special mediation body, similar to the Autonomous Council of Taiwan, China, which can provide guidance for the operation of the night market. No matter what the form of management is, there should be a clear guideline for the regular inspection of raw materials, business hours, health, transportation, and unified management of stalls, so as not to allow stalls too much freedom.[6] In the follow-up, management should also be strengthened according to the specific situation, and orderly management can not only stay at the beginning stage.

4.2.3. Building a Distribution Center to Improve the Environment of the Night Market

At night, the street vendors gather, the flow of people increases, the constant flow of people in the fixed area brings a lot of garbage generated after eating, the mobility of street vendors often causes health and environmental problems when the street vendors gather. In addition, for the sightseeing night market built in the center of the city, it will inevitably cause a certain pressure on the urban traffic.

In order to meet the urban spatial planning and road traffic problems, not all streets need to set up distribution centers, they should be set up centrally, that is, to establish traffic distribution, logistics distribution and garbage distribution sites at the setting points of the night market. In order to effectively deal with health problems, multiple public garbage cans can be placed near the urban roads that are a certain distance from the night market. Just as Henan Kaifeng night market in the night market management regulations will stipulate the maintenance methods of night market hygiene, and arrange the corresponding personnel for command and management work, because of the gathering of a certain pressure to reduce as much as possible.

4.2.4. Scientifically Plan the Site and Grasp the Spatial Layout

Mobile vendors lack management and display their products recklessly, resulting in many phenomena similar to road occupation, affecting city appearance, and disrupting traffic order. Night economy is the integration of night time and urban space, which is an important field for expanding urban development time and space, enhancing urban charm and influence. So, the key to planning a sightseeing night market is to plan the venue reasonably. Taking Ningxia Huaiyuan Sightseeing Night Market as an example For example, the night market is divided into two parts: one part is above ground and the other part is underground, which is connected by an overpass as a transportation link to

effectively utilize the space. The above ground part is built along the main transportation route and relies on the shopping mall. The underground part is set up around the shopping mall, with multiple entrances added, which can expand the night market land without affecting normal traffic.

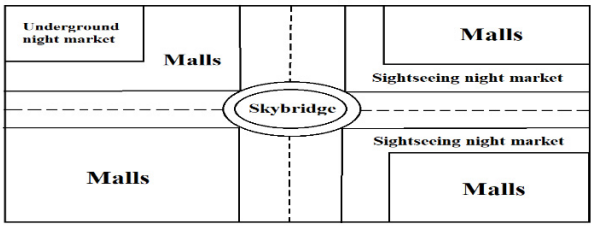


Fig 1. Spatial distribution of the night market in Huaiyuan, Ningxia

4.2.5. Disseminating Night Market Culture through Digital Empowerment

The research on the digital evolution of street market economy generally believes that "Internet + street market economy" is the future development trend. For example, Zhang Jiajia et al. (2021) believe that letting the stall economy catch the express train of digital economy and creating smart new stalls will become a new trend of future development. The relaxation of the stall economy is not to return to the old road of the stall economy, but to innovate in forms and methods, so the application of digitalization can help the traditional stall economy to achieve transformation and upgrading, and optimize the existing problems.

Nowadays, online platforms such as Tiktok, Kuaishou and XiaoHongshu have been widely known, and the way of live streaming and bringing goods is also widely used. As for the problem of insufficient promotion and popularization of the traditional stall economy, stall operators can adopt the new model of "new stall + short video + live broadcast" to improve it, so as to expand publicity, which can not only increase offline customers, but also increase the online traffic. Relevant departments should also carry out Internet knowledge education and popularization activities in the whole society to improve the media literacy of the public, so as to narrow the digital divide in the digitally-empowered market economy.[7]

5. Conclusion

The market economy is now an indispensable part of the market economy, and its importance is becoming increasingly prominent. As an economic form that has not been completely defeated for a long time, the night market has continued vitality. When it is transformed and upgraded from the individual form of floating stalls to the group gathering form of sightseeing night market, it will maximize the value. There is no absolute release, there is no absolute ban, the establishment of sightseeing night market and the use of humanized management is the feasible way. Because they represent the masses and people's livelihood, they should also be included in the consideration of urban construction. From the bottom up, the means of governance should be understood; From the top down, we should understand people's feelings and opinions.

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