

**CHINA-ASEAN EXPO EVALUATION AND MANAGEMENT  
CAPABILITY IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY**



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**A Dissertation Submitted in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of  
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CAPABILITY IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY**

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Fulfillment of Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Management).

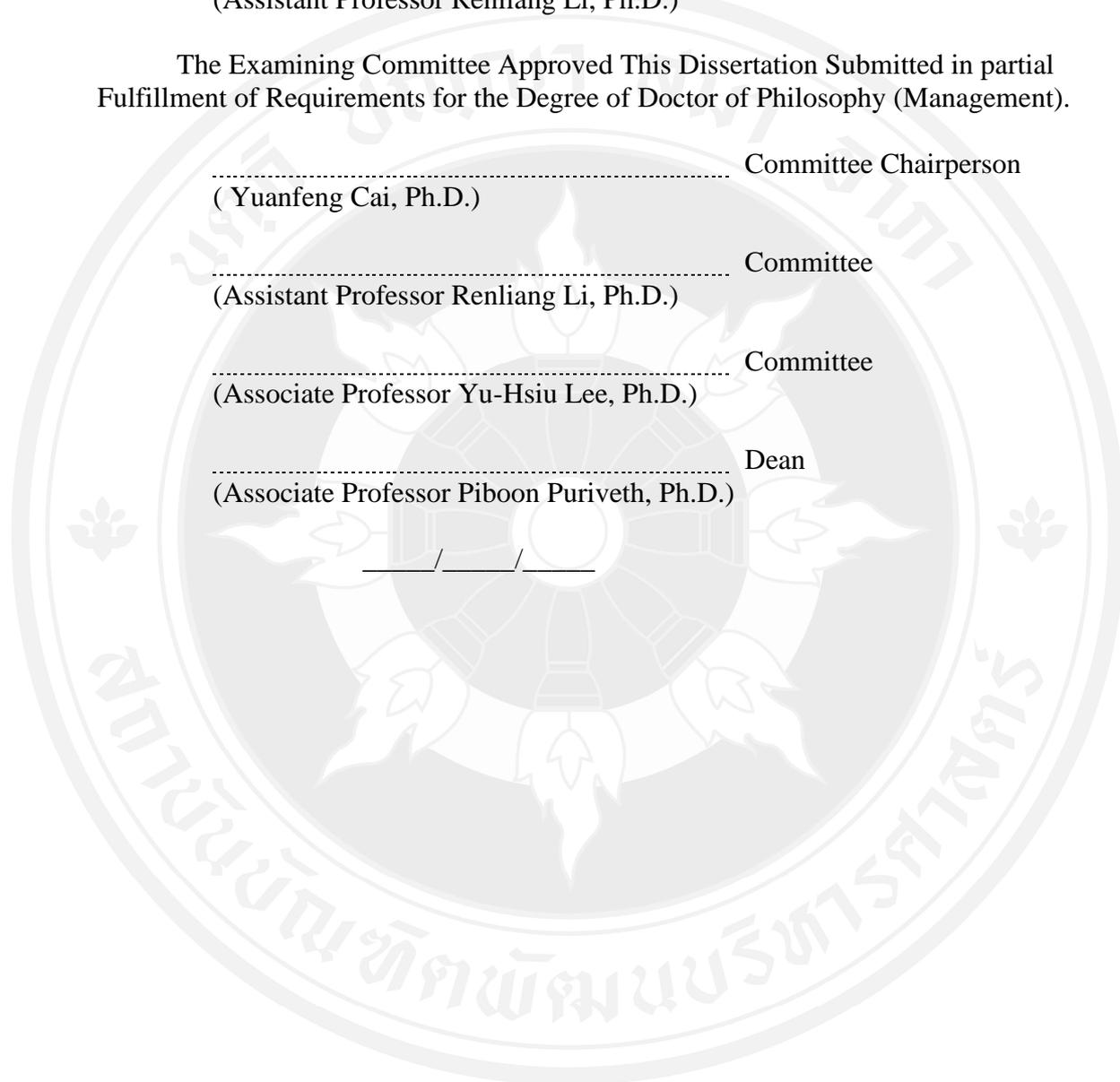
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## ABSTRACT

<b>Title of Dissertation</b>	CHINA-ASEAN EXPO EVALUATION AND MANAGEMENT CAPABILITY IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY
<b>Author</b>	He Xue
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China - ASEAN Expo is the only national class exhibition in China that has the functions of conference, forum and exhibition at the same time. It not only has the role of a general exhibition, but also has a major political, economic, social and diplomatic mission. Although the Expo has been successfully held for 15 years, it is still to be explored whether it can continue to be held successfully and form the China-ASEAN Expo model to be promoted as a model of exhibition, so as to improve the overall level and influence of China's exhibition industry and bring real benefits to the exhibition host cities and exhibitors.

The objectives of this study are to 1) identify the elements of China-ASEAN Expo evaluation, 2) assess the context, input, process and products/results of China-ASEAN Expo, and 3) propose strategies to improve the management capability of China-ASEAN Expo. Qualitative method is used in this study. Based on the CIPP evaluation theory, we obtain primary data by conducting in-depth interviews with a total of 24 interviewees, including organizers, exhibitors, local residents and research scholars. In addition, the literature review method is used to review existing literature, collect and organize relevant official documents and other secondary data. The results of this study show that:

1) By reviewing the extant literature, 20 key evaluation elements and 77 evaluation content points of the China-ASEAN Expo were elicited.

2) The results of the context evaluation show that the China-ASEAN Expo has the reasonableness and necessity to be held at the right time, whether in terms of China's national development strategy, China-ASEAN regional economic

integration, regional economic development imbalance or the need for business opportunity development. The input evaluation results show that the central government and local governments provide human, material and financial support as well as strong organizational support to the China-ASEAN Expo, which comprehensively promotes the continuous upgrading and healthy development of the China-ASEAN Expo and plays an increasing role in the construction of the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area. The results of process evaluation show that with the increase in the number of China - ASEAN Expo held and the accumulation of experience in running the exhibition, the exhibition service and management capabilities in terms of management standards, operation procedures, emergency plans, event records and program rectification have been continuously improved, and the scale and effectiveness of holding the event have been expanded. The product/result evaluation shows that the economic impact, management level, customer satisfaction, comprehensive benefits and target comparison have all reached the expected goals, providing new opportunities for China-ASEAN shared cooperation and development continuously. Additionally, it is also found that there is still much room for improvement and worth exploring in terms of talent training, exhibition scale, construction of standardization, and international influence of China - ASEAN Expo.

3) This study proposes corresponding strategies to improve the management capacity of the China-ASEAN Expo, including: maintaining and improving the strategic position of the Expo; improving the level of social public services and the spiritual civilization of the city; improving the quality and expanding the scale of the Expo; strengthening the construction of the Expo management talent team; broadening the financing channels to ensure the financial investment of the Expo; strengthening the organization and management mode of the Expo; optimizing various management standards ; strengthen the event record and emergency response system; enhance the brand image of the Expo; establish outstanding corporate role models; promote the incubation of scientific and technological achievements and technology transfer of exhibitors.



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The completion of my doctoral dissertation signifies that my doctoral career will come to an end, but I know that this is not the end of my academic career, but a starting point of a higher level. During my doctoral studies, I have learned that I should be able to work hard in academic research and learn self-control, self-assessment, self-examination and self-reflection. I hope that when I feel at a loss again in the future, I will look back on the experience of studying for my PhD and laugh it off, not forgetting the original intention, sharpening my focus and coming back as the same young man.

He Xue

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Research Background and Research Gap

#### 1.1.1 MICE Industry Promotes Economic Development and Trade Exchanges

The exhibition industry is called "the three smoke-free industries in the world" together with tourism and real estate (Meng, 2008). In today's rapid development of economic globalization and increasingly frequent international interactions, exhibition, as an important activity to promote economic development and trade exchanges, has received more and more attention from countries all over the world, and the economic effect brought by exhibition industry to the host city is very significant. According to X. X. Liu (2012), the exhibition industry can pull the development of logistics, tourism, catering, hotel, real estate, advertising, communication, urban construction and other related industries, and it is generally believed internationally that the promotion effect of the exhibition industry on economic development is 1:9 through quantification (Zou & Wang, 2003), and many countries and regions have made efforts to develop their own exhibition industry, and many industries have their own exhibition industry.

European exhibition economy has the strongest overall strength and the largest scale in the international arena, and Germany, Italy, France and Britain have all become world-class exhibition industry powers (Jing, 1999). The first exhibition in the world was held in London, England in 1851, which is the beginning of modern world exhibition. As Europe has a long history of market economy development and a developed market economy, it brings the largest exhibition scale and the strongest overall strength to the European exhibition economy. Europe has the largest exhibition halls in the world, and most of the modern service industries of European

exhibitions are strong and internationalized to a high degree. In terms of internationalization level, exhibition scale, number of exhibitors, number of visitors, service quality and other indicators, the European exhibition industry ranks among the world leaders (L. J. Yang, 2019).

In the 18th century, the exhibition industry emerged in America, and the development level of North American exhibition, which is represented by the exhibition industry in the United States and Canada, is second only to that of Europe. The annual meeting held by some professional associations is the initial manifestation of North American exhibition, mainly for displaying enterprise image and releasing industrial information, and after that, it has rapidly developed into the stage of world exhibition industry by virtue of its broad demand of North American market and economic strength, and the performance of exhibition economy is quite outstanding. Although the exhibition industry in America started later than that in Europe, the exhibition industry in America has developed rapidly. The prominent features of North American exhibition economy are: firstly, the exhibition market has huge capacity, and the international conference and international exhibition industry has the advantage of scale. Secondly, the development speed of exhibition economy is fast, and the development form of exhibition industry is diverse and flexible. Third, the exhibition industry is highly internationalized, and the exhibition industry has reached the world's top level (L. J. Yang, 2019).

With the rapid development of China's economy, the exhibition industry has also been developing rapidly in China. From the successful holding of Kunming World Horticultural Expo in 1999 to the successful holding of Shanghai World Expo in 2010, China has been recognized worldwide for its level of hosting and influence on conventions and exhibitions. The number of conventions and exhibitions held in China has increased sharply, forming a convention and exhibition industry belt centered on famous Chinese cities such as Shanghai, Beijing, Guangzhou and Tianjin, and the convention and exhibition industry has become a beautiful name card of the cities and has certain influence (X. X. Liu, 2012).

For exhibitors, participating in exhibition activities to market their corporate brand image and products to get more orders has become the most direct and effective marketing method for modern enterprises. Participation in influential exhibitions has a significant impact on the development of exhibitors.

### **1.1.2 The Importance of China - ASEAN Expo (CAEXPO)**

CAEXPO is an international economic and trade exchange conference co-hosted by the Ministry of Commerce of China, the economic and trade authorities of 10 countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the ASEAN Secretariat, and organized by the People's Government of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region of China. Since 2004, it has been held once a year at the Nanning International Convention and Exhibition Center in the capital of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. Up to 2018, the Expo has been held 15 times. Nanning City has become the permanent host city of CAEXPO. This is a unique exhibition, with "combination of import and export", "combination of investment and capital attraction", "combination of commodity trade and service trade", "combination of exhibition and conference", "combination of exhibition and conference", "combination of economic and trade and diplomacy", "combination of economic and trade activities and cultural exchange" and other 6 major features, and the session has the function of both conference and exhibition.

In 2014, the Chinese state identified the CAEXPO as "a key foreign-related forum and exhibition with special international influence" and "a key foreign-related forum and exhibition held at the national level", and it became one of the three national first-class exhibitions along with BoAo Forum for Asia and Summer Davos Forum (Qin, 2017). The BoAo Forum for Asia (BFA) was established in 2000 and is headquartered on Hainan Island, China, with 29 co-sponsoring countries. The Forum was originally established to promote economic integration in Asia. The events held during the main sessions are expressed in the form of conferences and forums (P. Yang, 2020). The "Summer Davos Forum" was established in 2007 in Dalian, China, at the initiative of WEF President Schwab and then Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, as the "WEF-New Leaders Annual Meeting", with the aim of providing a platform for "global growth companies" to jointly plan their future business vision and to engage

in dialogue with the world's top 1000 companies and national and regional governments. It is also known as the "Summer Davos Forum" because it complements the annual World Economic Forum held in Davos, Switzerland at the beginning of each year (C. C. Zhong et al., 2010). Dalian and Tianjin are the designated cities to host the annual summer Davos meetings, which are held alternately by the two cities. The events held during the main session are expressed in the form of conferences and forums.

To sum up, CAEXPO is a unique exhibition with special international influence. It is a key foreign-related forum and exhibition held at the national level. It is one of the three first-class exhibitions in China and the only national first-class exhibition that has the functions of conference, forum and exhibition at the same time.

### **1.1.3 The Role and Mission of CAEXPO**

In November 2002, at the sixth China-ASEAN (10+1) Leaders' Meeting held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, then Chinese Premier Zhu, Rongji and the leaders of ten ASEAN countries signed the Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation between China and ASEAN, officially launching the process of establishing a China-ASEAN free trade area (W. R. Huang, 2019). This process requires the establishment of a platform to implement concrete measures, and the "China-ASEAN Expo" is the platform that emerged.

In October 2003, at the 7th China-ASEAN (10+1) Leaders' Summit in Bali, the then Chinese Premier Wen, Jiabao, who attended the meeting, initiated that "in order to promote cooperation between the business communities of both sides, China proposes to hold the CAEXPO in Nanning, China, every year starting from 2004." This initiative was positively responded by the leaders of the participating countries, and the CAEXPO was officially started in November 2004 as an international economic and trade event co-hosted by the governmental economic and trade authorities of China and 10 ASEAN countries and the ASEAN Secretariat (S. Z. Li, 2003). By 2018, it has been successfully held for 15 sessions, and Nanning has become the permanent venue of the CAEXPO.

"To consolidate and enhance the CAEXPO open platform, we should innovate regional cooperation mechanisms, form high-level dialogue platforms with distinctive themes and features as well as professional cooperation platforms, and smooth the 'Nanning Channel'." This was the comment of Chinese President Xi, Jinping on the Expo during his inspection in Guangxi in April 2017 (S. L. Sun, 2018). Over the past 15 years of its success, the Expo has played an increasingly important role in China-ASEAN cooperation and cooperation between China and ASEAN and extra-regional economies, and is an important platform for gathering the consensus of various partners, closely surrounding national development strategies, implementing the construction of the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area, promoting multi-disciplinary cooperation, and integrating into the global value chain.

In 2017, the bilateral trade volume between China and ASEAN was US\$514.82 billion, an increase of nearly seven times compared to the bilateral trade volume of US\$78.252 billion in 2003 before the CAEXPO was held (P. W. Liu, 2019). Currently, China continues to maintain its position as ASEAN's top trading partner, and ASEAN has become China's third largest trading partner, fourth largest export market, and second largest source of imports (Han, 2018, December 23). The Expo is also open to the world, inviting companies from countries (regions) outside the China-ASEAN region to participate in each Expo. The Expo has also set up a special "Belt and Road" exhibition area to expand from serving the "10+1" to serving the "10+6" and "Belt and Road ". It also promotes exchanges and cooperation between China-ASEAN and other countries along the Belt and Road, creating a vast market and huge business opportunities beyond 11 countries (C. Y. Zhong & Zhou, 2013).

As a service platform for the upgrading and development of the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area, a public platform for multi-disciplinary exchanges between China and ASEAN Community of Destiny, and a core platform for cooperation on the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, the CAEXPO not only has the role of a general exhibition, it also has a major political, economic, social, and diplomatic mission.

#### **1.1.4 Research Gap**

Although the CAEXPO has been held for 15 years, its performance has not been well investigated. Thus, it is necessary to conduct a comprehensive and systematic evaluation on the background, input, process management and results of the Expo, in order to improve the overall performance and influence of China's exhibition industry and bring real benefits to the exhibition host cities and exhibitors.

Based on the literature review of CAEXPO, we identified five key themes, which include research on the sustainable development of CAEXPO; the socio-economic impact of CAEXPO on Guangxi; the impact of CAEXPO on Guangxi and sub-regional cooperation; the management of CAEXPO and the publicity of CAEXPO. It can be seen that although a small amount of prior research has evaluated CAEXPO from single perspective, no comprehensive and systematic evaluation of CAEXPO has been conducted yet so far. For instance, (X. X. Liu, 2012) focused only on customer satisfaction towards the Expo. W. Wang and Yin (2020) evaluated only for the efficiency of the resource allocation for the Expo. S. Y. Chen (2019) assessed only for service of peripheral diplomacy. Put together, these studies only provide very limited implications to understand the overall performance of the CAEXPO.

Given that prior work has not evaluated CAEXPO in a comprehensive and systematic manner, it is impossible to propose corresponding management improvement strategies in a targeted manner. Accordingly, this study addresses following research gaps to fill:

- 1) A theory is needed to guide the evaluation of CAEXPO.
- 2) The elements used to evaluate the CAEXPO should be identified.
- 3) Improvement strategies in response to the evaluation results should be developed.

## **1.2 Significance of the Study**

### **1.2.1 Broadening the Scope of Application of CIPP Theory**

The CIPP evaluation theory, which was generally applied to the field of education assessment in the past, is now employed in various fields of economic management. This study adopts it to the field of exhibition management for the first

time, which broadens the scope of application and enriches the theoretical basis of exhibition assessment.

### **1.2.2 Identifying Underlying Evaluation Elements of the CAEXPO**

MICE evaluation work is an important tool for modern MICE management (W. M. Jin & Luo, 2012). According to Y. Yu (2021), MICE evaluation can test whether MICE activities have achieved the objectives of the organizers and satisfied the needs of various stakeholders, and then determine the value of MICE activities. MICE evaluation allows MICE managers to think about how to solve and improve the problems that have occurred in the process of summarizing experience. Therefore, MICE evaluation is an important way to improve its performance and boost the high-quality development of MICE industry. Meanwhile, MICE evaluation can also lead to sustainable development of MICE industry and thus polish the MICE brand.

At present, the following problems exist in China's MICE evaluation: firstly, the evaluation index is relatively single, which is not conducive to the accurate evaluation of project performance; secondly, the index definition is relatively vague, which is not conducive to the improvement of exhibition quality (D. He & Li, 2019). Y. Yang (2018) argues that the introduction of foreign assessment standards only partially meets the national conditions of China, and in addition, the brand status of exhibitions cannot be replaced by assessment and certification. The key issue of MICE assessment in China is how to identify underlying assessment indicators or elements.

Based on CIPP theory and a comprehensive review of existing literature, this study identified salient assessment elements of CAEXPO, and conducted a comprehensive evaluation on CAEXPO. Our results provide important managerial implications for Expo decision makers.

### **1.2.3 Provide Guidance for Improving the Management Capability of China's Exhibition Industry**

As the only national exhibition with convention, forum and exhibition functions, CAEXPO has been successfully held for 15 sessions until 2018. This long history is worthy of academic research; worthy of exhibition industry organizers to

summarize their experiences and worthy of exhibition industry practitioners to learn from and refer to. This study conducted a systematic and comprehensive evaluation of CAEXPO, assessing its background, input, process management and results, and providing strategic suggestions for improving its management capability. The study is beneficial to the CAEXPO managers, and also provides guidelines for China's exhibition industry to improve its management capability, thus promoting the sustainable development of China's exhibition industry.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

Based on a comprehensive literature review on CAEXPO and existing research gaps. This study aims to address the following research questions:

1.3.1 How to identify the underlying evaluation elements of CAEXPO based on CIPP theory?

1.3.2 How to evaluate the performance of CAEXPO?

1) What is the background of the CAEXPO? Is the context in which the CAEXPO held beneficial to the holding of the CAEXPO? Is there importance and rationale for holding the CAEXPO?

2) What capabilities and resources does the CAEXPO project have? How to choose the appropriate implementation plan? Is it feasible and economical to host the CAEXPO?

3) What are the weaknesses in the management of the CAEXPO process? What suggestions and recommendations can be given to the organizer for improvement? Is there a scientific and efficient management of the whole process?

4) Based on a comprehensive analysis on the context, input, process and product evaluations, how effective and impactful was the CAEXPO? What judgment can be provided to decision makers when comparing expected and unintended results?

1.3.3 How to improve the management capability of CAEXPO?

## **1.4 Research Objectives**

1.4.1 To identify the underlying evaluation elements of the CAEXPO

1.4.2 To evaluate the overall performance of CAEXPO

1) To understand the importance and rationality of the CAEXPO by evaluating its context

2) To examine the feasibility and economic impact of the CAEXPO by evaluating its inputs on various capabilities and resources

3) To adjust and improve the implementation process of CAEXPO by evaluating its process management

4) To provide a basis for management improvement for decision makers by evaluating the results and effectiveness of CAEXPO

1.4.3 To develop appropriate strategies to improve the management capability of CAEXPO

## **1.5 Scope of the Study**

### **1.5.1 Content Scope**

The subject area of this study is the management of exhibition economy in the category of management. The unit of analysis is the CAEXPO, which has been held for 15 times in China. As the only national exhibition with the functions of convention, forum and exhibition, the Expo is a national class exhibition.

This study evaluates the context, inputs, process, and output results of the CAEXPO and proposes strategies for management capability improvement based on the assessment results.

### **1.5.2 Time Scope**

2004-2018, 15 years in total

### **1.5.3 Geographical Scope**

Nanning City located in Guangxi province of China has a population of 7,708,223 at the end of 2018. According to the Nanning Statistical Yearbook - 2019 published by the Nanning Statistical Bureau, which is edited by the Nanning Statistical Bureau, the city has a total area of 22,100 square kilometers, and now has seven urban areas and five counties with three national development zones (Propaganda Department of the CPC Nanning Municipal Committee, 2018).

## **1.6 Operational Definitions**

### **1.6.1 MICE.....**

It refers to the massive gathering of people, logistics, information and capital flows from all works in a specific time and space to carry out some kind of purposeful activities around a specific theme, including various types of conferences, exhibitions, tourism and festivals, and sometimes some special activities (H. L. Zhang & Wang, 2011).

### **1.6.2 Evaluation of Exhibition Industry**

It refers to the investigation, evidence collection, analysis and evaluation of the operation status, actual effect and reflection of all parties of an exhibition project, so that objective comparison can be made between exhibition projects or between exhibition events of the same topic, as well as scientific comments (Z. Y. Chen, 2009).

### **1.6.3 China - ASEAN Expo**

It was established in 2004, the organizer is China, the economic and trade authorities of the governments of 10 ASEAN countries and the ASEAN Secretariat, the international economic and trade event hosted by the government of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, and the permanent host city of China - ASEAN Expo is Nanning, Guangxi, China.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter reviews the relevant literature on the historical development of the exhibition industry and the evaluation of the exhibition industry. In the process of sorting out the literature on the evaluation of CAEXPO and management capability enhancement strategies, the CIPP evaluation theoretical model is introduced and propose corresponding management capacity enhancement strategies.

Stakeholder theory was used to make the selection of interviewees for the study. The CIPP evaluation theory, the theoretical literature related to the exhibition industry and the theoretical literature related to the CAEXPO were used as the basis for the study to complete the research process. Each of these aspects is described below.

#### **2.1 The Conference and Exhibition Industry**

##### **2.1.1 Overview of the Conference and Exhibition Industry**

With a long history, the definition of exhibition activities has not been unified in academic circles. The current definition of the concept of exhibition in foreign academic circles mainly includes three schools, namely American school, European school and comprehensive school (C. K. Shi, 2006). The European school generally summarizes exhibition as C&E (Convention and Exposition) or M&E (Meeting and Exposition), and refers to conference and exhibition collectively as exhibition, which is a relatively narrow definition. The American school refers to exhibition as MICE, that is, Meeting, Incentive Tour, Convention, Exhibition or Exposition. Convention, Exhibition or Exposition is the general term of the four parts. The Comprehensive School is built on the foundation of the American School, and gradually evolves MICE into MICEE, that is, adding Event to MICE (H. D. Ge, 2017). At present, the

definition of comprehensive school is gradually recognized by the academic circles and has become the standard caliber of international statistics and the classification standard of professional exhibition industry associations.

According to Zeng and Zhang (2007), there are mainly three typical definitions of the meaning of exhibition in China, the first of which is "connotation-extension type", for example, S. P. Liu and Liang (2004) proposed that "exhibition is the abbreviation of collective activities such as conference, exhibition, exhibit and sell, sports, etc., it refers to the mass social activities formed by many people together in a certain geographical space, regularly or irregularly, systematically or non-systematically, to transmit and exchange information." The second "connotation characteristic type", as Xiang (2005) believes, "Exhibition is a collective and comprehensive activity with the pursuit of economic benefits as the main purpose, using enterprise operation to provide social services, and taking verbal exchange of information or several kinds of display items as the main way". This definition is recognized by more scholars and touches on some of the connotative qualities of exhibition. The third one is "extensively defined", for example, Y. Ma and Xiao (2004) divide exhibition into narrowly defined exhibition and broadly defined exhibition, i.e. C&E or M&E and MICE, and extend the E in MICE from the original exhibition to event, and then extend the extensibility of broadly defined exhibition to various types of professional conferences, exhibitions and fairs, incentive travel and various events.

Although there is no consensus on the definition of MICE at home and abroad, the present study adopts the viewpoint of H. L. Zhang and Wang (2011), which defines exhibition as "a kind of purposeful activity carried out around a specific theme within a specific time and space, where people, logistics, information and capital flows from all over the world gather in large numbers". It includes all types of conferences, exhibitions, MICE tourism and festivals, and sometimes also some special events.

The MICE industry is the sum of interconnected, interactive and mutually influential related enterprises caused by the MICE economic movement, and is an organic part of the modern economic system. It is a comprehensive industry with the organization and hosting of exhibitions, conferences, MICE tourism and festivals as

its center, supported by perfect infrastructure and supporting services, and jointly constituted by related enterprises.

Through the holding of various exhibitions or conferences, a large number of exhibitors, traders and visitors will gather in the exhibition venue. The economic and trade negotiations, tourism and cultural exchanges of various participants can drive the development of related industries in the area. The MICE industry is characterized by strong professionalism, good cohesion, strong industry orientation, great integration, high industrial linkage and significant economic and social benefits (C. L. Yang, 2006).

The exhibition industry is one of the fastest growing emerging strategic industries in China, with an average annual growth rate of over 15%, and even under the new normal of China's economic development, China's exhibition industry is still able to maintain a growth rate of over 12%. China attaches great importance to the development of the exhibition industry and has introduced many promotional measures over the years. After several years of development, China's exhibition industry has made great progress. At present, China has more than 200 exhibition halls with an indoor exhibition area of more than 5,000 square meters that are in operation, and the indoor area available for exhibitions is nearly 10 million square meters. Among them, there are more than 50 halls with more than 50,000 square meters and seven halls with more than 200,000 square meters (Y. Jiang, 2018, June 21). In 2017, 22 exhibitions in China were listed in the world's top 100 commercial exhibitions, ranking second place, second only to Germany. "Shanghai International Industrial Automobile Exhibition" and "China International Construction Machinery, Building Material Machinery, Construction Vehicles and Equipment Exhibition" were among the top 10 world trade fairs. In 2017, the top four industries in China in terms of number of exhibitions were "consumer goods and residential services", "housing construction, decoration and business services", "industrial technology" and "culture, sports and entertainment", respectively. This indicates that the degree of specialization of China's exhibitions has increased. Today, 24 exhibitions in China are listed in the World's Top 100 Trade Fairs, ranking second in the world after Germany. Among them, the Shanghai International Automobile Industry Exhibition, the China International Import Exposition and the China International Exhibition for

Construction Machinery, Building Material Machinery, Construction Vehicles and Equipment are among the top 10 trade fairs in the world. The top four industries in China in terms of number of exhibitions are "automobile", "leisure and entertainment", "culture and education" and "construction materials" respectively, indicating the professionalism of Chinese exhibitions", indicating that the specialization of China's exhibitions has been enhanced (Y. Jiang, 2018, June 21).

A successful exhibition not only accurately communicates key information about the event, but also helps to identify well-known exhibitors and interested visitors, realizing the needs of all parties at a very low transaction.

### **2.1.2 Evaluation of the Exhibition Industry**

The evaluation of the exhibition industry is to make objective comparisons and scientific comments between exhibition events of the same theme or between exhibition projects of different themes, which requires investigation, evidence collection, analysis and evaluation of the operation status, actual effects and reflections from all parties of the exhibition projects (Z. Y. Chen, 2009).

Z. Y. Chen (2009) argues that the evaluation of exhibition projects can be carried out by the organizers so that they can take the initiative to understand the situation and identify problems in time and can continuously summarize and improve. Alternatively, in order to strengthen management or make decisions for future policies, the organizers can conduct their own assessment of the exhibition project, or have it assessed by higher authorities, and of course, there is also the 'third-party' assessment as a direction for future development.

From the perspective of industry assessment standards, the international assessment standards for the exhibition industry include:

- 1) The Constitution of the Global Association of the Exhibition Industry (UFI) stipulates that an exhibition project should have the following 10 criteria to be accepted as a member: net area, number of exhibitors, number of foreign exhibitors, should be held regularly, permanent facilities, services and other factors. Among them, the quantitative criteria for evaluating the success of an exhibition are: exhibition rental area, number of exhibitors, number of visitors, number of tickets sold, number of catalogues sold, income of organizing exhibitors, and service income;

the qualitative criteria for evaluation are: type of exhibitors, type of visitors, comments from the media, and the atmosphere on site during the exhibition (Y. Tang, 2012).

2) The Association of Asian Exhibition and Convention Associations (AFECA) has also established evaluation criteria for exhibition projects with reference to the regulations of UFI. For example, in the statistics of visitors, the concept of "attendance" is used instead of "number of people" (Z. Y. Chen, 2009).

3) The German Association for the Voluntary Review of Trade Fair Statistics (FKM), which belongs to the German Association of Trade Fairs and Exhibitions (AUMA), has also established a statistical index system for the evaluation of trade fair projects, including exhibition area (square meters); exhibition period (days); exhibitors (number of exhibitors); and visitors (number of people) (X. Y. Liu, 2011).

4) The International Association of Exhibition Management (IAEE), formerly known as IAEM, has changed M (Management) to E (Event), which means that its scope has been expanded. There are certain comprehensive assessment requirements for applying to join IAEE, only that its requirements are not as specific and clear as those required by UFI. However, the IAEE is very strict in certifying the organization as a 'convention manager'. Therefore, by assessing and certifying the qualifications of "MICE managers", IAEE aims to ensure that managers engaged in the operation and operation of MICE projects can reach a certain standard and ensure the quality of their work. This is equivalent to indirectly assessing and certifying exhibition projects (Z. Y. Chen, 2009).

5) The data certification indicators of the French Office for the Statistical Audit of General and Specialized Exhibitions (OJS in French), a government-recognized organization for the certification of exhibition statistics, mainly include the sales area, the number of exhibitors and the number of visitors to exhibitions (Z. Y. Chen, 2009).

6) The service quality assurance system of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO: 9001), which does not yet have specific standards and statistical calibers for evaluating exhibition projects. However, the organization's standards on project management (ISO: 10006), health and safety (ISO:

18001), environmental protection (ISO: 14001) and service quality assurance system (ISO: 9001) are all closely related to the evaluation of MICE projects (Z. Y. Chen, 2009).

Through the above information combing, it can be seen that although foreign exhibition assessment has gone through decades and is more suitable for their own exhibition assessment and has strong reference value for China, foreign assessment standards are also not uniform, and some of them are even obviously not suitable for China's national conditions. For example, among the above exhibition industry assessment standards, UFI's standards are relatively more authoritative, but UFI has never recognized that Chinese exhibition enterprises are market-oriented and therefore does not recognize the indicator of "revenue" of Chinese exhibition organizers.

In December 2002, the former State Economic and Trade Commission of China issued the industry standard "Classification and Evaluation of Professional Exhibition Grades". This is the first time that China has proposed evaluation criteria for exhibition projects that can be used as a reference. The Standard specifies "professional exhibitions", "specially decorated booths", "net exhibition area", "ratio of specially decorated booth area", "exhibitors", "foreign exhibitors", "professional visitors", "exhibition level", etc. and proposes eight definitions. 8 definitions such as "exhibitor", "foreign exhibitor", "professional visitor" and "exhibition grade" and the four grades of A, B, C and D of exhibitions were proposed (Z. Y. Chen, 2009).

Ningbo Exhibition Industry Association formulated the "Ningbo Exhibition Assessment Rules" in December 2003. There are nine articles in the Rules and a rating scale for the assessment of exhibition projects. According to the Rules, the scope of evaluation is restricted to professional exhibitions with "clear industry positioning, exhibition history of more than two sessions, more than 100 exhibitors and exhibition area of more than 5,000 square meters", and specific scoring methods and evaluation procedures are stipulated (L. Zhang, 2009).

In February 2006, the Shanghai Exhibition Industry Evaluation Committee issued the "Rules for Evaluating International Exhibition Projects in Shanghai (for Trial Implementation)", which will award "Shanghai Brand Exhibition", "Shanghai Quality Exhibition", "Shanghai Key Cultivation Exhibition" and "Shanghai

International Exhibition" respectively to the exhibition projects that have met the evaluation standards according to different standards and levels" (Y. Tang, 2012).

The Department of Treaty and Law of the Ministry of Commerce published the Measures for the Evaluation and Certification of Foreign Economic and Technical Fairs in China in early 2008, which has detailed and quantitative provisions on the organization of evaluation and certification, the procedures of evaluation and certification, the promotion of evaluation and certification and the punishment of evaluation and certification. It is clear from the above information combining that China's past exploration of exhibition assessment also has positive significance, but there are also great differences in the assessment standards, and none of the assessment standards are recognized by most exhibitions in the country or even local cities (S. Liang, Ye, & Sun, 2018).

In the field of academic research, three methods of qualitative evaluation (mainly expert evaluation), AHP (hierarchical analysis) and FCE (fuzzy comprehensive evaluation), or a combination of the three methods have been used in the past regarding the evaluation methods of exhibitions.

Qualitative evaluation of expert evaluation generally does not adopt mathematical calculation or data calculation, but makes qualitative value judgment on the evaluation object directly based on experts' observation and analysis of the reality and state of the evaluation object or literature, and is a bid evaluation method that uses experts' knowledge, experience and judgment to evaluate and compare through roll call voting. Qualitative evaluation emphasizes observation, analysis, induction and description (H. Y. Huang & Liu, 2018). The results of qualitative evaluation have disadvantages such as being subjective and lacking quantitative indicators, as the evaluation results of this method are defined by experts based on their personal subjectivity and are expressed in words.

Hierarchical analysis, or AHP for short, is a decision-making method that decomposes the elements related to decision-making into levels of objectives, criteria and options, and performs qualitative and quantitative analysis (H. X. He, 2020). The method is a hierarchical weighted decision analysis method proposed by American operations researcher Professor Saaty (1977), The basic idea is to decompose a complex exhibition evaluation problem into multiple indicators and group the

indicators according to dominance relationships to form an ordered recursive hierarchy. The relative importance of each factor in the hierarchy is determined through a two-by-two comparison of the indicators, and then the judgments of the evaluation agency are integrated to determine the total ranking of the relative importance of the decision factors. Establishing a hierarchical structure model, constructing a judgment matrix, hierarchical single ranking, consistency testing of the judgment matrix and hierarchical total ranking are the basic steps of the hierarchical analysis method. J. Y. Guo, Zhang, and Sun (2008) argue that when using hierarchical analysis, the exact solution of eigenvalues and eigenvectors is more complicated, and the calculation becomes more difficult as the number of orders increases with the increase of indicators. J. Zhao (2000) proposes that when using hierarchical analysis, if there are too many indicators and the data statistics are large, their weights are difficult to determine; in addition, the function of hierarchical analysis is to select the better one from the alternatives, and it cannot provide new solutions for decision making. However, the more perfect analytical tool that most decision makers want is an analysis that points out the optimal solution as well as the shortcomings of the known solutions and suggests improvement options.

Fuzzy Comprehensive Evaluation, or FCE for short, is a comprehensive evaluation method based on fuzzy mathematics, which was proposed by Zadeh (1965), an American expert in automatic control, and which uses fuzzy mathematics to make an overall evaluation of a thing or object subject to multiple factors, transforming qualitative evaluation into quantitative evaluation according to the subordination theory of fuzzy mathematics. It is characterized by clear and systematic results, which can better solve fuzzy and difficult to quantify problems, and is used to express the uncertainty of things and is suitable for solving various non-deterministic problems. Y. Tang (2012) argues that the disadvantage of FCE is that the calculation is more complicated, and when the indicator set  $U$  is large, it is easy to cause failure in judging. Z. H. Yang, Wang, Li, Zhang, and Wang (2016), on the other hand, argued that FCE cannot solve the problem of duplication of information caused among related evaluation indicators, and the methods for determining the affiliation function and fuzzy correlation matrix need further research.

## 2.2 Related Theories

### 2.2.1 CIPP Theory

#### 2.2.1.1 Background of the CIPP Assessment Theory

From the development of educational assessment in foreign countries, the development of educational assessment theory and practice has gone through the alternating stages of the measurement era, the description era, the judgment era and the construction era respectively, and as a result, they have formed their own unique theoretical models of educational assessment, which represent different theories or schools of educational assessment. Among them, the most typical models are the behavioral goal-oriented model, the CIPP assessment theory, the response model and the co-construction model (X. L. Cai & Zhuang, 2013). It was formed and developed gradually.

In 1965, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was passed by the US Congress in order to improve the quality of teaching and learning in US primary and secondary schools. The Act also requires schools that receive the grants to submit a full evaluation plan.

In order to implement the evaluation plan, the American scholar Stufflebeam, D. L., led an evaluation center at Ohio State University. The assessment theory that Stufflebeam and his research team began using was Tyler (1949) goal-oriented model. It was found that the model measured instruments that were not applicable to all students and did not reflect students' individual needs and goals; it did not assess the goals themselves and did not give enough attention to unintended outcomes and process assessment, which had an impact on the effectiveness of the assessment.

Based on the reflection of Taylor's goal-oriented model, Stufflebeam and his research team proposed the CIPP theoretical model of assessment the following year, also known as the modified oriented assessment theoretical model or the decision-oriented model (Stufflebeam, 1983). Stufflebeam argued that assessment should aim to inform decision makers and should not be limited to the extent to which defined goals are achieved. While the CIPP model overcomes the shortcomings of the Taylor model, which ignores conditions and unintended outcomes, the overemphasis

on descriptive information inevitably neglects value judgements about programmers and their implementation, and thus lacks a reflective and critical approach to practice.

In a review of the history of the development of the CIPP assessment theory, it can be seen that the model was initially applied to educational assessment, but has developed to be used in many countries for assessment in various fields (J. F. Li, 2017). For example, L. F. Wang, Xie, Wang, Wang, and Li (2016) used the CIPP model to assess the role and impact of safety education and training on miners' safety behavior, and then made recommendations on the problems encountered by coal mining companies in safety management, safety decision-making and safety training. Rahman, Irianto, and Rosidi (2019) introduced the CIPP model to study the implementation of e-budget in the provincial government of Jakarta Special Administrative Region and found that the project was worth continuing as it was found to be functioning well when evaluated using the CIPP model. In the contextual evaluation of the CIPP model the project focused on the successful achievement of the pre-defined objectives of budget transparency and accountability and found that users were moving from the old system to the e-budget system. In the input evaluation of the CIPP model, the project used sufficient equipment, infrastructure and human resources, but needed to improve the network and servers used. In the process evaluation of the CIPP model, the project helped to minimize errors in the scheduling process, but it was also found that there were no legally applicable standard operating procedures during the implementation phase of the e-budget. In the outcome evaluation of the CIPP model, it was found that this project could play a positive role in budget control management and improve the quality of local budgets; in the evaluation of the quality of entrepreneurship education. J. Xu (2020) applied the CIPP model to vocational colleges as an assessment target and made relevant recommendations, that is, entrepreneurship education in vocational colleges should be designed at the top level in the context evaluation of the CIPP model, and in the CIPP model's input evaluation concluded that a faculty should be built, and the CIPP model's process evaluation concluded that a practice platform should be built.

### 2.2.1.2 Concepts of the Theoretical Model of CIPP Evaluation

Stufflebeam (1983) argues that evaluation of educational activities should not be limited to determining whether objectives have been achieved, but should also help to manage and improve programmers, and that the evaluation process should serve to inform decision makers. The theoretical model of evaluation consists of four elements of evaluation: context evaluation, input evaluation, process evaluation and product evaluation, the initials of which form CIPP (Stufflebeam, 1968).

Contextual evaluation is a diagnostic assessment that is used to clarify project objectives and shape planning decisions. It identifies the problems of the project, assesses the needs of the clients, inventories the resources available to the project, assesses the opportunities for meeting needs and solving problems, and makes a value judgement about the importance and reasonableness of the project's objectives in their own right, given the context and conditions (Stufflebeam, 1983).

Input evaluation is a comparative analysis of the environment, resources, conditions and implementation options required to achieve the objectives of the project, based on a successful background assessment, and an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the different options to determine their feasibility and effectiveness. Input assessment needs to address practical issues in the following ways.

- 1) Identifying the ease of achieving project objectives and fully understanding the operational processes of different options.
- 2) Ensuring that a wide range of options are available.
- 3) Ensuring that the most convincing option with the highest success rate is selected.
- 4) The option chosen must be reasonable and legal.
- 5) Ensuring adequate financial support.
- 6) Ensuring that resources are fully utilized.

Input assessment is the process of evaluating the feasibility and economics of various options and arriving at the best option. Input assessment is diagnostic and forms the basis for organizational decision making (Stufflebeam, 1983).

Process evaluation, on the other hand, is the tracking of the project's progress during implementation to check, monitor and provide feedback in order to achieve the following objectives.

- 1) To track the implementation process and provide timely and reliable information to decision makers.
- 2) To analyze problems that have arisen during the implementation of the project programmer, diagnose problems that may arise during the implementation process and provide recommendations and suggestions for adjustments and improvements to the project programmer.
- 3) To provide effective and quick feedback channels for evaluation participants.
- 4) To provide follow-up analysis and diagnosis of all activities and procedural events recorded throughout the implementation of the project programmer.

The process evaluation needs to clarify three basic issues as follows.

- 1) Clarification of the operational process of the project implementation programmer.
- 2) A clear presentation of the rectification issues during the implementation of the programmer and the rectification plan.
- 3) Clarification of all procedural events and activities that were exhaustively documented during the implementation of the project programmer as a source of information.

Process assessments are formative assessments that shape implementation decisions (Stufflebeam, 1983).

Outcome evaluation is an assessment of goal attainment, the extent to which people's needs are met in relation to the objectives of the project programmer to ensure that people's needs are met. Outcome evaluation is a comprehensive analysis that combines the results of contextual, input and process assessments through measurement, judgement and doubt interpretation to observe the outcomes of a project programmer, understand the extent to which these outcomes are recognized by the sponsors of the project programmer, and compare intended and unintended outcomes to arrive at the assessment results. Outcome evaluation is summative and

results in circular decision-making (Stufflebeam, 1983).

These four evaluation elements of the CIPP assessment model are closely and inextricably linked to managers' decisions (J. D. Huang, 2013). The connotation of these four assessment elements shows that they correspond to different stages of decision making, for example, contextual assessment corresponds to planning decisions; input assessment corresponds to organizational decisions; process assessment corresponds to implementation decisions; and outcome assessment corresponds to management decisions. It can be seen that such assessments are not goal-oriented but decision-oriented and can provide a basis for management and decision makers to make decisions.

Stufflebeam (1983) states that evaluation is a process of delineating, obtaining and providing descriptive and judgement information about the value and merits of the objectives, design, implementation and impact of the research subject in order to guide decisions that meet the demands of performance accountability and to improve understanding of the subject. According to D. L. Ge (2013), this definition suggests that the purpose of the CIPP assessment theory model is to:

- 1) Provide decision makers with relevant reference information and relevant guidance when making decisions.
- 2) To provide decision makers with documented archival materials and relevant information on the performance accountability tests that have been completed
- 3) To improve the understanding of the subject of the study.

At the same time, the CIPP evaluation theoretical model also specifically emphasizes that the need to implement evaluation does not occur at a particular moment when it needs to be implemented, but is a long-term, ongoing process that needs to be carried out throughout the operation of the project (J. F. Li, 2017).

Stufflebeam and his research team further explored, researched and expanded on the original four elements of the CIPP evaluation theoretical model in depth, and developed the CIPP evaluation theoretical model into the new CIPP seven-element model (Stufflebeam, 2000). The new model consists of seven elements: contextual assessment, input assessment, process assessment, outcome assessment,

effectiveness assessment, sustainability assessment and replicability assessment, which were published in The CIPP Model for Evaluation. However, the new CIPP model is not commonly used at present and therefore the theoretical model of CIPP evaluation defined in this study is the CIPP four-factor model (Stufflebeam, 2000).

#### 2.2.1.3 Features of the CIPP Model

##### 1) Focus on decision-oriented

Staverbeem believes that assessment should not be limited to the extent to which stated goals are achieved, but rather provide useful information for educational decision-making by administrators and policy makers. Staverbeem divides the entire decision-making process into planning decisions, organizational decisions, implementation decisions and management decisions, fully reflecting the function of management assessment as a source of information for management decisions. This leads to the conclusion that the most prominent feature of CIPP is that it is oriented towards management decisions rather than management goals (J. D. Huang, 2013).

##### 2) Focus on the improvement role of assessment

Stufflebeam (1983) once said the classic phrase "not to prove but to improve" (p. 117). This quote points to another important feature of the CIPP assessment model, which is not to simply look for problems and identify them, but to place more emphasis on problem solving and educational improvement. In the implementation of the assessment, the program implementation is tested through the development of process assessment, and a reasonable control of the whole educational process is achieved through the timely feedback of effective information. In addition, the objectives are clarified through contextual and input assessments to guide the program and play its improvement role. Outcome assessment does not only yield a final assessment report, it also requires a stage summary by the stage of program implementation to identify problems and solve them in time.

3) Focus on the organic combination of diagnostic, formative and summative assessment

The CIPP assessment model attaches more importance to formative assessment, but does not ignore the utility of diagnostic and summative assessment, and tries to integrate these three forms of assessment into the assessment practice so that they can play different roles. J. D. Huang (2013) points out that the flexible and integrated use of these methods makes the CIPP assessment model applicable in a wide range and flexible form, which can be used by the evaluator both before and during the implementation of the program, depending on the needs.

#### 2.2.1.4 Outline of the Design of the CIPP Evaluation Model

As mentioned earlier, Stufflebeam (1968) understanding of CIPP is "not to prove but to improve", which means that the most important purpose of evaluation is not to prove but to improve. He advocated that evaluation is a systematic tool that provides managers and decision makers with useful information to make project programs easier to implement and achieve desired results. In order to better accomplish evaluation, Stufflebeam (1968) developed an outline on evaluation design, which is as follows.

- 1) Examination of evaluation tasks:
  - A. Define the object of the assessment.
  - B. Assessment of the principal, the intended user, and confirmation of other hearers who have a right to know.
  - C. Purpose of the assessment (e.g., program improvement, approved instructional effectiveness, understanding, and dissemination).
  - D. Types of assessment (e.g., contextual, input, process, and outcome assessment).
  - E. The guidelines and values followed for assessment (e.g., basic social values, strengths, guidelines, standards, and responsibilities of personnel, etc.).
- 2) Plan for obtaining information:
  - A. General strategies (e.g., surveys, case studies, group field trials).

B. Hypotheses to guide measurement, analysis, and interpretation.

C. Information collection (e.g., sampling, instrumentation, and data collection).

D. Organization of information (e.g., numbering, filing, and supplementing collection materials).

E. Analysis of information (including qualitative and quantitative analysis).

F. Interpretation of results (e.g., interpretation of criteria, process judgment, drawing final conclusions, etc.).

3) Plan for reporting results:

A. Drafting of the report.

B. Forecasting and finalization of the report.

C. Delivery of the report.

D. The need for follow-up measures to improve the social impact of the assessment.

4) Plan for managing the assessment:

A. The full control of the progress of the assessment.

B. Completion of the plan for staffing and resource requirements.

C. Provision of meta-assessments.

D. Periodic updates to the assessment design.

E. budgetary provisions.

F. Contracts or memoranda.

#### 2.2.1.5 Implementation Process of the CIPP Evaluation Model

In order to facilitate evaluators to grasp the CIPP evaluation theoretical model and operate it quickly and accurately, the model suggests a set of systematic and detailed operation flow chart (Figure 2.1).

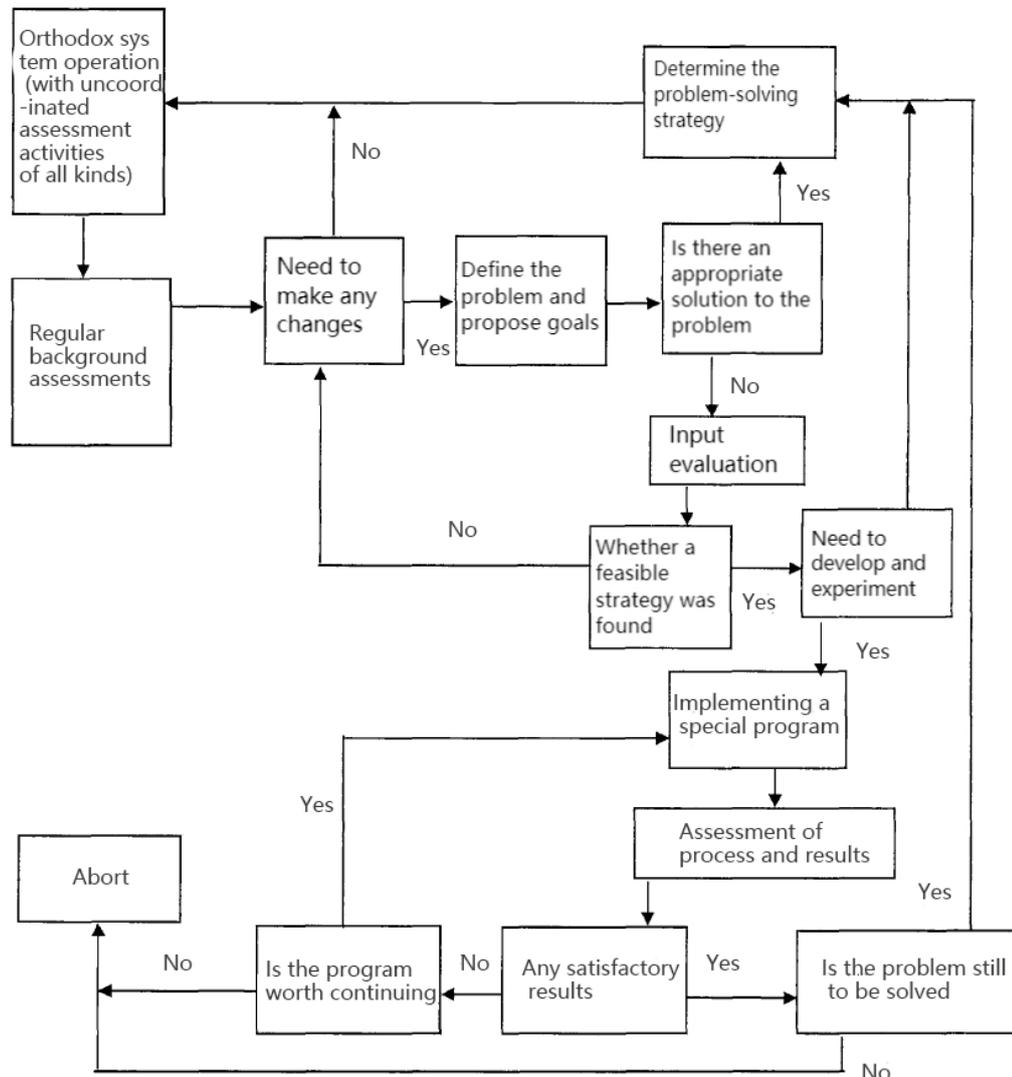


Figure 2.1 Flow of the CIPP assessment model

Source: Qu and Chen (1989, p. 309).

#### 2.1.1.6 Advantages of the CIPP Evaluation Model

1) The CIPP evaluation model is a critique and inheritance of Taylor's model by providing answers to the difficult questions encountered in Taylor's model (J. D. Huang, 2013).

(1) The CIPP evaluation model proposes a contextual assessment scheme that examines the rationality of the target's own value, whereas the question of educational value is not answered in the Taylor assessment theory model.

(2) The CIPP evaluation model introduces input assessment and process assessment in a timely manner to detect the process of goal achievement and task completion, but the Taylor assessment model ignores the contextual conditions and unintended outcomes of assessment.

(3) The CIPP evaluation model inherits the reasonable part of the Taylor evaluation model regarding outcome assessment, which provides an observation model for project managers and decision makers and facilitates project management improvement.

2) The CIPP evaluation model emphasizes the developmental function of evaluation.

According to J. D. Huang (2013), compared to the traditional evaluation theory that focuses on the outcomes of evaluation activities, the CIPP evaluation theory model places the focus on formative evaluation. Therefore, assessment provides timely feedback for decision-making activities, which truly reflects the formative function of assessment and effectively provides useful assistance for improving the improvement of project management activities. In addition, contextual assessment also provides a basis for goal setting, and input assessment guides the development and adjustment of programs. In summary, all these types of assessment methods provide guidance for management improvement.

3) The CIPP evaluation model integrates diagnostic, formative, and summative evaluations. The CIPP evaluation model integrates formative, diagnostic, and summative evaluations.

In the project management assessment process, different stages are linked to specific assessment approaches. The background assessment process detects the reasonableness of the establishment of project management objectives, the selection of project implementation solutions in input assessment, the implementation of project solutions in guidance process assessment, and the measurement of the achievement of project management objectives in outcome assessment. These are all inseparable from the organic combination of several evaluation methods, and the CIPP evaluation theory model also effectively applies them flexibly (J. D. Huang, 2013).

The CIPP evaluation theory enhances the recognition of management evaluation activities by reinterpreting the linkage between assessment requirements, quality control and program results in a holistic manner, which provides a strong basis for evaluation activities and enhances the recognition of management evaluation activities.

#### 2.2.1.7 Shortcomings of the CIPP Model

1) Weak awareness of value judgment The CIPP assessment model focuses on descriptive information throughout the assessment process and lacks awareness of value judgment for all activities, including program selection and prognosis development. For this reason, some scholars argue that the CIPP evaluation model cannot be called an evaluation activity (J. D. Huang, 2013).

2) Such assessments may provide political convenience for decision makers.

In the CIPP evaluation model, the evaluator's role is to collect, analyze, and report general information for the decision maker according to the relevant decision area, while the decision maker and manager are often disturbed by political factors, so the evaluator usually provides false falsifications for the political convenience of the decision maker (Worthen & Sanders, 1987).

3) The CIPP assessment model has a limited scope of application. According to J. D. Huang (2013), the CIPP theoretical evaluation model is generally applicable to large project programs that require various conditions to support, and the complexity of project activities determines its arbitrariness and uncertainty, which may lead to unpredictable factors, greatly limiting the scope of application of the CIPP evaluation model.

#### 2.2.2 CIPP as a Theoretical Basis for This Study

The CIPP theory has been used as the theoretical basis in the field of educational assessment since it was proposed by the American scholar Stufflebeam, D. L. in the 1960's. By combing through the literature of CIPP, we found that a large number of previous studies have used CIPP as a theoretical basis or theoretical foundation to guide their research. Thus, it is also reasonable to use CIPP as the theoretical basis to conduct current study. A review on CIPP as a theoretical basis

suggest three key findings as below.

1) The use of the term "CIPP theory" or "CIPP theoretical model" in the title.

For example, J. F. Li (2017); M. Wu (2015); J. Zhou and Lu (2019); S. Zhao (2020) directly use "CIPP theory" or "CIPP theoretical model" in the title of their studies. S. Zhao (2020) directly defines "CIPP" as "CIPP theory" and uses the term "CIPP theory" in the title of his paper. The author described that "With reference to the CIPP evaluation theory, the evaluation of dual-innovation education courses is designed from the needs and perspectives of experts, teachers, students, enterprise managers and other participants, and the first-level indicators include: the foundation of innovation and entrepreneurship education, the management of innovation and entrepreneurship education resources, the implementation of innovation and entrepreneurship education, and the impact of innovation and entrepreneurship education, etc. According to the object, task and functional requirements of the evaluation, the evaluation items include teaching, teachers, and students. functional requirements, the secondary and tertiary indicators designed from the dimensions of teaching, faculty, funding, and management" (p. 242).

J. Zhou and Lu (2019) directly used the word "theory" in the title of their paper, and also expressed it as "CIPP theory" in the paper "With reference to the *CIPP evaluation theory*, the evaluation of dual-creative education courses is conducted from experts, teachers, students, business managers and other participants. With reference to the CIPP evaluation theory, the evaluation of dual-innovation education courses is designed from the needs and perspectives of experts, teachers, students, business managers, and other participants in the evaluation (p. 56).

Likewise, J. F. Li (2017) directly defines CIPP as a theory and uses it as the title of her paper, and uses the term "CIPP theory" throughout the text when it comes to "CIPP".

The title of M. Wu (2015) also directly uses the term "CIPP theory", and the text "Combining the above theory and model analysis, we can see that the CIPP theory is extremely practical. It is able to conduct statistics on teaching data at different times and intervals, build a dynamic evaluation of the teaching practice process, and construct a dual analysis of quantitative and qualitative data by

aggregating subjective and objective data with the help of modern technological equipment and the Internet” (p. 127).

2) Explaining the connotation of CIPP as "CIPP theory"

X. Q. Chen (2019); H. Y. Wang (2019); Ke (2019); Hu and Zhao (2018); J. Lin (2016) and others formulated "CIPP theory" when elaborating the "connotation of CIPP".

For instance, X. Q. Chen (2019) describes the connotation of "CIPP" as "the theoretical connotation of CIPP evaluation model" (p. 82).

In H. Y. Wang (2019) paper, similar description can be found -- "Stufflebeam, a famous American evaluation expert, proposed the CIPP educational evaluation model in 1966, which provided scholars with a unique research threshold and a new theoretical foundation" (p. 93).

In Ke (2019) research, it is written that "In 1965, the American scholar Stufflebeam created the CIPP evaluation model theory based on the reflection of Taylor's behavioral goal model. The CIPP model, constructed under the guidance of this theory, analyzes a task itself as an object, and its goal is to provide managers with sufficient information to refer to services when making decisions, dividing the evaluation process into Context, Input, Process, and Product" (p. 54).

Hu and Zhao (2018) state that "among the many theoretical models used for the evaluation of university courses, CIPP evaluation model, which emphasizes the continuous improvement function, has a unique advantage." "Under the theoretical framework of the CIPP model, the problems existing in the curriculum, teaching mode, textbook development, teacher training and other important aspects of Business English in Xingtai College are analyzed, and targeted reform strategies are proposed, so as to point out the direction for the reform of the Business English curriculum system and cultivate more excellent Business English talents for the development of the local economy" (p. 135). "The core of the CIPP evaluation model lies in the fact that the purpose of evaluation is improvement. Using the CIPP model as a theoretical guide helps to promote a comprehensive and scientific reform of the curriculum system. Using the CIPP evaluation model as a theoretical framework and the teaching model reform program of school-enterprise cooperation as an entry point, the analysis of background evaluation, input evaluation, process evaluation, impact

evaluation and effectiveness evaluation, as well as sustainability and replicability evaluation is conducted around the important aspects of the business English curriculum system, such as curriculum setting, teaching materials development, teacher training and teaching evaluation, with the aim of analyzing the reform strategies that have been implemented and to point out the direction of the next reform” (p. 138).

According to J. Lin (2016), "A reasonable model is the foundation for evaluation. According to the theory of CIPP model, firstly, the multifaceted needs of higher education students' self-learning ability development are determined, as well as the status and significance of different evaluation aspects in the evaluation model” (p. 96). Mohebbi, Akhlaghi, Yarmohammadian, and Khoshgam (2011) state that CIPP evaluation model "which is one of the most effective models of systematic pattern" (Eseryl, 2002, pp. 93-98) is used as theoretical basics of this research (p. 3287).

3) Using CIPP as a theoretical basis or theoretical foundation for research

A great number of researchers such as Y. K. Luo and Du (2020); S. Zhao (2020); J. Li (2019); Z. Zhong, Yuan, Huang, Wu, and Song (2019); Y. J. Li, Wei, and Hua (2019); J. F. Li (2017); S. Y. Liu, Hu, and Liu (2016); T. Li and Zou (2016); H. X. Wang (2015); F. Q. Yang, Huang, and Liu (2015); G. Z. Fan et al. (2014); Z. F. Yu and Zhang (2014); T. Y. Li and Chen (2014) used "CIPP" as the theoretical basis or theoretical foundation of their research.

For example, Y. K. Luo and Du (2020) believe that "the applicability of CIPP evaluation model as a theoretical basis for integrated evaluation of talent cultivation in vocational education is mainly reflected in four stages of talent cultivation background evaluation, talent cultivation input evaluation, talent cultivation process evaluation, and talent cultivation result evaluation” (p. 87). "CIPP evaluation model: theoretical basis for integrated evaluation of talent cultivation in vocational education” (p. 89).

J. Li (2019) points out that "the CIPP evaluation theory is used to reconstruct the evaluation system of practical teaching quality. According to CIPP evaluation theory, the evaluation system of practical teaching quality in applied colleges and universities covering indicators of objective evaluation, program

evaluation, process evaluation and effect evaluation is constructed according to the principle of wholeness and systematization of educational activities, and the contents and weights of evaluation indicators at all levels are set at different levels” (p. 44).

Z. Zhong et al. (2019) pointed out that "this paper firstly introduces the theoretical basis of enterprise strategic planning quality management, strategic planning quality evaluation, and CIPP evaluation model, and then constructs a strategic planning quality evaluation index system and strategic planning quality evaluation guarantee measures for petroleum engineering technology companies on the example of petroleum engineering technology companies' strategic planning” (p. 207). According to the context, the paper introduces "CIPP" as the theoretical basis.

Y. J. Li et al. (2019) established an index system for evaluating the education of Civics and politics courses in agricultural and forestry colleges and universities based on CIPP theory, then applied the model to measure the satisfaction of the practice of Civics and Politics courses for graduate students in Beijing Agricultural College, and finally gave the corresponding improvement measures” (p. 50).

J. F. Li (2017) mentioned that "Based on the literature reading and collation, this paper expects to make some exploration and research accumulation for further standardization and improvement of the evaluation system of comprehensive family service programs in Guangzhou, combined with the management CIPP theory, through the research and analysis of the evaluation system of comprehensive family service programs in Guangzhou, so as to realize the evaluation system of comprehensive family service programs future optimization of dimensions to provide referenceable information." (p. 9). "After introducing the CIPP theory, the applicability of the CIPP theory as a review of the IFSP evaluation system is elaborated, and on the basis of the theory, the IFSP evaluation system is analyzed and its problems are pointed out. Based on the CIPP theory, the new system will be optimized and improved” (p. 9). "The CIPP theory arose in the field of education and was proposed by Stufflebeam, a famous American educational evaluation expert, in the late 1960s and early 1970s” (p. 13).

S. Y. Liu et al. (2016) pointed out that "this paper, oriented by the Koch theory and CIPP theory, takes into account the vertical evaluation as well as the horizontal evaluation, and constructs a safety training evaluation index system by combining the actual situation of enterprise safety training, which includes 3 primary indicators, 10 secondary indicators and 25 tertiary indicators, solving the problem that the traditional evaluation model cannot address the drawbacks of current training effects" (p. 10).

T. Li and Zou (2016) stressed that "the article firstly explored the feasibility of applying the CIPP evaluation model to collaborative information literacy education; secondly, the collaborative education evaluation index system was established based on the CIPP theory, and the index weights were determined using AHP and other methods to construct the collaborative education CIPP evaluation model; then the model was applied to the satisfaction measurement of a course collaborative education practice in Nanjing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics Then the model was applied to the satisfaction evaluation of collaborative education practice of a course in Nanjing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics, and finally the application suggestions of the model were given" (p. 108).

H. X. Wang (2015) argued that "through an in-depth elaboration of the development and research status of the evaluation of national defense education in colleges and universities at home and abroad, based on the analysis of the current evaluation procedures, principles, methods and index system of national defense education in colleges and universities, the CIPP evaluation theory was introduced into the evaluation of national defense education in colleges and universities, and the four dimensions of education elements, education process, education effectiveness and education characteristics were designed and analyzed. The evaluation index system of national defense education in colleges and universities is designed and analyzed in four dimensions, in order to enrich the research theory and practice of national defense education in colleges and universities" (p. 125).

F. Q. Yang et al. (2015) pointed out that "in view of this, the author will combine the CIPP theory with the continuous improvement (plan, do, check, action, PDCA) method to initially construct an enterprise's safety training evaluation system

by establishing the structural equation model (SEM). equation model (SEM) to further optimize the index system and provide a scientific basis for enterprises to effectively carry out safety training work” (p. 140).

G. Z. Fan et al. (2014) pointed out that "under the guidance of the process evaluation theory of CIPP model, the process evaluation of the secondary nursing curriculum system is mainly reflected in the following two aspects: first, to evaluate the degree of implementation of the professional curriculum system program, that is, whether the teaching program is correctly implemented, whether it is implemented in the teaching activities, which areas are implemented well, which areas are not implemented well, and which areas have problems. The first is to evaluate the degree of implementation of the professional curriculum program, that is to say, whether the teaching program is implemented correctly, whether it is implemented in teaching activities, what is implemented well and what is not, what problems exist, how to improve, the implementation and use of funds, whether the teaching conditions meet the teaching situation, etc. Secondly, the process of evaluating the implementation of the curriculum system of secondary nursing is mainly to evaluate the teachers' classroom teaching and to evaluate the students' learning” (p. 159).

Z. F. Yu and Zhang (2014) pointed out that "the study was based on CIPP theory, with reference to UNAIDS' "Monitoring the Implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on AIDS: A Guide to Constructing Core Indicators", and evaluated the implementation of the curriculum in terms of context, input, process, impact, effectiveness, sustainability, and replicability. We have studied the indicators of the "China AIDS Prevention and Treatment Supervision and Evaluation Framework (Trial)" in seven parts, and proposed modifications: to add the annual proportion of HIV infection in the total population, the "two decreases and one increase" and anti-discrimination indicators, and related economic indicators as the core indicators; to add talent team building, supervision and evaluation training mechanism, and to add the core indicators. The indicators of talent team construction, supervision and evaluation training mechanism, third-party evaluation indicators, award and satisfaction indicators as additional indicators; adjust additional indicators F6 and F7 as core indicators; revise the content of some indicators such as H1, H8, F1

and F2” (p. 29).

T. Y. Li and Chen (2014) set "CIPP" as the foundation theory of the study, and set it as a secondary title to express: "The foundation theory of CIPP model” (p. 239).

### **2.2.3 Stakeholder Theory**

Stakeholder Theory emerged in the 1960s and was developed in the United States and the United Kingdom, where the "shareholder first" model of corporate governance has long been practiced. The main difference between Stakeholder Theory and traditional shareholder supremacy is that Stakeholder Theory assumes that various stakeholders, such as shareholders, creditors, employees, consumers, suppliers, etc., are involved in the development of a company. Therefore, the firm can be seen as an institutional arrangement for governing and managing specialized investments (Blair, 1996), and therefore the firm should exist to serve the stakeholders, of which the shareholders are only one. After the pioneering research by Penrose and Ansoff, Freeman, Blair and Mitchell have improved the theoretical framework of stakeholder theory and achieved fruitful results in practical application. Since then, stakeholder theory has been widely employed.

In 1959, Penrose's Theories of Business Growth introduced the concept of "the firm as a collection of human assets and human relationships", which laid the foundation for the construction of stakeholder theory (Penrose & Penrose, 2009). However, it was not until 1963 that some scholars at the Stanford Research Institute used the term "stakeholder" as a counterpart to the term "shareholder" to denote all those who have a close relationship with the firm. Some scholars use the term "stakeholder" as a counterpart to denote all people who have a close relationship with the company. They define stakeholders as groups of people without whose support a business cannot survive (Clark, 1998). This definition of stakeholders is very narrow, as it only considers the relevant influence of stakeholders on the firm unilaterally. However, it contributes to the recognition that there are many interest groups around a company that affect its survival beyond serving its shareholders. The first economist to formally use the term "stakeholder" was Ansoff (1965), who argued that the formulation of an ideal business goal requires a comprehensive consideration of the

conflicting claims of the firm's many stakeholders, which may include shareholders, managers, employees, suppliers, and customers. suppliers and customers. In the 1970s, Western companies gradually accepted stakeholder theory, and economist (Dill, 1975) stated that stakeholder influence, which is an exogenous factor influencing the strategic decision making and management process, has been transformed into stakeholder participation. participation.

In 1984, Freeman gave a broad definition of stakeholders in his classic book "Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach": stakeholders are all individuals and groups who can influence the achievement of an organization's goals or are affected by the process by which an organization achieves its goals (Freeman, 1984). Freeman's definition completes the definition of stakeholders by including all individuals and groups who can influence the achievement of an organization's goals or are affected by the process of achieving the organization's goals (Freeman, 1984). Freeman's definition not only considered groups and individuals who influence the goals of the company as stakeholders, but also extended the definition to include groups and individuals who are affected by the actions taken in the process of achieving the company's goals, including government departments, local communities, environmentalists, etc. Freeman's definition was endorsed by many economists in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Freeman's definition was endorsed by many economists in the late 1980s and early 1990s and became a standard paradigm for stakeholder definition (H. F. Chen & Jia, 2002).

However, in later empirical studies and practical applications of stakeholder theory, scholars found that Freeman's approach lacked operability and that the study of all stakeholders in a broad sense as a whole did not lead to convincing conclusions (H. F. Chen & Jia, 2002). In 1993, the American economist Clarkson organized an international conference on stakeholder management at the University of Toronto in Canada, and the participants generally agreed that it is the goal of every enterprise to create wealth and value for all stakeholders, who form the system of the enterprise and operate together with the larger social system that provides the legal and market basis for the enterprise's activities. At the same time, a company can only survive and prosper with the support of its stakeholders, but stakeholders can be segmented from several perspectives, and different types of stakeholders influence management

decisions and are affected by the company's activities to different degrees (Clarkson, 1995).

In the mid-1990s, the "multidimensional segmentation approach" became the most common tool used by many experts to classify stakeholders from different perspectives. For example, Charkham (1992) classifies stakeholders into Contractual Stakeholders and Community Stakeholders according to the existence of a transactional contractual relationship between the stakeholder group and the firm. The former includes shareholders, employees, distributors, suppliers, customers, and lenders; the latter includes all consumers, regulators, government departments, media, pressure groups, and local communities. Wheeler and Sillanpa (1998) classifies stakeholders into the following four categories from the perspective of whether the relevant groups are social and whether the relationship with the company is directly composed of real people: 1) primary social stakeholders, who are directly connected to the firm and are engaged by real people, such as investors, employees, suppliers, customers, local communities and so on; 2) secondary social stakeholders, who form indirect relationships with the firm through social activities, such as government, resident groups, competitors, etc.; 3) primary non-social stakeholders, who have a direct influence on the firm 4) primary non-social stakeholders, who have direct influence on the company but do not act on specific people, such as the natural environment, human offspring, etc.; 5) secondary non-social stakeholders, who have only indirect relationship with the company and do not act on specific people, such as animal interest groups, etc.

The above-mentioned "multidimensional segmentation" approach to stakeholder segmentation has deepened people's understanding of corporate stakeholders to a great extent. However, it is still at the level of academic research and is not very practical, thus limiting the application of stakeholder theory in practice. Mitchell, Agle, and Wood (1997) studied the history of stakeholder theory and identified 27 representative definitions of stakeholders, and finally proposed a Score based Approach to define and classify stakeholders (H. F. Chen & Jia, 2002). According to Mitchell et al. (1997), the three possible attributes of all stakeholders in a firm are: Legitimacy, that is, whether a group is given legal and moral or specific claim to the firm; Power, that is, whether a group has the status, ability, and means to

influence the firm's decisions; and Urgency. Mitchell et al. (1997) argue that at least one of these three attributes must be present in order to be a stakeholder of a firm. Depending on the company's situation, they score the stakeholders in these three areas, and the stakeholders can be subdivided into three types: 1) Definitive Stakeholders, who have legitimacy, power and urgency at the same time. The management must pay primary attention to meeting their wishes and requirements and maintain close contact with them, including shareholders, employees and customers. 2) Expectant Stakeholders, who have any two of the three attributes. These stakeholders are divided into the following three categories: (1) groups that have both legitimacy and power, which may include investors, employees and government departments; (2) groups that have both legitimacy and urgency, but do not have the corresponding power to implement their demands, such as the media, social organizations, etc.; (3) groups that have both urgency and power, but do not have legitimacy, which are very dangerous to the company. are very dangerous, and they tend to achieve their goals through some more violent means. For example, environmentalists take protest actions such as demonstrations, and some political and religious extremists may launch terrorist activities in serious cases. 3) Latent Stakeholders, who possess only one of the three attributes. Legitimacy-only groups decide whether to play their stakeholder role as the business operates. Legitimacy-only groups are in a dormant posture and are activated as a stakeholder of concern when they actually use power, or threaten to use power. Groups that possess only urgency, on the other hand, do not require and rarely receive management attention unless they can demonstrate the legitimacy they demand.

Mitchell et al. (1997) model on stakeholder classification is dynamic, which means that any individual or group will change from one type to another when it gains or loses certain attributes. The scoring method proposed by Mitchell et al. (1997) has provided a significant advancement in determining and defining the stakeholders of an enterprise.

Many scholars have used this method to rate the stakeholder groups as a reference basis for management decisions, taking into account the specific situation of the company under study. For example, Thayer and Fine (2001) study the definition of stakeholders in non-profit organizations and the specific ways of participation.

Mikalsen and Jentoft (2001) examine the definition of stakeholders in Norwegian fishing companies. Their study shows that many stakeholders in Norwegian fishing companies are in a dynamic situation. For example, local residents and environmental protection groups that were expected to be stakeholders may rise to become the company's management must have a clear understanding of the different stakeholders. It is important for the management to have a clear understanding of the characteristics of the different stakeholders and to grasp their current status and trends in order to develop and implement strategies for the sustainable development of the company.

With the further development of enterprise theory and corporate governance research, China began to focus on stakeholder theory in the mid-1990s. As the research on stakeholder theory started late in China, the number of related literatures is less than that of foreign countries. R. L. Yang and Zhou (1998) were early to study the reform of state-owned enterprises. Based on the criteria associated with SOEs, they defined the stakeholders of SOEs as the state-owned assets bureau, creditors, banks, employees, managers, and so on. They propose to break away from the logic of "shareholders' supremacy" and compare "capital-employed labor" and "labor-managed enterprises", as well as to study joint production, income distribution and corporate governance. Through a comparison of "capital-employed labor" and "labor-managed enterprises" and a study of joint production, income distribution, and corporate governance, he concluded that shared ownership and stakeholder "shared governance" are superior, thus providing a basis for stakeholder participation in governance, and advocated the establishment of employee directorship, bank directorship, and employee supervisory system.

X. H. Li (2001) subdivides stakeholders into four types from two dimensions: cooperative and threatening. The first is supportive stakeholders, including shareholders, creditors, operators, employees and customers. The second is marginal stakeholders, including employee professional associations, consumer interest protection organizations, and unorganized shareholders. The third is unsupportive stakeholders, such as competing companies, labor unions, and the media. The fourth is the mixed stakeholders, including shortage of employees, customers, etc. He advocates different management strategies for different types of stakeholders, i.e., adopting attitudes and strategies of participation, monitoring, prevention, and

collaboration for these four types of stakeholders respectively. With the basic logic of cybernetics, J. F. Xu, Chang, and Xie (2006) proposed that the classification of stakeholders should be based on their position in corporate governance as the entry point, and classified stakeholders into dominant stakeholders, receptive stakeholders, and indirect stakeholders, and further explored the relative relationships among these three types of stakeholders.

In terms of empirical research, H. H. Chen and Jia (2004) conducted an empirical study on the three-dimensional classification of corporate stakeholders, which fills the gap that domestic scholars have no quantitative survey data to support the stakeholder theory. Based on the "multidimensional segmentation method" and "Mitchell's rating method" of foreign scholars, they classified the defined stakeholders in three dimensions, namely, the initiative of stakeholders, the importance of stakeholders, and the urgency of stakeholders' demands. They categorized the stakeholders of domestic enterprises into core stakeholders, dormant stakeholders and marginal stakeholders by using a scoring method.

The research on stakeholders at home and abroad is actually a process of "narrow definition, broad understanding, multi-dimensional segmentation and attribute scoring", and it is also a process of quantitative and empirical research that combines corporate ethics, corporate governance and organization theory, strategic management theory, etc. to prove the basis, realization mechanism and actual performance of companies considering stakeholders' interests (Hao, 2007).

## **2.3 Research Results in China and Abroad**

### **2.3.1 Literature Review of MICE Research**

1) Research on the economic, social and cultural impacts and environmental impacts of exhibition

The Western exhibition industry represented by Germany and other exhibition powerhouses have developed maturely now, and the research on the economic impact of exhibition is relatively early. M. G. Liu (2015) in the historical records of Chinese exhibition, it was called Dazzling Qihui, Sai Zhenhui, Sai Qihui, etc. in the late Qing Dynasty, and after the establishment of the Republic of China, it

was called the name of the material production meeting, persuasion meeting and exhibition. In the new China before the reform and opening up, it was called achievement exhibition, economic construction exhibition or material exchange exhibition, and after the reform and opening up of China, there was a modern comprehensive exhibition (Zhan, 2010). M. G. Liu (2015) points out that in terms of the whole history of exhibition development in China, it started early, but Chinese scholars' research on exhibition lagged behind due to China's experience of war and planned economy. And nowadays, China has become the second largest economy in the world, and the exhibition industry in China has also been developed rapidly.

So far, numerous research scholars have studied the methods of assessing the impact of MICE on economy from different perspectives, and the following are more representative views. One of the contributions of Braun (1992) in the academic of the impact assessment of exhibition on economy is the first one to apply the input-output model method to the economic impact assessment of exhibition. In the economic impact study done by this researcher for the convention industry in Orlando, he pointed out that the main sources of convention economic income are the expenditures of organizers, attendees and exhibitors. In 1989, for example, the convention industry in Orlando spent nearly US\$1 billion, and among these expenditures, the largest one was accommodation, which accounted for more than half of the total expenditures, 56%; food and beverage was the second largest, 24.17%; shopping accounted for 9.11%, entertainment accounted for 5.15%, transportation accounted for 4.17%, etc. In 1989, the convention industry in Orlando was worth US\$220 million. It provided 65,000 jobs for the society as well as US\$420 million in wages, and created more than US\$100 million in tax revenue for the government. From the above data, it seems that industries and sectors related to hotel and accommodation, food service, retail, entertainment, transportation, business and social services are directly affected because of the exhibition. In fact, the overall economic and social impact of MICE is greater than that of MICE itself, and each expenditure will lead to a broader economic effect. If the indirect income generated by MICE-related sectors is taken into account, the economic effect brought by MICE is two to three times that of MICE itself.

Getz (1994) uses the financial methods represented by "break-even method", "compensation analysis" and "total consumption expenditure" and "economic effect" to evaluate the economic benefits of exhibition activities. The methods used to evaluate the economic benefits of MICE events are financial methods such as "break-even method" and "compensation analysis", and economic evaluation methods such as "total consumption expenditure", "economic effect" and "cost-benefit analysis". The study concluded that the main source of local income from tourism development is the spending of tourists, so the basis of tourism economic impact assessment is usually the measurement of tourist spending. After synthesizing various studies, he believes that the following eight main steps can be used to assess the economic impact process of MICE activities.

- (1) Setting precise research objectives.
- (2) Determining the information needed and selecting the appropriate method of acquisition.
- (3) Deciding on the amount of participation in the activity.
- (4) Implementing a survey of visitors to understand their motivational activities and expenditure patterns, and calculating the number and proportion of visitors from the survey data.
- (5) Estimating the total tourist spending.
- (6) Estimating visitor spending attributes.
- (7) Calculating net income and overall economic impact.
- (8) Cost-benefit analysis.

In addition to visitor spending, the assessment of the economic effect of MICE tourism needs to be done by estimating the combined effect of direct, indirect or induced by the changes in final demand generated by holding MICE events through multiple cycles in the regional economy.

S. S. Kim, Chon, and Chung (2003) studied the effects of output, income, taxation, employment and imports, and applied the input-output model to calculate the analysis. The results show that the MICE industry is a high-output industry and the MICE industry can promote the development of local economy. The reasons for the considerable economic income brought by the MICE industry to the local area are: the large number of participants in the exhibition; the long stay of the

participants in the exhibition venue; the high level of consumption; the pre or post-event travel activities of the participants in the exhibition commonly accompanied in the local area; and the strong relevance of the MICE industry. In addition, scholars such as C. K. Lee, Lee, and Yoon (2013) have used input-output models for assessment in their studies on the economic benefits of MICE.

Studies on the economic impact of MICE have also been elaborated by the following researchers. Oppermann (1996) studied the important role of MICE industry in tourism industry in depth, pointed out that MICE activities are one of the most popular activities in tourism industry at present, and analyzed the important relationship between both MICE industry and tourism industry. Hanly (2012) believes that it can lead to the development of hotel and accommodation industry, catering industry, retail industry, air transportation and rental service of machinery and equipment, which can bring considerable national income and foreign exchange income.

When C. K. Lee et al. (2013) evaluated the economic impact of Daejeon convention center in Korea under the input-output model, it was concluded through analysis that convention visitors create the most local jobs, followed by conference attendees and conference organizers. Meanwhile, MICE generated the most employment opportunities in the food and beverage sector, followed by accommodation, transportation, culture and entertainment, and shopping-related wholesale and retail sectors.

By studying the influence of the exhibition industry on regional economic development in Sichuan Province, G. Chen, Fang, Zhou, Wang, and Zhao (2020) found that the integration between the exhibition industry and the tertiary industry is high, and the exhibition industry obviously pulls the economic development of the tertiary industry. Because of the high mobility of the exhibition industry, it can increase the employment opportunities in the local service industry, and then the output value of the tertiary industry can be improved. In addition, during the exhibition period, there will be a large influx of people in the local area, so it also directly stimulates the local tourism, drives the consumption of accommodation and catering and promotes transportation.

According to Ding (2018), the exhibition industry is currently in the growth period of the industrial life cycle with good profitability, but one of the reasons why exhibition companies have difficulty in developing and growing is the relatively single financing channel and method. W. Q. Ge (2014) suggests that only by combining multiple financing methods, such as increasing government financial investment, strengthening internal financing and reasonably utilizing foreign capital, can a better-quality exhibition industry be developed.

Y. M. Huang (2011) proposes that China's exhibition industry has become a new engine in promoting China's economic development, and also analyzes the functions of the exhibition industry in industrial linkage, economic radiation and enhancing regional competitiveness. Y. H. Lin (2010) argues from political, economic and cultural perspectives that China's exhibition industry has become an important means of regional economic cooperation, building a platform for political diplomacy and optimizing the development of cultural industry in China's opening up to the outside world.

Boggs and Wall (1985) proposed that holding MICE events can attract outsiders and tourists, and increase the consumption income of the place where they are held, among other benefits. The holding of MICE is believed to be very harmful to the healthy and sustainable development of the MICE industry if it is obsessed with economic benefits and ignores other non-economic impacts, such as social and cultural issues. Therefore, it is highly meaningful to consider the economic impact of MICE while it is necessary to study the social and cultural impact and environmental impact of MICE. "The cultural landscape of modern society owes much to the form and content of conventions, which have introduced millions of people to the latest scientific developments such as radium and X-rays ..... technological advances such as the telephone, plastics, and satellites." So stated Rydell and Gwinn (1994) in their co-authorship.

Carman (1968) summarizes several motivations for exhibiting, including sales purposes, showcasing the company's products, meeting new customers, maintaining existing customers, and discovering new technologies in the industry. W. Kim and Walker (2012) focused on the non-economic impacts of large trade show events, analyzing the following five areas.

- (1) A sense of pride in improving community infrastructure.
- (2) Enhancement of the sense of belonging in the community.
- (3) Enhancement of community pride.
- (4) Exhibition event stimulation.
- (5) Community uplift.

Atkinson and Laurier (1998), using the International Maritime Festival as a study, point out that festivals have an impact on the culture and economy of the place where they are held, in addition to other impacts on the social level. In their study, Gursoy, Kim, and Uysal (2004) found that hosting a convention can enhance social cohesion and create social rewards for the local community. This is based on an extensive literature collection, a sample survey of visitors and local residents, and semi-structured interviews with key individuals involved in city management and MICE. Y. S. Guan (2001) explores the particular religious, social, and political characteristics of Malaysian Hindu festivals based on their events. Vahed (2002) examines the impact of hosting festivals on Indian communities, humanity, culture, and local identity. Collins, Jones, and Munday (2009) use ecological footprint analysis and environmental input-output models to measure the impact of large events on the external environment.

In his study, Boissevain (1996) found that one of the important factors that attract tourists to Malta is the annual folklore festival held in Malta. In recent years, in order to promote local tourism and increase local income, the festival has been packaged, presented and promoted as a commodity in Malta. Janiskee (1996) points out that historic buildings within communities are unique tourism resources, but that there is often a lack of attention to the preservation of such historic buildings. The preservation of hardware and facilities.

Prayag, Hosany, Nunkoo, and Alders (2013) used social exchange theory and rational action theory to conduct a comprehensive assessment and analysis of the positive and negative economic, socio-cultural, and environmental impacts of the London 2012 Olympic Games. X. Q. Li and Wen (2007) argue that the way to enhance competitiveness from the perspective of exhibition industry chain is to establish strategic alliance of exhibition tourism to build brand and integrate value chain. Cao (2016) analyzed the comprehensive effects of the conference and

exhibition industry in Harbin city on economy, social culture and ecological environment, and the research results showed that the conference and exhibition industry influenced the economic development level, local foreign investment, industrial structure and financial income of the host city. In terms of social culture, the visibility and image of cities can be enhanced through the exhibition industry, which improves local infrastructure construction and public services and expands the space of the host cities. In terms of ecological environment, the exhibition industry can play a positive role in increasing local vegetation and greenery, but at the same time, it can also have a negative impact on the host city by increasing a large amount of local garbage, affecting air quality and bringing urban noise. J. Liu, Zhang, Gao, and Shen (2018) found that the main reason for polluting the environment is the use of substandard exhibition venues and booth construction materials, while the potential reason for polluting the environment is the unreasonable planning and design of exhibition venues and booths.

Chinese and foreign researchers generally believe that due to the strong correlation and large driving effect of the exhibition industry, a region with a prosperous exhibition industry can drive the development of related industries, such as tourism, transportation, finance and retail, etc. in the region, which has a great impact on the regional economy. Therefore, the possible adverse effects of the exhibition industry should be avoided to the greatest extent, and its positive role should be played to guide the healthy development of the exhibition industry so as to continuously promote the sustainable development of economy, society and environment.

## 2) Research on exhibition evaluation and exhibition standards

Cavanaugh (1976) proposed the conceptual framework for evaluating the performance of exhibitors participating in exhibitions, taking how to obtain target customers and procurement information as the factors to be considered in this framework. Bonoma (1983) divided the performance objectives of exhibitors into two categories, one is selling objectives and the other is non-selling objectives.

### (1) Sales objectives.

(1.1) Identify potential customers.

(1.2) To gain access to key decision makers in current or

potential customers' companies.

(1.3) Promoting products, services or employees.

(1.4) Selling products in the field.

(1.5) To solve current business problems of customers through contacts.

(2) Non-sales objectives.

(1.1) Maintaining the company's image among competitors, consumers and industry.

(1.2) Collecting information on competitors' product prices or other marketing variables.

(1.3) Maintaining or improving company morale.

(1.4) Product testing and evaluation.

Based on Bonoma's findings, Kerin and Cron (1987) conducted a further empirical analysis, which showed that the performance objectives of trade shows could indeed be divided into two categories: sales and non-sales. For example, "new product testing and evaluation" was classified as a non-sales objective in Bonoma's original classification, but was classified as a sales objective in the empirical analysis.

In terms of subjective performance measures, Shoham (1992) mentioned in his study that in the past, subjective performance measures were mostly evaluated for sales objectives until Bonoma's study in 1983, when he proposed a view of performance for non-sales objectives, and since then subjective performance measures have evolved from a single cross-section to a double cross-section. However, although Kerin and Cron (1987) empirical study confirmed the existence of non-sales target performance, the results differed from Bonoma's original classification of the items measured. Shoham (1992) proposed a revised classification. Moreover, Shoham argues that non-sales performance can be further broken down into three cross-sections - access to information, managing relationships with suppliers, and psychological activities. Tanner Jr (2002) also uses a subjective approach to performance measurement, with four levels of exhibitor performance: very successful, successful, unsuccessful, and very unsuccessful.

By the 1990s, some scholars advocated the use of objective indicators to assess exhibitor performance. For example, Gopalakrishna and Williams (1992) established evaluation indicators by studying the amount of business information obtained at trade shows, the number of visitors to booths, and so on, and used these indicators to evaluate the performance of exhibitors, which is more objective. Gopalakrishna, Lilien, Gopalakrishna, Lilien, Williams, and Sequeira (1995) used ROI (Return on Investment) as an indicator of exhibitor performance. The ROI turned from negative to positive at the beginning of the fourth month of the sample. This demonstrates that, under certain controlled circumstances, a manufacturer's budget invested in a trade show can be fully recovered after a certain period of time and start generating profits. Although the study only discussed the performance of one manufacturer at a single trade show, it did quantify and measure the investment associated with exhibiting. In the same year, Gopalakrishna et al. (1995) published a paper on a three-stage, five-process performance measurement model.

Dekimpe, Francois, Gopalakrishna, Lilien, and Van den Bulte (1997) use a performance indicator that combines the first and second stage performance measures developed by Gopalakrishna and Lilien (1995). The algorithm is as follows: number of target audiences approached or attracted to the booth by the salesperson / total number of target audiences. The sample for this study was obtained by commissioning a professional marketing research company and was sourced from a cross section of the UK and US. In his study, Hansen (2004) attempted to develop a systematic and comprehensive model for measuring the performance of trade shows. The five dimensions are the outcome-based sales dimension and four Behavior-based dimensions, namely information-gathering, relationship-building, image building and motivation activities. Hansen suggests that this model can be used to assess the overall performance of the trade fair as well as the performance of the various programmed elements, to diagnose shortcomings and to enhance and improve the organization and design of the fair.

Based on the traditional temporal division of exhibition activities, C. H. Lee and Kim (2008) have studied the determinants of performance in three stages: pre-show, at-show and post-show, and explored the links between each element and its relationship with exhibition performance.

Much of the current academic research on MICE performance evaluation is from the perspective of exhibitors, and the literature summarized above is in this category.

To compensate for the lack of previous research on visitors' evaluation of exhibitions, Berne and Garcia-Uceda (2008) explored potential visitors' criteria for evaluating exhibitions in the exhibition-going decision-making process. By interviewing a certain sample of retailers and using validated factor analysis to develop a TSE evaluation model, they confirmed that potential visitors do have certain structured criteria, and that changes in the direction of a company's operations influence its evaluation criteria. In addition, the results of the study illustrate the differences between exhibitors and visitors, the most important of which is the market research criteria and the fact that trade shows are a very useful market research tool for exhibitors, whereas for visitors this function is not as prominent.

Chinese scholars have been conducting research on the performance evaluation of exhibitions in the light of the Chinese context. S. Z. Chen (2020) proposes that the government's overall assessment of the operation performance of the convention center project includes the annual venue usage rate, annual operation cost, profit level, the content of the assessment during the exhibition period and the operation and management level of the convention company, with the aim of bringing the advantages of the social capital party in the operation and management of a certain convention center project into play and ensuring the effective operation of the project. And its risk evaluation results of the PPP project of J City Convention and Exhibition Centre found that the level of financial affordability risk level is slightly higher than the overall level of the project, therefore, in order to reduce the losses caused by such risks, the social investor of the project should do scientific analysis of the financial revenue capacity of J City Government and formulate corresponding bills to prevent such risks.

X. C. Xiong (2017) summarized the assessment of the 2010 Expo's organizing committee on the city's branch venues, with a clear picture of the assessment work: including the theme and characteristics, the exhibition venue layout of the pavilion's facilities and operations, and the pavilion's signage and guidance system; including the publicity and promotion efforts of the advertising services and

press coverage; including the pavilion staff's work attitude, reception guidelines and professionalism The level of hospitality. Z. Y. Chen (2009) discusses the concept of "evaluation of exhibition projects" and analyses the evaluation subjects of three types of exhibition projects, namely, organizers, higher authorities and third parties. L. B. Cai and Tang (2009) compare the meanings of project evaluation in the narrow sense and project evaluation in the broad sense, and combine them with the related concepts of MICE to arrive at the concept of MICE evaluation. F. P. Yang (2009) constructed a brand exhibition evaluation index system and used AHP hierarchical analysis to analyses the levels and weights of the evaluation indexes.

J. Chen (2009) points out that conference and exhibition evaluation should not be limited to the evaluation of individual conference and exhibition projects or conference and exhibition organizers, but also proposes to build a city conference and exhibition evaluation system so as to make a comprehensive evaluation of the development of the conference and exhibition industry in the whole city. This formulation expands the concept of "conference and exhibition evaluation", encompasses the evaluation system of urban conference and exhibition, and explains conference and exhibition evaluation from a new perspective. On the whole, it seems that the current research on conference and exhibition evaluation in China is still biased towards the evaluation of conference and exhibition projects, and the situation of "emphasizing exhibitions but not conferences" has emerged. The researcher also points out that the content of the index system of urban conference and exhibition assessment consists of three parts (primary indexes): conference and exhibition environment, conference and exhibition performance and conference and exhibition effect. The author only preliminarily explores the primary, secondary and tertiary indicators contained in the urban conference and exhibition assessment system, and describes them quantitatively, focusing on how to transform the quantitative indicators into quantitative assessment results by using the five-level scoring method combined with the expert meeting method and the Delphi method. Regarding the content of the primary, secondary and tertiary indicators proposed by the author, there is currently a wide divergence of views in the industry and academic circles, and no consensus has been formed, and the divergence exists in all sectors of the conference and exhibition assessment.

S. P. Liu and Liang (2004) summarized the 16 most important indicators for assessing the quality of exhibitions in the United States and their importance ratings. ", "number of exhibitors", while Chinese exhibitions focus more on "number of exhibitors", "exhibition area", "number of professional visitors", "number of exhibitors", "number of exhibitors", "number of exhibitors" and "number of exhibitors". "number of professional visitors", "on-site turnover and intended turnover" and other indicators. In comparison, the exhibition evaluation system in the United States is more mature, but it is not entirely suitable for China's exhibition evaluation, which is related to the stage of development of China's exhibition industry and the current demand of China's exhibition evaluation market.

N. Ma (2007) gives a new positioning to the exhibition industry, i.e. a service industry category alongside tourism, commerce and finance, etc., and puts forward the idea of constructing a standard system on this basis: the exhibition standard system includes basic standards, technical standards, management standards, service standards, information standards, safety and health standards, and environmental protection standards. J. Yang and Gu (2009) empirically investigated the situation of the 6th China (Shanghai) International Electronics Industry Exhibition held on 11 July 2007, and used IPA analysis to analyse the importance of the main factors influencing participation in the exhibition from the combination of exhibitors' expectations and actual perceptions of the exhibition.

Of course, some scholars have also conducted research on the issue of conference and exhibition evaluation and standards, pointing out that there are certain problems with conference and exhibition evaluation and conference and exhibition standards. Z. Y. Chen (2009) put forward the problems in China's conference and exhibition evaluation, pointing out that it is more difficult to obtain authority for conference and exhibition project evaluation, which must be supported by the government, and that it is still not possible to rely entirely on marketization to carry out conference and exhibition project evaluation work at present. F. P. Yang (2009) summarizes the problems in conference and exhibition evaluation: there are many industries involved in conference and exhibition, how to standardize the evaluation results for comparison: many factors in evaluating conference and exhibition projects can be quantified, but due to different types, the measurement units used are also

different and cannot be converted between each other, so it is naturally impossible to compare them: how to establish the relationship between evaluation elements, if only a single item is selected for comparison in the evaluation of conference and exhibition projects, it is not easy to reach clear conclusions: the relationship between evaluation elements is not easy to reach clear conclusions. It is not easy to draw clear conclusions if only a single item is selected for comparison: how to quantify the subjective indicators in the assessment elements.

Z. L. Li (2007) pointed out the reference and limitations of the UFI accreditation model to China's exhibition assessment, saying that the UFI accreditation standards cannot fully summarize the actual situation and needs of China's exhibition industry, and that the UFI accreditation model focuses on "accreditation" and there is a difference between accreditation and assessment. Qian (2007) proposed that the service standard system of the exhibition industry in Jiangsu Province includes basic standards, facility standards, service standards and methodological standards, but it is too general and general, and only qualitative in its exposition, which lacks persuasive power. F. P. Yang (2009) constructed a brand exhibition evaluation index system and applied AHP hierarchical analysis to analyze the levels and weights of evaluation indexes. S. B. Zhang (2012) applied the SERVQUAL model and designed and constructed the customer service quality measurement system of PZ exhibition Center according to the widespread application of SERVQUAL model in various service fields, and designed a system of 25 secondary indicators under six indexes according to the characteristics of services in the exhibition industry.

H. X. Wang (2012) of East China Normal University conducted an empirical study on the exhibitor performance evaluation model and finally established a set of exhibitor effectiveness evaluation model consisting of 30 evaluation indicators. The model is divided into six dimensions to assess the performance of exhibitors, namely "economic gain effect", "display effect and relationship cultivation effect", "existing business and brand promotion effect". The model is divided into six dimensions to assess the performance of a company's participation in the exhibition: "economic benefits", "presentation and relationship building", "existing business and branding", "new business development and internal organizational efficiency", "public

outreach" and "industry information access".

Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA) is a new field of research at the intersection of operations research, management science and mathematical economics. It is a quantitative analysis method to evaluate the relative effectiveness of comparable units of the same type based on multiple input indicators and multiple output indicators using linear programming methods. J. X. Liang and Lv (2015) used principal component analysis and data envelopment analysis to evaluate the input and output indicators of the performance of the agricultural exhibition industry in Heilongjiang Province, and the results of the study showed that the inputs of the agricultural exhibition industry in Heilongjiang Province were quantitative but not qualitative, showing a DEA invalid state. Based on this, the agricultural exhibition industry in Heilongjiang Province should build diversified supply bodies, improve the quality of agricultural exhibition talents, and promote the branding and internationalization of agricultural exhibitions.

Y. Y. Yu (2015), Shanghai University of Engineering and Technology, takes SWOT analysis of exhibition venues as the background and the six forces interaction model as the research basis to explore the operation and management of large exhibition centers and constructs an evaluation system for the operation performance of exhibition venues, which includes six first-level indicators: A1 business indicators, A2 economic benefits, A3 service quality, A4 management level, A5 development potential and A6 green exhibition management. It also contains 30 secondary indicators.

To sum up, at present, the research on exhibition evaluation and exhibition standards is still in the development stage in countries all over the world, and researchers focus more on the evaluation of exhibitors' inputs and outputs, whether performance targets are achieved and the construction of evaluation indicators and models, and on the construction of evaluation systems and standards, but no large scale or relatively complete scientific system has been formed so far. Overseas research on exhibition evaluation is inclined to microscopic research, with emphasis on research on the evaluation of exhibition performance. Researchers in China, on the other hand, are inclined to macroscopic research, and quantitative research is obviously less than qualitative research, with research findings generally

staying at the stage of exploration, keen on exploring exhibition evaluation indicators or models, while quantitative research on exhibition evaluation, especially on exhibitor evaluation and organizers is very rare. Research on exhibition-related standards is also very scarce. As there are many industries involved in MICE and many influencing factors, it is difficult to establish the relationship between assessment elements and to quantify the subjective indicators in the assessment elements, therefore, the assessment of standards in the MICE industry is a huge and complicated project, which is a major topic worthy of researchers' study.

### 3) Study on the development of regional exhibition industry and urban exhibition

One of the popular focuses of scholars' research on MICE is the interactive relationship between the MICE industry and regional development. According to Fang (2009), since the reform and opening up, China's exhibition industry has initially formed an exhibition industry belt with Shanghai in East China, Guangzhou in South China and Beijing in North China as the regional core. At the same time, the exhibition industry belt in Northeast China centered on Dalian and Changchun, and the exhibition industry belt in Central and Western China centered on Xi'an and Chengdu are taking shape.

L. Wang (2020) takes the convention and exhibition industry in the Yangtze River Delta region as an example and points out that in recent years, along with the rapid growth of the convention and exhibition economy, the convention and exhibition industry in the Yangtze River Delta region has also developed vigorously. However, from an overall perspective, there are still some factors restricting the development of the exhibition industry in the Yangtze River Delta region, such as the unbalanced development of the exhibition industry in the Yangtze River Delta region, independent development among cities, homogeneous positioning of cities and unreasonable overall industrial layout, which makes it difficult to produce scale effects because of the inability to achieve synergistic development and industry linkage in the region.

H. Y. Hao (2020) points out that the overall development capacity of the exhibition industry in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region is strong, but the development level varies greatly. According to the growth pole development theory, the growth pole of the exhibition industry in the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region is Beijing, and in order to realize its diffusion effect, the major exhibition cities in Beijing, Tianjin and Hebei should define their own growth centers and then form certain local exhibition complexes, and then form economies of scale and realize the diffusion effect by means of union and integration, so that the exhibition industry in the region can develop synergistically.

C. L. Wu (2018) studied the overall impact of the development of Xiamen's MICE economy on Xiamen and found that it has boosted Xiamen's economic growth. However, it has also brought about social and ecological problems, such as traffic congestion during the exhibition period causing inconvenience to local residents, rising property prices, intrusion of foreign cultures, new pavilions and artificial beaches, and the publication of advertising and promotional materials, which have caused negative ecological impacts.

Niu (2016) points out that the exhibition economy plays a positive role in the economic development of cities. Firstly, the exhibition industry finds an excellent platform for the investment attraction work and import and export trade enterprises of the host city to promote, exchange, communicate and cooperate. Secondly, the exhibition industry can gather a huge flow of people, logistics and information in a short time, and the catering, tourism, transportation and accommodation industries in the host city have to serve the exhibition industry, so it can drive the employment of people and the economic development of related industries. Furthermore, the exhibition industry can promote the optimization of industrial structure and enhance the service function of the city. The exhibition industry promotes the industrial structure of the host city from labor-intensive to capital-intensive and then to knowledge- and technology-intensive, so that the industrial structure can be optimized continuously. At the same time, MICE cities will continue to improve their public service capacity to obtain the hosting right. Finally, the exhibition industry shapes the brand of the host city and enhances the influence of the city.

Tian (2006) analyzed the application of industrial layout theory and spatial layout theory to the layout of the exhibition industry and explored the influence of the spatial layout of the exhibition industry on urban spatial differences and regional spatial differences. Y. M. Huang, Long, and Huang (2020) proposed that agricultural exhibitions are an important window for opening up the agricultural economy to the outside world, which can integrate resources, broaden the sales channels of agricultural products, have a strong role in promoting agricultural trade, enhance the visibility of agricultural products and promote the development of regional economy. Qi (2006) analyzed the impact of these factors on the competitiveness of exhibition and tourism cities in terms of economic, social and cultural, technological and other relevant environmental factors. C. J. Liu (2004) discussed the realistic basis of cooperation in the exhibition industry in the Yangtze River Delta and the overall positioning of exhibition cooperation and the positioning of major central cities. X. Jiang (2012) analyzed the basic features and functional system of regional MICE cooperation as well as the specific content and research framework system of regional economic development theory on the basis of the reality of MICE cooperation in the Pearl River Delta. X. L. Liu (2008) explored the intrinsic relationship between the exhibition industry and the competitiveness of regional cities.

Some scholars also explore the relationship between the MICE industry and regional development in a certain region at the micro level. A. X. Chen, Lin, and Li (2007) take Zhejiang Province as an example to analyse the factors affecting the development capacity of the city, and explore the convention and exhibition capacity and countermeasures to improve it. Ye (2007) analyzed the interaction between the exhibition industry and industrial base in Hunan and the problems existing in the interaction, and discussed the development ideas of Hunan's exhibition industry based on the interaction between the two, which provided a good reference for the development of regional exhibition industry. X. Li and Ma (2008) point out that the decision-making behavior of MICE tourists and the marketing organization of MICE destinations (MICE tourism bureau) are two of the four major themes of foreign MICE tourism research, indicating that the development of regional MICE industry should be closely linked with its related industry tourism.

Some scholars have conducted research specifically on cities that host conventions and exhibitions. D. Y. Shen (2008) pointed out that MICE cities can be divided into three grades: international MICE cities, famous MICE cities in China and regional MICE cities, and analyzed the conditions that need to be met for MICE in different cities. He pointed out that a recognized exhibition centre city should have at least three basic conditions: first, a moderate geographical location and well-developed transportation; second, perfect urban exhibition facilities and related infrastructure such as transportation, communication, hotels and restaurants; and third, comprehensive and efficient social services for exhibition activities.

Gong (2007) believes that cities should focus on the endowment conditions of the city's conference and exhibition resources, combine with the development of the conference and exhibition market, find the positioning of the type and scale of the city's conference and exhibition, regional positioning, positioning of professional characteristics and positioning of the city's image, and take the road of differentiated conference and exhibition economic development as the primary issue for the development of the city's conference and exhibition economy. L. B. Cai and Shen (2011) analyze the concept, significance and basis of positioning of exhibition, and believe that the positioning of exhibition in a city needs to be considered from the city's economic foundation, location conditions, urban infrastructure and development of service industry.

To sum up, regarding the development of regional exhibition industry, researchers generally focus on studying the influence of exhibition on regional or district economy from the aspects of spatial distribution of exhibition, industrial distribution and types of exhibition, as well as studying factors affecting the development of urban and regional exhibition industry and exploring strategies and methods to solve them, which provide good ideas for the development of exhibition business and provide good reference for the development of regional exhibition industry, but most of the studies stay more in making suggestions. It is indisputable that the influence of the exhibition industry on the development of cities is positive, and exhibitions can drive the development of other industries. However, the development of regional convention and exhibition economy will be constrained by a variety of factors, such as whether the government attaches importance to it, whether

it has economic strength, whether the industrial layout of enterprises is reasonable, whether the development positioning is accurate, whether the transportation is convenient, whether the infrastructure facilities are perfect, whether the society and culture are attractive, whether the theme features of the convention and exhibition are prominent, whether the location advantage is obvious, whether the environment is good, whether the talent reserve is sufficient, whether it has All these factors may affect the smooth development of the exhibition industry in a region or city.

#### 4) Research on the management and service quality of conference and exhibition

There are relatively more research perspectives on the management of conference and exhibition enterprises, mainly including conference and exhibition marketing strategy, conference and exhibition economic development mode, development strategy, conference and exhibition brand, conference and exhibition industry chain, etc.

According to R. Hao (2020), the era of big data brings more new opportunities for the development of conference and exhibition enterprises, and conference and exhibition enterprises have entered into the mode of precision marketing, which promotes the development of conference and exhibition industry marketing in the direction of intelligence, informationization and precision. J. Liu and Shen (2020) find that more and more technological means are being used in various aspects of the exhibition industry, and the use of these technologies provides comprehensive, thoughtful and meticulous services for exhibition organizers and exhibitors. For example, VR technology, intelligent firefighting, 5G technology and the use of big data. At the same time, the exhibition centre also uses various technologies to build technological venues and smart venues.

Bai (2012) points out that the exhibition project is very strict in terms of time requirements, so it is necessary to achieve reasonable and effective time management. At the same time, exhibition projects do not involve any manufacturing process and all activities are carried out by people, so human resource management is particularly important in exhibition project management. Human resource management is all about the role of "people", so firstly, there must be a specific management plan: a written plan and assignment of project tasks, responsibilities and

reporting relationships, an organizational chart with each task assigned to an individual and a single person responsible for each task. Secondly, there should be good team development: through increased training, performance appraisals, etc. to ensure team execution and to ensure the success of the exhibition project by improving the effectiveness of individual and teamwork.

From the perspective of resource allocation efficiency, Ouyang (2009) puts forward three exhibition models of government-led, market-oriented and government-market combined with the advantages of resources of multiple subjects. X. Y. Li (2008) discussed the problems of Chinese enterprises' exhibition marketing from the perspective of economic globalization and put forward five innovative strategies for China's exhibition marketing.

Baker and Crompton (2000) divided the 18 service items into four facets to measure the service quality of festival Expo: "general features", "special entertainment features" and "information sources". "Information Sources" and "Leisure Facilities", with "General Features" representing the features included in the festival. Breiter and Milman (2006) used Importance Performance Analysis (IPA) to understand the importance of facilities and services for visitors to large convention centers and to identify gaps in visitors' demand for software and hardware facilities respectively. Visitors generally rated "signage" and "adequate toilets" as the most important services in a convention Centre, while visitors rated "adequate public networking" and "better catering" as the most important. and "better catering services" were less important. Surprisingly, gaps in the software facilities section were found in the services 'assistance from other exhibition Center staff' and 'website design for the HKCEC'. There were 12 gaps in the hardware facilities. The results of the study prove that visitors attach different importance to the hardware and software facilities of exhibition centers, and the study also suggests that venue managers can use this to understand the needs of their customers, as a successful exhibition or event will lead to more people attending the exhibition or event again in the future, as the process of organizing an exhibition is also a process of building a brand in the minds of the participants.

Although, Severt, Wang, Chen, and Breiter (2007); Breiter and Milman (2006) focus on conference topics, there were significant differences in the items measured due to the differences in topics. Severt et al. (2007) used a sample of 150 SOHO2003 visitors to rate the services provided at the event. The study used principal component analysis to classify the service offerings into two clusters, activities and opportunities and learning benefits, and showed that learning benefits were highly correlated with overall satisfaction.

Ling-Yee (2007) collated past scales used to test trade shows and found that of the six scales studied, the highest correlation was with general management knowledge assets, and that for exhibitors, the ability to liaise and expertise is an important item in exhibition services. -Yee suggests that exhibitors should strengthen their expertise and increase the use of relationship marketing in the future to ensure their competitiveness in trade shows. J. Yuan and Jang (2008) measured the service quality of wine festivals in terms of three factors: facilities, wine and organization. Facilities include entertaining live music, arts and crafts that add to the festival, very suitable location, and professional staff with expertise. Wine includes a wide range of wines and a variety of wine merchants. Organization includes short waiting lines, high variety, well-planned activities and reasonable participation fees. When discussing the service quality of festivals and Expos, the factors often distinguished are the theme, the various hardware facilities, the organization of the planned activities, etc. Whitfield and Webber (2011) analyses and summaries the service factors that influence the repeat attendance rate of an Expo, and conclude that enriching the number and variety of new products on display can increase visitor attendance through IPA analysis. revisit rates.

In summary, research on MICE services and management has generally focused on the mode of MICE marketing, the construction of MICE brands, the quality of MICE services and customer satisfaction with MICE. There are two major categories of business provided by MICE for customers, one of which is tangible physical products, including physical products, exhibition hall environment, facilities and equipment. The other category is intangible products, which are mainly reflected in the quality of services. Unlike physical products, service quality must be assessed in the process of service delivery, and customers' satisfaction with service

quality is based on a comparison between their actual perception of the service and their expectations of the service. Service quality is a competitive advantage, and the emphasis on service quality not only brings substantial practical benefits to the company, but also creates more intangible added value, such as word of mouth and reputation. Different industries have different requirements for quality, for example, the manufacturing industry aims for zero defects, while service providers aim for zero customer betrayal. In order to stand out in the highly competitive exhibition industry, perfecting service quality is the key to success. At present, there are still a few studies on service quality in exhibitions, and scholars differ in exploring the same type of studies based on different research purposes.

#### 5) Other research on exhibitions

With the concrete implementation of China's "One Belt, One Road" strategy, the exhibition industry, as a platform for economic and trade cooperation, will play an increasingly important role in promoting economic and trade cooperation between China and its neighboring countries and regions. Researchers such as Zhai (2021); Y. Zhao (2020); J. N. He (2019) study the relationship between MICE and the "One Belt, One Road" strategy, and they believe that under the background of the "One Belt, One Road" strategy, it will bring many opportunities and challenges to the development of China's MICE industry and challenges for the development of China's exhibition industry. The 41st World Expo hosted by China, the Shanghai World Expo 2010 has become a representative of China's high-level exhibitions, and Chinese scholars also recognize the importance of education and human resources in the MICE industry.

H. Jin (2004) pointed out that the development status and characteristics of international conference and exhibition education are the rapid increase of tourism colleges and universities offering conference and exhibition majors and courses, the complete system of conference and exhibition courses, the speed of complete and updated conference and exhibition teaching materials, and the gap between conference and exhibition education of international tourism colleges and universities and China.

J. H. Wu (2008) expounded three misunderstandings between conference and exhibition theoretical education and conference and exhibition practical education, and proposed four ways to cope with conference and exhibition education. Chen (2008) proposed that China's conference and exhibition education should take vocational education as the main body and the construction of ladder conference and exhibition human resources as the training mode. L. Xu and Qiao (2009) believe that the further development of conference and exhibition economy should focus on the cultivation of compound talents. N. Xu (2020) points out that the conference and exhibition profession belongs to application-oriented profession and needs to cultivate application-oriented talents, but the current situation of conference and exhibition education is that there is a disconnection between conference and exhibition talents education and actual work demand of enterprises.

H. J. Song and Hong (2020) underscored the problems in the exhibition operation training program of conference and exhibition majors, and the mismatch between the number of positions and the number of students, the mismatch between the requirements of positions and the needs of students, the mismatch between the time nodes of positions and the time of students' participation, and the mismatch between the training of positions and the content of induction, etc.

B. Zhao (2021) analyzed the existing talent training mode of conference and exhibition majors in higher vocational colleges and universities, deeply analyzed the main problems existing in the process of talent training of higher vocational conference and exhibition majors, and explored the strategies for the construction of talent training mode of conference and exhibition majors in higher vocational colleges and universities under the background of industry-education integration from the aspects of industry-education integration, human training program, practical training base, teaching team, etc., in order to solve the main There are also many studies from different perspectives.

Besides, there are also many studies from different perspectives. For example, research on the relationship between exhibition stakeholders (Goldblatt, 2002; McDonnell, Allen, & Toole, 1999); research on customer satisfaction index model consisting of customer expectation, perceived quality, perceived value, customer satisfaction, customer complaint and customer loyalty (Fornell, Johnson,

Anderson, Cha, & Bryant, 1996); research on exhibition success factors (Smith, Hama, & Smith, 2001; Tanner Jr, 2002); research on exhibition human resources (McCabe, 2008); research on exhibition site selection (Chacko & Fenich, 2000; Crouch & Louviere, 2004); destination image research (Baloglu & Love, 2005; Oppermann, 1996); brand equity research (Camarero, Garrido, & Vicente, 2010).

Under the influence of economic globalization, the scope of research on MICE has become more and more extensive, involving other aspects related to MICE, such as the impact of "One Belt, One Road" on MICE development, MICE education, talent training, etc. These researches help to explore the influence of MICE.

### **2.3.2 Literature Review of CAEXPO**

Based on a review on CAEXPO literature, it is found that Chinese researchers have conducted relatively few studies on the Expo, and the research results are mainly presented in the form of papers. The main research contents are roughly grouped into five categories, namely, research on the sustainable development of CAEXPO; research on the socio-economic impact of CAEXPO on Guangxi; research on CAEXPO's participation in the influence of Guangxi and sub-regional cooperation; research on the management of CAEXPO, and research on the publicity of CAEXPO. The research methods include qualitative research methods, quantitative research methods, mixed research methods and so on. Many of the above research results provide good reference values for the success, branding and sustainable development of CAEXPO, which makes CAEXPO more and more competitive in the international arena.

#### **1) Research on the sustainable development of CAEXPO**

The series of CAEXPO Development Report published by Guangxi Normal University Press, which is organized by the official organization of CAEXPO, has been published 10 volumes since 2008, and the series is the most complete yearbook-style work to study CAEXPO, which faithfully records every aspect of the process of holding CAEXPO with the writing method of chronicle, and becomes the study of the book is the most outstanding result and indispensable reference document for the study of CAEXPO.

X. T. Song, Du, and Zheng (2009) compiled a series of important speeches of the central leaders and leaders of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region on the holding of the expo in the Concise Report on the Development of CAEXPO (2004-2008), on the basis of which the whole writing framework was designed from the perspective of the project process of the expo, which gives an account of the origin of CAEXPO, analyzes the role of different government subjects in the preparation and The book explains the origin of CAEXPO, analyzes the role of different government subjects and the operation mechanism of the Expo in the process of organizing the Expo, and on this basis records in detail the opening ceremony, on-site exhibition activities, related activities and service support system supporting the Expo, and gives an overview of the results and impacts of the Expo, and finally puts forward a feasible plan for the continuation of CAEXPO.

Y. Y. Gu (2004) introduces in more detail the whole process of CAEXPO from initiative, research, decision to implementation, and is an important document that combines the strategic layout of the central government's opening up to the outside world and the external work of Guangxi Autonomous Region for research.

S. Z. Li (2005) focuses on the internationalization strategy in the operation of CAEXPO, and puts forward feasible paths and countermeasures in four aspects: internationalization content selection, internationalization operation mechanism, internationalization soft environment and internationalization talent resources.

X. Y. Sun (2005), for the first time, considers the sustainable development of CAEXPO in the context of China's peripheral diplomatic strategy, and believes that Expo is a concrete manifestation of the Chinese government's peripheral diplomatic strategy of "good neighbor, safe neighbor, and rich neighbor", and proposes specific measures that CAEXPO should take to implement the peripheral diplomatic strategy. The specific measures that should be taken to implement the peripheral diplomatic strategy.

In the book "China-ASEAN Expo Sustainable Development Report", X. S. Gu (2009) has made a detailed analysis of the experience and problems during the operation of the first to the fifth CAEXPO, and has proposed the overall goal, basic model and main tasks of sustainable development, and pointed out the path and

countermeasures for sustainable capacity building. The book is a more important work on the development of CAEXPO.

H. Y. Lu (2011) discusses the platform and leverage role of CAEXPO in the process of establishing China-ASEAN FTA, and H. Y. Lu (2011) even summarizes the strategic platform role as a platform for political diplomacy, economic and trade promotion and regional cooperation between China and ASEAN countries, which deepens the perception of the function of frontier area expositions. L. P. Fan (2011) analyzed the role and significance of the CAEXPO in constructing China's ASEAN identity from a constructivist perspective. Tao (2011) analyzed the CAEXPO in the framework of government-led exhibitions and focused on the advantages and disadvantages of government-led exhibitions, based on which he proposed six reform and development ideas on the development path of CAEXPO, such as improving marketization, strategizing, innovating forms and contents, transforming and innovating, informatization and talent strategy. B. Tang (2012) discussed the sustainable development of the CAEXPO, and the author analyzed the sustainable development of the CAEXPO in terms of the functions it undertakes.

L. P. Xu (2014) meticulously discusses the role of humanistic exchanges in China's relations with neighboring countries, while pointing out seven paths of educational exchanges, cultural exchanges, etc. in humanistic exchanges between China and neighboring countries, and discusses in detail bilateral and multilateral mechanisms of humanistic exchanges, especially pointing out the role of CAEXPO, China-Northeast Asia Expo and other frontier area fairs in humanistic exchanges. The role of multilateral platforms in humanities exchanges is particularly pointed out. Z. Z. Yang (2014) discusses the influence and constraints of Sino-US relations in China's connectivity with neighboring countries, considers CAEXPO, China-Northeast Asia Expo, and China-Asia-Europe Expo as communication platforms for building connectivity between China and neighboring countries, and proposes three targeted countermeasures for building connectivity.

In summary, by 2020, the CAEXPO has been successfully held for 16 consecutive sessions, and the regional influence of the Expo is relatively large, attracting more and more scholars to study it. One of the common concerns of scholars is the sustainable development of CAEXPO, exploring the future reform and

development ideas of the expo in terms of the mode of holding the expo, the results achieved, the functions of the expo and the future development strategies, and offering suggestions, which provide more references for the organizers and have great theoretical and practical significance.

## 2) Research on the socio-economic impact of CAEXPO on Guangxi

Regarding the literature on the influence of CAEXPO on Guangxi, most of these works are some chapters in books or papers, and there is no systematic research on the relationship between CAEXPO and the social and economic development of Guangxi in the form of whole books. There are papers included in the 2006 Guangxi Blue Book of Guangxi Economic Situation Analysis and Forecast by Q. Q. Zhong (2005). "CAEXPO -- the far-reaching influence on Guangxi's economic and social development"; "Research on economic and social development of Guangxi driven by bigger exhibition industry" by Zheng (2011b); "Analysis of the influence of CAEXPO on Guangxi's import and export and countermeasures" by B. Liu (2004); "Strategic concept of Guangxi using CAEXPO to accelerate its open development and countermeasures suggestions" by B. Liu, Ling, Mo, and Liu (2007).

S. Z. Li (2004) pointed out that the holding of the exhibition industry would bring a strong correlation drive effect, and the CAEXPO held in Nanning would bring huge economic and social benefits to Guangxi, such as industrial upgrading, system reform and increase of jobs. At the same time, the success of the exposition, especially in the early stage of holding, the government's support in terms of funds, policies and environment is crucial. The government should focus on the macro management of the exhibition industry, such as establishing and improving the policies and laws related to the exhibition industry, maintaining good market order and building good exhibition facilities. S. Z. Li (2003) conducted an in-depth study on the site selection of CAEXPO. The research comprehensively analyzed the advantages of Nanning in holding CAEXPO, such as location advantage, traffic advantage, comparative trade advantage, environmental advantage, humanistic advantage and policy advantage, and also made a more in-depth discussion on the constraints such as ideology, institutional mechanism, human resources and industrial base that restrict the advantages of Nanning city.

In introducing the influence of the exposition on Guangxi's economic development, it is worth mentioning that B. Liu (2004) suggests the important influence that the exposition will have on Guangxi's import and export as a platform for Guangxi's export-oriented economic development, which was foreseen at the beginning of the exposition. B. Liu (2004) also discusses that the expo improves the level of trade between Guangxi and ASEAN, improves the level of opening up of Guangxi, analyzes the impact of the expo on Guangxi's import and export from the above aspects and puts forward relevant countermeasures.

X. Q. Guan (2004) combined the CAEXPO with the construction of Nanning international city, and made a more comprehensive explanation of the significance of holding the CAEXPO for Guangxi's location advantages, and believed that Guangxi would become a regional logistics center, trade center and processing and manufacturing center between China and ASEAN in the future, and on this basis, he comprehensively discussed the advantages of holding the CAEXPO in Nanning. On this basis, he comprehensively discussed the advantages of Nanning's location in hosting the CAEXPO, and also pointed out the gaps and performance of Nanning from the international metropolis, and finally gave five aspects of targeted construction ideas.

X. J. Fan (2004) analyzed four effects of CAEXPO for Guangxi: the first one is a new engine to promote Guangxi's leapfrog development, the second one is a gas pedal for Guangxi to participate in regional economic cooperation, the third one is an opportunity for Nanning to build an international metropolis, and the fourth one is a window and platform for humanistic exchanges.

Y. Zhou (2004) interpreted the opportunities and challenges brought to Guangxi by CAEXPO from the perspective of national interests and national strategies, and believed that the location advantages and historical opportunities Guangxi has in the process of holding CAEXPO will be magnified, and will also impact the old local concepts, government system, development strategy, investment environment, regional opening and internationalized talents, etc., and accordingly gave a change of concepts. S. P. Liu (2005) has made specific recommendations on the challenges of China. S. P. Liu (2005) is more specific in her study on CAEXPO and the positioning and construction of Nanning city. This researcher believes that

Nanning has the potential to become the central city of China-ASEAN Economic Circle, and that the collaborative role, leading role, cooperation, pulling effect and policy resources of CAEXPO can be used to achieve the goal of building the central city of Nanning in China-ASEAN Economic Circle.

Bao (2005) discussed the driving mechanism of CAEXPO to Guangxi industry from the economic development function of the Expo, the overall impact on industrial development, and finally proposed the technical path of using Expo to develop Guangxi industry. Q. Q. Zhong (2005) believes that CAEXPO provides a strong theoretical support for building Guangxi by adjusting the macroeconomic structure of the autonomous region through trade and investment. Y. P. Shen and Xu (2006) examined the impact and influence brought by CAEXPO to Guangxi government from the perspective of government functions, and argued that after the task of hosting CAEXPO, Guangxi local government must change its working style, working ideas, and ideology, and actively transform to a service-oriented government, and also improve its foreign affairs coordination ability.

D. H. Yang, Li, and Zhang (2007) regard the Expo as a kind of new industrial growth point in Nanning City, and the focus of the research is to make the interaction between the Expo and the industrial development of Nanning, to establish a sound mechanism, and to make an empirical analysis on the industry-driven effect of the Expo, and to propose relevant constraints according to the analysis. The study focuses on the interaction between the expo and the industrial development of Nanning, the establishment of a sound mechanism, and the empirical analysis of the industry-led effect of the expo. X. S. Gu (2009) made an empirical analysis on the impact of CAEXPO on Guangxi's socio-economy based on the data since the Expo was held five years ago, in terms of the impact of the Expo on the development of Guangxi's GDP and the impact on Guangxi's investment, consumption, import and export trade.

These literatures provide research clues for the relationship between the exposition and Guangxi export-oriented economy, but most of these literatures are limited to the time period at the beginning of the exposition, without informative data to support the comparative study, and then quantify the impact of the exposition on Guangxi's economy and society through data.

Xie (2012) proposed suggestions to optimize government economic behavior from the perspective of government behavior on the development of the exhibition industry. Z. Y. Huang (2013a) links the CAEXPO with the second great opening wave of Guangxi to examine its significance and influence on Guangxi's opening up to the outside world, arguing that the first two waves created three major miracles: first, the localization of the central strategy, second, the centralization of the local strategy, and third, the internationalization of the regional opening, and elaborates the performance of the three miracles, initially revealing that the CAEXPO, the central peripheral strategy and the complex interaction between the opening strategy of Guangxi Autonomous Region, and finally proposed suggestions and countermeasures to promote the establishment of China-ASEAN Bank for the third great opening of Guangxi.

Y. S. Lv (2013) comprehensively summarized the effectiveness of the development of CAEXPO in its 10th anniversary, and made a detailed summary, sorting and analysis of the impact of the Expo on both China and Guangxi, and finally concluded that a profound grasp of economic globalization and regional integration is a prerequisite for running CAEXPO, emphasizing the trust, vision and consensus between the leaders of China and ASEAN countries. The importance of trust, vision and consensus between the leaders of China and ASEAN countries, as well as the significance of the innovative 11-country co-hosting mechanism and hardware and software environment for the success of the CAEXPO.

L. Zhang and Huang (2014) studied the "Nanning Channel" formed by various mechanisms and platforms under the framework of CAEXPO, pointing out that the Nanning Channel has a broad and narrow sense, and on this basis, they summarized and classified the specific manifestations of the Nanning Channel, clearly pointing out that the Nanning Channel has 13 attributes such as comprehensive, diversified, diplomatic, etc. It is clearly pointed out that the Nanning channel has 13 attributes, such as comprehensive, pluralistic and diplomatic, and the active role of the Nanning channel in four levels, such as international, domestic, Guangxi and Nanning, etc. Finally, the main practices and experiences of the Nanning channel are summarized. C. Wang (2014) conducted a case-based study on the bilateral trade impact of the CAEXPO, and the article gives an optimized path for the Expo to

promote trade between China and Vietnam on the basis of empirical research.

In summary, studies on the socio-economic impact of the CAEXPO were more frequent in the first years of the Expo and fewer papers were found in the recent years. It can be shown that in the first few years, people are still more worried about whether the exposition can achieve the expected effect. With the successive success of the Expo, we can really feel the great changes brought by the Expo to Guangxi and Nanning City. The great impact of the CAEXPO on economic growth has, to a certain extent, excluded everyone's worries and made them more and more confident in the Expo.

### 3) Study on the impact of CAEXPO's involvement in Guangxi and sub-regional cooperation

Zheng (2011b) summarizes the achievements of China - ASEAN FTA, outlines the expo as a booster of FTA, reflects the expo as a platform for the FTA from various aspects such as the process of FTA establishment and the results achieved by bilateral trade and investment between China and ASEAN in the context of FTA. The constructive significance of the FTA. It also introduces the irreplaceable role of the CAEXPO in the field of sub-regional cooperation and multilateral cooperation between China and ASEAN. It is a more detailed study of the relationship between the CAEXPO and the China-ASEAN FTA, and is indispensable for understanding the constructive significance of the CAEXPO as a platform for the FTA. Most of these works study the CAEXPO from a particular research perspective or combine the Expo with other research objects.

X. Du, Deng, and Li (2005) regard the CAEXPO as a new model for promoting regional economic integration in East Asia and regional cooperation in Asia. X. G. Li (2005) took Guangxi, Yunnan, Hainan, and Guangdong, the provinces located in China's ASEAN-oriented frontier zone, and analyzed them in terms of their geographical location, economic conditions, and strategies developed on the basis of their own advantageous conditions. Y. He (2007) focused earlier on the important role of CAEXPO in promoting Guangxi's integration into regional economic cooperation, and the authors argued that CAEXPO needs institutional, economic and cultural impetus for Guangxi's integration into the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) economic cooperation, and that Guangxi's integration into GMS economic

cooperation should be promoted with the advantages of CAEXPO.

C. Y. Xiong and Liu (2019) elaborated the importance of CAEXPO's openness and cooperation, which should be devoted to promoting China-ASEAN good neighborliness and mutually beneficial cooperation, and helping to build a closer China-ASEAN community of destiny. Z. Y. Huang (2013b) believes that the biggest advantage of Guangxi is in its location, and the most fundamental way out is in opening up, and strives to create a new situation of opening up and cooperation. L. P. Fan (2011) takes the CAEXPO as a successful case of collective identity and positive identity between China and ASEAN as the research object, and points out that building positive identity between China and ASEAN remains a heavy responsibility for both sides. H. L. Chen (2012) examined the status, role and function of local governments in participating in sub-regional cooperation, and specifically argued the indispensable role of local governments in sub-regional cooperation, taking Guangxi's participation in the Greater Mekong Sub-regional Economic Cooperation and CAEXPO in ASEAN cooperation as examples.

To sum up, influenced by the Asian financial turmoil and the growing trend of regional economic integration, openness and win-win cooperation have become the consensus between China and ASEAN and even Asian countries, and only by strengthening cooperation and working together on development plans can we effectively cope with the many threats brought by the unpredictable international situation. Researchers generally agree that the CAEXPO is playing an increasingly important role in promoting multilateral cooperation between China and Asian countries, including the promotion of "Greater Mekong Sub-regional Economic Cooperation", "Pan-Beibu Gulf Economic Cooperation" and "21st Century Maritime Silk Road". It is important to promote the cooperation and sharing of the "21st Century Maritime Silk Road".

#### 4) Research on the Management of CAEXPO

L. Chen (2007) specializes in the crisis management of CAEXPO. By introducing the theories and analytical frameworks related to crisis management into CAEXPO, the author established a system for analyzing the crisis triggers of the Expo and a two-layer wheel-type model, based on which a specific analysis of the crisis triggers of internal and external variables of CAEXPO was conducted, and then the

crisis management contingency plan of the Expo was established, and more importantly, the framework model of the Expo crisis management system was constructed. More importantly, the framework model of crisis management system of CAEXPO was constructed, and the implementation plan under the guidance of crisis management system of CAEXPO was formulated, which provided a scientific decision basis for the crisis response of the Expo.

Y. He (2007) studied the ways and possibilities to improve the competitiveness of CAEXPO, and the author analyzed the composition of the competitiveness of the Expo, the optimization scheme and the ways to improve it based on the competitiveness theory. Z. F. Ma (2008) used the CAEXPO as an analysis case and constructed a dynamic model of large exhibition projects. X. X. Liu (2012) found that customers were satisfied with the three aspects of tangibility, assurance and responsiveness in the customer satisfaction index of CAEXPO, but were more dissatisfied with the ability of the expo executive to promise services to customers and the personalized services provided. There are problems of relatively large customer complaints and high customer expectations, while customer satisfaction and customer loyalty are relatively low. Finally, to address these problems, this study proposes that managing customer expectations, maintaining competitive advantage, actively dealing with customer complaints and cultivating customer loyalty are the main measures to improve customer satisfaction in CAEXPO. J. Liang (2014) applied bilateral market theory to study the operation strategies of exhibition platforms, and the author first defined four bilateral market characteristics of exhibition platforms, and then specifically analyzed price difference strategy, product comparative advantage strategy, internationalization strategy, efficient service strategy and service virtualization strategy in the context of CAEXPO.

To sum up, at present, there are few references on the research on the management of CAEXPO, mainly focusing on crisis management, strategies for competitiveness improvement, operation management strategies and customer satisfaction research. As the only exhibition co-organized by many governments in China and held in one place for a long time, CAEXPO has been highly valued by the governments of Guangxi and ten ASEAN countries, pushing Guangxi to the forefront

of opening up to the outside world and regional cooperation, and becoming a powerful driving force to pull the regional economy to sustainable, rapid and coordinated development.

#### 5) Research on the propaganda of CAEXPO

Yan and Gao (2019) believe that the publicity effect of the CAEXPO is weak. The online and offline publicity and promotion activities lack certain unity as well as innovation, which makes the publicity effect poor. The public's cognition of the theme spirit of CAEXPO and the content of the exhibition is not clear, and although there are public accounts of WeChat and official microblogs, the operation still needs to be improved. The communication and interaction between the public and the Communication and interaction with the public also need to be improved.

Liao (2010) applied the framework theory to construct the framework of media coverage of CAEXPO, and discussed the main influencing elements of media framework construction by analyzing the thematic framework and structural framework of Guangxi Daily's coverage of CAEXPO, and also gave a clearer description of the role of media framework construction in shaping the theory. Z. L. Wang and Xu (2012) adopted a questionnaire research method to conduct interviews and questionnaires with exhibitors of the CAEXPO, and came up with a detailed analysis of exhibitors' perceptions of southwest China and Nanning, the influence of the CAEXPO and the communication methods of the Expo, as well as conclusions and suggestions.

H. Wang, Pan, and Dong (2013) conducted a study on the lack of international value in the media coverage of the CAEXPO, and concluded that efforts need to be made in three areas: broadening the coverage horizon from the theme of cooperation, paying attention to international public opinion orientation, and improving cross-cultural communication capabilities, and these concerns help to enhance both the international image of China and Guangxi, as well as China's soft power. Yi. Gao (2014) have studied the internal and external communication framework, paths and effects of the CAEXPO from the perspective of communication science. S. Y. Li (2014) conducted a study on government marketing behaviors and strategies in the CAEXPO.

There are also few references on the research on the promotion of the CAEXPO. It is necessary for the organizers to promote the brand of CAEXPO through the way of public relations and marketing publicity, which is worth exploring by the researchers.

### **2.3.3 Defining Stakeholders of CAEXPO Evaluation**

Strictly speaking, the exhibition is not a corporate organization, but only a product of the organizing enterprise. The specific exhibition involves various groups such as exhibition organizers, exhibitors, and industrial support systems, which effectively ensure that the exhibition project can be executed successfully, so any exhibition projects have their stakeholders. According to the "multidimensional segmentation method" proposed by Clarkson (1995) and the "Mitchell scale" proposed by Mitchell et al. (1997), Yao and Lu (2007) defined the stakeholders in large events such as MICE, based on the importance, initiative and urgency of the stakeholders by using the expert rating method, combined with the elements of the industry chain structure of MICE. The top 10 stakeholders are local government, large event organizers, event participants, event sponsors, media, volunteer, large-scale event extension service companies (Such as advertising, decoration, logistics, accommodation, translation, tour guide companies, etc.), Special interest groups, local communities and people, industry associations.

Hao (2007) summarized several types of stakeholders of exhibition projects with high recognition by domestic and foreign researchers through understanding domestic and foreign literature: government, exhibition enterprises, venue enterprises, exhibitors, exhibition visitors, exhibition holding cities, local residents, and the public, etc. Z. Y. Zhang and He (2010) interviewed the senior management of the enterprises related to exhibition, the employees of the enterprises with exhibition experience and the scholars who study exhibition, and came up with several types of the most important stakeholders in China: Government, exhibition enterprises, exhibition-related enterprises (such as construction companies, booth design), transportation, catering, hotels, exhibitors, exhibitors and visitors, etc.

According to the above-mentioned stakeholders of the exhibition project who are generally recognized by prior researchers, this study selects stakeholders of CAEXPO evaluation as the research subjects, which are:

I Organizers. S. P. Liu and Guo (2009) claim that the organizer of exhibition activities is authorized to plan and arrange the process of exhibition activities, and actively communicate and cooperate with the extension service enterprises in order to make the exhibition activities run well. It plays a crucial role in the conference and exhibition activities. The CAEXPO Secretariat is the permanent working body of the CAEXPO and the organizer of CAEXPO, The CAEXPO Secretariat organizes an exhibition, which will have a very comprehensive plan with a more comprehensive consideration for each exhibition stakeholder, and has a greater power to defend their interests, which obviously belongs to the key stakeholders and should belong to the core stakeholder part.

II Exhibitors. The CAEXPO exhibitors and buyers are the ones with greater demand for interest. By paying the exhibition expenses, the exhibitors will receive their corresponding power from the organizers and also have a greater power to defend their interests and the exhibitors are obviously key stakeholders as well (Tong, 2014).

III Local residents. Xing (2006) emphasizes that the benefits brought by the exhibition industry should be extended to the society, especially for the local residents. The CAEXPO is an exhibition held under the leadership of government departments and has been successfully held for 15 consecutive sessions from 2004 to 2018. In order to successfully hold the exhibition, the local government has invested a lot of urban infrastructure construction in Nanning. At the same time, the Expo also brought more cheap foreign goods to local residents. The local residents have perceived the local changes and the impact, so they are also important stakeholders of CAEXPO.

IV Scholar. The CAEXPO has been successfully held for 16 consecutive sessions, with high level, large scale and long duration. Therefore, many scholars have participated in the study of CAEXPO, with a wide range of research contents, perspectives and achievements. Thus, the research results related to CAEXPO can be used as an important reference for Expo organizers. At the same

time, prior researchers of CAEXPO have obtained rich research materials in the holding of each Expo, so they are also stakeholders.

## 2.4 Theoretical Framework for Evaluation and Management Capability Improvement Strategy for the CAEXPO

### 2.4.1 Theoretical Framework

Based on the identification and interpretation of specific CAEXPO assessment indicators, and on the premise of establishing the components of CAEXPO assessment and its management capability improvement that match the CIPP assessment theory, a theoretical framework of CAEXPO assessment and management capability improvement strategy based on the CIPP assessment theoretical framework is constructed, as shown in Figure 2.2.



Figure 2.2 Theoretical Framework of China - ASEAN Expo Evaluation and Management Capability Improvement Strategy

### 2.4.2 Theoretical Framework Evaluation Content

1) Context evaluation of CIPP theory: the assessment of the contextual base capacity of the CAEXPO. The CAEXPO contextual assessment serves the CAEXPO program decision making and is a diagnostic assessment of the CAEXPO objectives. This assessment element defines the program-related hosting environment, describes the context contained in the CAEXPO environment, sets goals for the needs of the Expo, and diagnoses the issues that constrain the development of the Expo. Therefore, the context assessment of the CAEXPO focuses on improving the environmental base capacity for holding the Expo.

The improvement of the environmental base capacity of CAEXPO is the result of the combined effect of external and internal environment. As far as the external environment is concerned, the environmental basis of the CAEXPO is characterized by the "opportunity to hold the exhibition" and "national development strategy"; In terms of the internal situation, the environmental base of CAEXPO is characterized by "the location advantage of Guangxi", "the foundation of Nanning city" and "the demand of business opportunities". Specific assessments include:

- (1) The Time
- (2) Politics
- (3) Economy
- (4) Society
- (5) Science and technology
- (6) Government
- (7) Foreign trade
- (8) "The Belt and Road Initiative"
- (9) Peripheral diplomacy
- (10) Outward opening layout
- (11) Regional economic cooperation
- (12) Location advantage
- (13) City Infrastructure
- (14) Transportation and logistics
- (15) Government Effectiveness
- (16) Legal policy environment

- (17) Ancillary facilities
- (18) Sales growth
- (19) Trade channels
- (20) Brand building
- (21) Information Communication

2) Input evaluation of CIPP theory: CAEXPO Resource Allocation Capacity Input Assessment. CAEXPO input assessment serves the decision making of CAEXPO organization and is the feasibility assessment of CAEXPO plan. This evaluation factor tests and decides how to use the resources of CAEXPO to achieve the goal of holding the Expo, so as to point out the direction for optimizing the plan of the Expo. Therefore, the Expo input assessment focuses on improving the resource allocation capacity of the Expo. This process needs to consider the investment and allocation of resources related to Expo, such as people, money and materials. Under the combined effect of "government attention", "talent investment", "financial support", "organizational guarantee" and "resource utilization" of the Expo, the resource allocation capacity of CAEXPO is improved. Specific assessments include:

- (1) Development of regulations
- (2) Policy support
- (3) Participation of all people
- (4) Publicity efforts
- (5) Exhibition education
- (6) Introduction of talents
- (7) Cultivation of talents
- (8) Employment positions
- (9) Special financial investment
- (10) Financing channels
- (11) Financial risk
- (12) Management team
- (13) Organizational structure
- (14) Division of labor
- (15) Execution capability
- (16) Time management

- (17) Staffing
- (18) Disposal of funds
- (19) Use of equipment
- (20) Site allocation

3) The process evaluation of CIPP theory: CAEXPO process action capability evaluation. The process evaluation of CAEXPO serves for the decision-making of CAEXPO implementation, and is the efficient evaluation of the Expo action. This evaluation element studies and judges whether the Expo program effectively utilizes the existing resources and obtains the corresponding feedback information. Therefore, the evaluation of the Expo process focuses on improving the action ability of the Expo process. The formulation of "management standards" is the basis of the implementation process management of CAEXPO. The "operation process", "emergency plan", "scheme rectification" and "event record" of CAEXPO are the factors to be considered in the process evaluation of the Expo, so as to improve the action ability of the Expo. Specific assessments include:

- (1) Management standards
- (2) Service standard
- (3) Safety standard
- (4) Health standard
- (5) Information standard
- (6) Environmental protection standard
- (7) Operation process standard
- (8) Operation training situation
- (9) Operation assessment
- (10) Work log
- (11) Emergency reporting
- (12) Preparedness
- (13) Emergency guidelines
- (14) Emergency drills
- (15) Emergency Response System
- (16) Responsible person
- (17) Assessment program

## (18) Correction program

4) Achievement evaluation of CIPP theory: Performance evaluation of CAEXPO. The achievement evaluation of CAEXPO serves for the repeated decision-making of the Expo and is the formative evaluation of the result of the Expo. This evaluation factor provides corresponding information for the realization of the goals and the negative effects of actions of the Expo, so as to improve the decision-making of the Expo and form more satisfactory results. Therefore, the achievement evaluation of CAEXPO focuses on improving the achievement performance ability of the Expo. Since the Expo was held, "economic impact" has been the most priority factor in the economic society, the improvement of the "management level" of the managers of the Expo, the "customer satisfaction" and "comprehensive benefits" of the Expo, and the "target comparison" with the objectives of the Expo are the consideration factors of the achievement evaluation of the Expo, so as to improve the achievement performance ability of the Expo. Specific assessments include:

- (1) Economic radiation
- (2) Industrial linkage
- (3) Political diplomatic platform
- (4) Regional competitiveness
- (5) Scientific and technological progress
- (6) Environmental protection
- (7) Government efficiency
- (8) The influence of the community
- (9) Cultural identity
- (10) Customer expectations
- (11) Competitive advantage
- (12) Handling customer complaints
- (13) Cultivating customer loyalty
- (14) Pre-show management
- (15) Mid-show management
- (16) Post-show management
- (17) Target comparison
- (18) Brand image

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Research Methods

The research idea of this study is to extend the CIPP theory to the context of CAEXPO Evaluation, and construct a theoretical model of CAEXPO Evaluation based on CIPP theory. At the same time, we analyze the application function of this theoretical model to provide theoretical basis for future studies.

Based on the CIPP based CAEXPO Evaluation Model, the evaluation element system of CAEXPO is identified. It includes the context assessment, input assessment, process assessment and product/performance assessment of CAEXPO in one model. It consists of four dimensions: environmental foundation capability, resource allocation capability, process action capability and result performance capability. It also consists of twenty key evaluation elements and seventy-seven evaluation content points with the characteristics of CAEXPO.

The CAEXPO was selected as a case study for evaluation, and the data was collected through literature review and in-depth interviews. It summarizes in textual descriptions the "environmental foundation capacity", "resource allocation capacity", "process action capacity" and "result performance capacity" of the CAEXPO. The strategy to improve the management capacity of the Expo is analyzed in a targeted manner. Moreover, based on the assessment results, the inspiration for the assessment and management of China's exhibition industry is proposed.

The term case study is usually used to refer to research conducted specifically on a single person, a single organization, event, project, process, or what Stake (2000, p. 436) calls a "specific, unique bounded system". Case studies are more often associated with qualitative design (Stake, 2005). However, qualitative researchers believe that qualitative research does not have its own method (Denzin & Lincoln,

1998). The commonly used methods are interview, literature analysis, investigation, participation and observation, and even statistics (Rudestam & Newton, 2014).

This study takes a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research is the analysis and study of the qualitative aspects of things. Qualitative analysis mainly relies on human observation and analysis ability, relying on knowledge, technology, experience and judgment ability, applying logical thinking methods, analyzing the characteristics of things, development laws and connections with other things from the perspective of studying things material, and its analysis process and conclusions are expressed in written descriptions (Cheng, 2007).

First of all, this study used a combination of theoretical analysis and case study. This research summarizes CIPP theory and analyzes its applicability. This study built a theoretical model for the evaluation of CAEXPO based on CIPP theory. Under the guidance of this theoretical model, a comprehensive and systematic assessment was conducted with the CAEXPO as a case study, so as to verify the scientificity and rationality of the theoretical model and assessment elements of the CAEXPO based on the CIPP theory.

Secondly, this study also used a combination of literature research and comparative analysis. Literature review and in-depth interview are used in the theoretical framework, evaluation elements, case analysis, selection of management mode and management ability promotion strategy data mining and collection of evaluation elements. Rudestam and Newton (2014, p. 35) believe that a good case study can be based on specific issues, while taking a variety of different methods to collect data. For example, interview method, behavior observation method, participation observation method, document method, file record consulting method (literature consulting method) and so on.

Thirdly, this study collected and organized relevant official documents and information by reviewing existing literature. For example, the series of documents of the central leaders and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region agreeing to hold the CAEXPO, the government work report, the series of important speeches of the central leaders and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region leaders on the holding of the Expo; the series of CAEXPO Development Report, CAEXPO Sustainable Development Report, Guangxi Blue Book, etc. prepared by the official organization of CAEXPO

for in-depth reading. According to the actual situation of the research, do a solid, objective analysis, master the more perfect literature, can form a scientific research basis, from which the problems of the study can be identified and also provide supporting materials for this study.

In-depth interviews are an important method to study the development and changes of CAEXPO, and an important means to assess the context, input, process management and product of CAEXPO. This study obtained first-hand information for the study by listening to a wide range of opinions through in-depth interviews. According to the objectives of the study, it is used to understand the background, input, process management, and effect of the CAEXPO, to provide a realistic basis for subsequent research, and to corroborate the correctness and validity of the findings of the literature. In addition, this study compares and analyzes the research frontiers and research hotspots of domestic and foreign exhibition research and CAEXPO research in China.

### **3.2 Research Site**

The research site of this research is Nanning City, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China, where the CAEXPO is permanently held.

### **3.3 Interviewees**

As for the selection of samples, qualitative researchers tend to choose purposive or theoretical sampling to increase the range of data exposed (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 40). As described in Chapter two of this dissertation, based on stakeholder theory, the research interviewees selected for this study were the main stakeholders of the CAEXPO, that is: organizers, exhibitors (buyers and sellers), local residents and scholars.

The Secretariat of CAEXPO is the permanent working organization and organizer of CAEXPO. Exhibitors and purchasers of CAEXPO are an important part of the participants. The local residents have strong perception toward the impact of the CAEXPO, and they are also participants in the Expo. The Expo has been held successfully for 15 sessions since 2004 until 2018, it is the only national exhibition with convention, forum and exhibition functions at the same time held in a fixed location in China, which is of high level, large scale and long duration. Therefore, there are many scholars who have studied the Expo in depth with different perspectives and results, it is necessary to include these scholars to be participants of the CAEXPO.

Josselson and Lieblich (2003) believe that saturation is the key factor to determine the size of a sample. They point out that it is usually the researchers who feel saturated, and that in general the longer, more detailed and more in-depth the transcription of the interviews, the smaller the number of interviews. This means that in practice the number of interviews should be set between 5 and 30 (Rudestam & Newton, 2014, p. 77). Accordingly, a total of 24 interviewees were selected for this study as follows: six organizers; two top managers; two middle managers, and two employees; six exhibitors, from six different companies; six local residents, from the city of Nanning; and six researchers of CAEXPO. To comply with the ethics of the study and to protect the privacy of the interviewees at their request, all names and affiliation of the interviewees were kept anonymous.

Table 3.1 Interviewee I: Organizer

<b>Serial Number</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Selection Conditions</b>
1.	A1	Organizers	Expo** Office	Senior executive, main organizer, with decision-making authority.
2.	A2	Organizers	Expo** Office	Senior executive, main organizer, with decision-making authority.
3.	A3	Organizers	Expo** Office	Mid-level management, mid-level executive, 15 years of experience at CAEXPO
4.	A4	Organizers	Expo** Office	Middle management, management executives.
5.	A5	Organizers	Expo** Office	Grassroots employee, general management position, 15 years of experience in the CAEXPO
6.	A6	Organizers	Expo** Office	Grassroots employee, 15 years of experience at CAEXPO, research and development management position.

Table 3.2 Interviewees II: Exhibitors

<b>Serial Number</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Selection Conditions</b>
7.	E1	Exhibitors	Thailand** Jewelry Company	Exhibiting for 15 consecutive years
8.	E2	Exhibitors	China** Logistics Company	Exhibiting for 15 consecutive years
9.	E3	Exhibitors	Guangxi ** Foreign Trade Company	Exhibiting for 15 consecutive years
10.	E4	Exhibitors	China-ASEAN** Study Abroad Service Center (**Education)	10 years of exhibiting
11.	E5	Exhibitors	**Cleaning Service Company	Exhibited for 15 years and provided cleaning services for 10 of the CAEXPO at the same time.
12.	E6	Exhibitors	China Railway** Bureau Guangxi Branch	Exhibited for 15 consecutive years and participated in the construction of the hardware of the CAEXPO

Table 3.3 Interviewees III: Local residents

Serial Number	Code	Category	Affiliation	Selection Conditions
13.	R1	Local residents	Nanning, China	A local resident of Nanning who has participated in the CAEXPO for 15 consecutive years.
14.	R2	Local residents	Nanning, China	A local resident of Nanning who has participated in the CAEXPO for 15 consecutive years.
15.	R3	Local residents	Nanning	A local resident of Nanning who has participated in the CAEXPO for 15 consecutive years.
16.	R4	Local residents	Nanning	A local resident of Nanning who has participated in the CAEXPO for 15 consecutive years.
17.	R5	Local residents	Nanning	A local resident of Nanning who has participated in the CAEXPO for 15 consecutive years.
18.	R6	Local residents	Nanning	A local resident of Nanning who has participated in the CAEXPO for 15 consecutive years.

Table 3.4 Interviewee IV: Scholars

Serial Number	Code	Category	Affiliation	Selection Criteria
19.	S1	scholar	Guangxi** University	15 consecutive years of research on the CAEXPO
20.	S2	scholar	Guangxi** University	15 consecutive years of research on the CAEXPO
21.	S3	scholar	Guangxi** University	15 consecutive years of research on the CAEXPO
22.	S4	scholar	Guangxi** University	15 consecutive years of research on the CAEXPO
23.	S5	scholar	Guangxi** University	15 consecutive years of research on the CAEXPO
24.	S6	scholar	Guangxi** University	15 consecutive years of research on the CAEXPO

### 3.4 Source of Theoretical Model Elements

The evaluation points are an important part of the interview points and are the basis for constructing the evaluation system. Y. Wang (2018) suggests that many scholars have already proposed measurement indicators (points) on the evaluation indexes (points) of exhibition service quality, which can provide reference for the establishment of measurement indicators. Built upon a large amount of relevant Chinese and foreign literature, Y. Gao (2012) identified key variables in conjunction with the purpose of the study and formed the indicators (points) for her research by drawing on the well-developed scales from previous studies. Well-established and comprehensive elements of MICE assessment are relatively rare, but certain assessment points can be borrowed from the existing results of assessment for a particular aspect of the exhibition industry. This study draws many insights from accumulative existing literature. Based on the theoretical model of CIPP, this study sorts out and establishes four dimensions, twenty key assessment elements and

seventy-seven assessment content points of CAEXPO by sorting out the literature. The sources of the seventy-seven assessment content points are organized as follows. (Tables 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8)

Table 3.5 Theoretical Model for CIPP Evaluation of CAEXPO - "C Context Evaluation" Key Points Source Table

<b>Key Assessment Elements</b>	<b>Assessment Content Highlights</b>	<b>References</b>
<b>Element I: The opportunity to hold the exhibition</b>	1. Timing	(X. T. Song et al., 2009).
	2. Politics	(Y. S. Guan, 2001; Y. H. Lin, 2010).
	3. Economy	(Braun, 1992; Cao, 2016; Getz, 1994; Y. M. Huang, 2011; S. S. Kim et al., 2003; Prayag et al., 2013).
	4. Society	(Atkinson & Laurier, 1998; Y. S. Guan, 2001; Gursoy et al., 2004; Prayag et al., 2013).
	5. Technology	(Carman, 1968; Qi, 2006).
	6. Government	(Cao, 2016; H. L. Chen, 2012; Z. Y. Chen, 2009; Ouyang, 2009).
	7. Foreign trade	(X. S. Gu, 2009; B. Liu, 2004; H. Y. Lu, 2011).
<b>Element II: National Development Strategy</b>	8. "One Belt, One Road"	(J. N. He, 2019; Zhai, 2021; Y. Zhao, 2020).
	9. Surrounding diplomacy	(S. Y. Chen, 2019; Y. H. Lin, 2010; X. Y. Sun, 2005; Z. Z. Yang, 2014).

<b>Key Assessment Elements</b>	<b>Assessment Content Highlights</b>	<b>References</b>
	10. Opening up the layout to the outside world	(W. R. Huang, 2019; C. Y. Xiong & Liu, 2019).
	11. Regional economic cooperation	(X. Du et al., 2005; Fang, 2009; X. Jiang, 2012; Y. H. Lin, 2010; Zheng, 2011a).
<b>Element III: Guangxi location advantage</b>	12. Location advantages	(X. Q. Guan, 2004; S. Z. Li, 2003; Y. Zhou, 2004).
<b>Element IV: Nanning City Foundation</b>	13. Urban infrastructure	(L. B. Cai & Shen, 2011; Cao, 2016; D. Y. Shen, 2008).
	14. Transportation and logistics	(Cao, 2016; X. Q. Guan, 2004; D. Y. Shen, 2008).
	15. Government effectiveness	(Y. P. Shen & Xu, 2006; Xie, 2012).
	16. Legal policy environment	(S. Z. Li, 2004).
	17. Supporting facilities	(Cao, 2016; Qian, 2007; D. Y. Shen, 2008).
<b>Element V: Need for Business Opportunities</b>	18. Sales growth	(Boggs & Wall, 1985).
	19. Trade channels	(Y. M. Huang et al., 2020).
	20. Brand building	(X. Q. Li & Wen, 2007).
	21. Information dissemination	(Cavanaugh, 1976).

Table 3.6 Theoretical Model for CIPP Evaluation of CAEXPO - "I Input Evaluation"  
Key Points Source Table

<b>Key Assessment Elements</b>	<b>Assessment Content Highlights</b>	<b>References</b>
<b>Element I: government attention</b>	22. Make regulations	(S. Z. Li, 2004).
	23. Policy support	(S. Z. Li, 2004).
	24. Participation of all people	(Stufflebeam, 1968)
	25. Publicity efforts	(X. C. Xiong, 2017)
<b>Element II: talent investment</b>	26. Exhibition education	(F. Y. Chen, 2008; H. Jin, 2004; J. H. Wu, 2008).
	27. Talent introduction	(Y. Zhou, 2004).
	28. Talent cultivation	(F. Y. Chen, 2008; H. Jin, 2004; Tao, 2011; L. Xu & Qiao, 2009).
	29. Jobs	(S. Z. Li, 2004).
<b>Element III: Financial support</b>	30. Specialized financial input	(W. Q. Ge, 2014; S. Z. Li, 2004).
	31. Financing channels	(Cao, 2016; Ding, 2018).
	32. Financial risk	(S. Z. Chen, 2020).
<b>Element IV: Organizational security</b>	33. Management team	(Bai, 2012).
	34. Organization	(J. Yuan & Jang, 2008).
	35. Division of labor	(X. C. Xiong, 2017).
	36. Execution ability	(Bai, 2012).
<b>Element V: Resource Utilization</b>	37. Time management	(Bai, 2012).
	38. Staffing	(Bai, 2012; W. Wang & Yin, 2020).
	39. Fund allocation	(W. Wang & Yin, 2020).
	40. Use of equipment	(J. Liu et al., 2018).
	41. Site allocation	(Chacko & Fenich, 2000).

Table 3.7 Theoretical Model for CIPP Evaluation of CAEXPO - "P-process evaluation" Key Points Source Table

<b>Key Assessment Elements</b>	<b>Assessment Content Highlights</b>	<b>References</b>
<b>Element I: Management Standards</b>	42. Management standards	(N. Ma, 2007).
	43. Service standard	(N. Ma, 2007; Qian, 2007).
	44. Safety standards	(N. Ma, 2007).
	45. Health standard	(N. Ma, 2007).
	46. Information standards	(N. Ma, 2007).
	47. Environmental protection standard	(J. Liu et al., 2018; N. Ma, 2007).
	<b>Element II: Operating procedures</b>	48. Operating process standards
49. Operation training situation		(H. J. Song & Hong, 2020; B. Zhao, 2021).
50. Operation assessment		(S. Z. Chen, 2020).
<b>Element III: Emergency Response Plan</b>	51. Preparedness	(L. Chen, 2007).
	52. Emergency guidelines	(L. Chen, 2007).
	53. Emergency Drill	(L. Chen, 2007).
<b>Element IV: Incident records</b>	54. Emergency response system	(L. Chen, 2007).
	55. Work Log	(Stufflebeam, 1968).
	56. Emergency report	(Stufflebeam, 1968).

<b>Key Assessment Elements</b>	<b>Assessment Content Highlights</b>	<b>References</b>
<b>Element V: Program Correction</b>	57. Responsible person 58. Evaluation program 59. Correction program	(Bai, 2012). (Y. He, 2007). (Y. He, 2007).

Table 3.8 Theoretical Model for CIPP Evaluation of CAEXPO - "P Product Evaluation" Key Points Source Table

<b>Key Assessment Elements</b>	<b>Assessment Content Highlights</b>	<b>References</b>
<b>Element I: Economic Impact</b>	60. Economic radiation 61. Industrial linkage	(Braun, 1992; Getz, 1994; Y. He, 2007; Y. M. Huang, 2011; C. K. Lee et al., 2013; S. P. Liu, 2005). (Braun, 1992; Getz, 1994; Hanly, 2012; Y. M. Huang, 2011; C. K. Lee et al., 2013; Oppermann, 1996).
<b>Element II: Management level</b>	62. Pre-exhibition management 63. Management during the exhibition 64. Post-show management	(C. H. Lee & Kim, 2008). (C. H. Lee & Kim, 2008). (C. H. Lee & Kim, 2008).
<b>Element III: Customer satisfaction</b>	65. Customer expectations 66. Competitive advantage	(Fornell et al., 1996; X. S. Gu, 2009; X. X. Liu, 2012; F. P. Yang, 2009). (X. X. Liu, 2012).

Key Assessment Elements	Assessment Content Highlights	References
<b>Factor IV: Overall benefits</b>	67. Handle customer complaints	(Fornell et al., 1996; X. X. Liu, 2012).
	68. Cultivating customer loyalty	(Fornell et al., 1996; X. X. Liu, 2012).
	69. Political diplomatic platform	(Y. M. Huang, 2011)
	70. Regional competitiveness	(Y. M. Huang, 2011; S. Z. Li, 2003; X. L. Liu, 2008).
	71. Progress in science and technology	(Carman, 1968).
	72. Environmental protection	(Cao, 2016; Collins et al., 2009; Prayag et al., 2013).
	73. Government efficiency	(S. Z. Li, 2004).
	74. Influence of community	(Gursoy et al., 2004; W. Kim & Walker, 2012; Vahed, 2002).
	75. Cultural identity	(Y. H. Lin, 2010; Vahed, 2002).
	<b>Element V: Target comparison</b>	76. Target comparison
77. Brand image		(Bonoma, 1983; Breiter & Milman, 2006).

### 3.5 Interview Highlights

Built upon CIPP theory, this study proposed the underlying evaluation elements of CAEXPO. We collected insightful information for this study through interviewing the stakeholders of the Expo to understand their concerns and their points on the Expo.

Structured interviews were used in this study. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2013, pp. 133-134), structured interviews can be used when it is known what information is needed. The interviewer may interview the respondent face-to-face, by telephone, or online, and a list of interview points related to research question. It can be prepared in advanced. When the interviewee answers the questions, the researcher will take the notes. And the same questions can be asked in the same way to different interviewees.

According to the research elements of the theoretical model of evaluation and management capability enhancement strategy of CAEXPO, a list of interview points was designed for the purpose of the study. The main points of the interviews are as follows:

- 1) Highlights of interviews to assess the context of the CAEXPO
  - (1) Please talk about the background of the CAEXPO in terms of time background, politics, economy, society, science and technology.
  - (2) What is the relationship between the CAEXPO and China's national development strategy needs? For example, the national "Belt and Road" strategy, the peripheral diplomatic strategy, the national opening-up strategy, the China-ASEAN regional economic cooperation strategy, etc.
  - (3) What are the advantages or disadvantages of the location of Nanning City, Guangxi, the permanent address of the CAEXPO?
  - (4) As the permanent address of CAEXPO in Nanning, Guangxi, what are the basic conditions of urban infrastructure, transportation and logistics, government effectiveness, legal and policy environment, and supporting facilities?
  - (5) What is the impact of the CAEXPO on business growth, trade channels, branding, information dissemination and other business development opportunities for enterprises?

2) Highlights of interviews to assess the various capacity and resource inputs to the CAEXPO

(1) Regarding the holding of the CAEXPO, how much importance does the government attach to it and how much publicity is given to it?

(2) What about CAEXPO in terms of investment in human resources such as MICE education, talent introduction, talent training and job positions?

(3) What is the situation of financial management such as financial investment, financing channels and financial risk management of CAEXPO?

(4) What is the situation of organizational security such as the management team, organization, division of labor and execution capability of CAEXPO?

(5) What is the utilization of resources such as time management, staffing, funds at disposal, equipment use and venue allocation for the CAEXPO?

3) Interview points for evaluating the management of the CAEXPO process

(1) What are the management standards for service, safety, health, information, environmental protection, etc. for the management of the process of holding the CAEXPO?

(2) What is the operational process, operational training and operational assessment of the management process of CAEXPO?

(3) How about the detailed event record and event record process management of the process of holding CAEXPO?

(4) Is there a contingency plan and guidelines for emergency handling at the CAEXPO?

(5) What is the status of the rectification program of the process of holding the CAEXPO?

4) Highlights of interviews to assess the results of the CAEXPO and the effectiveness and impact of its organization

(1) What is the impact of the CAEXPO on economic radiation and industrial linkages?

(2) What is the impact of hosting the CAEXPO on political diplomacy, regional competitiveness, scientific and technological progress, environmental protection, government efficiency, community impact, and cultural identity?

(3) Satisfactory aspects and unsatisfactory aspects of the CAEXPO, such as managing customer expectations, maintaining competitive advantages, actively handling customer complaints, and cultivating customer loyalty.

(4) How do you evaluate the level of management before, during and after the CAEXPO?

(5) What is the gap between the effectiveness of the CAEXPO and its expected goal of holding it?

(6) What do the respondents say about other exhibitions?

### **3.6 Data Collection**

The researcher obtains information from primary and secondary sources, with primary information being the first-hand information collected by the researcher for the purpose of the study, and secondary information being information that already exists in the database (Rudestam & Newton, 2014). Data collection methods are an integral part of research design. There are many different methods, such as observation, interview, questionnaire, actual measurement, and non-interventional methods, each of which has its advantages and disadvantages (Rudestam & Newton, 2014).

The first-hand information for this study was collected from in-depth interviews. The data were collected during the exhibition period of CAEXPO 2017 and CAEXPO 2018. The data was collected at the CAEXPO Exhibition Center. Since the CAEXPO has a permanent management structure, the interview was conducted by the author in Nanning, where the CAEXPO was held, in the form of face-to-face with 30-60 minutes each. The interview process was recorded using audio recording equipment. After the interview, the recordings were converted into textual transcript and coded for archival purposes.

The secondary data for this study was collected from existing sources, which include government documents, statistical yearbooks, government publications, published or unpublished information from within and outside the organization, library records, documentation of previous studies, the Internet, and so on.

### **3.7 Data Analysis**

The purpose of qualitative data analysis is to distill valid inferences in words from a large amount of information, but there are few generally accepted rules and guidelines for analyzing qualitative information (Rudestam & Newton, 2014). According to Miles and Huberman (1994) method of analysis, the first step is to streamline, rearrange and integrate the information to form theoretical codes and classifications. In the second step, the information is presented, the content of the information is analyzed, and summary information is formed. In the third step, conclusions were drawn. In accordance with the purpose of the study, the process of analyzing the secondary data in this study using the analysis method proposed by Sekaran and Bougie (2013). In the first step, review the literature. In the second step, classify the literature. In the third step, analyze the literature. In the fourth step, summarize them. The process of analyzing primary data in this study was: 1) selecting interviewees; 2) conducting interviews; 3) developing transcript; 4) coding; 5) classification; 6) analysis; 7) summary.

There are significant differences in the reliability and validity in qualitative research compared to quantitative research. Triangulation is a calibration technique related to reliability and validity (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013, p. 278). This method can be used to test different sources of information or different methods of data collection. The triangulation method is characterized by the use of two or more research strategies when studying the same unit of analysis. It involves comparing information from different sources to determine whether they corroborate each other, and its purpose is to assess the veracity of the information.

The idea of triangulation is that a credible study result must be the same despite the use of different methods or different sources of information (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). Triangulation requires the research be conducted from multiple perspectives. The triangular methods proposed by Sekaran and Bougie (2013) are:

- 1) Methodological triangulation: using multiple methods to collect and analyze information.
- 2) Information (data) triangulation: collection of information (data) from multiple sources or different time periods.
- 3) Researcher triangulation: multiple researchers collect or analyze information.

The basic principle of the triangulation is to collect observations and interpretations of the situation from multiple perspectives or positions and to compare them. In order to make the research results more credible, this study used the triangulation method to compare and test the collected interview data to ensure their credibility. The results of this study's triangulation are as follows:

- 1) This study used literature review and interview methods to collect information, and there were no apparent conflicts in the information collected.
- 2) The points expressed by the same group of interviewees on the same issue during the in-depth interviews in this study were not significantly conflicting, although there were differences.
- 3) During the in-depth interviews, there was no apparent conflict in the points expressed on the same issue by different groups of interviewees on the issue, although they differed.
- 4) In-depth interviews were conducted in different years of this study in 2017 and 2018, respectively, and there were no conflicting comments on the same question from the same respondents in the information collected.
- 5) There were no significant conflicts in the information obtained from different interviewers interviewing the same respondents in this study.
- 6) Different groups analyzed and assessed the same issue, and the consistency and variability between their assessment perspectives were equally important to the findings of this study.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **RESEARCH RESULTS**

CAEXPO was established in 2004 and is hosted by the governmental economic and trade authorities of China, ten ASEAN countries and the ASEAN Secretariat. It is an international economic and trade event hosted by the government of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. Until 2018, it has been successfully held for 15 consecutive sessions. This is a unique exhibition with six major features, including 1) combination of import and export, 2) combination of investment and capital attraction, 3) combination of commodity trade and service trade, 4) combination of exhibition and conference, 5) combination of economic and trade and diplomacy, and 6) combination of economic and trade activities and cultural exchange. The Chinese state has identified the CAEXPO as "a key foreign-related forum and exhibition with special international influence" and "a key foreign-related forum and exhibition held at the national level", and it has become one of the three national first-class exhibitions. The CAEXPO has promoted and witnessed the continuous enrichment of the connotation of China-ASEAN strategic partnership, the rapid improvement of the level of economic and trade cooperation, and the increasingly close human and civil contacts. It played an important role in serving the construction of the "Belt and Road", promoted the construction of the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area in a practical manner, served the construction of the China-ASEAN It has become a "Nanning channel" with strong authority and high recognition for China-ASEAN cooperation in many fields, promoting China and ASEAN to participate in international economic cooperation as a whole and increasing its influence in the world.

## **4.1 Analysis of CIPP Evaluation Results of CAEXPO**

### **4.1.1 Analysis of Context Evaluation Results**

By assessing and analyzing the context of five main aspects, which include the opportunity/timing of China - ASEAN Expo, national development strategy, location advantage of Guangxi, Nanning city infrastructure construction and the need of business opportunity development, it can be found that although there are still some obvious shortcomings in the development of Guangxi. However, the unique location advantage and environmental foundation of Guangxi has resulted in a good environmental foundation which led to the successful holding of CAEXPO, even under the influence of Asian financial turmoil. This is a prerequisite for the smooth and successful holding of CAEXPO, and it has a very important strategic development significance for China and ASEAN countries. It can be considered as the joint result of the timing, the location and the people.

#### **4.1.1.1 Opportunity/Timing to Hold the CAEXPO**

##### **1) Uneven development of China's regional economy**

According to the data compiled by the National Bureau of Statistics of the People's Republic of China (2003) publicly released: In 2002, the annual gross domestic product reached 1,023.98 billion yuan. Guangxi achieved an annual GDP of 2,437.22 billion Yuan, accounting for 2.38% of the total national GDP, and the per capita GDP of the region was 5,062 Yuan. Comparatively, Zhejiang province achieved a GDP of 767 billion Yuan, accounting for 7.49% of the total national GDP, and the province's per capita GDP was 16,570 Yuan. Another province, Jiangsu completed an annual GDP of 10,636.3 billion Yuan, accounting for 10.38% of the total national GDP, and the province's per capita GDP was 14,397 Yuan.

According to the 2003 National Economic and Social Development Statistics Bulletin of the People's Republic of China released by the National Bureau of Statistics of the People's Republic of China (2004), the annual GDP of the whole nation was 116,694 billion Yuan. Among them, Guangxi achieved an annual GDP of 2,733.21 Yuan, accounting for 2.34% of the total national GDP. The region's GDP per capita was 5,964 Yuan, an increase of 9.4%. Comparatively,

Zhejiang Province's annual GDP was 920 billion Yuan, accounting for 7.88% of the total national GDP, and the province's per capita GDP was 19,730 Yuan. Jiangsu Province achieved an annual GDP of 12,451.8 billion Yuan, accounting for 10.67% of the total national GDP, and the province's GDP per capita was 16,796 Yuan.

Based on the above data comparison, it can be found that there is still a huge GDP gap between Guangxi and two coastal provinces, Zhejiang and Jiangsu provinces. At the same time, there is also a significant imbalance in the economic development within Guangxi. The imbalance of regional development affects the coordinated and sustainable economic development, national unity and political stability (Dai, 2017). Therefore, solving the problem of unbalanced regional development is a major issue that needs to be addressed by the Chinese government.

Scholar S1: "The opportunity/timing to hold the CAEXPO in Nanning City every year since 2004 and the China-ASEAN Business and Investment Summit at the same time was the result of the combination of unbalanced domestic economic development, the construction of the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area, political diplomacy, and foreign trade at that time, which had strong contemporary significance. CAEXPO is based on China - ASEAN Free Trade Area, and the results of the construction of the Free Trade Area provide a very strong intrinsic market impetus for the sustainable development of the Expo."

Scholar S2: "At present, there is still a serious imbalance in the economic development of the whole region of Guangxi, which is related to the regional economic spatial structure of Guangxi. The Beibu Gulf Economic Zone with Nanning as the core and the West River Economic Zone with Wuzhou and Guigang as the center are better developed, and the rise of Beibu Gulf Economic Zone has accelerated the development of Beihai and Qinzhou. Liuzhou, an important industrial production base in Guangxi, has been maintaining good development and is an important city for economic development in Guangxi. Guilin and Beihai also play a very important role driven by tourism. However, the whole western region of Guizhou is marginalized, with neither a core city nor an economic development axis, and the regional development is seriously unbalanced. The agglomeration power of the central area is much larger than that of the peripheral area, and the spatial structure of

'East is strong and West is weak' is being reinforced, which is a major issue before the People's Government of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region."

## 2) China's national policy support

Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, abbreviated as "Gui", is a provincial administrative region of the People's Republic of China, with the capital city of Nanning, which belongs to the minority and border areas of China. China is a vast country with obvious regional imbalances in economic, educational, cultural and industrial development. As a backward western region, ethnic region, old revolutionary region and frontier region along the coast, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region has been highly valued by the state in recent years and has developed rapidly with obvious late-stage advantages (Dai, 2017). Especially with the continuous reform and opening-up policy, narrowing the regional development gap within the country has become an urgent issue. Therefore, it is very important for the Chinese government to implement the western development in depth from the perspective of development strategy and policy support, support the western region to improve infrastructure, develop special advantageous industries, and strengthen ecological environmental protection.

Scholar S1: "In October 2000, the Fifth Plenary Session of the 15th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China adopted the Proposal of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on the Formulation of the Tenth Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development, which made the implementation of the Western Development and the promotion of coordinated regional development a strategic task, emphasizing: 'Implementing the Western Development Strategy and accelerating the development of the central and western Regional development, related to economic development, national unity, social stability, regional coordinated development and the ultimate realization of common wealth, is a major initiative to achieve the third strategic goal.' And Guangxi, as one of the main provinces facing the western development strategy, has rich natural resources, high market potential, important regional strategic location, and priority to enjoy the care of national development policies; therefore, the Chinese government chose to place the permanent host of CAEXPO in Nanning, Guangxi, so as to achieve interconnection between China and ASEAN countries by strengthening infrastructure

construction, commodity trade, scientific and technological innovation, cultural exchange, talent development, etc. to drive the coordinated development of regional economy in Guangxi, which is an important consideration in terms of national development strategy."

Organizer A3: "Since the 16th National Congress of the Communist Party of China was held in November 2002, the Chinese government has formulated a series of major policies to promote the coordinated development of domestic regions in response to the outstanding problems and major contradictions in domestic regional development. The layout of major projects fully considers supporting the development of ethnic minority regions and central and western regions. From October 26 to 29, 2015, the Fifth Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China considered and adopted the "Proposal of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Formulating the 13th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development", and in the "Proposal of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Formulating the 13th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development" put forward: openness is the necessary road to national prosperity and development. We must follow the trend of deep integration of our economy into the world economy, pursue an open strategy of mutual benefit and win-win situation, strengthen the layout of opening up to the outside world, adhere to the coordination of internal and external demand, balance import and export, give equal importance to importing and going out, attract investment and technology and wisdom, develop a higher level of open economy, actively participate in global economic governance and public product supply, improve our institutional discourse in global economic governance, and build a broad community of interests."

3) Economic globalization and the impact of the Asian financial turmoil

Globalization is a complex linkage between the global and the local, and globalization and localization are two coexisting processes (Murray & Overton, 2014; Sheppard, 2002), which also have an effect on the spatial imbalance of regional economic development (Dai, 2017). The development of international economic "globalization" or "integration" has become an objective trend, which has

given a great impetus to the development of the world economy. In this process, developing countries have absorbed a large amount of foreign capital, introduced a large amount of advanced technology, developed, and replaced the industries replaced by developed countries in the industrial restructuring, and promoted the accelerated development of their economies (M. Yuan, 1998). China is a developing country with great development potential, and participation in economic globalization is an inevitable trend for China's development. Since the implementation of China's reform and opening-up policy, developed coastal regions have taken the lead in participating in economic globalization by virtue of their location, resources, policies and other advantages. While minority regions and western regions are constrained by various factors, their participation in economic development, foreign trade, cultural exchange and other fields of economic globalization is not sufficient.

In 1997, affected by the Asian financial crisis, the currencies of Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Japan and South Korea were devalued significantly, causing the major stock markets of most Asian countries to fall sharply. The Asian financial crisis, which started in Thailand, first hit Indonesia, the Philippines and Malaysia, and later spread to Singapore and Vietnam, and even to India and Pakistan. Countries in Southeast Asia abandoned the linked exchange rate system and adopted a floating exchange rate system. As of January 6, 1998, the exchange rates of Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines dropped by 52.9%, 67.1%, 41.7% and 42.8% respectively from July 1 of the previous year, and the stock market also dropped sharply. Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir pointed out that the financial crisis caused at least \$20 billion in economic losses to the Southeast Asian region (M. Yuan, 1998). And at that time, China, as a major Asian economy, was affected by the Asian financial crisis, although it did not become a direct victim. Some of the countries damaged by this financial crisis were almost all important trading partners of China. And the financial crisis made the economic growth of these countries slow down, the balance of payments capacity decreased, and the import demand decreased, which inevitably affected China's exports to these countries (D. Sun, Q., Zhu, & Zhou, 2009). China has experienced rapid socio-economic development encouraged by its reform and opening-up policy. In the face of the Asian financial turmoil, the Chinese government implemented a relatively

prudent financial policy and a series of measures to prevent financial risks, and overcame difficulties and challenges during the financial turmoil, and continued to maintain stable financial and economic development. ASEAN countries, in order to actively cope with the huge impact of the financial turmoil, have strengthened their cooperation with China, attracted by China's peaceful foreign policy, open-door policy and huge market, in order to better face the current relatively difficult situation. In addition, the Chinese government attaches great importance to implementing the basic policy of neighboring diplomacy, and shares a broad common language and common interests with neighboring countries in international social affairs, and a common desire for stability and growth in economic development.

Scholar S3: "Developing good-neighborly and friendly relations with neighboring countries is the consistent policy of China's neighboring diplomacy, and the Chinese government has always adhered to the basic policy of neighborly diplomacy of treating neighbors as good and companions, adhering to the basic policy of good-neighborly, safe and rich neighbors, and actively developing good relations with neighboring countries."

Exhibitor E3: "I think the Chinese government pays great attention to neighboring diplomacy, and China has always maintained good neighborly relations with ASEAN countries. Since the outbreak of the Asian financial crisis in 1997, the economies of ASEAN countries have really been hit hard, and many enterprises have closed down. China, on the other hand, has been hit to a certain extent during the financial crisis, but its economic development can be said to be stable and progressive. At the same time, with the continuous promotion of China's opening-up layout, not only should we introduce foreign advanced technology, advanced management concepts, advanced equipment and good commodities, but also let Chinese manufacturing, Chinese technology, Chinese culture, etc. go out of the country, so that the world can know China, understand China, identify with China and support China. In this general context, both China and ASEAN countries actually have needs, and the CAEXPO is held to build a good regional economic cooperation platform for China-ASEAN, thus promoting common development between China and ASEAN neighboring countries."

4) Joint cooperation and development become the consensus of China and ASEAN countries

On October 8, 2003, Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao initiated at the 7th China-ASEAN (10+1) Leaders' Meeting to hold the CAEXPO in Nanning, China every year starting from 2004, and the China-ASEAN Business and Investment Summit at the same time. This initiative, as a practical action of China to promote the construction of China-ASEAN Free Trade Area. It has received positive responses from the leaders of ASEAN countries (Y. Z. Li, 2012, October 8). Focusing on economic and trade cooperation within the free trade area, the China-ASEAN Expo is open to the world and provides new opportunities for the common development of businessmen from all countries, and thus has been highly valued by China and the 10 ASEAN countries. Since the beginning of the China - ASEAN Expo, nearly hundreds of leaders from China and ASEAN countries have participated and delivered keynote speeches.

The following are some of the interviews on the opportunity/timing to hold the CAEXPO.

Organizer A5: "First of all, with the development of economic integration, strengthening cooperation has become the main development trend between China and ASEAN countries, which is beneficial for both sides. Secondly, Guangxi is in Southeast Asian countries, and there are many overseas Chinese, which helps the smooth cooperation in culture and foreign trade. Again, China and ASEAN countries have many aspects in common, such as environment, climate and food habits, which is a good locational advantage and conducive to bilateral activities."

Scholar S5: "Since Xi, Jinping assumed the presidency, he has been implementing a peaceful foreign policy, attaching great importance to the basic policy of peripheral diplomacy, upholding the concept of 'goodwill, sincerity, and tolerance' peripheral diplomacy, and seeing the periphery as a place of stability and a foundation for development and prosperity. Therefore, a great deal of work has been done in cooperation with ASEAN countries, whether in terms of commodity trade, investment cooperation, or exchanges in culture, education, tourism, etc., which are all deepening. President Xi Jinping's "One Belt, One Road" initiative, which connects China with ASEAN countries and more countries in the world, is very beneficial to

the development of regional economic integration in Asia. At the same time in the country, due to the regional economic development is really unbalanced, Guangxi in the whole of China's economic development, belong to the back of the country also attaches great importance to minority areas, Guangxi also included in the ranks of the western development, give Guangxi a lot of favorable policies. The Chinese government has set up the permanent venue of CAEXPO in Nanning, the capital of Guangxi, which itself is strongly supporting the development of our Guangxi."

Organizer A3: "In the context of global economic integration and 'One Belt, One Road' construction, Nanning, Guangxi gives full play to its location advantages, actively strives for 'going out' and 'bringing in come', which has built a platform for exchange and cooperation between Guangxi and ASEAN countries, not only promoting trade exchanges, but also able to drive cooperation in various fields such as tourism, education, culture and sports, providing strong impetus for the economic recovery of Guangxi and ASEAN countries, which is very important and highly expected."

#### 4.1.1.2 China's National Development Strategy

##### 1) Reform and opening-up policy

The Third Plenary Session of the Eleventh Central Committee of the Communist Party of China was held in Beijing from December 18 to 22, 1978. This plenum revived the ideological line of emancipating the mind and seeking truth from facts, and made the great decision to implement reform and opening up (J. G. Shi, 2009, August 20). By 2018, after 40 years of reform and opening up, the Chinese government has well combined "importing" and "going out", and has fully participated in international economic cooperation and competition in various fields. As a result of the reform and opening-up policy, China's GDP has grown from 364.5 billion Yuan in 1978 (National Bureau of Statistics of the People's Republic of China, 2013) to 820,754 billion Yuan in 2017 (National Bureau of Statistics of the People's Republic of China, 2019). In the global ranking from the 10th place in 1978 to the second place in the world in 2017, the total economic volume in the world ranking has steadily increased, and the contribution to the world economic growth has been increasing.

## 2) Western Development Strategy

In 1995, Jiang Zemin proposed in his speech "Correctly Handling Certain Major Relationships in Socialist Modernization" delivered at the Fifth Plenary Session of the 14th Central Committee that the central government should give strong support to the western region in terms of financial transfers, project arrangements, and infrastructure construction, and stimulate eastern enterprises to invest in the western region. It was not until June 1999 that the third generation of the central leadership, with Comrade Jiang Zemin at its core, considered that China had the conditions to accelerate the development of the western region and that the time was ripe to implement the western development strategy, in accordance with the strategic idea of "two major situations" proposed by Comrade Deng Xiaoping. In September 1999, the Fourth Plenary Session of the CPC Central Committee formally proposed that "China should implement the Western Development Strategy". In November of the same year, the Central Economic Work Conference, in view of the actual economic development of China, reviewed the situation and deployed the implementation of the western region development strategy, marking the official start of the implementation of the western development strategy (Xiao, Zhang, & Ma, 2018). Five-Year Plan" adopted by the Fifth Plenary Session of the Fifteenth Central Committee of the Communist Party of China in October 2000, made the implementation of western development and the promotion of coordinated regional development a strategic task. In March 2001, the Outline of the Tenth Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development of the People's Republic of China, adopted at the Fourth Session of the Ninth National People's Congress, made another specific deployment for the implementation of the western development strategy. The implementation of the western development, is to rely on the Asia-Europe Continental Bridge, the Yangtze River waterway, the southwest sea access and other transportation arteries, play the role of the central cities, to line string points, points with the surface, the gradual formation of western China has the characteristics of the West Longhai Lanxin line, the upper reaches of the Yangtze River, South (Ning) Guizhou, Chengdu Kunming (Ming) and other cross-administrative economic belt, drive the development of other areas, step by step, focused on promoting the development of the west. Western development is a major strategic deployment

related to the overall development of China, the stability of the border and national unity, which raises the development of less developed areas in the west to the level of national strategy, both in theory and practice is a great innovation in the field of regional development. The full implementation of the Western Development Strategy has played an unprecedented role in promoting the overall economic and social development of the western region (Xiao et al., 2018). The inclusion of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region as a province of China's Western Development Strategy shows the importance the state attaches to Guangxi.

### 3) The Belt and Road Development Strategy

In a speech delivered at Nazarbayev University in Kazakhstan on September 7, 2013, Chinese President Xi, Jinping (2013) said, "In order to bring the economies of various countries closer, mutual cooperation deeper, and development space wider, we can use innovative cooperation models to jointly build the 'Silk Road Economic Belt ', leading from point to point, from line to line, and gradually forming a large regional cooperation." On October 3 of the same year, President Xi (2013, October 3) said in a speech to the Indonesian parliament that "China is willing to strengthen maritime cooperation with ASEAN countries, make good use of the China-ASEAN Maritime Cooperation Fund established by the Chinese government, develop maritime partnerships, and jointly build the '21st Century Maritime Silk Road "'.

Chinese President Xi, Jinping has put forward the major initiatives of building the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road (Belt and Road for short), which have received great attention from the international community. The " Belt and Road" initiative has received great attention from the international community. The construction of the "Belt and Road" adheres to the principles of common business, sharing and building, actively developing economic partnerships with countries along the route, and jointly building a community of interests, destiny and responsibility with mutual political trust, economic integration and cultural tolerance. The "Belt and Road" initiative has the domestic goals of promoting China's economic transformation and upgrading, promoting balanced regional development, and deepening openness to the outside world, as well as the international goals of promoting the development of the world

economy, reforming and building the global governance system. It provides a new direction and platform for the deepening development of economic globalization and a new round of world economic growth, which is a great feat of landmark significance in the development process of economic globalization (Y. J. Chen, Deng, & Zhang, 2019). Starting from the 11th CAEXPO, the theme of "Building the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road" has been promoted, and the Maritime Silk Road has been actively promoted as an early project in key cooperation areas. Thus, the CAEXPO is combined with China's "Belt and Road" cooperation and development strategy, effectively combining the realization of the Chinese dream with the promotion of regional economic integration and the perfect combination of the realization of the Chinese dream and the foreign policy of peace, promoting the establishment of a strategic partnership of peace and prosperity between China and ASEAN countries.

On November 14, 2018, the leaders of China and ASEAN countries unanimously agreed to adopt the China-ASEAN Strategic Partnership Vision 2030 to further promote the building of a high-level comprehensive strategic partnership between China and ASEAN countries. As the core region of China's strategy toward ASEAN, Guangxi is the only region in China that enjoys the national policy of western development, coastal opening policy, minority policy and border area opening policy, and the state has given Guangxi the necessary support in relevant planning, layout of major projects and project approval, approval and filing, etc. In 2016, the People's Government of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region issued the "Guangxi Building an ASEAN-oriented International Corridor Implementation Plan" to provide strong policy support for Guangxi enterprises to go out of the country and enter the ASEAN market.

Organizer A5: "In June 2018, the Department of Science and Technology of Guangxi studied and formulated the Implementation Plan for Guangxi's Participation in the 'Belt and Road' Science and Technology Innovation Action Plan (2018-2020), Guangxi will, with the strong support and guidance of the Ministry of Science and Technology of China, make full use of Guangxi's characteristics and advantages, organize forces from all sides, vigorously invest funds to develop science and technology, strive to promote Guangxi as a regional

innovation center facing ASEAN, and contribute Guangxi's strength to the construction of 'Belt and Road'."

Scholar S4: "Guangxi should make full use of its advantages to carry out cooperation with ASEAN countries and 'Belt and Road' countries in various fields such as trade, science and technology, education, finance, tourism and culture, deepen the exchange of talents and technology, promote economic and trade exchanges and improve the economic vitality of Guangxi. "

Local resident R1: "With the continuous development of society, the pace of global economic integration is advancing rapidly, and China's economic development has also changed a lot with the deepening of reform and opening up. Since China officially joined the WTO in 2001, it can obtain multilateral, stable and unconditional most-favored-nation policy, and since then, China has been opening up to the outside world faster and faster. China is the most populous country in the world and a major developing country. China's domestic development has gained momentum and its total economic volume is growing steadily year by year under the influence of its opening-up policy. As the neighboring countries of China, the 10 ASEAN countries have unique advantages in location and humanities. Under the influence of the Asian financial crisis, the economies of ASEAN countries are very depressed, and they are eager to promote mutual development through cooperation with China. In this environment, CAEXPO was successfully held under the initiative of China, which is a very good opportunity. At present, CAEXPO has been successfully held for more than ten sessions. In recent years, under the initiative of Chinese President Xi, Jinping, the construction of China's 'Belt and Road' has received strong support from ASEAN countries. In the future, it is believed that the scale and influence of the CAEXPO will become stronger and stronger, driven by the construction of 'Belt and Road', and cooperation and development have become the mainstream trend."

#### 4.1.1.3 Guangxi's Location Advantage

Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, abbreviated as Gui, is located at the southern border of the motherland, between 104°28'-112°04' East longitude and 20°54'-26°24' North latitude, with the Tropic of Cancer crossing the central part of the region. The total land area of Guangxi is 237,600 square kilometers, accounting

for about 2.5% of the total land area of the country, ranking the ninth among all provinces, autonomous regions and municipalities directly under the central government; the total length of the mainland coastline is 1,595 kilometers, and there are abundant coastal port resources, marine biological resources and coastal tourism resources. There are 12 ethnic groups living in Guangxi, including Zhuang, Han, Yao, Miao, Dong, Mulao, Maonan, Hui, Jing, Yi, Shui and Gelao. Nanning City, the capital of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, abbreviated as "Yong", is the political, economic, transportation, science, education, culture and health, financial and information center of the region. Guangxi is the only minority autonomous region near the sea in China and the only coastal region in the west. With its unique location advantage, Guangxi has become an important gateway and frontier for China to open up to the outside world, to ASEAN and to the world, and is the most convenient outlet to the sea in the southwest. Guangxi is the third largest overseas Chinese hometown in China, and overseas Chinese are distributed in 92 countries and regions in the world, of which about 80% are distributed in Southeast Asian countries, so the CAEXPO has the unique conditions to carry out cultural exchanges (M. Guo & Yuan, 2017).

Scholar S4: "Nanning City is located in the south of Guangxi, in the subtropical zone and south of the Tropic of Cancer, and is connected to ASEAN countries, which has natural geographical superiority. Nanning city has always been hygienic and clean, beautiful environment, four seasons like spring, and pleasant climate. Nanning city, as the capital of Guangxi, is the frontier city of Guangxi and even China's open cooperation towards ASEAN, the core city of the Beibu Gulf Economic Zone, and the important gateway city of the organic connection of the national 'Belt and Road', which has a very good location advantage. "

Scholar S6: "Nanning is China's only provincial capital city with ASEAN countries both land borders and sea access, has the transportation hub center of the three major economic circles of Southwest China, South China coast and ASEAN free trade zone, a river of spring water connecting Yunnan, Guizhou, Hong Kong and Macao, plays a strategic pivot role in the economic construction of the ASEAN-oriented channel in Guangxi, is China and ASEAN countries to carry out international meeting room of deep interaction, with unique and important location advantages."

Organizer A3: "Guangxi is located in the combination of China and ten ASEAN countries, and can directly enter Southeast Asia by waterway and land way, and has the most convenient traffic channel to communicate with the two major markets of China and ASEAN, which is very convenient to travel. At the same time, Guangxi is China's third largest overseas Chinese hometown, Chinese overseas Chinese become an important link connecting Guangxi and ASEAN countries economic and trade exchanges. In the ten ASEAN countries, the number of Chinese is about more than 40 million, among these Chinese, a large part of them come from Guangxi, they share the same language and customs with Guangxi people, and most of them are business people, which is very conducive to trade and commerce, these are the main factors that are very favorable to the CAEXPO located in Nanning, Guangxi. Guangxi and Southeast Asian countries are very close human relations, with superior human advantages: ASEAN people from all walks of life to Nanning to carry out trade and commerce activities, it is easier to adapt."

It can be seen that the location advantage of Nanning, Guangxi is very obvious, and the CAEXPO is set up in Nanning as a permanent venue, whether for the development of Guangxi or for the implementation of China's national development strategy has a very important significance.

Exhibitor E3: "I think China and ASEAN countries have a lot in common in terms of environment, climate, food habits and so on. In addition, there are many overseas Chinese in Southeast Asian countries, which is a very favorable aspect for cooperation."

#### 4.1.1.4 Nanning City Foundation

##### 1) Population, education and economic base

Nanning is the seat of the capital of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, a provincial capital city with Zhuang as the main ethnic group and a multi-ethnic population, inhabited by 50 ethnic groups, including Han, Zhuang, Miao, Yao, Dong, Hui and Mulao. According to the data of the Statistical Bulletin of National Economic Development of Nanning City in 2017, the city's registered population at the end of 2017 was 7,568,700, an increase of 51,300 or 0.7% over the previous year, of which the urban population was 3,753,800, an increase of 52,900 or 1.4% (Nanning Bureau of Statistics, 2018).

There are 32 general colleges and universities in Nanning, including Guangxi University, Guangxi Medical University, Guangxi University for Nationalities, Guangxi University of Traditional Chinese Medicine, Guangxi Finance and Economics College, Guangxi Art College, etc., of which 14 are undergraduate colleges and universities and 18 are specialized colleges and universities, with an annual enrollment of more than 100,000 students.

In 2004, the city's gross domestic product was 58.886 billion Yuan (Nanning Bureau of Statistics, 2005), with an increase of 13.2% over the previous year, the highest growth rate since 1996. The three industries developed comprehensively, among which: the value added of the primary industry was 10.275 billion Yuan, increased 5.9%; the value added of the secondary industry was 18.497 billion Yuan, increased 18.1%; the value added of the tertiary industry was 30.114 billion Yuan, increased 13.1%.

The annual gross regional product of Nanning City in 2017 was 411.883 billion Yuan (Nanning Bureau of Statistics, 2018), an increase of 8% over the previous year at comparable prices. Based on the resident population, the city's per capita gross regional product was 57,948 yuan, increased by 6.7% year-on-year, or \$8,583 at the average exchange rate. Among the three industries, the primary industry added value of 40.418 billion Yuan, increased 4.1%; the secondary industry added value of 159.950 billion Yuan, increased 8.6%; the tertiary industry added value of 211.515 billion Yuan, increased 8.4%.

During the same period, Hangzhou, the capital city of the eastern region of China, achieved an annual regional GDP of 125.56 billion Yuan in 2017 (Statistics, 2018, March 8), an increase of 8.0% over the previous year. The value added of the primary industry was 31.2 billion Yuan, the value added of the secondary industry was 438.7 billion Yuan, and the value added of the tertiary industry was 785.7 billion Yuan, increased 1.9%, 5.3%, and 10.0%, respectively. The GDP per capita of the city's resident population was 134,607 Yuan, an increase of 10,321 Yuan or 5.4% over the previous year.

Nanjing achieved an annual regional GDP of 117.1510 billion Yuan in 2017 (Nanning Bureau of Statistics, 2018), an increase of 8.1% over the previous year, with a growth rate of 0.1 percentage points higher than the previous

year. Among them, the added value of the primary industry was 26.301 billion Yuan, increased 1.2%; the added value of the secondary industry was 445.487 billion Yuan, increased 5.1%, of which the added value of industry was 385.339 billion Yuan, increased 6%; and the added value of the tertiary industry was 699.722 billion Yuan, increased 10.3%.

As seen by the above comparison of total GDP, Nanning's gross domestic product increased nearly seven times in 13 years from 58.886 billion Yuan in 2004 to 411.883 billion Yuan in 2017. However, also as a provincial capital city, Nanning still lags far behind compared to the economic development level of Hangzhou and Nanjing. Through this data, it also reveals that there is an unbalanced economic development between the east and west of China.

Regarding the development status of Nanning's open economy, W. J. Wang (2017) pointed out that Nanning's foreign trade dependence has increased, but there is still room to rise; processing trade has multiplied fruitfully, but general trade continues to be weak with the rapid growth of import and export volume of major trading partners; the import and export to ASEAN still needs to be strengthened; foreign direct investment contributes greatly to GDP, but there is still a gap compared with neighboring provincial capital cities.

The weakness of light industry in Nanning has gradually reduced the development of whole industry. The driving force of light industry on overall industrial development gradually decreased from 100% in 2011 to 66.3% in 2016 (C. Yang, Wei, Huang, Feng, & Su, 2018). The foundation of industrial development in Nanning is weak and the total industrial economy is not large. In 2017, the city's total industrial output value was 407.088 billion Yuan, achieving an industrial output value above the scale of 398.982 billion Yuan, an increase of 13.9%, and an industrial added value above the scale of 115.908 billion Yuan, an increase of 9.9%. However, compared with other more developed provincial capitals, there is still a large gap in total economic output. In terms of industrial composition, the traditional manufacturing industry is still a large output value, and its related enterprises have weak independent innovation capability, low value-added products and lack of market competitiveness. The three key industries of electronic information, advanced equipment manufacturing and biomedicine are growing fast, but they account for a

relatively low percentage of the total output is relatively low, and the number of leading backbone enterprises is small (Z. H. Liang, 2018).

The future economic development of Nanning City needs to be guided by the national strategy, emancipate the mind, use the big platform of CAEXPO, actively participate in the construction of "Belt and Road", and continuously promote policy communication, road connection, trade smooth flow, currency circulation, and people-to-people communication in the construction. To further promote mutual recognition of standards and information technology cooperation with ASEAN countries, strengthen economic and trade exchanges with ASEAN countries, strengthen technical exchanges and cooperation, innovative talent training mechanisms, and strive to build a platform for technical exchanges and comprehensive cooperation with ASEAN countries, creating a good environment for foreign trade. At the same time, we will carry out in-depth cooperation with domestic neighboring provinces and cities to optimize the industrial structure and achieve mutual benefits and win-win situation.

Organizer A2: "CAEXPO, as an important platform for investment and cooperation between China and ASEAN, builds a direct platform for entrepreneurs and investors from Guangxi and ASEAN countries for image display, trade, investment cooperation, seminars and dialogues, cultural exchanges, and for enterprises from ASEAN countries to enter Guangxi and Guangxi enterprises to 'go out ' to build a bridge and promote the development of trade in goods and services between the two sides. In order to further strengthen the friendly cooperation and economic and trade exchanges and cultural exchanges between Nanning and ASEAN countries, Nanning City has been planning to build China - ASEAN International Business Zone in Qingxiu District since 2005, and currently six of the ten ASEAN countries, including Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand, Laos, Myanmar and Malaysia, have set up their consulates in Nanning. With the upgrade of China - ASEAN Free Trade Area in 2015, more and more powerful Guangxi enterprises have started to implement 'going out' strategy in ASEAN countries."

Exhibitor E5: "I think the urban construction in Nanning is much better now than in previous years, the environment is now very hygienic, and the traffic is very convenient. Especially, the social security is very reassuring. During our visit to the exhibition, we can often see police patrolling on the street, which gives us a sense of security."

Local resident R1: "Nanning City as the permanent venue of CAEXPO, I think the main reasons are the following 3 points: First, Guangxi is a place where ethnic minorities live, the country attaches more importance to ethnic minority areas, by holding CAEXPO in Nanning, thus driving the development of Guangxi; second, Guangxi is located in the combination of China and ten ASEAN countries, the geographical location is superior. Among them, Nanning City has convenient transportation conditions, with convenient transportation conditions along the river, near the sea, near the border, etc. It can directly enter Southeast Asia by water, land and air, and has the most convenient transportation channel to communicate the two markets of China and ASEAN, which is very convenient to travel. In addition, Nanning City, as the capital of Guangxi, is the center of Guangxi in many fields such as politics, culture, education, economy and art, etc. Meanwhile, the security and climate environment of Nanning City are relatively good, and the urban infrastructure and supporting facilities are also very good, so it has great development space and development potential. Thirdly, Guangxi belongs to the third largest overseas Chinese hometown in China, and overseas Chinese have become an important link connecting Guangxi and ASEAN countries in economic and trade exchanges."

2) The foundation of modern service industry construction

Convenient transportation conditions can provide good conditions for regional economic development. Nanning City is the permanent location of CAEXPO, and it is necessary to maximize the role of infrastructure investment for balanced regional economic growth, prioritize the role of transportation network, and promote the development of regional economy.

Organizer A6: "Nanning City has convenient transportation conditions along the river, near the sea, near the border, etc. In 2018, a more complete three-dimensional transportation network of highways, railroads, civil aviation and

waterways has been built, a new breakthrough in the construction of a regional international integrated transportation hub, a number of major railroad and highway projects such as Guinan high-speed railway and Guilong high-speed started construction. The second runway of Wuxu Airport and the preliminary work of the comprehensive transportation interchange center are being accelerated. The South China-Kunming Passenger Train opened for operation, the West Railway Station was completed and used, and the East Railway Station became the largest comprehensive transportation hub in southwest China. A number of highways directly through the Southwest China sea access, the formation of 'a ring of five shots, two horizontal and one vertical' highway network, four high-speed railway line network convergence Nanning, the West River "Golden Waterway" hub and other major transport infrastructure is accelerating the construction. Many Chinese goods exported to ASEAN, especially Vietnam, are mostly exported through Guangxi, and the import and export of people and goods of seven countries in the South China Peninsula, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore have also entered the Chinese hinterland by land and sea through Guangxi, and the status of Guangxi as the logistics center of China facing Southeast Asia has become increasingly obvious. And as the hub city of the Great Southwest Sea Passage, Nanning has formed a three-dimensional transportation network with air, railroad, highway and waterway in all directions, and convenient transportation and logistics infrastructure, which creates very favorable conditions for the successful holding of CAEXPO."

Organizer A3: "Nanning's modern service industry is developing rapidly. As of 2018, Nanning has 25 national AAAA-level and above scenic spots, 131 travel agencies (including 38 outbound travel agencies), 8 museums, and 49 actual star-rated hotels in the city. Nanning has 11 logistics enterprises with grade A or above, has been approved as a model city for service outsourcing in China, Nanning has become one of the first 25 national demonstration cities for information consumption, and has received a total of 352 million tourist arrivals in the past five years."

Exhibitor E3: "The reason for setting up the expo in Nanning, I think, is that in addition to the special policy care of the state for Guangxi, Nanning itself has many advantages. Nanning, as the capital of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, has done very well in terms of environment, climate as well as social climate, the city infrastructure is also improving, and Nanning, as an important transportation hub city, is relatively close to ASEAN countries and has convenient transportation conditions by sea, land and air. The Nanning government attaches great importance to the holding of the fair, and the urban infrastructure and supporting facilities in Nanning are getting better and better, which I think is very good."

3) Foundation of government services and rule of law construction

Nanning Municipal Government has made bold innovations and achieved good results in the construction of government services and the rule of law. In 2017, Nanning Municipal Government comprehensively promoted the reform of government services mechanism and solidly promoted the implementation of the Outline for the Implementation of the Rule of Law Government Construction (2015-2020) in the city. Nanning Municipal Government has taken a series of effective measures through innovative methods of social governance, and the construction of the rule of law government has obtained obvious results. According to the China Rule of Law Government Assessment Report by China University of Political Science and Law and Institute of Government by Law (2017), Nanning ranked 5th among 100 major cities in mainland China and 1st among western cities in the comprehensive evaluation (China University of Political Science and Law & Institute of Government by Law, 2017). However, there is still more room for development in optimizing the business environment.

Organizer A4: "Now, Nanning City, based on the new mission of 'three major positioning' given by the central government to Guangxi as an international channel, strategic pivot point and important gateway, is giving full play to government effectiveness and making every effort to implement industrial transformation and upgrading, 'Nanning Channel' Upgrade, green city quality upgrade, deepening reform upgrade, rule of law upgrade, Nanning upgrade, people's well-being upgrade 'six upgrade' project, accelerate the construction of China's

ASEAN-oriented open cooperation of regional international city, 'belt and road' organic linkage of the important gateway city, to region's economic and social development has a strong support drive the capital city, with strong Zhuangxiang characteristics and subtropical style of ecological livable city 'four cities' construction."

Scholar S5: "Creating a good environment for attracting investment is inseparable from the escorting guarantee of policies and regulations, and we hope that the Guangxi government will introduce regulations on optimizing the business environment as soon as possible, further improve the legal and policy environment, and promote high-quality economic and social development."

#### 4) The main problems of urban construction

Nanning City is the center of politics, finance, economy, education and culture in the region, with relatively perfect infrastructure facilities. It has a large stadium, a modern library, a convenient transportation hub, a good educational environment, other modern public facilities and a high level of medical conditions, which can satisfy businessmen and friends from all countries in all directions. However, there are still some obvious problems, such as the industrial structure is not reasonable enough; modern finance, high-tech industries, and modern industrial development are still relatively backward compared with the developed areas in the east; the degree of agricultural modernization is not high; the introduction and training of high-level talent is not enough; lack of development momentum; the radiation and leading role in the economic and social development of the region is not strong; the development of urban and rural areas is unbalanced, and the task of fighting poverty is relatively difficult.

Organizer A5: "At present, there is still an obvious phenomenon of unreasonable industrial structure in Guangxi. In the future, Nanning City will integrate advantageous resources and give priority to the three key industries, such as biomedicine, advanced equipment manufacturing and electronic information, etc. Through the development of key industries, we will achieve the point to lead the surface, further optimize the industrial structure and drive the healthy development of other industries."

Scholar S3: "Guangxi's regional economic development has been unbalanced for a long time, especially some relatively remote rural areas, or relatively backward. To solve this problem, we need to provide strong support for the development of agriculture, rural areas and farmers by formulating corresponding support policies under the drive of government departments. At the same time, more enterprises, groups and individuals in a position to do so should be encouraged to join the big project of poverty eradication and work together for the early realization of the goal of an overall well-off society."

#### 4.1.1.5 Business Opportunities Needed for Enterprises

ASEAN was established in 1967, but before 1984, there was very little economic and trade cooperation between China and ASEAN. It was only after 2003, with the signing of a series of trade agreements and the establishment of the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area, that Chinese investment and trade exchanges with ASEAN began to grow rapidly. The author learned from the CAEXPO Secretariat that the trade volume between Guangxi and ASEAN was only \$803 million in 2003 before the CAEXPO was held, and increased significantly after the Expo was held. From 2006 to 2016, the trade volume between Guangxi and ASEAN increased from 10.98 billion Yuan to 183.5 billion Yuan. In 2017, Guangxi's import and export to ASEAN was 189.39 billion Yuan, an increase of 3.7%, accounting for 49% of Guangxi's total foreign trade value in the same period (H. M. Zhou, 2018), and ASEAN has been Guangxi's largest trading partner for 15 consecutive years.

The China-ASEAN Expo has a very positive effect on the development of Chinese enterprises. Many Chinese companies hope to use the big platform of CAEXPO to exchange technology and cooperate with ASEAN countries and companies, and prepare them to go to ASEAN and to the world. The following are some of the excerpts of interviews conducted by the researcher with several organizers, exhibitors and scholars.

Organizer A1: "Now, China is ASEAN's number one trading partner, and ASEAN is also China's third largest trading partner, fourth largest export market and second largest source of imports. Figures in 2016 show that China-ASEAN annual trade volume was 452.2 billion dollars. In 2017, China-ASEAN trade grew very well, with a growth rate of 16.6 percent and the growth rate is 2.4 %, which is

higher than the national average trade. The growth rate has boosted confidence in the development of enterprises in each country and the growing influence of the brand. I believe that this growth trend will remain good in the future."

Organizer A2: "Data technology as an important part of the CAEXPO advanced technology, this year, the exhibitors' technical achievements cover new materials, advanced manufacturing, Internet plus, artificial intelligence, medicine and health, smart city, electronic information and other fields. Each exhibitor hopes that through the large platform of China-ASEAN, they can increase product and technology exposure and further build their brands. We are confident that more and more advanced technology enterprises and institutions will organize to put their latest technological achievements on exhibition in the future."

Scholar S2: "The exhibition of advanced technology achievements is an important channel and practical platform for ASEAN countries to gain an in-depth understanding of China's science and technology industry development and innovation, find data technology cooperation, and obtain development business opportunities, and is an important way to disseminate technology information and a very important bridge for high-tech enterprises in China and ASEAN countries to seek cooperation. At present, many high-precision technologies have not been well transformed, and I hope the expo can serve as an incubation base for scientific and technological innovation and improve the transformation rate of scientific and technological achievements."

Exhibitor E1: "The CAEXPO platform is a very good platform, which is very suitable for us to promote our brand. Now, the sales volume of our products is increasing year by year. We also hope that more of our Thai companies will be able to explore the Chinese and ASEAN markets through this platform. Every year, the Expo has some new elements, which I think is a good phenomenon. We also hope that, in the future, the Expo can take the form of physical exhibition plus online Expo, which makes the exhibition more dynamic."

Exhibitor E2: " CAEXPO is a good platform to help many enterprises broaden their trade channels. For example, our logistics companies can promote their brands well in this big international platform. We hope that we can achieve more contact and cooperation with ASEAN countries in the service industry through the Expo, so that our enterprises can serve more countries and people."

Scholar S2: "Guangxi's enterprises, should make good use of the expo as a big platform and opportunity to broaden trade channels, do a good job of building corporate brands, and hope to see our local enterprises go to ASEAN and to the world."

Exhibitor E3: "As a foreign trade enterprise, our sales were very limited before we participated in the Expo, since we exhibited through this Expo 3 years ago, we started to open up the ASEAN market, and now, our sales are developing steadily in terms of ASEAN countries. I believe that there will be many enterprises like us, and under the big platform of the fair, the sales channels are getting wider and wider, and the business is getting bigger and bigger."

Organizer A3: "Guangxi, due to the slow start of economic development, is relatively backward compared to the developed eastern regions, and the brand awareness of local enterprises is even weaker. According to statistics, in 2017, there were about 1,000 well-known trademarks in the country, while there were only 31 in Guangxi, which is a very low ratio. It is very necessary to take advantage of the CAEXPO to promote local enterprises in Guangxi and create a number of localized corporate brands."

Scholar S5: "Belt and Road' initiative has been highly praised by countries all over the world, pushing China's opening up to the outside world to a new climax. The construction of 'Belt and Road' has fully considered the advantages of provinces and cities in each country, and Guangxi, as an ethnic minority region and the only coastal province in the west, has natural geographical advantages and is facing unprecedented opportunities."

The holding of CAEXPO not only attracts foreign talents, technology and various products into China, but also builds a very good platform for Chinese enterprises to "go out", which creates a good opportunity for enterprises to "go out".

### 4.1.2 Analysis of Input Evaluation Results

Through the feasibility assessment and analysis of the five elements of CAEXPO, which include government attention, talent investment, financial support, organizational support and resource utilization, the results show that these five elements fully reflect the Chinese government's high attention to the holding of CAEXPO, giving full play to government functions and exhibition management capabilities, vigorously training talents, providing financial support and organizational support, and reasonably allocating various resources, which provide a very strong guarantee for the successful holding of CAEXPO and make the implementation of the project highly feasible and economical.

#### 4.1.2.1 Government Attention

Since 2004, the CAEXPO has been highly valued by the governments of China and ASEAN countries, and for each edition of the Expo, China and ASEAN countries have arranged for key national leaders to attend and deliver important speeches. For example, on September 12, 2017, the 14th CAEXPO and Business and Investment Summit, with the theme of "Building the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, Tourism Boosting Regional Economic Integration", was grandly opened in Nanning, Guangxi. The then Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, Vice Premier Zhang, Gaoli, the 14th CAEXPO theme country Sultan Hassanal of Brunei, Prime Minister Hun Sen of Cambodia, Executive Vice Premier Truong Hoa Binh of Vietnam, Deputy Prime Minister Song Sai of Laos and other national leaders attended and delivered speeches. The leaders of the participating countries in the previous sessions have highly praised the CAEXPO.

According to Chinese President Xi, Jinping: "Since 2004, the CAEXPO and the China-ASEAN Business and Investment Summit have been successfully held for 13 consecutive sessions, becoming a bright business card of Guangxi and an important open platform for China-ASEAN. It is necessary to innovate regional cooperation mechanisms, form high-level dialogue platforms with distinctive themes and outstanding characteristics as well as professional cooperation platforms, and smooth the 'Nanning Channel.'" (Y. Shen, 2017). Hu, Jintao, then President of the People's Republic of China stated that: "As an international exhibition at the national level, the CAEXPO has become an important platform for economic

and trade cooperation between China and ASEAN, and the central government will strongly support Guangxi to run this expo well. The CAEXPO should be held for a long time, and it should be run with characteristics and effectiveness." (X. L. Jiang, 2007, March 16).

Li, Keqiang, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China suggested that: "The CAEXPO and Business and Investment Summit has been run with great success over the past 10 years, and we also hope to sail smoothly and ride the waves in the future." (K. Q. Li, 2013, September 3). Zhang, Gaoli, Member of the Standing Committee of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee and Vice Premier of the State Council claimed that: "The Chinese government, as always, attaches great importance to developing friendly cooperation with ASEAN, insists on making ASEAN a priority direction in neighboring diplomacy, supports the development and growth of ASEAN, supports the building of the ASEAN Community, and supports ASEAN's leading position in regional cooperation. China is willing to work with ASEAN to join hands in building the 'Belt and Road' and building a closer China-ASEAN community of destiny as the goal, further implement the '2+7 cooperation framework', and promote the strategic partnership between the two sides to continuously make new progress." (G. L. Zhang, 2015, September 18).

Prime Minister Hun Sen of the Kingdom of Cambodia reported that: "We should continue to let the CAEXPO play an important role in strengthening economic and trade cooperation between China and ASEAN and promoting political mutual trust. The CAEXPO is an important factor in deepening cooperation between China and ASEAN, and Cambodia has made important gains at the China-ASEAN Expo." (J. H. Liu, 2018, September 12). Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, former President of the Philippines and current Speaker of the House of Representatives: "China and ASEAN are not competitors, but a very good collaborator, enabler. China attaches great importance to its cooperation with ASEAN and actively provides financial and technical support to ASEAN countries. Any country in ASEAN, including the Philippines, can clearly see that it will benefit a lot from good neighborly cooperation with China." (C. Yang & Lin, 2018, September 8 ). Yingluck, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand: "The China-ASEAN Expo continues to strengthen the strategic partnership with China, and our relationship is mutually beneficial." (Su, 2013,

October 9). Lee Hsien Loong, Prime Minister of the Republic of Singapore: "The CAEXPO held has built a good platform for Singapore companies to enter the Guangxi and Chinese markets, and Singapore fully supports the Expo." (W. T. Du, Jiang, & Liao, 2008, October 21). Philippine President Arroyo said, "The CAEXPO is a big stage for China and ASEAN to strengthen economic and trade relations, and promote the construction of the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area." And that "the CAEXPO has set a model for future cooperation between the two sides." (W. T. Du et al., 2008, October 21). Nguyen Xuan Phuc, Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam: " CAEXPO and the Business and Investment Summit have played an important role in promoting the deepening strategic partnership between ASEAN and China, helping the ASEAN community to make steady progress towards the goal of achieving 2025." (Wei & Rong, 2016).

Since the CAEXPO has been held, it has played an increasingly important role, with a series of agreements signed and many policy documents issued between China and ASEAN countries.

Organizer A3: "The People's Government of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region has issued the Regulations on the Administration of Exhibitions in Nanning, the Work Plan on Accelerating the Development of the Exhibition Industry, the Implementation Plan for Further Promoting the Reform and Development of the Exhibition Industry, the Implementation Plan for Building an International Corridor for ASEAN in Guangxi, the Guangxi Participation in 'Belt and Road' Science and Technology Innovation Action Plan Implementation Plan (2018-2020)," and a series of other policies, which have formulated corresponding regulations, nudged to create a good investment environment and attract more enterprises to Guangxi for construction and development."

Local resident R3: "Now every year the CAEXPO held, the Office of the People's Government of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region will issue the Notice on the Holiday in Nanning City during the CAEXPO, organs, enterprises, institutions and social organizations in Nanning City downtown, two-days holiday (relevant units and individuals who undertake the work of the Expo will not take a holiday, the Expo After the end of the fair to make up for the holiday), fully reflecting the high importance the state attaches to the fair and encouraging more people to visit

the venue. During the exhibition period, the staff of each community strengthen the propaganda, call on all citizens to set an example, everyone participate, speak civilized and polite, and show a good spirit."

Organizer A5: "The leaders of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and the relevant persons in charge of the 'two conferences' command center went to the Nanning International Convention and Exhibition Center and the journalists' resident hotel before the CAEXPO to inspect and guide the press propaganda work of the Expo. They requested all relevant news media and journalists to attach great importance to the expo's publicity and reporting work with close cooperation, careful planning, and clear responsibility. They were asked to tell the story of the Expo, so that more people around the world can understand the Expo, pay attention to the Expo, participate in the Expo. The CAEXPO Secretariat is required to support the construction of the official website and the external services and publicity of the Expo, therefore, a window for the promotion of the Expo brand can be created."

#### 4.1.2.2 Talent Investment

Modern exhibition industry is a sunrise industry with increasingly strong economic, political and cultural influence, and exhibition professionals are the key to running good exhibitions and developing modern exhibition industry.

##### 1) Number of exhibitions

With the successful holding of the first CAEXPO in 2004, the exhibition industry in Guangxi flourished like a spring. Ten years ago, there were almost no large-scale international conventions and exhibitions in Guangxi. Nowadays, a series of large-scale international conferences such as China-ASEAN Business and Investment Summit, China-ASEAN Free Trade Area Forum and Pan-Beibu Gulf Economic Cooperation Forum have settled in Guangxi, which have a strong promotion effect on the local economy. More than ten years ago, there were almost no large convention and exhibition complexes capable of hosting international conferences. Now, large convention and exhibition complexes such as Nanning International Convention and Exhibition Center, Guilin International Convention and Exhibition Center, Beihai "Silver Beach One" Convention and Exhibition Center, Guanling Convention and Exhibition Center and Yulin International Convention and Exhibition Center are rising up.

Although the exhibition industry in Guangxi is increasing rapidly, the gap is still very obvious compared with the number of exhibitions held in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Zhengzhou and other regions every year. According to the data of China Exhibition Economic Development Report (2017), 659 exhibitions of various kinds were held in Shanghai, 373 exhibitions were held in Beijing, 314 exhibitions were held in Guangzhou, 147 exhibitions were held in Shenzhen, 142 exhibitions were held in Zhengzhou, while less than 50 exhibitions were held in Nanning, and the number of exhibitions held in Guangxi accounted for only 1% of the national exhibitions (China Council for the Promotion of International Trade, 2018). It can be seen that the number of exhibitions in Nanning is still far away from the first-tier cities in China.

## 2) Demand for exhibition talents

CAEXPO insists on combining attraction and cultivation, combining inside and outside, "learning by doing" and "doing by learning", and strives to build a high-quality exhibition professional talent team for ASEAN, so as to serve the national peripheral diplomatic strategy, the construction of China - ASEAN Free Trade Area, and provide strong talent support to promote Guangxi's opening up and economic and social development (Qin, 2018). The data of China Exhibition Economic Development Report (2017) shows that in the past three years, the annual enrollment of new students in exhibition majors in national universities is roughly around 15,000, among which, the top 10 provinces and cities in the distribution of the number of students in exhibition majors in 2015 are 6,648 in Guangdong Province, 3,828 in Zhejiang Province, 2,809 in Shanghai, 2,486 in Shandong Province, 2,314 in Chongqing. There are 1,966 students in Beijing, 1,952 students in Anhui, 1,951 students in Tianjin, 1,899 students in Hubei and 1,859 students in Jiangsu. Among them, Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region is ranked 16th with 1040 people (China Council for the Promotion of International Trade, 2018). And the "Talent Development Plan of Guangxi Beibu Gulf Economic Zone 2008-2015" issued by the Institute of Quantitative Economics (2008) clearly stipulates that the exhibition service industry is one of the nine key industries for development and predicts that the total number of talents in the exhibition industry in Beibu Gulf Economic Zone will be about 23,000-28,000 by 2015. Thinking from this perspective, we can know that

the development of exhibition industry can also drive local employment and improve many jobs for the local area. Judging from the above data, the national conference and exhibition professional talents cultivation is relatively stable, and there is still a big gap between the number of Guangxi conference and exhibition professional talents cultivation and Guangdong Province, Zhejiang Province, Shanghai and other regions. There is still a big gap between the number of talents cultivation of exhibition professionals in Guangxi universities and the number of actual market demand. At the same time, there are still problems of insufficient training of conference and exhibition management talents in CAEXPO: shortage of training funds and the existing training funds are not effectively utilized; lack of training faculty; relatively vague training contents and no step-by-step plan; single training form; and lack of training effect assessment (Qin, 2018).

Exhibitor E4: "I hope there will be more exchanges between China and ASEAN countries in terms of talent training. By attracting and recruiting more foreign students, Guangxi's universities can spread Chinese culture to the world and further improve their international influence. We hope that students in Guangxi will have the opportunity to study abroad, further improve their language skills, develop their horizons and contribute to the economic and social development of Guangxi when they return home after their studies. As a platform for study abroad services, we will be dedicated to providing services for students from various countries."

Scholar S4: "With the increasing business of conference and exhibition and the increasing degree of specialization, the conference and exhibition industry in Guangxi urgently needs three types of talents, the first type is the core talents of conference and exhibition, i.e. the talents of conference and exhibition planning and operation management; the second type is the specialized talents of conference and exhibition, i.e. the specialized talents involved in conference and exhibition service and management, as well as the specialized talents in the fields of conference and exhibition-related industries, such as public relations and logistics; the third category is the general talents of exhibition, i.e. the foreign-related service talents who are familiar with English or the language of an ASEAN country and know international etiquette and have certain organization and management ability. Driven

by the CAEXPO, the exhibition economy and exhibition industry in Guangxi are developing rapidly, and the demand for exhibition applied talents such as core talents, specialized talents and general talents in the exhibition industry has increased significantly. Especially, the demand for talents who master the professional knowledge and skills of conference and exhibition and are proficient in foreign languages in conference and exhibition and related industries increases year by year. At present, there are still problems of insufficient conference and exhibition education and training of conference and exhibition talents."

Scholar S6: "The shortage of conference and exhibition talents shows from another angle that the development of conference and exhibition industry can provide more employment positions."

### 3) Cultivation of conference and exhibition talents

Talent is the base of prosperity and development. Talent resources are the first resource for regional development, and the accumulation of human capital is the source of economic growth and the driving force to achieve economic and social development (L. Li, Huang, & Fang, 2017). In order to attract exhibition professionals and solve the problem of talent shortage, Nanning Municipal Government has introduced a series of policies related to the introduction and protection of talents to increase the introduction of talents. For example, the Outline of Nanning Medium and Long-term Talent Development Plan (2010-2020) (Nanfa [2011] No. 33) and the 12th Five-Year Talent Development Plan of Nanning (Nanfu Fa [2011] No. 55). These two documents both clearly put forward the talent strategy "focusing on ASEAN talents and high-end talents".

Scholar S1: "Guangxi's policy on the introduction of convention talents is firstly, the Party committee and government of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region issued the Decision on Implementing the Innovation-driven Development Strategy (Guifa [2016] No. 23), the Implementation Opinions on Deepening the Reform of the Institutional Mechanism for Talent Development (Guifa [2016] No. 26) and the Measures on Strengthening the Construction of High-level Innovative Talents (Guifa [2016] No. 26). Implementation Measures for Construction" (Gui Fa [2016] No. 42) and a series of policies on the introduction, cultivation and development of talents. The second is to especially support the

relevant units of China - ASEAN Information Port to actively introduce high-level talents and provide strong protection in terms of talent apartments, children's enrollment, tax policies, medical policies, etc. The third is the implementation of the ASEAN Outstanding Young Scientists to China to Gui work program. These talent introduction and cultivation policies can alleviate to a certain extent the problem of lack of high-level talents in the region, especially the urgent and shortage of professional talents in key industrial fields."

Scholar S2: "Guangxi district government attaches more importance to the cultivation of exhibition professionals and ASEAN minor language professionals, and in 2018, there are six undergraduate colleges and universities and eight senior high schools and colleges in the region that offer exhibition professionals. At present, six ASEAN minor language majors such as Thai, Cambodian, Indonesian, Myanmar, Laotian and Vietnamese are opened in undergraduate colleges and universities in Guangxi, and the opening of these majors can provide more talents to support the economic trade and cultural tourism between China and ASEAN."

Scholar S5: "In recent years, China's conference and exhibition education has been developing rapidly, but the development of conference and exhibition education in Guangxi is relatively slow, and there is a disconnect between the cultivation of conference and exhibition professionals in colleges and universities and the demand of social employers, and high-quality conference and exhibition talents cannot meet the demand of society yet."

Talent issue is the key to the sustainable development of CAEXPO. Human resources are a most active and valuable resource (X. H. Luo, 2015), and attaching importance to the development and management of human resources can cultivate more talents for regional economic development. To be competitive in the fierce competition of the exhibition market, establish a good exhibition brand image and get sustainable development in the future, CAEXPO needs to establish a sound talent system, strengthen the introduction of exhibition talents, urgently cultivate a group of exhibition professionals and build a regional talent gathering center with international vision for ASEAN.

#### 4.1.2.3 Financial Support

In terms of financial support and investment, China and ASEAN are mutually important sources of foreign investment, and China has now become the main source of foreign investment in ASEAN. Cooperation in infrastructure development and connectivity between China and ASEAN has been developing, and the Chinese government has invested a large amount of special financial funds for infrastructure development, and a large number of projects such as roads, railroads, ports, aviation, power and bridges are being implemented.

Organizer A3: "In order to support the CAEXPO, China's National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Finance, the People's Government of the autonomous region, and the Government of Nanning City, in addition to giving direct and substantial funds for the construction of exhibition venues, infrastructure construction, and the introduction of talents, have also formulated a series of new international flight loss subsidy methods, exemption from corporate income tax of the Expo Bureau, and other policies. For example, in 2008, China's state financial support includes: the annual subsidy of 5 million Yuan of the central financial import promotion fund for encouraging the good import exhibition, the national foreign aid fund of nearly 4 million Yuan per session for helping less developed ASEAN countries to participate in the exhibition, and the annual training fund of 100,000 USD for the training of exhibition projects, etc. China's central government subsidizes the fair every year, reflecting the high importance the Chinese government attaches to the fair's holding and providing a solid financial guarantee for the fair's sustainable development."

Scholar S2: "According to the data released by China's Ministry of Commerce in 2017: the bilateral China-ASEAN trade volume achieved US\$452.2 billion in 2016; the trade volume between China and ASEAN reached US\$514.82 billion in 2017, 6.6 times that of 2003. China has been ASEAN's top trading partner for nine consecutive years, and ASEAN has been China's The third largest trade partner. By the end of May 2017, Chinese enterprises had signed a total of US\$296.27 billion in infrastructure construction contracts in ASEAN countries, with a cumulative turnover of US\$204 billion. China actively participates in the China-ASEAN (10+1), ASEAN and China-Japan-South Korea (10+3) and East Asia economic cooperation

under the framework of the East Asia Summit led by the ASEAN side, allowing the people of China and ASEAN to fully share the fruits of regional economic integration, which, in my opinion, is a very good development trend."

Organizer A2: "The Party Committee of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and the People's Government of the Autonomous Region, in order to solve the problems of insufficient exhibition area, incomplete supporting functions and poor traffic in Nanning International Convention and Exhibition Center, and to promote the upgrading and sustainable development of CAEXPO, started a special project for the construction of supporting facilities for the renovation and expansion of Nanning International Convention and Exhibition Center in June 2016. The project is a key project for the 60th anniversary of the founding of the autonomous region, with a total land area of about 37,000 square meters, a total construction area of about 158,000 square meters and a total investment of about 2.558 billion Yuan, and most of the works were put into use at the 15th CAEXPO."

Organizer A2: "Every year, the CAEXPO Secretariat, the Department of Commerce of the autonomous region, the Investment Promotion Bureau of the autonomous region and other departments jointly host the CAEXPO Investment and Financing Project Matchmaking Meeting, inviting governments of domestic provinces and cities and ASEAN countries, business associations, financial institutions, relevant enterprises, investment banks, etc., to communicate on issues such as enterprise financing and risk response. "

Organizer A3: "Guangxi - ASEAN Economic Development Zone is an important carrier of the CAEXPO and a key contact unit of the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office of the State Council of China. In 2015, Guangxi - ASEAN Economic Development Zone received strong support from the National Development and Reform Commission and the Ministry of Finance in terms of special funds and policies to support national financial recycling transformation. This is the only national park recycling transformation demonstration pilot park in Guangxi."

Exhibitor E6: "In order to better hold the CAEXPO and improve the international competitiveness of the Expo, Nanning Municipal Government has invested a lot of money and resources to upgrade the venues and the surrounding supporting facilities, and the effect is very obvious. Compared with the first CAEXPO

in 2004, the surrounding environment of the Expo has now undergone a radical change, and this speed is very fast."

Local resident R1: "The key point about the input of the exhibition is that the national leaders, leaders of Guangxi District and Nanning Municipal Government all attach more importance to the success of the exposition, and have invested a lot of special financial funds and manpower in the exposition, integrated the resources of all aspects of the region and done a lot of practical work. For example, the planning and construction of exhibition venues, the introduction of exhibition talents, the development of exhibitors, etc., and the opening of exhibition service and management-related majors and courses in various universities to cultivate exhibition corresponding talents for the country."

#### 4.1.2.4 Organizational Security

##### 1) Strengthening organizational leadership

Chinese Minister of Commerce, Director of the Organizing Committee of the Business and Investment Summit, China Trade Promotion Council, Deputy Director of the Organizing Committee, Chairman of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and other leaders attended and delivered speeches. The Chinese government attaches great importance to the holding of CAEXPO, and in each year of the Expo, the main leaders of the Chinese government will attend and deliver speeches. The Government of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and the Municipal Government of Nanning City, as the organizers, also attach great importance to it and provide strong organizational guarantee for the success of the CAEXPO.

Organizer A3: "In 2017, for example, Peng, Qinghua, Party Secretary of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, Chen, Wu, Chairman of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and head of the 'Two Conferences' Guangxi Leading Group, Chen ,Wu, Vice Chairman of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and 'Two Conferences ' Command Center General Director Zhang, Xiaoqin and other major leaders hosted a series of working meetings many times before the 'Two Conferences' were held to invite and arrange important activities for the leaders of the 'Two Conferences', exhibition work, investment promotion, the meetings and forums, publicity, security, reception, basic security and other preparatory work was

deployed to strengthen coordination, strict work discipline, and emphasize the ability to implement to ensure the smooth holding of the Expo. Encourage all staff to unity of thought, unity and cooperation, to make the CAEXPO a high level, effective and influential event, to better serve the construction of China - ASEAN Free Trade Area and participation in the 'Belt and Road' construction, and to establish a good image of Guangxi."

Organizer A6: "Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region leadership attaches great importance to the establishment of transfers, specifically established a work organization, set up a 'two conferences' command center with the vice chairman of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region as the head of the group, various departments, each work is equipped with sufficient personnel to participate in the construction and management. A series of policies and programs for exhibition services and management have also been introduced, and a series of management standards and service processes have been formulated to provide a strong guarantee for the smooth conduct of the exhibition in terms of management standards, service standards, safety standards, health standards, information standards, environmental standards, commercial standards, etc. Contingency plans for all aspects of the exhibition have also been formulated."

## 2) Establishment of special organizational structure

In order to enhance the organization security, the Government of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region attaches great importance to the establishment of special organizational institutions. Chen, Wu, chairman of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, personally served as the leader of Guangxi Leading Group of the "two conferences", and Zhang, Xiaoqin, vice chairman of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, served as the commander-in-chief of the command center of the "two conferences". In the "two conferences" command center, there is a general director and 11 deputy general director, including three executive deputy general director. CAEXPO permanent working body Guangxi International Expo Bureau specially set up comprehensive coordination department (comprehensive coordination department), research and development department, exhibition work department, foreign liaison department, investment and trade department, publicity and promotion department, meeting reception department, human resources

department (organ party committee), finance and accounting department (state-owned assets management office) and other nine institutions. They clarify the work responsibilities of each agency, with dedicated staff, and do all the coordination work.

Organizer A2: "The command center of the 'two conferences' has strengthened the ability of horizontal and vertical coordination in the coordination work, organizing and holding more than 30 work coordination meetings every year on average, vigorously promoting the work of the conference and exhibition, coordinating and solving problems, and guaranteeing the effective implementation of the work. By strengthening organizational leadership, setting up special organizational structure, strengthening management team construction, clear division of labor, coordinating and supervising and inspecting, the 'two conferences' command center plays the role of planning, coordinating, supervising, leading and reminding the work of each work department, improving the planning, controllability and effectiveness of work, strengthening execution, and guaranteeing the exhibition objectives are achieved."

#### 4.1.2.5 Resource Utilization

The author learned from the CAEXPO Secretariat that the Government of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and the Municipal Government of Nanning City have taken a series of measures to run the "two conferences" well, strictly control the time frame, fully utilize the personnel, funds, equipment and venues. On average, they complete the task of receiving nearly 200 VIP groups each year, and provide logistical support for all exhibitors and individuals.

##### 1) Staffing

For example, in 2017, the CAEXPO Command Center specially set up various organizational bodies, equipped with dedicated personnel, and focused on promoting standardized management and refined warm-hearted services, showing strong organizational reception capabilities.

Organizer A6: "The command center organized a large number of human and material resources from various government departments and units, reasonably equipped with personnel, funds and equipment, to complete the reception services and logistical support work of the 'two conferences' on time, including hotel and hotel rooms and their meeting places protection, vehicle organization and

deployment, welcome and send seven major security initiatives, such as courtesy protection, medical and health care and food safety protection, price supervision and religious services, etc., to provide high-quality services for the reception of guests of the 'two conferences'. Under the careful organization and layers of selection by the Guangxi Committee of the Communist Youth League, the Education Department of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region and the Guangxi International Expo Bureau, more than 10,000 volunteers are recruited for each CAEXPO. During the exhibition period, the volunteers are divided into different shifts according to time and are active in more than 100 positions in the exhibition center office, command center, liaison group, press group, translation group, protocol group, airport group, customer reception group, performance venue, etc. They undertake a lot of hard and meticulous work such as etiquette service, venue translation, sanitation and cleaning, venue decoration, emergency support, etc., and contribute to the 'two conferences' made positive contributions to the smooth holding of the 'two conferences.'

## 2) Transportation

Transportation links all aspects of social production, distribution, exchange and consumption, and is the basis of national economic development and a necessary condition for economic and social operation, and the development of the transportation industry is coordinated with economic development, which will play a role in promoting social and economic development (J. C. Liang, Fu, & Shi, 2007). The rapid economic and social development has put the government's management ability to a new test. The command center of the "two conferences" fully mobilized the resources of all parties during the exhibition period and brought into play the organizational effectiveness of the government, which solved the problem of vehicle traffic and provided convenient travel conditions for guests from various countries.

Organizer A1: "'Two conferences' command center reasonable planning, arrangements for the work site, strict control of the use of vehicles and other equipment. For the organization and deployment of vehicles, the guests were selected through open bidding for the source of reception vehicles, and more than 200 drivers were drawn from the autonomous regions directly under the units and the central government directly under the units in Yong. Nearly 700 vehicles such as limousines,

business cars, large buses and medium-sized buses are deployed for reception during the period, and 200 cabs are arranged to provide services at designated locations every day. Every day, 500 shared bicycles are arranged in the exhibition center for the use of the exhibitors and participants. The organizer provides free shuttle buses for exhibitors and VIPs from different countries, which leave on time, once every hour, with stops at Nanning International Convention and Exhibition Center, South China Convention and Exhibition Center and Guangxi Exhibition Hall, taking point-to-point 'one-stop' service to provide safe, convenient and comfortable services for guests. Replanning the entrances and exits of the Metro Convention and Exhibition Center Station, arranging staff to direct guests in and out on site, effectively easing the congestion of the crowd at the Convention and Exhibition Center Station of Metro Line 1."

### 3) Hotel reception

In terms of hotel rooms and meeting places, the researcher learned from the expo secretariat that in 2017, the CAEXPO introduced a new "two conferences" hotel occupancy settlement method, charging accommodation and food costs at the travel standard for domestic civil servants and institutional staff who received free reception. In order to improve the reception capacity of the hotel, improve the efficiency and ensure the accuracy of the reception information, the reception resource allocation group, the fund guarantee group and the health guarantee working group specially sent commissioners to the hotel, jointly held a hotel reception exchange training meeting, assisted VIPs and exhibitors to check in and out of the hotel and other related procedures, accurately verified the arrival and departure of VIPs, timely informed the conference information, and checked the hotel hygiene condition. In addition, it also assists hotels in providing room information, airline ticket booking, currency exchange, scenic spot ticket booking and other related services, providing VIPs and participants from various countries with quality and attentive services.

Organizer A6: "In 2017 CAEXPO, in order to guarantee a high specification and high standard of hotel reception, the 'two conferences' command center purchased more than 2,100 rooms for reception from more than twenty hotels, of which more than 1,600 rooms were deployed for VIPs, and more than 300 rooms

for security, medical, food inspection, firefighting and other related working groups. The hotel venue deployment work for nearly 80 events during the 'two conferences' was successfully completed, involving 18 departments and 14 hotels. Thanks to the high standard and high level of reception work, VIPs and guests from various countries can personally feel the enthusiasm and warmth from the people of Guangxi."

Organizer A5: "In order to provide a good environment for VIPs and guests from various countries, every year in the 'two conferences' held in the early stage, the health protection working group, the district health supervision and disease prevention and control center will go to the reception hotel to carry out health survey, guide the hotel to carry out health supervision and protection work to prevent accidents of health hazards in public places, so that guests can eat with confidence and stay with peace of mind."

Exhibitor E4: "The hotel reception in Nanning was done carefully and thoughtfully. As a customer, I myself was pleasantly surprised by the hotel's attentive and personalized service."

#### 4) Venue construction

Convention and exhibition venues are the main facilities and platforms for holding convention and exhibition activities, and their construction is the main driving force for the development of the convention and exhibition industry in cities and regions, as well as an important symbol of the development level of the convention and exhibition industry in a city and region (Ren, 2014). The construction of exhibition venues provides the most basic hardware facility conditions as well as the most high-quality hardware reliance for the development of the exhibition industry (J. F. Zhao, 2015), and the high-quality hardware venue conditions of the exhibition industry have a positive impact on the development of the exhibition industry (C. L. Wang & Chen, 2006). In order to solve the problems of insufficient exhibition area, lack of supporting facilities, insufficient parking spaces and poor traffic organization, and long distance from the main exhibition hall of the existing venue, and further improve the level of exhibition services and comprehensive competitiveness, in 2017, Nanning International Convention and Exhibition Center newly expanded Pavilion E on the original basis and put it into use, adding 14,000

square meters of exhibition area, with the total exhibition area reaching 124,000 square meters and the total booth The number of booths reached 6,600. Among them, the exhibition area outside ASEAN and the region is 33,000 square meters, which is 10% higher than the previous one and accounts for 32% of the exhibition area of Nanning International Convention and Exhibition Center, which is a record high (China-ASEAN Expo Secretariat, 2017). In order to enhance the usage rate of the exhibition hall, the E area pavilion is also equipped with TV program recording and indoor performance, which can accommodate about 7,000 people at one time. It is evident that the Nanning Municipal Government attaches great importance to the construction of the exhibition venue and the improvement of the surrounding facilities conditions. However, as an exhibition for China and ASEAN, the scale of the exhibition still needs to be improved.

Organizer A2: "Nanning International Convention and Exhibition Center is located in Qingxiu District, Nanning City, Guangxi, covering an area of 615 acre and a building area of 640,000 square meters, which is a landmark building of Nanning city, and has been the permanent venue of CAEXPO since 2004. Among them, the indoor exhibition area is 92,000 square meters, which can build 5,300 international standard booths. In addition, there are more than 3,500 parking spaces in the underground parking lot and 270 parking spaces on the ground. The Convention and Exhibition Center has convenient transportation and perfect supporting service facilities around. The main building of Nanning International Convention and Exhibition Center, Jubilee Hall, takes the Nanning city flower "Jubilee" as its creative idea, in which the 12 petals symbolize the unity and friendship of the 12 major ethnic groups living in Guangxi, and build a beautiful home with green mountains and beautiful water in Guangxi together."

Organizer A3: "The ASEAN country pavilion is divided into two parts: image display and commodity display, which is the main highlight of each Expo, and the image of ASEAN countries and ASEAN Secretariat is displayed according to the design of 'one country one exhibition area'. Basically, each exhibiting country displays the image of each country well through the exhibition hall design and merchandise display according to their national characteristics, and actively promotes national customs and folklore and famous products."

Local resident R4: "The construction of the venue of the CAEXPO is very grand and beautiful, the decoration is also very good, and each booth is carefully designed with its own merits. I will participate in every Expo, and I think it is very good to come to the Expo, you can buy good products from many countries, and you can enjoy the atmosphere of each country without leaving the country, and buy special and famous products from each country. I hope more countries and more products will come to the next edition to make the Expo bigger and stronger."

Scholar S2: "I think the existing venue area of CAEXPO is not big enough and needs to be expanded. With the deepening exchanges between China and ASEAN countries in economy, trade, culture, tourism and education, and with the increasing influence of the expo, the number of exhibiting countries and enterprises will definitely increase in the future. The current venues are slightly crowded when there are many people, and the scale of the venues and supporting facilities are still difficult to meet the needs of the rapid growth of the industry."

Exhibitor E1: "I think the venue construction of CAEXPO is very good, but the scale is still a bit small, it should expand the international influence of Expo and attract more companies from more countries to come and exhibit."

Exhibitor E4: "Compared with venues such as Shanghai New International Expo Center, China Import and Export Fair Complex, National Convention and Exhibition Center, Shenzhen Convention and Exhibition Center, Guangzhou Poly World Trade Expo, the scale of CAEXPO is still a bit small and the number of exhibitions in the venues needs to be improved."

Exhibitor E6: "Compared with the exhibition centers in Shenzhen, Guangzhou and other big cities, the area of Nanning International Exhibition Center is indeed still a bit small, mainly because I think the frequency of exhibitions is relatively low, and I hope that Nanning International Exhibition Center will hold more exhibitions in the future to attract more enterprises and visitors to participate and promote the development of Guangxi."

#### 5) Financial services

In the exhibition service, the organizer organizes and coordinates various banks and other financial institutions to provide exhibitors and VIPs with various financial services, such as equipping the exhibition venue with self-service payment equipment, self-service access machines, etc. to realize on-site currency exchange, transfer and settlement, bill discounting, electronic ticketing and other businesses; providing international financial agency services, financial consulting and trade-type insurance and other businesses. It provides bank card acquiring POS machines in the process of fund transactions and supports e-purse payment means for the convenience of the public. The organizer cooperates with banks to make use of the advantages of bank outlets for the promotion of exhibition financial services and to realize real-time monitoring and data statistics of transactions during exhibition activities.

Exhibitor E5: "Compared with previous years, the level of financial services at the CAEXPO 2018 has been greatly improved, with various financial institutions visiting hotels and exhibition areas to take the initiative to provide insurance, currency exchange, financial consultation and other services for various exhibitors, which is becoming more and more convenient for us."

Organizer A2: "Financial services are an important part of the exhibition services, and now, CAEXPO is not doing well enough in this area, which is a problem at present and an area that needs to be improved in the future. In the future, we will strive to cooperate with more qualified financial institutions, enrich the content of exhibition financial services, spread the business of currency settlement, international financial agency and financing guarantee gradually, improve the credit guarantee service system and help more small and medium-sized enterprises to develop."

#### **4.1.3 Analysis of Process Assessment Results**

Based on the evaluation on management standards, operation processes, emergency plans, incident records and program rectification, it is found that CAEXPO could effectively employ the available resources to conduct research and obtain corresponding feedback information to deal with various contingencies that

may occur during the process of project management. The process management is carried out in strict accordance with the standards and workflow, which is well documented, responsive and timely, reflecting the core competitiveness and efficiency of the organizer in the project implementation and management process.

#### 4.1.3.1 Management Standards

The object of enterprise management is the enterprise's people, property and materials. The management standard is the standard set for managing the enterprise's people, property and materials well, so that they can eliminate the corresponding sources of danger and run them in an orderly and efficient manner. The characteristics of management standards require that management standards must be clear, specific, and in line with reality (G. H. Wang, 2010). Management standards are an important guarantee for improving work efficiency and service level, and require exhibition organizers to coordinate personnel from various units and departments to organically combine, unify their thoughts and make joint efforts to conscientiously implement work systems and requirements, standardize indicators, effectively monitor management processes, and strictly control safety, quality and service. Regarding process management standards, Cai, Xiuyu, Vice President of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), called in Nanning: "China - ASEAN countries should work together to use the 'world language' - standardization, reduce transaction and compliance costs, circumvent technical barriers to trade, achieve market access, and promote stable development of the global economy" (H. Lin, 2019, September 23).

The CAEXPO process management criteria were evaluated, and the following are a few excerpts from interviews with academics, exhibitors, organizers, and local residents.

Organizer A1: "In the process of reception of VIPs and guests from various countries, the 'two conferences' command center designated the China - ASEAN Expo reception hotels according to the evaluation standards, standardized service standards, established brand image and authority, and further improved the services for the Expo exhibitors and participants. Provides for the assessment criteria, application procedures, assessment process, honorary title use and supervision and management of the designated reception hotels of the Expo. Provides that the

reception hotel building, ancillary facilities, service projects and operation and management must comply with the industry and commerce, public security, health, safety, fire, price, environmental protection and other relevant national laws, regulations and standards. In the safety standards of the reception hotel must be configured by the city fire department acceptance of the fire system and can provide the recent verification by the city fire department issued a valid certificate of fire safety; must cooperate with the public security, fire departments to install key parts of the intrusion detection alarm system, installation of explosion-proof detection system and installation of anti-explosion detection equipment in the parking lot; must be under the guidance of the local public security departments to strengthen the security around the hotel order maintenance, and the installation of video surveillance equipment, the monitoring coverage of public areas in the hotel to 100%."

Organizer A4: "The CAEXPO Secretariat strictly follows the information disclosure standards and releases various information to the public, for example, ticket information, booth information, exhibitor information, etc."

Organizer A5: "We have always been strict about safety during the Expo, so that health and medical care can be guaranteed, and we are also committed to improving the quality of our services and handling all operations according to the standards. In terms of environmental protection, we have strictly followed our working standards and arranged many cleaning staff and volunteers to work together to maintain the environmental hygiene of the venue and create a clean, tidy and comfortable environment for everyone."

Scholar S3: "When the CAEXPO was first started, many aspects of its management were not standardized or regulated enough. After more than ten years of holding the event, it has continued to accumulate experience, making its various service and management standards perfect year by year and its service quality higher."

Exhibitor E2: "My feeling is that the services provided by CAEXPO are still relatively complete and humane, and when I encounter problems to communicate with the staff, they are also very patient and quite polite. All their work is recorded and done in a very standard way."

Exhibitor E3: "The hotel I stayed in felt cleaner than those I stayed in when I came in previous years, and the staff attitude was better. The hotel is also very serious and careful in the process of handling business, strictly in accordance with the requirements and standards, which I think is very good."

Service and management standards from the initial non-standard, the development of the current standardized, standardized management, which is a continuous improvement and upgrading process, the purpose is to run a good Expo, and ultimately achieve the goal of the Expo.

Exhibitor E5: "I am satisfied with the organization and management of the CAEXPO, the organizers are more standardized in their work process, this makes us feel at ease."

#### 4.1.3.2 Operation Process

In order to further improve the brand awareness and reputation of CAEXPO and serve the VIPs, exhibitors and visitors, the command center of the "two conferences" has formulated standards or operation procedures for each work, standardized the process management and implemented corresponding supervision and assessment methods.

Organizer A1: "In the process of reception service, Guangxi International Expo Affairs Bureau to clarify the service standards and operating procedures of the first person in charge of the reception service objects, pre-job training for all staff, after pre-job training and assessment before they can go on duty, so as to ensure that the answer to questions to be patient and meticulous, service attitude to be warm and thoughtful, the use of civilized language, disable Civilized jargon, no indifference to people, no shirking of responsibilities. For example, when answering the phone, when the phone rings, we should do 'three rings, there must be a response', 'first say hello, then report the department, and then ask things'; if the colleague you are looking for is not in, you should explain the situation, ask if you can do it on your behalf, or ask If the colleague you are looking for is not available, you should explain the situation, ask if you can do it on your behalf, or ask the other party to leave his or her phone number and tell the colleague to call back in time. When receiving visitors, 'take the initiative to greet them, get up to welcome them, give up your seat with enthusiasm, ask patiently, answer clearly, and get up to see them off'.

When encountering service recipients with differences in policy understanding or unreasonable requests, the person in charge of the first question or the specific contractor should adhere to the principles, patiently explain and do a good job."

Organizer A2: " CAEXPO designated reception hotels have a clear application process; eligible hotels can voluntarily apply to the Expo Secretariat. All hotels that apply need to formally submit application materials to the Expo Secretariat. The Expo Secretariat will review the authenticity and accuracy of the application materials after receiving the application report. The Expo secretariat set up a panel to evaluate the hotels designated by the Expo for application. The evaluation panel will give written reply to the hotels that meet the standards and award the plaque and certificate of the designated reception hotel formulated by the Expo secretariat; the evaluation panel will not reply to the hotels that fail to meet the designated standards after the evaluation. The evaluation team will issue the plaque and certificate of the designated hotel of the Expo in the middle of August every year."

CAEXPO by further improving the standardization of various services and management processes, not only to ensure the quality of service, improve efficiency, control a variety of costs, but also fully embodies the customer first service purpose, as far as possible to allow guests and businessmen from all countries to feel the organizer's high priority, reflecting the brand value of the Expo.

#### 4.1.3.3 Emergency Response Plan

##### 1) Emergency response plan

The development of emergencies is characterized by randomness, uncertainty and dynamics, which requires decision makers to adjust the emergency plan according to the actual situation in time. In order to prevent problems before they occur and minimize the probability of emergencies, the "two conferences" command center requires that emergency plans should be made during the exhibition, emergency measures should be prepared actively, various emergencies should be handled calmly, and the emergency reporting system should be implemented. The main measures are: to improve the work programs and plans in advance; to strengthen the reading of the work programs, emergency plans and operation details of each work department in the command center; to find the crossover areas, gray areas and

vacuum areas in the programs of each department; to compile and read various programs and details; and to conduct drills for various programs and plans.

Organizer A3: "The command center has built a special emergency response system and adopted a full-time responsibility system for various tasks. We asked all departments and working groups to carefully formulate contingency plans for unexpected situations before the exhibition and to conduct drills for various contingency plans."

Exhibitor E5: "Whether in the exhibition hall of the exhibition center or in the hotel, we can see the obvious emergency guidance system to guide us to find the emergency channel quickly in case of emergencies."

Local resident R3: "The emergency signage in the convention center is very eye-catching and can serve as a good emergency guide."

## 2) Food safety guarantee

In terms of food safety guarantee, Guangxi has set up an autonomous region food safety coordination committee and formulated relevant working systems, working rules, member units' work responsibilities and food safety accident emergency handling plans, and formulated the "11th CAEXPO, Business and Investment Summit Food Safety Guarantee General Plan", "11th CAEXPO, Business and Investment Summit Food Safety Incident Emergency Response Plan", "CAEXPO Food Safety Reputation Publicity Work General Plan", "CAEXPO Hospitality Hotel Renovation Food Hygiene Requirements" and "CAEXPO Hospitality Work Food Hygiene Safety Guarantee Technical Measures" and a series of work plans and systems, Nanning, Liuzhou, Guilin Beihai and other cities have also established corresponding leading and coordinating agencies. Agencies at all levels implement responsibilities and layers of control to ensure food safety.

Organizer A3: "The holding of CAEXPO has received strong support from various departments. The head of the State General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine said that quality inspection departments strongly support Guangxi to hold the CAEXPO, requiring studies on the establishment of green channels to speed up the movement of people and goods in and out, to ensure economic security and other matters, within the scope of responsibility to provide good conditions. "

### 3) Medical and health care security

The medical security system is a product of the progress of social civilization and is closely linked to technology, capital and labor elements in the application of new technologies, the layout of the medical industry and the maintenance of the health of the population (Q. Wang & Wang, 2016). Medical and health protection is an important protection system in exhibition services and management, and a perfect medical and health protection system can effectively reduce safety risks.

Organizer A4: "In terms of medical and health security, the Department of Health of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region has set up a leading group for medical care and health security for the 14th CAEXPO, with an office, health care group, health supervision and monitoring group, disease control group, emergency medical treatment group, stability maintenance group and logistical support group, and has formulated a general work plan and six thematic work implementation plan and 27 special emergency plans, 98 health supervisors were deployed from the region to participate in the health security work of the main Expo venue in Nanning. Training, drills and pre-war mobilization were carried out, and health monitoring of key reception units was strengthened to ensure a comfortable and hygienic environment for VIPs during the Expo. During the exhibition, Guangxi health system sent 29 stationed healthcare teams, 60 medical personnel and 5 ambulances, as well as 29 mobile medical teams, 117 medical personnel and 22 (times) ambulances to serve all activity sites of CAEXPO, providing good medical and health protection."

### 4) Accommodation security protection

CAEXPO Command Center requires designated reception hotels to provide customers with a safe, healthy and comfortable accommodation environment in accordance with requirements, strictly implement the real-name system for accommodation, cooperate with public security departments to develop various types of public security, firefighting, anti-terrorism and emergency handling plans for emergencies, have special personnel responsible for coordinating and solving emergencies, develop corresponding emergency plans for the reception of the

Expo, avoid various accidents, and fully protect the personal and property safety of VIPs, exhibitors and guests from various countries.

#### 5) Social security guarantee

Practice has proved that constantly purifying the security environment can greatly promote the opening up to the outside world and the rapid development of economic construction; to improve the investment environment, the security environment should be improved first (Z. Lv, 1998). The Nanning Municipal Government has been working closely to create a harmonious and stable social environment for the high-quality development of the capital's economy and society, focusing on building "Safe Nanning" and "Nanning under the Rule of Law", and has invested a lot of human and financial resources in ensuring security, protecting stability and promoting development. We have created a good social environment for the successful holding of CAEXPO.

Organizer A1: "In terms of social security protection, Nanning public security organs are the main force, with all police officers put into security work. The security resources of the whole region are coordinated to ensure that personnel and materials are in place. The public security organs vigorously strengthened social security to create a good security environment for the CAEXPO."

Local resident R1: "Every day we can see the police patrolling everywhere on the street, we feel very safe, and I am very satisfied with the security in Nanning City."

Local resident R3: "In the past few years, I feel that one thing that has changed especially in Nanning is that the law and order is getting better and better. Now there are very few fights and brawls, thefts, robberies, frauds and other problems, and we live with peace of mind."

#### 6) Duty system

Reasonable duty system ensures that there are staffs answering working phones 24 hours during the exhibition, which can quickly deal with various emergency and unexpected events, and can quickly convey work orders to guarantee the smooth implementation of various tasks.

Organizer A3: "During the exhibition period, the command center implements the joint duty system during the session, disposes of problems on site through the joint duty room and duty officers, conveys the orders of the command center leaders, follows up the activities of each field, and timely disposes of all kinds of urgent problems or emergencies, and answers about more than 6,000 duty calls each year on average, and the joint duty during the session handles all kinds of consultation and complaints Business about more than 200 pieces. Through the network, we compile and print work briefs, special reports and daily snapshots, as well as send cell phone text messages and publish announcements on LED screens of the Convention and Exhibition Center and major cities in Nanning, ensuring the accurate, fast and smooth transmission of all kinds of information during the 'two conferences'. Strengthen the management of customer service hotline 961236. Established a mechanism for collecting and organizing frequently asked questions, improved the mechanism for validating and updating the caliber of responses, and realized standardized and standardized services, which were widely praised by businessmen from various countries."

Exhibitor E6: "We were able to quickly contact the corresponding staff through the duty phone to help coordinate and solve any problems from the exhibition hall layout to the end of the exhibition, and the staff was very patient to help us, which I think is very good."

Exhibitor E4: "When I encountered problems that needed to be dealt with during the exhibition, I usually sought help from the organizer by contacting the staff on duty, and every time the problem was solved to my satisfaction."

#### 4.1.3.4 Record of Incidents

During the exhibition period, the "two conferences" command center requires each work department to develop a reporting system for major matters and emergencies, formulate emergency plans, and make sure to keep a good work log to record major events, emergencies and urgent events. The way of recording includes text, pictures, audio and video, etc. The cause and effect of the event should be clearly explained, and the whole process should be tracked and the responsibility should be assigned to someone. Implement a public information disclosure system to ensure

timely, truthful, accurate, complete and fair information disclosure, promote standardized management operations and safeguard the legitimate rights and interests of all parties.

Organizer A6: "For example, those who have the following bad records for the designated reception hotels are recorded and informed of the situation in a timely manner: major safety, health, environmental protection, quality complaints, economic disputes and other accidents or hidden dangers occur within the validity period after the hotel is designated as a reception hotel, and are announced to the public by the government or relevant departments and notified to rectify the situation on time, if they fail to rectify the situation in a timely manner as required. Those who violate the requirements of using the logo and title of the exposition and are verified by the exposition secretariat; those who violate the relevant price management regulations during the CAEXPO and raise the sales or service prices without authorization and are verified by the local price supervision department, will be disqualified from the reception. For those who cause serious adverse effects, they are listed on the blacklist of reception hotels."

Organizer A6: "For complaints from exhibitors or customers, we will strictly follow the standards to do a good job log, timely tracking the handling of complaints, so that each complaint can be properly handled, and timely feedback with the relevant personnel. For major and unexpected situations, we will strictly follow the emergency reporting system to guarantee the smooth flow of information up and down and deal with problems efficiently."

#### 4.1.3.5 Program Rectification

The CAEXPO Command Center emphasizes the need to implement a good program rectification system while making good emergency plans.

Scholar S2: "The General Office of Nanning Municipal Government issues a work plan for the supervision of production safety at the CAEXPO before the expo every year. The main contents are the sound implementation of the duty reporting system during the expo; identify key prevention targets; organize special inspections; take the necessary mandatory measures; and complete the rectification of major accident hazards by the deadline. The establishment of CAEXPO production safety work organization, a clear division of labor, responsibility to the person,

strengthen the key industry areas, major accident hazards, major sources of danger and other key parts and key links of supervision, and resolutely eliminate the occurrence of accidents above the larger or social impact of the event, to ensure the realization of 'big things do not happen, not in the middle, small things in a timely and rapid disposal control 's work objectives. Each unit is required to pay attention to production safety, implement the production safety responsibility system, and propose methods of rectification for the problems that existed in production safety in previous years."

Organizer A3: "The Secretariat will carry out strict supervision and management of the reception hotels designated by the 'two conferences'. After the hotels have obtained the title of designated hotels for reception hotels, the Expo Secretariat has the right to make corresponding treatment if major accidents occur within the validity period and cause bad influence. Designated reception hotels must obey the unified deployment of the Expo Secretariat during the Expo, to provide quality services for the exhibitors and participants of VIPs, businessmen and attendees. The secretariat regularly assesses the reception hotel, the designated reception hotel with good service quality and high guest satisfaction, the Expo secretariat will give notice of praise and issue honorary certificates; poor service quality, guest complaints, low guest satisfaction, after verification, the Expo secretariat will inform the community, and depending on the severity of the case to withdraw the plaque to stop the use of qualifications and other penalties, or even blacklisted. "

#### **4.1.4 Analysis of Product/Outcome Evaluation Results**

The main purpose of the outcome evaluation of the CAEXPO is to provide decision-making services for the organizers of the CAEXPO. Through the evaluation of five key elements: economic impact, management level, customer satisfaction, comprehensive benefits, and target comparison, the results show that the CAEXPO is valuable and has achieved "the purpose of promoting the construction of China - ASEAN Free Trade Area and sharing opportunities for cooperation and development, the China - ASEAN Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation is based on the principle of two-way mutual benefit, focusing on

economic and trade cooperation within the free trade area, opening up to the world and providing new opportunities for the common development of businessmen from all countries” (China-ASEAN Expo Secretariat, 2017), realizing the original purpose of holding the CAEXPO and achieved the expected purpose.

#### 4.1.4.1 Economic Impact Assessment

As an emerging sunrise industry, the MICE industry has a pulling effect of 1:9 on related industries, which can bring not only huge economic benefits, but also huge social benefits (X. Lu, 2013). The MICE industry has become a big stage for cities to reach the world, and also an important carrier to participate in world competition. It can reflect the development of the national economy of a country and region, and is more capable of promoting the economic development of a country or region because of its characteristics of fast growth and high efficiency (X. S. Liu, 2017). China-ASEAN regional economic cooperation has achieved new results, and the CAEXPO has played an important role as a platform. The China-ASEAN Free Trade Area (FTA) was established in 2010 with the full implementation of "zero tariff", and in July 2016, the China-ASEAN FTA Upgrade Protocol came into force to further improve trade facilitation. The negotiations of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (RCEP), in which China and ten ASEAN countries are participating, are also being actively promoted, allowing Chinese and ASEAN enterprises and people to share the fruits of regional economic integration on a wider scale and at a higher level, actively playing the role of an effective platform for CAEXPO to serve the construction of China-ASEAN FTA and implement trade and investment facilitation.

Organizer A2: "According to the data made public by the Ministry of Commerce, in the first CAEXPO in 2004, a total contract amount of nearly 100 billion Yuan was signed, with a total of 129 foreign-related projects and a total investment of US\$4.968 billion. By 2016, bilateral trade between China and ASEAN was US\$452.2 billion, and China's direct investment in ASEAN was US\$9.31 billion, exceeding ASEAN's investment in China by nearly US\$3 billion. In the first five months of 2017, China-ASEAN trade maintained a sustained growth momentum, with trade volume reaching US\$195.66 billion, a significant increase of 16.2 percent, of which exports to ASEAN countries reached US\$108.86 billion, and imports from

ASEAN amounted to \$86.8 billion. China has been ASEAN's top trading partner for nine consecutive years, and ASEAN has been China's third largest trading partner for seven consecutive years."

Scholar S5: "The economic and trade data from 2004 to the present can see that the bilateral trade volume is rising and the growth momentum is getting stronger and stronger, which shows how significant the impact of the Expo on the economy and trade between China and ASEAN countries is, and the economic radiation is relatively large. In April 2017, Xi, Jinping, general secretary of the CPC Central Committee, highly praised China - ASEAN during his inspection in Guangxi Expo has become a bright business card of Guangxi and an important open platform of China - ASEAN'."

Local resident R1: "As Nanning citizens born and raised in Nanning, we are all very concerned about the development of the CAEXPO and whether the Expo can bring good changes to our city. After the development of China-ASEAN Expo for more than ten years, we really feel that our city has changed a lot. I think the economic development of Guangxi is getting better and better in these years, the country has invested a lot of money in infrastructure construction, now the airport, subway, high-speed railway, highway, hospitals, schools, parks are built very well, many enterprises have been introduced, you can see more and more high-rise buildings in Nanning city now. There are more and more Chinese enterprises going out of China to have deep cooperation with ASEAN countries. There are also more and more foreign enterprises stationed in Guangxi, adding bricks and mortar to the construction and development of Guangxi. In addition, under the influence of the CAEXPO, tourism, logistics and transportation, and financial industry in Nanning City are also flourishing, which shows that the CAEXPO has a strong industrial linkage function."

#### 4.1.4.2 Management Level

After more than ten years of development, CAEXPO has accumulated certain experience in organizing exhibitions, and the management level has been greatly improved and the degree of specialization has become higher and higher.

Organizer A4: "Before each exhibition is held, the Ministry of Commerce, the People's Government of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, the Municipal Government of Nanning City, and the CAEXPO Command Center make vigorous publicity by holding press conferences, promotion meetings, and releasing announcement information on the official website to strengthen investment attraction and attract dignitaries and enterprises from various countries to participate in the exhibition. During the exhibition period, it also holds economic and trade cooperation forums and development forums on various themes, and holds various online and offline special promotional meetings jointly with ASEAN countries, Chinese provinces and regions, and enterprises, so as to improve the visibility and reputation of the exposition; under the guidance of the 'two conferences' command center, the organizers are able to effectively handle the exhibition period arising from various emergencies, complaints, coordination and other issues. After the expo, it followed up the exhibiting countries and exhibitors in a timely manner, and actively made follow-up coordination, cooperation, feedback, rectification and other follow-up services. Since the first CAEXPO was held, the organizers have continuously accumulated experience and have significantly improved the management level before, during and after the exhibition, which has increased the competitiveness and influence of the Expo."

Exhibitor E2: "Now, CAEXPO has been successfully held for more than ten consecutive sessions, and I feel that one session is bigger and better than the other. The efficiency of the organizers is very good, and the attitude of the staff is very friendly. I believe that the organizers must have spent a lot of energy, material, financial and human resources to make the expo so successful. Take our participation in this exhibition as an example, from the qualification examination of our exhibitors, I think the organizer's work is very standardized and serious, and of course the efficiency is also very high, for our exhibitors' various complaints and complaints, all can be handled very properly. The management of the exhibition hall was also very standardized, and the construction of fire and safety facilities made us feel very relieved. Regarding the areas for improvement, my suggestion is that the signage of the exhibition hall is not ideal and should be made more obvious. In addition, the

number of bathrooms in the venue should be increased appropriately, because the number of exhibitors is very large and there is often congestion in the bathrooms."

Exhibitor E3: "We can see that the people's government of Guangxi District and Nanning City attach great importance to the Expo through the construction of the venue, the construction of supporting facilities and so on. The success of the Expo is a very good business card for Guangxi. Every time the Expo is held, leaders and businessmen from China and ASEAN countries come to Nanning, which is very influential. In addition to the economic improvement, the Expo has a great significance in the introduction and training of talents, education, art, tourism and cultural exchange, trade and commerce, technology exchange, etc. The industry linkage is great. At the same time, it also provides a lot of jobs for the country and solves many employment problems."

Exhibitor E4: "The organization and management of CAEXPO is getting more and more standardized and humane. The organizer takes the initiative to provide us with various information services so that we can keep abreast of the various developments of the Expo, which I think is very good. In the future, we will come again."

#### 4.1.4.3 Customer Satisfaction

With the continuous development of the exhibition industry, customers have higher expectations for the holding of CAEXPO. For the satisfaction of CAEXPO, Liu (2012) points out that it can be evaluated from the following aspects:

- 1) Tangible display, i.e. the aspects of the appearance design of the Expo pavilion, the design of the inner booth, the modern facilities and equipment, the hygiene condition and the grooming gesture of the service personnel. It includes the size of the exhibition hall, space size, decoration style and material, product arrangement, color, lighting application, etc., to meet the visual needs of customers and people from the perspective of the exhibition hall environment.

- 2) Assurance, i.e., the impact of staff attitude and response strategy on the handling of unexpected events.

3) Responsiveness, that is, the maintenance of order at the Expo site, the response to customer inquiries, the release of various types of information before, during and after the Expo, the handling of customer complaints and the timeliness of the services provided.

4) Reliability, i.e., the transaction service at the Expo site, the accuracy of the Expo information, whether the matters promised to customers at the Expo are completed on time, whether the service hotline is open, and whether the booth, transportation, accommodation, food, and exhibition goods are safe.

5) Empathy, i.e. the distribution of benefits to customers, the provision of information from previous years, the participation of advanced technology and giant companies, and the number and quality of exhibitors.

Doing a good job of customer management, actively handling customer complaints and meeting customer expectations is an important task in cultivating customer loyalty.

Exhibitor E1: "Although the Expo has achieved very good results, we also found that the influence of the Expo is also limited. In the future, we hope that the CAEXPO will continue to improve the quality of service and management, further improve the competitive advantage, so that more people in China and Asia can understand the Expo, participate in the Expo, and promote the Expo".

Exhibitor E2: "I am very satisfied with the service of the Expo staff, they are very friendly and take the initiative to help. Every time we complained, the staff was able to give us a satisfactory answer, which made me very impressed."

Exhibitor E3: "I think the CAEXPO is a very good platform. In the future, we will continue to show our products and market our products through this big platform of CAEXPO, to build our country's national brand, so that China has more and better products out of China and towards Southeast Asia and even the world. With regard to satisfaction, the Expo is indeed a very good platform. In addition, I think the Expo is getting better and better, and the service attitude of the staff is much better than before. The hotel I stayed in felt cleaner than the ones I stayed in when I came in the past, and the staff attitude was better, so I had a very comfortable stay. The volunteers at the fair were also very enthusiastic, and overall, I think it was quite good, and we will try to come back next year."

Exhibitor E4: "Thanks to the big stage of the Expo, more students got to know us. We will definitely do a good job for everyone's study abroad."

Exhibitor E5: "Overall I am satisfied with the CAEXPO, coming to Nanning, China, I like the environment and the food, China's economy is developing very fast, which is an example that ASEAN countries need to learn from."

Organizer A3: As the organizer of the Expo, we want to present a perfect Expo for everyone. Therefore, we have repeatedly discussed from the establishment of the organization, program design, staffing, exhibitor invitation, brand promotion and exhibition service, just hoping that everyone will be satisfied. Of course, I am personally very satisfied with the organizing process of this Expo.

Organizer A4: "China was Malaysia's largest trading partner before the establishment of the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area. Since the establishment of the FTA, China has continued this position as well. With the in-depth cooperation and development of bilateral trade between China and Malaysia, bilateral strategic cooperation will be further enhanced".

Scholar S1: "For more than a decade, the success of the CAEXPO has not only made positive contributions to promoting trade between China and ASEAN, but also provided a good opportunity to enhance the political mutual trust between China and ASEAN, providing a platform for the people of China and ASEAN countries to understand each other, learn from each other and support each other. "

Scholar S2: "At present, China and ASEAN have been mutually important economic and trade partners, and I hope that China and ASEAN countries, continuing to maintain a good strategic partnership, will make more contributions to regional economic development and cultural exchanges."

Scholar S3: "I think the Expo could also be improved in terms of promoting the brands of local companies and improving the quality of public services. Overall, I think the Expo is very meaningful."

Local resident R1: "By participating in the CAEXPO, we can buy many good foreign products without going out of the country, which I think is very good. I hope that in the future, more exhibitions will be held in Nanning, and we will be very happy as Nanning citizens."

Local resident R2: "I certainly welcome the CAEXPO, and I hope more foreign products will come to Nanning in the future."

Local resident R3: "I think the management of the Expo is getting better and better, the whole venue is very orderly although there are many people, it's very good!"

Local resident R4: "Now the scale of the Expo is getting bigger and bigger, and more and more people are coming to visit, which means the Expo is getting more and more popular. I hope more attentive services will be provided on site."

Local resident R5: "The volunteers here are very enthusiastic and attentive, I want to give them credit!"

Through research interviews with various groups of people, the overall service and management of CAEXPO is relatively satisfactory. Especially in terms of service attitude, under the leadership of the "two conferences" command center, all staff members have been trained and studied to standardize the service procedures and standards, and to improve the service quality of staff members, which is liked by the majority of customers.

#### 4.1.4.4 Comprehensive Benefits

The CAEXPO is an important traction to promote multi-disciplinary cooperation and deepen all-round in-depth exchanges between China and ASEAN countries. The Expo plays an increasingly important role in promoting policy communication, enhancing strategic mutual trust and serving the construction of China-ASEAN community of destiny in many aspects through a variety of activities such as high-level forums, economic and trade cooperation, technical exchanges and humanistic exchanges.

1) The positive role of CAEXPO on Guangxi's involvement in sub-regional cooperation

Against the background of the rapid development of economic globalization and the trend of regional economic integration, global and regional cooperation is on the rise, and the pursuit of openness, cooperation and win-win situation has become an unstoppable trend of the times for all countries. While promoting bilateral economic and trade cooperation and two-way investment

cooperation, the CAEXPO has played a positive role in promoting regional and sub-regional cooperation and maritime connectivity in the service area. Sub-regional cooperation has become one of the important driving forces to promote cooperation between China and ASEAN, attracting high attention from world leaders and reflecting the function of the CAEXPO as a platform for political diplomacy.

Organizer A5: "Under the influence of CAEXPO, many projects of China-ASEAN cooperation have also settled in Guangxi, such as 'China-ASEAN Healthcare Cooperation Center (Guangxi) Project', 'China-ASEAN Youth Training Base ', 'China - ASEAN Technology Transfer Center', 'China - ASEAN Mobile Internet Industry Alliance', etc. These projects have settled in Guangxi, which is conducive to bringing together more resources from China and ASEAN countries to Guangxi, making Guangxi and the cooperation field between Guangxi and ASEAN is more extensive and the regional competitiveness is continuously improved. The Expo builds a platform for Guangxi to participate in regional cooperation while also injecting new vitality for Guangxi to participate in sub-regional cooperation and improving the competitiveness of Guangxi in China and ASEAN countries."

R2, a local resident: "The CAEXPO is an important platform for exchanges between China and ASEAN countries, and the Expo is held in Nanning on a fixed annual basis, which brings so many benefits to Nanning. For example, in terms of economic trade, Nanning's economic income has increased year by year. In terms of tourism, because of the Expo, a large number of tourists from ASEAN countries and China have been attracted to Guangxi, driving the development of tourist enterprises such as scenic spots and hotels. In terms of urban construction, Nanning's transportation, health, parks and other infrastructure facilities are becoming more and more perfect. As Nanning citizens, we recognize the holding of the Expo, and hope that the Expo will become better and better in the future!"

Local resident R5: "Before the Expo, Nanning's business and foreign trade industry still had many shortcomings compared with other provincial capitals in China, such as the flow of people, logistics, technology, capital, etc., which could not be compared with the eastern cities. Since the CAEXPO was confirmed to be permanently settled in Nanning, a large number of materials from ASEAN countries and domestic began to pour into the Nanning market, and various well-

known brand exhibitions were held in Nanning one after another, the city's population flow and total GDP increased year by year, and the gap with other provincial capitals is slowly narrowing."

Local resident R6: "As a local resident of Nanning, we are proud of the Expo, which is a beautiful business card for the city, attracting tourists and businessmen from all over the world and driving the economic development and infrastructure of Nanning. During the ten years of the Expo, we have really felt the great changes in Nanning City."

Scholar S2: "The CAEXPO has facilitated exchanges among leaders and built a good platform for political diplomacy for all countries."

## 2) Impact on participation in Beibu Gulf Cooperation

The first "Beibu Gulf Economic Cooperation Forum" on July 20, 2006 proposed the construction of a Pan-Beibu Gulf Economic Cooperation Zone, which will extend the Pan-Beibu Gulf Economic Cooperation to the neighboring ASEAN countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines and Brunei that are close to the Beibu Gulf, and by actively promoting the Pan-Beibu Gulf Economic Cooperation, a new pattern of China-ASEAN regional cooperation will be built. The concept of a new pattern of China-ASEAN regional cooperation. In the strategic cooperation between China and ASEAN, the mechanism of Greater Mekong Sub-regional Cooperation has been formed. Through the Pan-Beibu Gulf Regional Economic Cooperation, it will be gradually upgraded to a new sub-regional cooperation project between China and ASEAN, and together with the Nanning-Singapore Economic Corridor, which is based on the main transportation route, it will constitute a new pattern of China-ASEAN regional economic cooperation of "one axis and two wings" (Feng, 2012).

Scholar S6: "The Pan-Beibu Gulf Economic Cooperation has been an important regional cooperation platform for more than a decade and is one of the driving forces of China-ASEAN cooperation, further enriching and deepening the content of China-ASEAN cooperation and expanding and deepening the strategic partnership between the two sides, which is highly valued by the Chinese government and countries such as Singapore, Brunei, Vietnam and Malaysia. The holding of the CAEXPO plays an important role in promoting the participation of ASEAN countries

in the Pan-Beibu Gulf Economic Cooperation, and is conducive to promoting the strengthening of political mutual trust between China and ASEAN countries, eliminating obstacles and achieving mutual benefits and win-win situation."

### 3) Impact on participation in the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) regional cooperation

The Greater Mekong Subregion Economic Cooperation Mechanism (GMS) was initiated by the Asian Development Bank in 1992, and its member countries include China, Thailand, Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia. The purpose of GMS is to eliminate poverty and promote economic and social development in the subregion by strengthening economic ties among its members. Since its establishment, GMS has continued to develop in depth under the high attention of the leaders of the six countries and has achieved fruitful results in many areas such as trade and economy, culture, tourism, agriculture, and transportation (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, 2020). In 2017, China's cumulative investment in the five countries exceeded US\$42 billion, total trade reached US\$220 billion, and the number of people travelling reached 30 million (Yi. Wang, 2018).

Scholar S5: "Yunnan Province and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region are the main provinces and regions in which China participates in GMS cooperation. One of the important reasons why Guangxi has the opportunity to participate in the GMS cooperation as a province and region representing China is the successful holding of the CAEXPO in Nanning, which has comprehensively enhanced Guangxi's visibility and influence in ASEAN. With the thrust and opportunity of the expo, Guangxi is better integrated into the economic cooperation of the Greater Mekong Subregion, which is of great significance to develop Guangxi and enhance its competitiveness among the international."

### 4) Impact of CAEXPO on the development of related industries

The development report of CAEXPO shows that the Expo plays a very important role both in terms of promoting bilateral trade development and service investment. The Expo can not only create economic value directly, but also drive tourism, transportation, logistics, culture, education and other related

industries, and promote urban construction, which is called "gas pedal and booster of economic development".

Scholar S2: "The industry driving coefficient of international exhibition industry is about 1:9, that is, if the income of the exhibition venue is 1, the related social income is 9. The important influence of the Expo on the development of Guangxi export-oriented economy is not only in the field of trade and investment, but also in the pulling effect of the tertiary industry of Guangxi, that is, the industry related to the exhibition, such as tourism, intelligent logistics, financial service and so on. Therefore, under the radiation of CAEXPO, exploring the breadth and depth of cooperation fields between China and ASEAN both sides is a direction worth studying in the future and is very much expected."

Organizer A1: "Since September 2012, the Chinese Ministry of Science and Technology and the ministries of science and technology of ten ASEAN countries have jointly launched the 'China-ASEAN Science and Technology Partnership Program' in Nanning, Guangxi, relying on the CAEXPO, with the aim of promoting the progress of science and technology between China and ASEAN countries, with key areas of cooperation including national science and technology development strategies, formulation and management of major science and technology programs, support for innovative enterprises and cooperation between industry, academia and research, etc., involving various aspects of information technology, equipment manufacturing, artificial intelligence, life sciences, agriculture, etc."

Scholar S6: "The impact of the CAEXPO is multifaceted, highlighting its increasingly important role in political diplomacy, economic and trade success, cultural exchanges, and tourism development. Meanwhile, the CAEXPO has cultivated a vibrant new cultural system - the CAEXPO Culture - after more than a decade of development. Now, CAEXPO has become a bright business card of Guangxi. In Guangxi, when it comes to the Expo, everyone has a strong sense of cultural identity."

Local resident R1: "With the holding of the Expo, Nanning has done a better job in urban environmental protection."

Local resident R4: "Various communities in Nanning actively participated in the Expo. The government departments give full play to their organizational effectiveness, guide the community, encourage, guide and call on the community to actively participate in volunteer activities and exert community influence, which I think is a very good thing, and we are all proud of Nanning."

#### 4.1.4.5 Comparison of Objectives

##### 1) Branding

For an enterprise, there is no future without brand awareness, and the power of branding can bring sustainable development to the enterprise. MICE branding can improve a city's international and domestic visibility, thus enhancing the city's brand competitiveness (J. Zhou, 2018). Branding and promotion are very important elements of the CAEXPO. With the cautious treatment of export and import trade, focusing on improving the quality of the products, strengthening the promotion of quality brands, and increasing the recognition of domestic products will also drive the upgrading of product demand to improve the competitiveness of the industry (D. Sun, Q. et al., 2009). From the first exhibition to the present, CAEXPO has continuously liberated its thinking, vigorously implemented the strategy of upgrading development, and gradually formed the exhibition pattern of "one main and many specialized, parallel touring exhibitions", with the brand influence gradually enhanced, and will play a more important role as a platform in serving the national strategy, the free trade zone and the development of Guangxi. In the form of global economic integration, CAEXPO should follow the general trend of media integration development, actively innovate media communication methods, give full play to the technical advantages and aggregation power of emerging media, and implement cross-platform and cross-media linkage communication to meet the diversified and personalized needs of consumers in countries along the "Belt and Road". The influence of cultural brands is continuously enhanced (Shuang, 2016). The success of each CAEXPO has attracted a high level of attention from China and ASEAN. The organizers, news media, exhibitors, partners and participants report through press conferences, radio and TV news reports, advertisements, social media platforms, and

live webcasts to strengthen and improve the publicity channels and implement the "all-media" strategy to tell the story of the CAEXPO and convey the spirit of China-ASEAN cooperation. Further expand the brand influence of the Expo.

Organizer A6: "The organizers and local governments organized experts, scholars and experienced senior media reporters to write articles specialized in in-depth interpretation and explanation of the important role and main issues in the development of CAEXPO, Business and Investment Summit, the construction of 'One Belt, One Road', and pushed to major media, attracting wide attention in China and abroad. People's Daily", "Guangxi Daily" and other newspapers reported on the front-page headlines, and major media outlets have published them. Dozens of domestic and foreign media such as CCTV, Guangxi TV, Phoenix TV, Hong Kong Business News, as well as Indonesia Business Daily and Philippine World Journal participated in the report. The official website of CAEXPO, WeChat, Facebook, YouTube, Weibo, Headline and other media have been read by more than tens of millions. The Expo was widely publicized through multiple channels to people from all walks of life in China and abroad and the general social audience, further enhancing the brand awareness and expanding the brand influence of the Expo at home and abroad."

Local resident R1: "Previously, many people outside the region only knew Guilin, and knew little about Nanning. Now, under the influence of the expo, Nanning is becoming more and more well-known and the brand image of Nanning city is getting better and better."

Local resident R6: "Guangxi and ASEAN countries have developed more and more exchanges in many fields such as culture, education, art and sports. There are more and more foreign tourists willing to come to Guangxi. Guangxi's brand awareness has been rising."

In response to the changes in the international situation and the development of China and ASEAN countries in each year, each session of the Expo is dedicated to setting a theme, the main slogan and the theme of the opening conference, reflecting the Expo's keeping up with the times and characteristics, and creating the brand characteristics of CAEXPO. The following are the themes and slogans of the previous CAEXPO (Table 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4)

Table 4.1 Theme of the 1-15th China-ASEAN Expo

<b>Session</b>	<b>Themes of Each Session</b>
<b>The 1st</b>	The water of cooperation is injected together to start the bell of the times.
<b>The 2nd</b>	China and ASEAN Countries: Market Opening and Development.
<b>The 3rd</b>	The pearl is a perfect match.
<b>The 4th</b>	Port Cooperation.
<b>The 5th</b>	Information Communication Cooperation.
<b>The 6th</b>	Cooperation between bonded parks and ports.
<b>The 7th</b>	Free Trade Zone and New Opportunities.
<b>The 8th</b>	Environmental Cooperation.
<b>The 9th</b>	Science and Technology Cooperation.
<b>The 10th</b>	Regional cooperation development - new opportunities, new dynamics, new stage.
<b>The 11th</b>	Building the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road together.
<b>The 12th</b>	Building the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road - Creating a better blueprint for maritime cooperation together.
<b>The 13th</b>	Building the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road and a Closer China-ASEAN Community of Destiny.
<b>The 14th</b>	Building the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road, Tourism Boosts Regional Economic Integration.
<b>The 15th</b>	Building the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road and the China-ASEAN Innovation Community.

Table 4.2 Main Slogan of the 1-15th China-ASEAN Expo

<b>Session</b>	<b>Main Slogan of Each Session</b>
<b>The 1st</b>	Great Meeting Opportunities Mutual Benefits - China-ASEAN Expo.
<b>The 2nd</b>	11 countries set the stage 1.9 billion people sing 6 billion people cheer.
<b>The 3rd</b>	Friendship, Cooperation, Development, Prosperity.
<b>The 4th</b>	China-ASEAN Win-win Cooperation.
<b>The 5th</b>	China-ASEAN Expo 10+1 > 11
<b>The 6th</b>	Host the China-ASEAN Expo to promote the completion of the free trade zone as scheduled.
<b>The 7th</b>	China-ASEAN Expo makes the FTA a better tomorrow.
<b>The 8th</b>	Twenty years of cooperation and expansion of the Free Trade Zone, the results of the China-ASEAN Expo are always new.
<b>The 9th</b>	China-ASEAN Expo Win-win cooperation for development.
<b>The 10th</b>	China-ASEAN Expo 10 years of cooperation to create brilliant again.
<b>The 11th</b>	Re-create the brilliant China-ASEAN Expo and build a new silk road on the sea.
<b>The 12th</b>	Carrying the vision of the Silk Road to gather at the China-ASEAN Expo.
<b>The 13th</b>	Build a new silk road on the sea to share the wonderful China-ASEAN Expo.
<b>The 14th</b>	Gather at the China-ASEAN Expo to write a new chapter of the Silk Road.
<b>The 15th</b>	15 years of strategic cooperation and solidarity 15 China-ASEAN Expo event to share and win together.

Table 4.3 Theme of the Opening Session of the 1-15th China-ASEAN Expo

<b>Session</b>	<b>Themes of the Opening Sessions</b>
<b>The 1st</b>	The water of cooperation is injected together.
<b>The 2nd</b>	The Gathering of the Streams.
<b>The 3rd</b>	The pearl is a perfect match.
<b>The 4th</b>	Sailing Together.
<b>The 5th</b>	Five years of concentrated efforts on the Golden Bridge.
<b>The 6th</b>	Turning crisis into opportunity to light the voyage.
<b>The 7th</b>	Water and flowers share the fruits.
<b>The 8th</b>	The icing on the cake.
<b>The 9th</b>	Jointly developing ambitions.
<b>The 10th</b>	Harvesting the fruits and sowing the future.
<b>The 11th</b>	Interweaving of warp and weft, silk road integration.
<b>The 12th</b>	Eight-tone Ensemble, Silk Road Resonance.
<b>The 13th</b>	Gathering and upgrading than flying together
<b>The 14th</b>	Light up the Silk Road and let your wishes fly
<b>The 15th</b>	Spitting and weaving silk, turning a chrysalis into a butterfly.

Table 4.4 Invited Partners

<b>Session</b>	<b>Invited Partners</b>
<b>The 11th China-ASEAN Expo Specially Invited Partners.</b>	Australia
<b>Specially Invited Partner of the 12th China-ASEAN Expo.</b>	Korea
<b>The 13th China-ASEAN Expo Specially Invited Partners.</b>	Sri Lanka
<b>The 14th China-ASEAN Expo Specially Invited Partner.</b>	Kazakhstan
<b>Specially Invited Partner of the 15th China-ASEAN Expo.</b>	Tanzania

With the purpose of promoting the construction of China - ASEAN Free Trade Area and sharing opportunities for cooperation and development, China-ASEAN Expo has been successfully held for 15 consecutive sessions until 2018, providing new opportunities for businessmen from various countries to develop together, and also building its own brand and gaining a series of honors.

In 2005, it was awarded as one of the top ten famous brand exhibitions in China, and the secretariat of China-ASEAN Expo, the permanent organization of the Expo, won the Special Contribution Award of China's exhibition industry.

In 2006, it was awarded the title of "2006 Top Ten Most Influential Government-led Exhibitions in China".

In 2007, it was awarded "2007 China's Top Ten Most Influential National Brand Exhibitions".

In 2008, it was awarded as "2008 Top Ten Exhibition".

In 2009, it was awarded as "2009 Top Ten National Brand Exhibitions in China".

In 2010, it was awarded as "2010 Top Ten International Influential Exhibitions in China" and "2009-2010 Top Ten Influential Exhibitions of China's Exhibition Industry Golden Finger Award".

In 2011, it was awarded "2011 Top Ten Brand Exhibition in China".

In 2012, it was awarded as "2011-2012 Top Ten Brand Exhibition in China".

In February 2014, the Chinese government identified China-ASEAN Expo as "a key foreign-related forum and exhibition with special international influence" and "a key foreign-related forum and exhibition held at the national level", becoming one of the three national first-class exhibitions.

In 2015, it was awarded the title of "2015 Top Ten Brand Professional Exhibition in China".

## 2) Obvious economic and trade achievements

According to the summary data of economic and trade results of previous China-ASEAN Expo, the total number of booths, exhibition area, number of exhibitors, number of exhibitors and merchants, bilateral trade volume and two-way investment volume are steadily increasing, and the overall development trend is positive (see Figure 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, Table 4.5). It shows that the China-ASEAN Expo is continuously attracting domestic and foreign enterprises to participate in it, and the enthusiasm of exhibitors from China and ASEAN countries to participate in it is increasing, which has achieved remarkable economic and trade results.

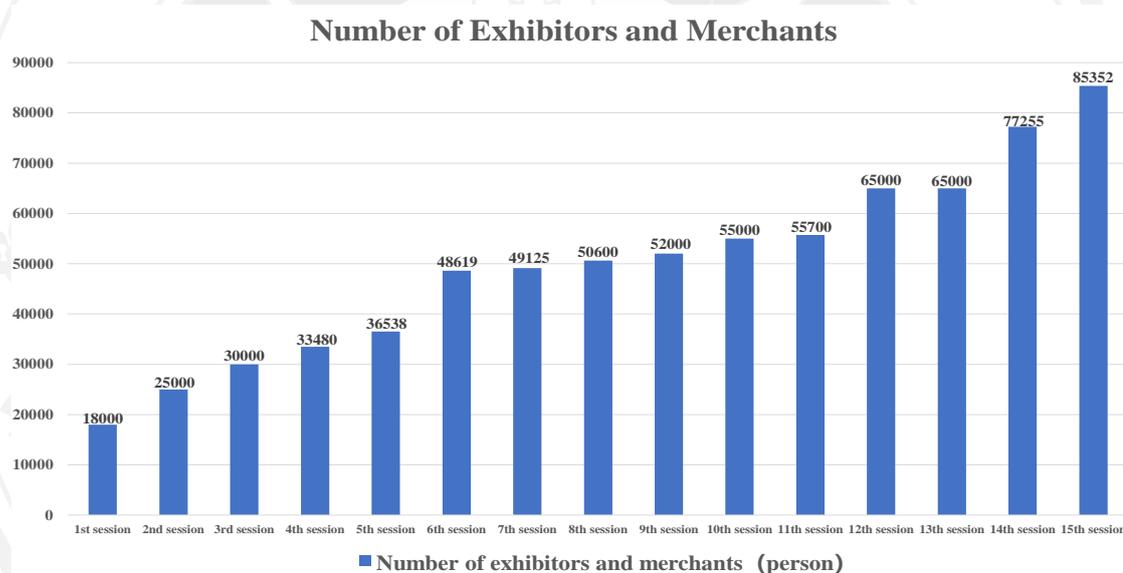


Figure 4.1 Total Number of Exhibitors and Merchants

Source: Guangxi International Expo Affairs Bureau (2020).

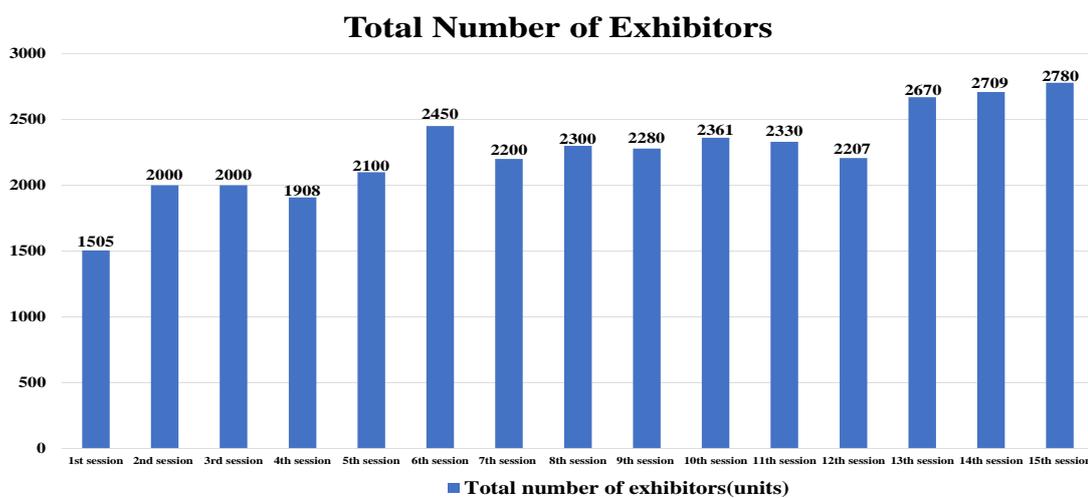


Figure 4.2 Total Number of Exhibitors

Source: Guangxi International Expo Affairs Bureau (2020).

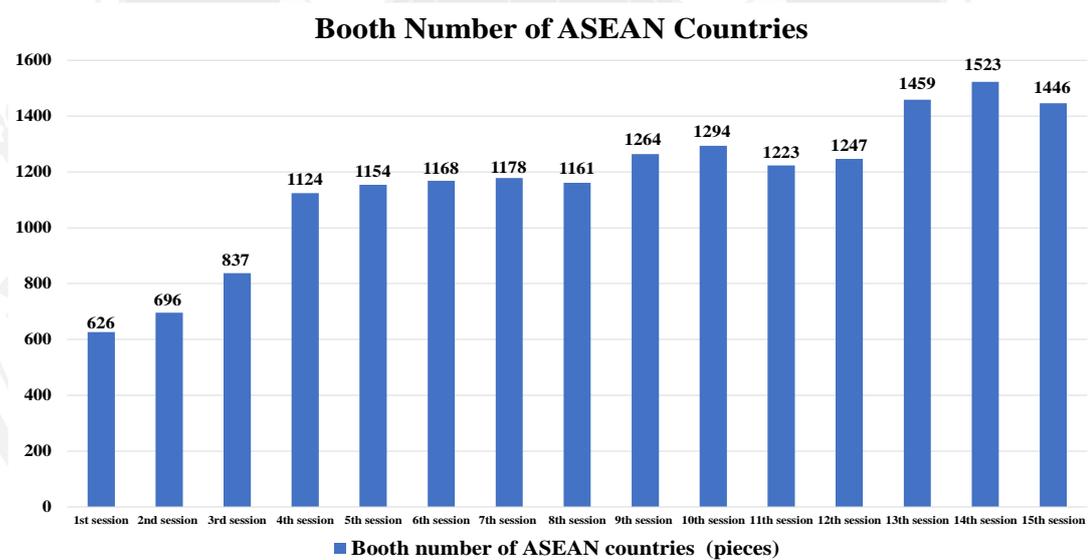


Figure 4.3 Number of Booths from ASEAN Countries

Source: Guangxi International Expo Affairs Bureau (2020).

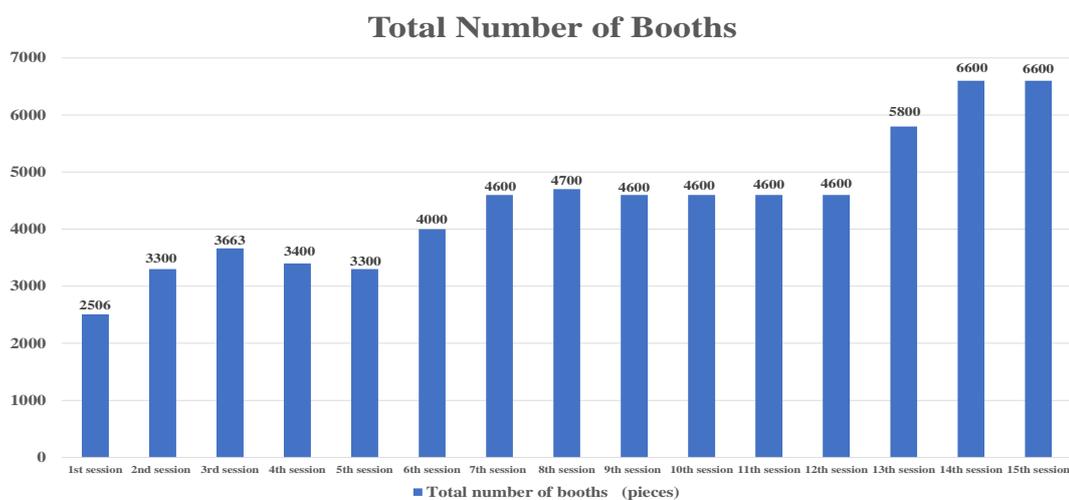


Figure 4.4 Total Number of Booths

Source: Guangxi International Expo Affairs Bureau (2020).

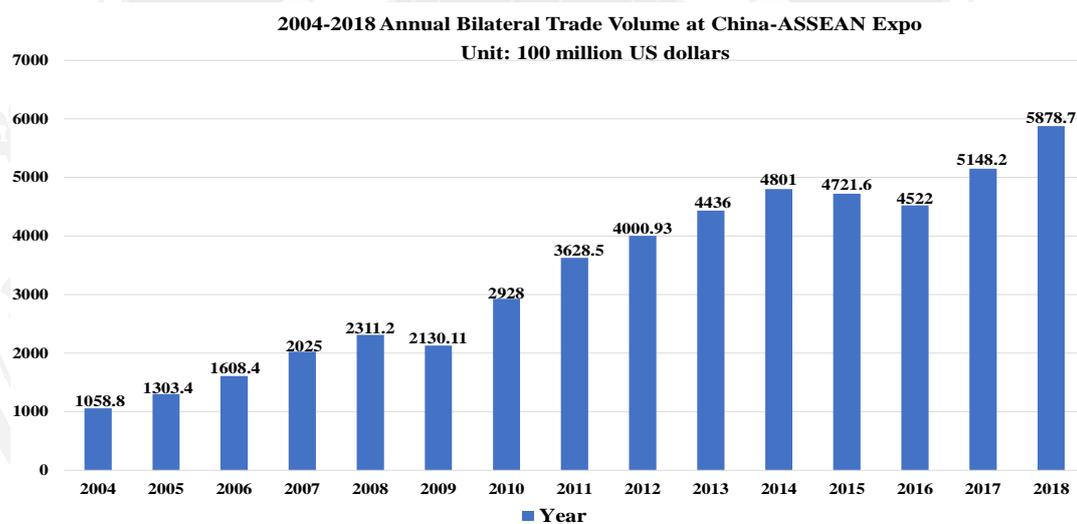


Figure 4.5 2004-2018 Annual Bilateral Trade Volume at China-ASEAN Expo

Unit: 100 million US dollars

**2012-2018 Annual Two-Way Investment in China - ASEAN Expo**  
Unit: 100 million US dollars

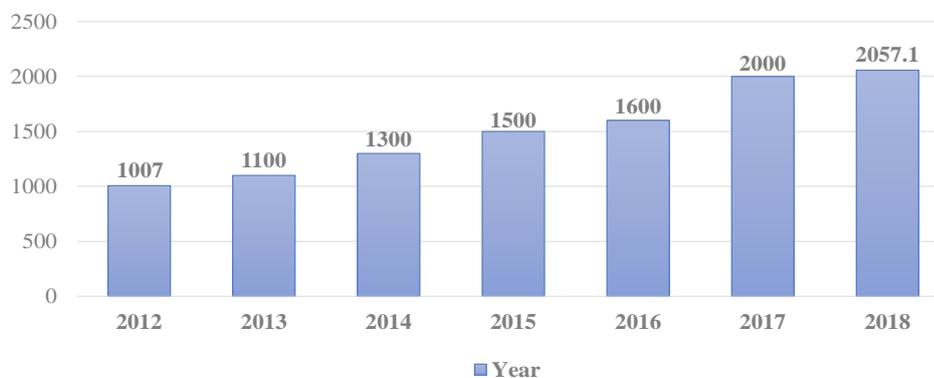


Figure 4.6 2012-2018 Annual Two-Way Investment in China - ASEAN Expo  
Unit: 100 Million US Dollars

Table 4.5 Summary of the Economic and Trade Results of the Previous China-ASEAN Expo

Projects	Total number of booths (pcs)	Exhibition area (million square meters)	Number of ASEAN booths (pcs)	Total number of exhibitors (home)	Number of exhibitors and participants (people)	Annual bilateral trade volume (USD billion)	Annual two-way investment volume (\$ billion)
<b>The 1st (2004)</b>	2506	5	626	1505	18000	1058.8	-
<b>The 2nd (2005)</b>	3300	7.6	696	2000	25000	1303.4	-
<b>The 3rd (2006)</b>	3663	8	837	2000	30,000	1608.4	-
<b>The 4th (2007)</b>	3400	8	1124	1908	33480	2025	-
<b>The 5th (2008)</b>	3300	8	1154	2100	36538	2311.2	-

<b>Projects</b>	<b>Total number of booths (pcs)</b>	<b>Exhibition area (million square meters)</b>	<b>Number of ASEAN booths (pcs)</b>	<b>Total number of exhibitors (home)</b>	<b>Number of exhibitors and participants (people)</b>	<b>Annual bilateral trade volume (USD billion)</b>	<b>Annual two-way investment volume (\$ billion)</b>
<b>The 6th (2009)</b>	4000	8.9	1168	2450	48619	2130.11	-
<b>The 7th (2010)</b>	4600	8.9	1178	2200	49125	2928	-
<b>The 8th (2011)</b>	4700	9.5	1161	2300	50600	3628.5	-
<b>The 9th (2012)</b>	4600	9.5	1264	2280	52000	4000.93	1007
<b>The 10th (2013)</b>	4600	8	1294	2361	55000	4436	1100
<b>The 11th (2014)</b>	4600	11	1223	2330	55700	4801	1300
<b>The 12th (2015)</b>	4600	10	1247	2207	65000	4721.6	1500
<b>The 13th (2016)</b>	5800	11	1459	2670	65000	4522	1600
<b>The 14th (2017)</b>	6600	12.4	1523	2709	77255	5148.2	2000
<b>The 15th (2018)</b>	6600	12.4	1446	2780	85352	5878.7	2057.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>66869</b>	<b>138.2</b>	<b>17400</b>	<b>33800</b>	<b>746669</b>	<b>50501.84</b>	<b>10564.1 (2012-2018)</b>

## 4.2 Analysis of Management Strategy of China-ASEAN Expo

With the development of today's economy and society, the exhibition industry is also changing day by day, and all kinds of exhibitions are emerging from all walks of life. The exhibition management mode must be adapted to local conditions and have its own characteristics to reflect the uniqueness of the exhibition. By 2018, CAEXPO has made a new leap in management capability after fifteen years of development, and the development of management capability is obvious to all, but from the perspective of keeping up with the development needs of the times, the scientific development concept of excellence and sustainable development, the management of CAEXPO still has many problems. Therefore, the exploration of the management capacity model of China-ASEAN Expo has never been stopped, and the need to find out the exhibition management model suitable for the characteristics and advantages of CAEXPO and then analyze the management capacity improvement strategy of CAEXPO has become an urgent and imperative task.

Built upon CIPP theory and based on the theoretical model of China-ASEAN, this study conducts a comprehensive evaluation of CAEXPO. On the basis of the environmental base capability, resource allocation capability, process action capability and result performance capability evaluated by CAEXPO, Expo management is based on the premise of emphasizing resource allocation capability, and the management strategy of CAEXPO is refined, namely, process-oriented strategy emphasizing management process action capability, environment-oriented strategy emphasizing management environmental base capability, and result-oriented strategy emphasizing management result performance. It is necessary to point out that the process-oriented strategy is the most important one.

It should be noted that the naming and definition of process-oriented strategy, environment-oriented strategy and result-oriented strategy do not negate or ignore the other elements and corresponding competency components of the management capability evaluation of CAEXPO. It is just that the role and effectiveness of such evaluation elements and corresponding competency components are more significant and prominent than those of other elements and corresponding competency components of the CAEXPO evaluation.

#### **4.2.1 Process-oriented Management Strategy**

The process-oriented model emphasizes the management process action capability, which is characterized by the process-based management process action capability under the premise of improving the input-based entrepreneurial resource allocation capability, and is devoted to the management of operation standards, emergency management and correction management around the management process of process management standards, operation procedures, incident records, emergency plans and correction plans, in order to promote the efficient process management of the CAEXPO.

The process-oriented model emphasizing process action capability focuses on the management standards, service standards, safety standards, health standards, information standards and environmental protection standards established by CAEXPO, so that there are "standards" to follow and "standards" to use. On the premise of establishing "standards", we train employees to memorize and understand the indicators of "standards", and strictly implement the standards implemented by CAEXPO in the process of action management, and the performance assessment of employees must refer to their ability to implement the standards. In the process of management, employees are required to fill in the work log on time and in accordance with the regulations. The work log is the first-hand information for CAEXPO to find out problems, study them and solve them, and is the basis for future rectification. While filling out the work log, the management abnormalities or emergencies found must implement the abnormal and emergency reporting system, and prepare cases to provide supporting materials for the rectification program. In the event of extraordinary situations and emergencies, the emergency response system should be activated and employees should start the emergency plan according to the guidelines of the plan, which has been rehearsed before the emergency occurs to ensure that the action management process runs efficiently.

#### **4.2.2 Environment-oriented Management Strategy**

The environment-oriented model emphasizing the management environment base capability, this model is characterized by emphasizing the context-based environment base capability under the premise of enhancing the input-based entrepreneurial resource allocation capability, taking into account the management process action capability, focusing on the opportunity of holding CAEXPO, the national development strategy, the location advantage of Nanning city, the city base condition and the development business opportunity of CAEXPO for enterprises, in order to diagnose whether the objective of holding CAEXPO is closely linked to the environment base to meet the needs of the development business opportunity of enterprises.

The environment-oriented model that emphasizes the ability to manage the environmental base focuses on the opportunities and challenges facing the development of the CAEXPO. China's "Belt and Road" strategy has given the Expo a new mission, and the China-ASEAN Free Trade Area has been upgraded to achieve "more regions, higher levels" of cooperation. "10+1" to "10+6" and even to countries and regions along the "Belt and Road", and the service targets are expanded from ASEAN countries to "Belt and Road" countries. The service targets are expanded from ASEAN countries to countries and regions along the "Belt and Road" to deepen the cooperation in a wider range of fields, and the CAEXPO is upgraded from regional to global. As the permanent venue of CAEXPO, Nanning has outstanding location advantages and is at the front of opening up, enjoying regional autonomy of nationalities, western development, opening up along the coast and rivers, Pearl River-Xijiang Economic Belt, revitalization of old revolutionary areas, Beibu Gulf Economic Zone, Beibu Gulf City Cluster and "One Belt, One Road". Construction, the construction of China (Guangxi) Free Trade Pilot Zone Nanning Area, the construction of ASEAN-oriented financial open gateway and other multiple policy advantages overlapping. After the establishment of CAEXPO, the sales of participating enterprises have increased, broadening the trade channels of participating enterprises, and with the "Internet +" into CAEXPO, the information of participating enterprises has been accurately and quickly disseminated, which is very beneficial to the brand building of participating enterprises. At present, the supporting

facilities of CAEXPO basically meet the conditions for holding and sustainable development of the exhibition.

#### **4.2.3 Results-oriented Management Strategy**

The results-oriented strategy emphasizing management results performance capability is characterized by the fact that the CAEXPO, under the premise of improving the input-based management resource allocation capability, emphasizes the results-based management results performance capability, taking into account the management environment base capability and management process action capability, which is the formative result of the CAEXPO around the economic and political, cultural and social generating benefit impact, customer satisfaction, management level of managers and the gap assessment between the management results and the holding goal for the repeated decision making of the CAEXPO.

The results-oriented strategy that emphasizes the ability to manage the performance of results concerns including the holding of the CAEXPO to produce economic radiation around Nanning and even ASEAN countries, has produced industrial linkage. The CAEXPO has been able to achieve its function as a political and diplomatic platform, improving regional competitiveness, positively influencing scientific and technological progress, environmental protection, and government efficiency, and the people of Nanning and even Guangxi have pride in holding the CAEXPO and are very appreciative of the CAEXPO. The results-oriented strategy that emphasizes the ability to manage results performance also focuses on customer satisfaction, meeting customer expectations is also one of the competitive advantages, and handling customer complaints quickly and precisely can foster customer loyalty. Under the implementation of the result-oriented management strategy, the CAEXPO has become more and more specialized and has well integrated the main contents of commodity trade, investment cooperation, service trade, high-level forum and cultural exchange in the exhibition, built more platforms for China-ASEAN cooperation, and gradually explored the formation of "one main and multiple specialized" exhibition with complementary functions throughout the year. The new pattern of "one main and many specialized" exhibitions throughout the year and with complementary functions has realized the original purpose of CAEXPO. It has formed the six characteristics of

"combination of import and export", "combination of investment and capital attraction", "combination of commodity trade and service trade", "combination of exhibition", "combination of economic and trade event and diplomatic stage" and "combination of economic and trade activity and cultural exchange".



## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Conclusions and Important Contributions of the Study**

Through the literature review of previous studies, this research has reviewed the official data and information publicly released by the National Bureau of Statistics, the Office of the People's Government of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, the People's Government of Nanning, the CAEXPO Secretariat, and authoritative Chinese media, and conducted in-depth interviews with four groups of people: organizers, exhibitors, scholars, and exhibitors. This study adopted the CIPP evaluation theory to conduct a comprehensive and systematic assessment of the CAEXPO that focused on four aspects: context, input status, process management, and product/exhibition results. According to the results of our analysis, this study addressed the research questions and filled the research gaps.

##### **5.1.1 Assessment Elements of CAEXPO**

Built upon CIPP theory and by following the source approach of assessment elements by prior researchers, such as Y. Wang (2018); Y. Gao (2012), this study has identified 20 underlying assessment elements and 77 assessment content points of the CAEXPO.

##### **5.1.2 CAEXPO Evaluation**

The results of the context evaluation and analysis of the CAEXPO show that the Expo has the reasonableness and necessity of timing, whether in terms of China's national development strategy, China-ASEAN regional economic integration, regional economic development imbalance or the need for business opportunity development.

The central government and local governments attach great importance to CAEXPO, fully mobilize and integrate resources from all aspects. They invest a lot of human, material and financial resources in the holding of each CAEXPO, formulate a series of development plans and encouraging policies, provide strong organizational guarantee for the Expo, comprehensively promote the continuous upgrading and healthy development of CAEXPO, and contribute to the China-ASEAN free trade area construction to play an increasingly large role.

By 2020, CAEXPO has been successfully held for seventeen consecutive years. The evaluation and analysis results of the management standards, operation procedures, emergency plans, event records and program rectification in the process of holding show that with the increase of the number of CAEXPO held and the accumulation of experience in running the exhibition, the level of exhibition services and management has been improving, and the scale and effectiveness of holding continuously expanded.

The results of the outcome assessment show that the development of CAEXPO has achieved the expected goals in terms of economic impact, management level, customer satisfaction, comprehensive benefits and target comparison so far, and has continuously provided new opportunities for China - ASEAN shared cooperation and development.

The results of the interviews show that the organizers, exhibitors, scholars and also the local people are generally satisfied with the Expo and are confident and expectant of the future development of the Expo. At the same time, it is also found that there is still much room for improvement in the areas of talent training, exhibition scale, construction of standardization and international influence of the CAEXPO, which is worth exploring.

The leaders of China and ASEAN countries have always attached great importance to the CAEXPO and given high hopes to it. At present, the Chinese government has listed "China-ASEAN Expo", "Asia BoAo Forum" and "Summer Davos Forum" as the key foreign-related exhibitions and forums held at the national level forum. More importantly, the Chinese government has combined the CAEXPO with China's national "Belt and Road" development strategy, effectively combined the realization of the Chinese Dream with the promotion of regional economic

integration, combined the realization of the Chinese; combines the realization of the Chinese dream with the foreign policy of peace, and comprehensively promotes the further establishment of a strategic partnership of peace and prosperity between China and ASEAN countries.

### **5.1.3 China-ASEAN Expo Management Capability Improvement Strategy**

Focusing on the process-oriented model of CAEXPO which emphasizes the process action ability, the environment-oriented model of CAEXPO which manages the environment foundation ability, and the result-oriented model of CAEXPO which emphasizes the performance ability of management results, we propose a targeted and effective strategy to improve the management ability of CAEXPO, so as to enlighten the strategy for building a highly effective, linked, oriented, cohesive strategy of improving the management capability of the exhibition industry with high efficiency, high linkage, strong orientation, good cohesiveness, strong professionalism and great integration.

1) Background-based strategies to enhance the environmental foundation capacity of the CAEXPO

(1) Maintain and enhance the strategic position of CAEXPO

Maintaining and enhancing the strategic status of CAEXPO is the pioneering point to enhance the environmental foundation capacity of CAEXPO. Keep maintaining and upgrading the strategic position of the Expo to get more resources for the development of the host city of Guangxi Nanning. The Expo should follow the national strategic deployment and be brave enough to undertake the mission of national political and diplomatic tasks. In order to continuously highlight the important role of the Expo in building a platform to serve national political diplomacy, activities such as planning exhibition themes and adjusting exhibition settings around the new situation, maintaining and enhancing the status of the Expo in the national strategy, prompting the host city of Guangxi Nanning to gain more support for policies, funds and major projects, and gaining priority status in national policy and project deployment (J. Y. Chen, 2018).

(2) Improve the level of social and public services and the spiritual and civilized outlook of the city

The level of social public services and the spiritual and civilized outlook of the city are the prerequisites for improving the environmental infrastructure capacity of the CAEXPO. As a large-scale foreign-related exhibition hosted by the Chinese government, the government can get a full understanding of the social and public service factors that restrict the development of the Expo. Through the government's coordination and promotion, the city's public facilities and various public service systems and other issues are solved, external conflicts are internalized, the investment environment and living environment of the host city Nanning is built, and various public service demands as well as business demands arising from the large number of visitors driven by the Expo are met. In addition, through measures such as external publicity and public welfare activities, we will increase the construction of spiritual civilization in Nanning, Guangxi, China, improve the construction of soft environment in Nanning, establish a good image of the city and contribute to the sustainable development of the Expo.

(3) Improving the quality of CAEXPO and expanding the scale of the Expo

Improving the quality of CAEXPO and expanding the scale of the Expo is the guarantee to improve the environmental base capacity of CAEXPO. For CAEXPO, the improvement of quality can lead to the improvement of the benefits of the exhibitors. The quality improvement of CAEXPO does not only refer to the income of the exhibition itself, but should also consider the income gained by the exhibitors and participants through the platform of CAEXPO. The exhibitors' goal of participation in CAEXPO is to gain greater income from the platform of the Expo.

Improvement of the quality of CAEXPO should be based on the market economic development needs, set the exhibition content with the characteristics of the Expo, broaden the procurement channels, improve the quality of exhibitors, and carefully design trade and investment promotion activities. In terms of promoting the development role of the city economy, the quality of the exhibition is more important compared with the scale of the exhibition, therefore, promoting the

landing of major projects, leading to the signing of commodity trade, investment and service projects, allowing exhibitors to obtain practical results, which is also the embodiment of the CAEXPO to meet the needs of business opportunities for enterprises, while allowing the host city to obtain practical results. According to the development demand of the exhibition, while ensuring the quality of the exhibition, it is necessary to moderately expand the scale of the exhibition to achieve the sustainable development of the exhibition.

2) Input-based strategies to improve the resource allocation capacity of CAEXPO

(1) Strengthening the construction of the management talent team of CAEXPO

Strengthening the construction of the management talent team of CAEXPO is the key to enhance the resource allocation capacity of CAEXPO. The sustainable development of CAEXPO must be supported by a high-quality professional exhibition team. At present, the development speed of China's exhibition industry is fast, especially the exhibitions sponsored by Chinese government, and there is stiff competition among the exhibitions. However, the speed of cultivation of exhibition talents is obviously lagging behind, and the cultivation of talents of the whole exhibition industry chain is still in the state of lacking. The reasons behind could be, firstly, the exhibition majors in Chinese universities have only been established not long ago, and they cannot deliver high-end exhibition talents for China's exhibition industry; secondly, it is relatively backward in terms of certification and training of practitioners in the exhibition industry.

The Chinese government has called the CAEXPO, the BoAo Forum Asia and the Summer Davos Forum "key foreign-related exhibitions and forums held at the national level". Therefore, the special identity represented by CAEXPO determines that its management talents must have high political awareness, consciously uphold the central authority of the overall situation, and resolutely implement the lines, guidelines and policies of the state and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, must think and deal with problems from a political perspective, must be able to deeply understand and comprehend the importance of running the Expo, and strictly abide by the laws and regulations of the state, strictly implement the

confidentiality system, and have a strong sense of enterprise and a high sense of responsibility for the exhibition industry (Qin, 2017).

Guangxi is at the forefront of communication between China and ASEAN countries, and it is also the gateway province of the "Belt and Road" construction in the south. Due to its geographical advantages, Guangxi is increasingly participating in international economic cooperation, especially the political, economic and cultural exchanges with ASEAN countries are getting closer. As the window of Guangxi to the outside world, CAEXPO, its managers must have a certain quality of humanities, be familiar with the social and humanistic situation of each ASEAN country, and constantly enhance the awareness of humanities, in order to be comfortable and comfortable in cross-cultural communication.

Nowadays, in the era of big data information economy where the division of industry and market is getting more and more fine, the condition to seize the market opportunity is to grasp the first-hand information, which determines the higher requirements for the ability of conference and exhibition managers to obtain information, analyze information and use information comprehensively, and they must have a full understanding of the industry development in China and abroad, and must obtain the latest information of each industry through network and media. It is necessary to make accurate judgment quickly in the organization, planning and operation of the exhibition projects, and to maintain the keen insight into the market and the ability of forward-looking analysis of the industry.

To strengthen the construction of the management talent team of CAEXPO, great support must be provided to the construction of the management talent team. Firstly, we should make training and training plan for exhibition talents, focus on training the senior operation and management talents and exhibition planning talents of CAEXPO that are urgently needed at present, and improve the quality of management personnel of CAEXPO; Secondly, CAEXPO vigorously advocates the incentive mechanism for exhibition talents, and closely links the business quality and work performance of exhibition talents with their personal interests. The incentive mechanism can be directly linked with the service quality evaluation, job promotion, title evaluation, assessment level and allowance compensation of conference and exhibition talents, and the incentive for conference

and exhibition management talents who have made outstanding contributions in conference and exhibition management is increased; Thirdly, establishes and improves the introduction mechanism of conference and exhibition talents, encourages the introduction of foreign senior conference and exhibition planning talents and experts and scholars in the field of conference and exhibition, and strengthens the cooperation with higher education institutions to promote the cultivation of conference and exhibition talents.

(2) Broaden the financing channels to ensure the funding of CAEXPO

Broadening the financing channels to ensure the financial investment of CAEXPO is the material guarantee to enhance the resource allocation ability of CAEXPO. Effective integration of various exhibition resources and social forces, relying on its diversified financing channels and strong government financial support become the economic basis to ensure the high-speed operation of CAEXPO. Insufficient investment and imperfect financing system are one of the constraints affecting the resource allocation ability of CAEXPO. The main funding of CAEXPO comes from the government financial allocation and the income of the exhibition, in addition to this, effort should be made to broaden the financing channels, such as: venture capital, private capital, non-governmental organizations, industry, foundations and other sources of funding support.

(3) Strengthen the organization and management mode of CAEXPO

Strengthening the organization and management mode of CAEXPO is the organizational guarantee to enhance the resource allocation capacity of CAEXPO. In order to better organize CAEXPO and better mobilize government resources, the Expo adopts "Expo Bureau" as the organization and management model, which only appeared in China after the 21st century. This model establishes "Guangxi International Expo Bureau" as a permanent institution under the name of "CAEXPO Secretariat". Guangxi International Expo Bureau is fully responsible for the organization and preparation of CAEXPO, and it mainly undertakes four major responsibilities: first, the overall planning of CAEXPO and the organization and implementation of major activities; second, the coordination and organization of the

implementation of CAEXPO domestic and foreign investment and recruitment, exhibition area planning, on-site management and services; third, the management and operation of pavilion leasing, booth operation, advertising sponsorship and exclusive brand resources of CAEXPO; fourth, the overall image design and promotion of CAEXPO (S. M. Zhang, 2020).

Compared with the administrative model of other government-led exhibitions in China, the prominent advantage of the exposition bureau model is that it weakens the administrative model and makes the organization of exhibitions more stable, more professional, and more efficient. The stability and professionalism of holding exhibitions are fundamentally guaranteed, which is conducive to the formation of exhibition brand competitiveness.

In advanced developed countries of exhibition, the international common management mode of holding exhibition is business association and professional exhibition company, and there is still a certain gap between the professional degree of management of CAEXPO and the international common management mode, and there is often a concession of professionalization to administrativeization. However, as a large-scale exhibition led by Chinese government, "government-led" is one of its main features, and it is unrealistic and not conducive to the healthy growth of CAEXPO for the government to completely withdraw from the management of CAEXPO. Therefore, CAEXPO, a Chinese government-led exhibition, should adopt the "government + market" mode of operation and management by a government-led exhibition company, which can ensure the control of the government on the one hand and take a market-oriented professional route on the other. The management goal of this mode is to ensure the governmental and professional nature of CAEXPO, and try to maximize the advantages of resource utilization and planning of the government. Dealing with the relationship between government-led CAEXPO and market-oriented CAEXPO is the top priority, from the long-term development of CAEXPO, taking the scientific development and market-oriented road is the general trend.

### 3) Process-based strategy for improving the action capability of the CAEXPO process

#### (1) Optimize the management standards

Optimizing various management standards is the key to improve the process action ability of CAEXPO. To improve the process management ability of CAEXPO, higher standards need to be put forward for the unity, wholeness, standardization and systematization of the management standards of CAEXPO.

Combing with its own characteristics and advantages, the optimization of the management standards, service standards, safety standards, health standards, information standards and environmental protection standards of CAEXPO must under the premise of meeting the international prevailing standards, national standards and industry standards. Through the strict implementation of the standards set up to be effective, so that it becomes a benchmark for the industry, and even become industry standards, national standards and international standards.

#### (2) Strengthen the event record and emergency response system

Strengthening the incident record and emergency response system is an important part of enhancing the action capability of CAEXPO process. The management process is a repetitive operation process from week to week. Nevertheless, the event details of each management process are not the same. For each event node that occurs in the management process, it is important to keep a record of events as required. The previous event records can be compared with the ongoing events to seek the optimal treatment plan and provide a strong basis for program rectification.

### 4) Product/Result-based strategy to improve the performance capability of CAEXPO results

#### (1) Improving the brand image of CAEXPO

Improving the brand image of CAEXPO is the key to improve the performance ability of CAEXPO. A more effective way to enhance the brand image is to make good use of media publicity, especially new media and self-media. Increasing exposure can make the Expo the object of media attention, promote interactive cooperation between the Expo and the media, the dynamics of the Expo spread to the

outside world through the media in a timely manner, and integrate into people's lives in a 24/7 and multi-directional manner, so that more people and potential customers can understand the CAEXPO. The hot scene of CAEXPO among the media reports will gain more attention and sound, and win opportunities for the development of Expo continuously. At the same time, the monitoring role of the media is also a kind of spur, constantly promoting the development of Expo. The CAEXPO is always under the attention of public opinion, which will constantly expose the problems of itself, and to ensure the effectiveness of the Expo, these problems must be dealt with timely and effectively, so as to promote the sustainable development of the CAEXPO (L. L. Jiang, 2017).

To enhance the brand image of CAEXPO, it is necessary to improve the content of CAEXPO, subdivide the exhibition subjects such as exhibitors and buyers, and provide group customization services in a targeted manner. If CAEXPO wants to achieve long-term development and not be eliminated by the market, it must make good use of the Internet technology, follow the mega trend, and build and maintain the CAEXPO online system through the interconnection network. The "Internet+" has penetrated and extended to all walks of life in the short term, and the opening of the CAEXPO online system can provide convenient and efficient services for exhibitors, buyers and potential customer groups. At the same time, the organizer should also conduct survey on customer satisfaction after the exhibition, maintain customer relations, collect customer comments and suggestions, and understand customer needs. The organizer must make timely feedback on the problems found in the survey, and develop appropriate solutions.

#### (2) Set up outstanding corporate role models

The power of role models is infinite. The CAEXPO can focus on selecting and building a number of outstanding enterprises participating in the CAEXPO as a model, establishing the "CAEXPO Outstanding Enterprise Fund" and carrying out the selection of outstanding enterprises in the CAEXPO. The selected outstanding enterprises can be supported by the "CAEXPO Outstanding Enterprise Fund" and allowed to use the logo of "CAEXPO Outstanding Enterprise", so as to effectively stimulate the motivation and passion of the exhibitors. The successful experience of outstanding enterprises using the platform of CAEXPO is a vivid

teaching material for all enterprises. Through the vigorous publicity of CAEXPO, it can play an exemplary role as a role model for enterprises. At the same time, the "Outstanding Enterprise of CAEXPO " logo obtained by the outstanding enterprise can be used in various publicity of the enterprise, which also plays a role in promoting the brand image of CAEXPO (L. L. Jiang, 2017).

(3) Promoting the incubation of scientific and technological achievements and technology transfer of exhibitors

The market is the life of an enterprise, and the exhibitors of CAEXPO need the market. The competition in today's market is very fierce, and scientific and technological innovation is an important aspect for enterprises to gain access to the market. CAEXPO should serve as an incubation base for exhibitors' scientific and technological innovation, cultivate exhibitors' continuous innovation in scientific and technological research and development, promote exchanges and cooperation between exhibitors, government and enterprises, and strive to play a greater role and energy in the government-industry-academia-research collaborative innovation mechanism. By signing contracts with the government and enterprises, CAEXPO provides direction and funding for their entrepreneurial scientific research activities. The exhibitors apply their scientific research results as intellectual property rights through technology transfer, so as to improve the transformation rate of their scientific and technological achievements and their ability to transform into real productivity, to brand the exhibitors of CAEXPO, and to continuously enhance the market competitiveness of the exhibitors of CAEXPO, thus enhancing the influence of CAEXPO.

#### **5.1.4 Theoretical Contribution**

CIPP assessment theoretical model, which was generally used in the field of education assessment in the past, is now used in various fields of economic management (J. F. Li, 2017). This study is among the first to employ the CIPP theory in the research of exhibition management. We elicited 77 points of exhibition assessment content and identified 20 salient assessment elements based on the CIPP theory. This study broadens the scope of application of CIPP theory and enriches the theoretical basis of conference and exhibition assessment, and can provide theoretical

basis for future research.

## **5.2 Discussion of Results**

According to the findings of this study and a review on the existing literature, the elements of exhibition evaluation, exhibition impact and exhibition management, and the beneficiaries of this study are discussed in the context of the research objective of this study.

### **5.2.1 Discussion of the Elements of MICE Assessment**

Regarding the evaluation of exhibition, researchers focus more on the evaluation of exhibitors' input and output, whether the performance objectives are achieved and the evaluation indexes. Regarding the construction of evaluation system and evaluation standards, a large scale or relatively complete scientific system has not been formed so far.

Research on MICE evaluation in countries other than China is inclined to microscopic research, focusing on the evaluation of exhibitors' performance. Researchers in China, on the other hand, are inclined to macroscopic research, and quantitative research is obviously less than qualitative research, and research conclusions generally stay at the stage of exploration, keen on exploring exhibition evaluation indexes or models, but very little on comprehensive evaluation of exhibitions. Research on exhibition-related standards is also very scarce.

Based on the CIPP theoretical model, this study systematically evaluates CAEXPO from four aspects: context, input, management process and product/results, involving macro aspects of environmental foundation and results performance, as well as micro aspects of resource allocation and process action. At the same time, it compiles important elements and assessment content points of the exhibition, integrating the results of the exhibition assessment points (indicators) of previous studies, and also putting forward new comprehensive evaluation of the exhibition. It also proposes a new comprehensive assessment method.

### **5.2.2 Discussion on the Impact of Exhibition**

Chinese and foreign scholars generally believe that the exhibition industry has a positive impact on today's economy, society and culture, technology and environment. In addition, the exhibition industry is highly interrelated and has a regional driving effect, which brings various impacts to the places where exhibitions are held.

The results of this study, which assesses the outcome performance of CAEXPO, verifies that CAEXPO has a great impact on the economic growth of Guangxi, especially the economic development of Nanning City, where it is held, benefits a lot. The impact in social, cultural, technological and environmental aspects is also significant.

This study implies that the possible adverse effects of the exhibition industry should be avoided to the greatest extent, and its positive role should be played to guide the healthy development of the exhibition industry, so as to continuously promote the sustainable development of economy, society, culture, technology and environment.

### **5.2.3 Discussion on the Management of Exhibition**

Prior research on the management of exhibition has mainly focused on aspects, such as exhibition service, crisis management, operation management strategy and customer satisfaction. As far as the management of CAEXPO is concerned, there are few researches on propaganda and communication and brand marketing.

This study systematically evaluates CAEXPO from four perspectives, namely context, input, management process, and product/results. We comprehensively examine the management effectiveness of CAEXPO, and verify some results from previous studies while summarizing the management model of CAEXPO. Specifically, we propose the Process-oriented model of CAEXPO with emphasis on the process action capability; Environmentally oriented model of CAEXPO with emphasis on managing environmental infrastructure capacity; Result-oriented model of CAEXPO with emphasis on the ability to manage the performance of results, and the corresponding management strategies.

#### **5.2.4 Main Beneficiaries of the Study**

According to the research objectives of this study, the main beneficiaries of this research are the managers of the organizers of CAEXPO, the managers of the exhibition industry, and the researchers of the exhibition industry.

##### 1) Managers of the organizers of CAEXPO.

This study conducted a comprehensive examination of the CAEXPO. It summarized the effectiveness of the project by identifying the shortcomings of it at the same time. It provides direct reference for the decision making of the managers of the CAEXPO, who are the direct beneficiaries.

##### 2) Managers of the exhibition industry.

CAEXPO is the only national exhibition with the functions of convention, forum and exhibition. It has certain special features, but there are also common features of exhibition. Thus, the results of research can provide some implications for the management decision of the managers of exhibition industry.

##### 3) Researchers in the conference and exhibition industry.

Based on the theoretical and practical contributions of this research, it can provide theoretical basis and research reference for the research of exhibition.

### **5.3 Limitations and Directions for Future Research**

CAEXPO, as one of the three national category exhibitions in China, is one of the most important research objects in the field of exhibition management. Based on the latest domestic and foreign related literature, this study examines and evaluates the problems related to the management of CAEXPO, based on the CIPP evaluation theory. This study attempts to analyze the effectiveness and deficiencies of the management of CAEXPO, and proposes management improvement strategies. Due to various objective reasons such as manpower, material resources and time, this study has certain limitations and reveals potential directions for future research.

1) Built upon CIPP theory, the assessment elements identified in this study are mainly derived from prior work. Although they are relatively comprehensive and systematic, but there are inevitable omissions in the process of

processing the literature. Therefore, future research can try to obtain the elements by using alternative research methods.

2) CAEXPO is an exhibition held under the unique political, economic and contemporary background, and has a strong government-led character. Give its unique characteristics, the generalizability of our findings is limited.

3) The CAEXPO evaluation could be a broad topic. Chinese researchers have not paid enough attention to it. Thus, the relevant literature is limited. There are limited theoretical results to draw on, and the data availability and time constraints lead to conclusions with limited insights. Future study could fill this gap by exploring more theories and alternative perspectives.

4) CAEXPO has huge impact on political, economic and social benefits of China. Based on the method and theoretical model adopted in this study, it is difficult to quantify and prove some contents in the process of evaluation, therefore, whether some points in the evaluation results are completely scientific and objective remains to be tested and improved through further in-depth research.

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