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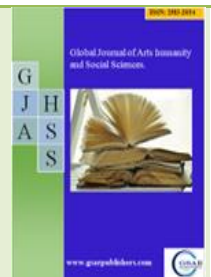
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The Influence of Family on Tourist Consumer Behavior

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Abstract

Family travel is an important form of tourism. Understanding the behavioral characteristics of family travel is of great significance for improving the service level of the tourism industry. This article systematically reviews the literature on family travel in recent years. The research finds that the academic circles at home and abroad are paying increasing attention to family travel, and the number of literatures is constantly growing. The research method mainly relies on literature review. The research content, themes, and acquisition methods show a diversified trend, focusing on the influence of families on the behavior of tourism consumers. Based on this, this paper, by deeply understanding the influence mechanisms of factors such as family economic level, family demographic characteristics, family structure status, educational level, preference for attractions, and traditional cultural values on family tourism consumption expenditure, ultimately explores the impact of families on tourism consumer behavior and provides relevant suggestions for promoting the development of the family tourism industry.

Key words: Family Travel Consumption; Economy; Region; Attraction

1. Introduction

Due to the continuous growth of household disposable income and the promoting effect of tourism on family functions, the family tourism market has developed rapidly and has become the most important segment of the global tourism industry. Visa's research predicts that "by 2025, nearly 282 million families worldwide will plan to travel overseas at least once a year, and the average annual spending per family on overseas trips will reach 5,305 US dollars."

Whether in Western countries or China, family-based tourism activities account for a high proportion of all leisure activities. According to data from the China Tourism Academy, in the first "Report on the Demand for Family Travel in China", the proportion of family travel in domestic and outbound tourism in China reached about 50% to 60% in 2017. Nearly 80% of the respondents believe that family travel can bring happiness, and 67% of the respondents think that family travel can promote family harmony. 54.1% of the respondents believe that traveling can enrich people's experience, and the demand for family travel segments such as couple trips, parent-child trips, and parent-child trips all maintain a vigorous development trend^[1]. It can be seen that family travel holds an important position in the current tourism

market, and families have a significant influence on the behavior of tourism consumers.

2. Literature Review

In terms of research content, researchers abroad, especially those in developed countries, started their studies on family travel behavior earlier. Francken divided tourist behavior into three levels: decision-making behavior before travel, tourism activities during travel, and evaluation behavior after travel^[2]. From the perspective of research content, foreign scholars have focused on the decision-making behavior before traveling. They have conducted research around the influence of factors such as the changes in the roles played by family members, especially couples, income, rights, and family structure, on family travel decisions, as well as conflicts and resolution strategies in family travel decisions. For instance, Thompson et al. (1978) conducted an empirical survey of 104 American families and found that there was a significant positive relationship between household income and tourism consumption expenditure. Meanwhile, there were significant differences in the elasticity of tourism income among families of different incomes^[3]. Davis et al. (1992) analyzed the influencing factors of tourism consumption expenditure using the data from the British Household Income Survey Database and found that the level of

income was the main factor affecting tourism consumption expenditure^[4].

Domestic scholars' research on family travel behavior started relatively late and the research content is rather broad. From their respective perspectives, researchers analyzed the influence of factors such as the characteristics of family tourism consumption behavior, tourism decision-making behavior, as well as family size, family life cycle, family structure, and the region where the family is located on tourism behavior. For instance, Jiang Guohua (2017) utilized the data released by the China Household Tracking Survey (CFPS) in 2014 and analyzed it through a multiple linear regression model. He found that the region where a household is located has a significant impact on household tourism consumption expenditure, especially in the Northeast and western regions where the influence on tourism consumption expenditure is particularly significant^[5]. Wang Guiqiang (2008) pointed out that changes in family structure are an important factor influencing family tourism consumption expenditure^[6].

Although in recent years, the Chinese people have increasingly aspired to a better quality life and the demand for family travel in China has been strong, the domestic academic circle has recognized the importance of the family travel market and produced some research results. However, the research period is short, the themes are relatively concentrated and limited, and the focus is mainly on the development and marketing of the family travel market. Among them, the research on the behavior of family tourists and its influencing factors mainly draws on the theories and models of relevant foreign studies. Most of the papers merely present viewpoints but lack the demonstration of standardized research methods. Therefore, there is an urgent need for more standardized and in-depth research to provide guidance for industry practice.

Therefore, based on this background, this article systematically sorts out and discusses the influencing factors of family on the behavior of tourism consumers as reported by CNKI in recent years. By deeply understanding the influence mechanisms of factors such as family economic level, family demographic characteristics, family structure status, educational level, preference for attractions, and traditional cultural values on family tourism consumption expenditure, the influence of families on tourism consumer behavior is ultimately explored to provide references and lessons for the research on family tourism in China. It is expected that future research on family travel in China will not only better guide industry practices, but also help enrich and improve the knowledge system of family travel research.

3. Research and Analysis

3.1 Basic Characteristics of Family Tourists

Through the literature analysis method, the research on the basic characteristics of family tourists on CNKI is analyzed. Niu Zewen and Zhang Jie (2020) found that in terms of the number of tourists, the number of family trips is the largest, followed by trips with parents, then couples, and the number of couple trips is the smallest. It can be seen that the family trip market is the focus of

the tourism market in the old city of Beijing. From the perspective of time changes (2009 to 2018), apart from the family travel market remaining at the top, the proportion of traveling with parents has shown an upward trend. Especially in the past decade, it has gradually replaced couple travel and become the second largest tourist group after family travel^[7].

3.2 Family economic status

The economic level of a family is an important factor influencing the behavior of tourism consumers. Luo Jianji et al. (2020) based on CFPS data, used a multivariate Logistic regression model to study the trend, characteristics and influencing factors of family tourism consumption. The results show that: (1) Basic and mid-range family tourism consumption is the mainstream choice of family tourism consumption in China at the present stage and shows a strong development trend; (2) The basic and mid-range tourism consumption is more evident in the tourism consumption choices of families in second-tier regions and rural families. The close relationship between the consumption level and the location of the family is a notable feature of family tourism consumption in China. (3) Household net assets, residents' consumption expenditure, total household expenditure, per capita net household income, and the nature of house ownership are significant factors influencing household tourism consumption in China. The diversified characteristics of the influencing factors of household tourism consumption in China are obvious^[8].

3.3 Demography and Family Structure

Wang Qunlong (2020), based on the data released by the China Household Tracking Survey (CFPS) in 2016, used t-test, analysis of variance and Games-Howell pairwise comparison method to study that there are significant differences in tourism consumption expenditure for demographic characteristics other than gender. The tourism consumption expenditure of married families is 1.24 times that of non-married families. It is worth noting that there is a significant difference in tourism consumption between families without work and those with work. The tourism consumption expenditure of families without work is actually 22.1% higher than that of those with work. In terms of age and the number of children in the family, the tourism consumption expenditure of the elderly aged 60 and above is significantly higher than that of the young people aged 35 and below. The tourism consumption expenditure of nuclear families without children and one-child families is also significantly higher than that of families with two or more children. In terms of residential areas, except that the tourism consumption expenditure of families in the economically developed eastern region is significantly higher than that of families in the other three regions, the tourism consumption expenditure of families in the relatively underdeveloped western region is higher than that of families in the central and northeastern regions^[9].

3.4 Educational Attainment

The level of educational attainment to some extent influences the behavior of tourism consumers. Based on the data of the 2016 China Household Tracking Survey, this paper focuses on analyzing the impact of the educational level of household heads on household tourism consumption through OLS and 2SLS methods.

The empirical results show that the improvement of the educational level of the household head significantly increases family tourism consumption. The increase of family cash and deposits, net assets and income will significantly increase family tourism consumption. The increase of family size and the number of children will significantly reduce family tourism consumption. Compared with low-income families, the increase in the educational level of the household head and the annual net income of high-income families will promote tourism consumption expenditure to a greater extent. Compared with families where the head of the household is under 30 years old, families where the head of the household is between 30 and 39 years old and those over 60 years old have higher tourism consumption^[10].

3.5 Traditional cultural values

Cultural values can influence tourists' consumption behavior. Research on family tourism from a consumption perspective mainly focuses on the influencing factors of family purchase intention and level, but lacks an analysis of the social psychology and cultural values that drive family tourism consumption. Hsu and Huang's research classifies contemporary Chinese cultural values into traditional cultural values (such as "thinking of others", "harmony", "sense of responsibility", "filial piety", "family affection", etc.) and modern cultural values (such as "freedom", "independence", "individuality", "equality", "enjoyment", etc.), which jointly influence the behavior of tourists^[11]. In the context of Chinese family consumption, Wang Ning believes that the family is the ultimate unit of interests. The interests and emotions among family members are interconnected. The satisfaction of the consumption needs of other family members will enhance the sense of achievement and satisfaction of the main person responsible for the family, demonstrating a clear behavioral logic of "sharing" and "altruism"^[12]. This view is reflected in Chinese family tourism consumption, where tourists attach great importance to children's learning experiences and pay attention to the travel preferences and demands of elderly parents. Therefore, future research focusing on the perspective of Chinese family tourism consumption should take into account more non-economic indicators (such as "family consumption concepts" and "tourism motivations"), and pay attention to the structure and utility of Chinese family tourism consumption.

4. Conclusion and Implication

4.1 Main Conclusions

With the development of the economy and the improvement of living standards, the family tourism consumption market will gradually expand, and the research area will become increasingly extensive. The family tourism market under different social, cultural, economic and environmental conditions may show certain differences. Moreover, the diversity and complexity of the composition of family tourism groups lead to the possibility that the combination of research subjects may span characteristics such as gender, age and generational. However, through research, it is found that the main factors influencing tourists' consumption behavior by families include family economic level, family demographic characteristics, family structure status, educational

level, preference for attractions, and traditional cultural values, all of which are universal.

4.2 Research Implications

First, the strong momentum of family tourism consumption presents an opportunity for the development of the tourism industry. Governments at all levels should continuously increase policy guidance and investment, and tourism enterprises should constantly enhance the development of related tourism products to meet the diverse demands of family tourism consumption.

Secondly, against the backdrop of consumption upgrade and structural adjustment in the tourism market, tourism enterprises should focus on the basic family tourism consumption market and continuously increase and improve tourism products that match it.

Thirdly, in the new stage of the in-depth development of mass tourism, the factors influencing family tourism consumption are becoming increasingly diversified. Relevant tourism departments and scholars need to pay attention to and study the new influencing factors in order to better interpret and predict the new trends of family tourism consumption in China.

Fourth, parent-child Tours are currently the main force in the family travel market. At the same time, attention should be paid to the niche market of traveling with parents, and more emphasis should be placed on the needs of the elderly and children.

Fifth, further develop historical and cultural as well as leisure and recreational tourism resources. From the perspective of meeting the needs of the elderly and children, enhance the interpretation of the cultural heritage of the old town and cultural guidance services. Appropriately increase tourism projects that are favored by the elderly and children in recreational Spaces to improve the tourism experience.

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