

Shandong Tourism Demand: Perspective of Taiwanese Tourists to Mainland China

Wang Chengyun*
Li Nana**

Abstract

Shandong Province, as one of the birthplaces of China's ancient culture, is rich in natural and cultural tourism resources and historically associated with Taiwan in terms of economy and culture. On the base of the questionnaire survey to Shandong tourism demand of Taiwanese in Yangtze River Delta, more detailed analysis on Shandong tourism demand of Taiwan tourists in mainland China is conducted in this paper, including tourist motivation, tourist destination, travel mode, travel time, service facilities selection and travel expenditure, etc.. This analysis contributes to forecasting the Shandong tourism market and its trends towards Taiwan tourists and providing strategy references to develop the market.

Keywords: tourism demand; Taiwan tourists in mainland China; Shandong Province

1. Background and Purpose

Along with economic development, people have become increasingly involved in recreational activities, resulting in the boom in tourism in the past few decades. The tourism industry is now the largest in the world, with receipts from international tourism expenditure totaling US \$735 billion from about 800 million tourists in 2006. According to the World Tourism Organization (2000), international tourist arrivals worldwide will reach 1.6 billion and tourism receipts will exceed US \$2 trillion by the year 2020. The tourism industry benefits other service industries, as well as creates employment opportunities and foreign exchanges.

With the "open door policy" declared by Deng Xiaoping in the late 1970s, China began to experience high economic growth for a long time. Along with the open door

* Associate Professor, Department of Georaphy, Shanghai Normal University, Shanghai, China.

Tel: +86 021 64322578, Fax: +86 021-64321136 E-mail: chengyun@shnu.edu.cn

** Graduate Student, Shanghai Normal University, Shanghai, China.

policy, China also has attracted a large number of tourists for its cultural as well as its natural endowments. During the same period, mainland China attracted many tourists from Taiwan. In November 1987, Taiwan authorities permitted Taiwanese to visit their relatives on the mainland, which ended the 38-year-long severance of relations between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait (Fig. 1).

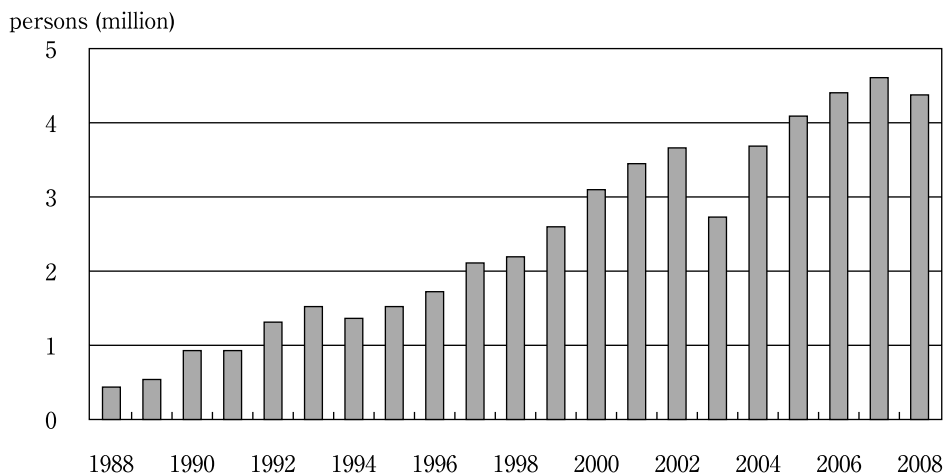


Fig.1. Number of Taiwanese Tourists to Mainland China, 1988-2008.

Source: The Yearbook of China Tourism Statistics (1988-2008)

Since then, people-to-people contacts and cross-strait economic and cultural exchanges have been steadily increasing, which makes Taiwan one of the most significant in-bound tourism markets on mainland China. Statistics show that Taiwan tourists traveling to mainland China accounted for more than 50% of the total number of Taiwan outbound tourists every year. Mainland China has become the most popular tourist destination for Taiwanese tourists, especially with the low consumption threshold and high degree of cultural congnition. In addition, people on both sides of the Taiwan Strait share common roots and profound cultural connections, so more broad prospects for connections will come to the tourism market of the cross-Straits along with the realization of “Three Direct Links” (trade, mail, and air between the mainland and Taiwan). Given the fact that mainland China serves as an important Taiwanese tourist destination, it is necessary to pay attention to what Taiwan tourists expect to experience while they are traveling in mainland China.

As one of the most economically developed coastal provinces in China and the area renowned as the birthplace of Qilu culture,¹⁾ Shandong Province has close historical ties

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with Taiwan. Historical records show that Shandong natives served as local officials in Taiwan during the early Qin Dynasty. According to *Shandonese in Taiwan*, compiled by well-known Taiwan scholars Lizhan et al., about 15% of Taiwan's population is from mainland China, among which 550,000 people are from Shandong Province, accounting for about 10% of the total population from the mainland. The population migration promoted the spread of the culture, so that Qilu culture has been gradually incorporated into Taiwan local culture and has had a significant impact on Taiwan society. Along with the progress, both Shandong and Taiwan have been strongly influenced by Confucianism.²⁾ Besides that, Shandong has become a new center of economic investment by Taiwan. In recent years, the distribution pattern of Taiwan-founded enterprises in mainland China has undergone significant changes, because foreign enterprises have entered the mainland China market on a large scale and have initiated a structural adjustment of relocation of recourses from labor intensive to more capital intensive. Along with the industry transfer, some of the Taiwan-founded enterprises in mainland China also have moved from the Greater Pearl River Delta, Yangtze River Delta region, to the Bohai Bay Economic Rim³⁾ in North China. In this process, Shandong Province has become the most attractive in the Bohai-Rim Economic Circle for investment by Taiwan-based enterprises.

Given this background, the importance of research into the tourism demands of Taiwanese in Shandong Province becomes clear. The results of this study can contribute to forecasting travel market trends of Taiwan tourists to Shandong Province and can provide a scientific basis for developing an effective strategy to expand the Taiwan tourist market.

2. Tourism Resources in Shandong and Their Characteristics

Although several factors affect what attracts tourists, a region with significant historical and cultural heritage and exceptional natural landscapes undoubtedly has advantages in the tourism market. As one of the important provinces on the east coast of China, Shandong Province is located on the lower reaches of the Yellow River, bordering on the Bohai Sea and the Yellow Sea to the east. With its beautiful natural landscapes and numerous historical and cultural sites, Shandong is rich in tourism resources. These include the profound Qilu-cultural connotation with the distinctive feature of one mountain (the Mount Taishan: Pic.1), one water (the Baotu Spring: Pic.2) and one saint (Confucius: Pic.3). Shandong's tourism area can be divided into three zones: from west to east, the "mountain-water-saint tourist area" with the feature of "ancient Confucian cultures" extends from Jinan, Taian, Qufu to Zoucheng in the western Shandong Peninsula; the "thousand miles folk tours area" featured by the "traditional local

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culture” in the central region such as the cities of Weifang, Zibo; and, in eastern coastal Shandong, the “beach resort area” characterised by “seaside tourism” represented



Fig.2. Spatial Distribution of Major Scenic Spots in Shandong Province



Pic.1. Mount Taishan

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by the major cities of Qingdao, Yantai, and Weihai (Fig.2).

2.1 Natural Tourism Resources

Shandong Province has abundant natural tourism resources. Mount Tai is well-known as the “First of the Five Sacred Mountains in China,” with its main peak rising 1,545 meters above sea level. As the great Tang dynasty poet Du Fu said, “When I stand on the top of Mount Taishan, the other mountains appear so small.” Mount Taishan is located in the middle of Shandong Province and across Tai’an city and JiNan city, with an area of 426 square kilometers. With its magnificent scenery and rich cultural connotations, known as “China Soul,” Mount Tai is listed in UNESCO’s “World Natural and Cultural Heritage.” In addition, the Yellow River flows through Shandong Province, covering more than 610 km., and then flows into the Bohai Sea in the northeast. The strange and interesting natural scenery surrounding the mouth of the Yellow River is spectacular. Jinan, the provincial capital called “the city of springs,” boasts such stunning scenic spots as Baotu Spring, Thousand-Buddha Mountain (Pic.4), Daming Lake (Pic.5), and Lingyansi Temple. The coastal tourist cities of Qingdao, Yantai, and Weihai in the east have gained popularity at home and abroad. Penglai (Pic.6), well-known as “fairyland,” is home to the museum of Dengzhou and a myriad of other wonders. Among those tourism sites, coastal sightseeing and leisure tourism are the most popular.



Pic.2. Baotu Spring



Pic.3. Temple and Cemetery of Confucius and the Kong Family Mansion in Qufu

2.2 Cultural Tourism Resources

Shandong Province is rich in historical and cultural resources and folk customs. The Yiyuan ape-man fossil proves human beings have been living in the area since about 400,000 to 500,000 years ago. There are many valuable historical and cultural sites widely distributed throughout Shandong Province, including six national-level and nine province-level historical and cultural cities, more than 16,000 immovable cultural relics, and more than 700,000 cultural relics in museums. As substantial evidence of Qilu culture, these sites and objects have become an important component of Shandong cultural resources. Among these historical and cultural resources, Qilu culture, the culture of Confucius, and Water Margin⁴⁾ have drawn substantial attention from tourists and scholars. Qufu, the hometown of Confucius, with architectural complexes known as “the



Pic.4. Thousand Buddha Mountain



Pic.5. Daming Lake



Pic.6. Penglai

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peak of Oriental culture,” is particularly well preserved and has been declared by UNESCO as a “World Cultural Heritage” site. As one of the most populous in China, Shandong Province is rich in folk customs and home to diverse festivals with distinctive regional characteristics, such as the Qingdao International Beer Festival held every July, the Weifang International Kite Festival in April (Pic.7), the Mount Taishan International Mountain Climbing Festival in September, and other festivals with local characteristics. Community organizations, holiday customs, and folk arts abound. In an effort to fully use the cultural tourism resources, Shandong offers more than 30 programs for tourists to experience cultural attractions, including study tours, folk-custom tours, and calligraphy art tours. In addition, the image of “Friendly Shandong,” taken from a famous quotation in the *Analects of Confucius*: “It is such a delight to have friends coming from afar” has been recognized.



Pic.7. Weifang Kite Festival

2.3 Tourist Services Facilities

The issue of the accessibility of tourist attractions is crucial for the development of tourism. Transportation infrastructure significantly affects how many tourists reach a destination. Shandong, one of the most advanced provinces in terms of transportation on the mainland, already has three levels of tourist transport systems. The first is the large-scale spatial cross-border or inter-provincial external traffic system, the second is the traffic system from tourist cities to tourist attractions, and the third is internal transport. The high quality highway network covers the 17 cities in Shandong Province, with a total of more than 80 thousand km., including 3163 km. of expressways, which is ranked

number 1 in China in terms of mileage and quality. A complete network of railways has been built in Shandong, Beijing–Shanghai, and Beijing–Kowloon, and several other major railways pass through Shandong Province. There are two international airports in the cities of Jinan and Qingdao. About 176 airlines fly into 44 cities and regions, including 14 international airlines, which connect the province with Japan, Korea, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Macao. Besides that, traffic by sea is very convenient; four international routes are open, including routes between Qingdao and Inchon (Korea), Qingdao and Shimonoseki (Japan), Weihai and Inchon, and Yantai and Busan (Korea).

Furthermore, most tourist cities have improved their basic services and facilities, such as tourist communication, upscale tourist hotels, restaurants, and other entertainment facilities, which greatly increase the area's capacity for receiving tourists.

3. Data

3.1 Survey Area Selection

Data in this study mainly comes from responses to questionnaires. For the purpose of research, we decided to examine tourism demands of Taiwanese tourists in the Yangtze River delta area where Taiwanese concentrate, including the cities of Shanghai, Suzhou, and Kunshan. Along with more frequent communication between the mainland and Taiwan, more Taiwanese are coming to the mainland to work, study, invest, or live permanently.

The Yangtze River delta area, with its relatively well-developed economy and good investment environment, has become the most popular site for Taiwanese tourists and immigrants. Shanghai, Suzhou, Kunshan, and other surrounding cities of Shanghai have a large population of resident Taiwanese. According to statistics, the number of resident Taiwanese in Shanghai is about 150,000, and there are about 150,000 Taiwanese who come and go between Taiwan and Shanghai regularly over a period of six months. An additional 150,000 Taiwanese work or have settled in the areas surrounding Shanghai. Data from 104 Job Bank shows that the Yangtze River delta region is still the most popular area for Taiwanese people to find jobs, although the employment market is not so vibrant in the mainland because of the international financial crisis. Statistics from Taiwan show that manpower needs in Taiwan's financial industries have decreased by 1.6% over the same period in 2007, indicating that surplus manpower in the Taiwanese banking industry has become increasingly evident. Given that situation, some financial professionals from Taiwan are looking for new opportunities in mainland China, particularly in the Yangtze River Delta⁵⁾ (Fig.3).

Based on these facts, this study focuses on Shanghai, Suzhou, and Kunshan⁶⁾ as the

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Fig.3. Spatial Distribution of Cities in Yangtze River Delta Region

main areas of this investigation. The survey was conducted among the Taiwanese population at different points, including residential areas of Taiwan's residential areas, Taiwan restaurants, Suzhou industrial park, Pudong International Airport, and Taiwan Affairs Office of Xuhui district in Shanghai.

3.2 Respondents' Characteristics

In this survey, 850 questionnaires were sent out, and a total of 715 responses were collected for a response rate of 84.1%. Among the 715 respondents, the number of Taiwanese settling in the Yangtze River Delta region is 212, accounting for 29.2% of the total; there are 156 Taiwanese working and living in the mainland long-term, with the proportion of 21.8%; 136 Taiwanese who frequently travel between Taiwan and the mainland live in the Yangtze River Delta region for six months or more at a time, accounting for 19%; the number of Taiwanese who live nearly three months or more is 35, accounting for 4.9%; and the number who frequently come and go short-term is 137, accounting for 19.2%. The questionnaire includes basic information (gender, age, occupation, and cultural level), selection of travel destination, knowledge of Shandong tourism, travel intention, travel motive, and travel mode to Shandong.

As shown in Tab.1, the ratio of males to females in the 715 interviewees is nearly equal. The majority of respondents are between 26 and 55 years of age, because the majority of Taiwanese who live or work in the mainland are mainly in this age range. In particular, the number of respondents between 36 and 45 years of age is the largest, and the age structure is represented by the obvious single-peak in Tab.1. Occupationally,

enterprise staff and housewives make up the largest proportion, the ratio of the group reaches up 60.2%, more than half of the total. This is because many enterprise staff members come to the mainland along with their family members. From the educational level point of view, most interviewees hold degrees from universities or junior colleges, and the general educational level is relatively high.

Tab.1. Respondents' Characteristics

Characteristic	Number	%
Gender		
Male	359	50.2
Female	356	49.8
Age group		
0-18	26	3.6
18-25	71	9.9
26-35	184	25.7
36-45	237	33.1
46-55	122	17.1
56-65	53	7.4
66-	22	3.1
Main occupation		
Government staff	12	1.7
Business owner	100	14.0
Enterprise staff	260	36.4
Housewife	156	21.8
Teacher	38	5.3
Freelance	56	7.8
Other	93	13.0
Education level		
Master or Ph.D.	89	12.4
University	305	42.7
Junior college	164	22.9
Secondary vocational or High school	115	16.1
Junior high school	29	4.1
Other	13	1.8

4. Analysis of Shandong Tourism Demand by Taiwan Tourists in the Mainland

Travel demand is defined as the quality of tourism goods or services that consumers

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will be both willing and able to purchase at any given price during a specific period of time. A combination of factors makes up travel demand. We can look at demand factors from two perspectives. On the one hand, a range of factors influence demand, such as the motivation to travel, the ability to travel, leisure time, and the number of nights spent by tourists at a destination. These factors cover a wide range, from the general economic situation to politics to technological innovations. On the other hand, several emerging factors including changing consumer behaviors in tourism, such as destinations preferences, quality expectations, booking behaviors, and the promotional efforts of the destination, as well as other social, cultural, geographical, and political factors exist.

In the following section, the tourism demand of Taiwan tourists to Shandong Province is analyzed from different points of view. More detailed analysis of cognition, travel intention, tourist motivation, travel mode, consumption level, and other travel factors is conducted based on the survey results.

4.1 Analysis on Cognition and Intention of Shandong Tourism for Taiwan Tourists in the Mainland

4.1.1 Cognition of Shandong Tourism

In the survey, cognition of Shandong tourism is based on the knowledge of Taiwan tourists to ten tourist cities: Qingdao (maritime city), Weihai (coastal garden), Jinan (spring city), Taishan (first of the five sacred mountains), Penglai (fairylad of human world), Qufu (hometown of Confucius), Zibo (capital of the ancient Qi State), Rizhao (sunshine city), Weifang (kite capital), and Linyi (red tour area). It indicates that the respondents have cognition of the destination, when they have been there or when they

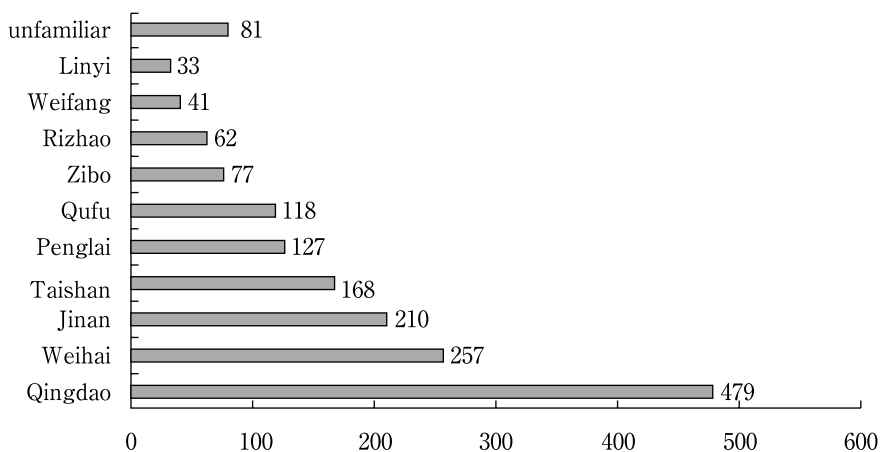


Fig.4. Cognition of Shandong Tourism for Taiwan Tourists

know about it. If they have never been to the destination or are unfamiliar with it, they have no cognition of it.

As Fig.4 indicates, most respondents have cognition of Shandong tourism, accounting for 89% of the total number of 715; only 81 visitors are unfamiliar with Shandong or have never been there. Among those tourist cities, Qingdao enjoyed the largest share of cognition, followed by Weihai, Jinan, Taishan, Penglai, and Qufu. In the overall statistics, a majority of Taiwan visitors possess high degrees of awareness of Shandong tourism. However, tourist hot-spots are mainly confined to the coastal cities, such as Qingdao and Weihai, while Taiwan tourists have a low degree of cognition of other tourist cities in inland areas, such as Qufu, Zibo, and Weifang.

4. 1. 2 Travel Intention

To gather more detailed information, the travel intentions of Taiwan tourists of different ages are investigated in the survey. It is seen clearly in Fig.5 that a higher proportion of the respondents, accounting for 58.3% of the total and including 210 males and 207 females, intend to travel in Shandong within two years. The statistics also show that travel intentions of Taiwan tourists vary according to the tourists' ages. Among interviewees over the age of 66, 50% (11/22) plan to travel to Shandong; between the ages of 56 and 65, 56.6% (30/53) want to go; the ratio of those aged 46 to 55 is 62.3% (76/122); the ratio of those between 36 and 45 is 58.6% (139/237); the ratio of those aged 26 to 35 is 63.6% (117/184); and the ratio of those aged 18 to 25 is 53.5% (38/71), while only 23.1% (6/26) of the respondents under age of 18 intend to travel to Shandong Province. Clearly,

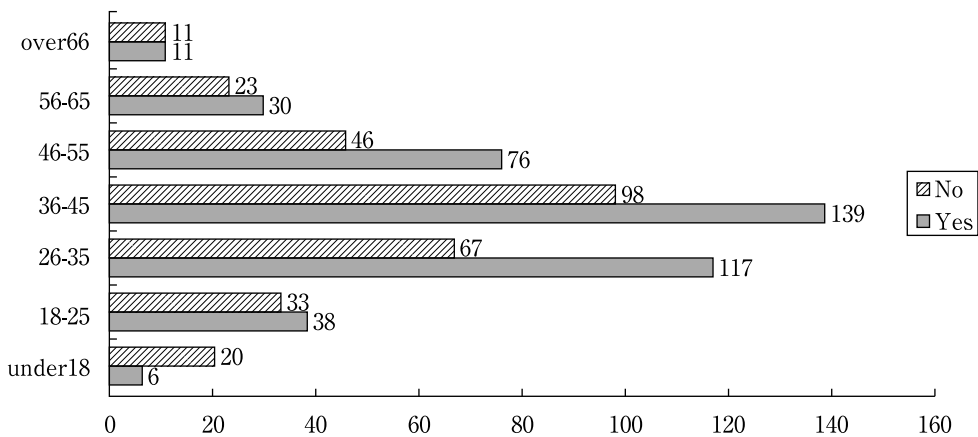


Fig.5. Travel Intention of Taiwan Tourists to Shandong by Different Ages

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interviewees between the age of 26 and 55 have higher travel intentions, while respondents under 18 have a relatively low desire to travel in Shandong.

4.2 Tourist Motivation

Tourist motivation is the reason a tourist chooses one destination over another and the attributes that govern that behavior. This is important to tourist operators, who must understand what drives tourists to initiate the leisure activity and then match a destination to the tourist's travel motives. A good fit may ensure that the guest will enjoy the tour and either come back year after year or book another trip within that tourism area. The tourism professional also needs to have information about tourist motivation to market specific destinations and to design appropriate tourist packages.

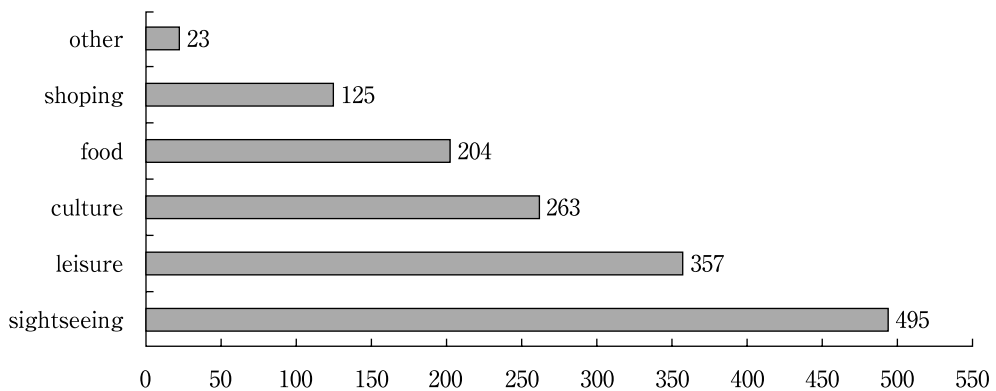


Fig.6. Travel Motive Factors of Taiwan Tourists to Shandong

The travel motives in the investigation are divided into six types: sightseeing, leisure, delicious food, shopping, culture, and other (Fig.6). According to the results, both sightseeing and leisure are the major motives contributing to Taiwan tourists' visits to Shandong Province, with sightseeing and leisure separately accounting for 71.5% and 51.6% of the total. Culture and food are the third and fourth ranking motives. In addition, tourists with the motive of shopping account for less, while tourists with other motives like golf, religion, and business are relatively few.

"Natural scenery" is the number-one consideration when tourists are choosing a travel destination. It is interesting that culture and delicious food become two important factors attracting Taiwan tourists to Shandong. It is also found during the survey that many Taiwan tourists are interested in the Confucius culture, and hope to learn more about it during their travels.

Another noteworthy point is the interest of Taiwan tourists in business travel. The results show that tourists with different careers have different attitudes towards business travel. Nearly 50% of the Taiwanese tourists, most of whom are housewives, do not plan to participate in business travel, while only 10% of the total, most of whom are business owners, is interested in business travel. Another 42% of the tourists hold a neutral view of business travel.

4.3 Selection of Travel Mode

Travel mode selection is an important determinant of travel demand. This study examines the travel behavior-travel mode of Taiwan tourists to Shandong, mainly including information about who the tourists' travel partners are and the package tours the tourists choose. Interestingly, most Taiwan tourists travel to Shandong with family members and friends as their companions. According to the investigation, 51.5% of the interviewees travel with their family members and 29.8% with their friends. A few interviewees choose to travel alone, only accounting for 6.9% of the total. Self-guided tours, with the proportion of 30.1%, have become one of the most preferred travel modes for Taiwan tourists traveling in Shandong. In addition, as shown in Fig.7, Taiwan tourists are more willing to join Taiwanese group to travel in Shandong; 29% of interviewees chose the high criteria mainland group, and 19% would join the general mainland group.

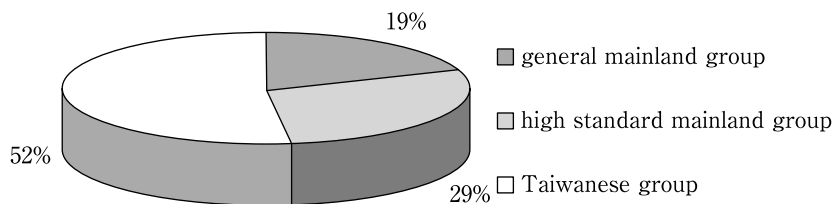


Fig.7. Group Travel Selection of Shandong Tourism for Taiwan Tourists

4.4 Selection of Travel Time

The travel time tourists select is of key importance to the operator. The travel time can be explained from two perspectives, the selection of a time to travel and the number of nights that tourists spend at the tourist destination. According to the survey results (Fig.8), 51% of Taiwan tourists choose their own convenient time to travel in Shandong, while a smaller proportion travel during May Day golden week, National Day holiday, or during the Spring Festival. According to the investigation, most Taiwan tourists tend to choose their time to travel, rather than traveling during holidays and festivals. The

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average number of days Taiwan tourists spent in Shandong is four or five.

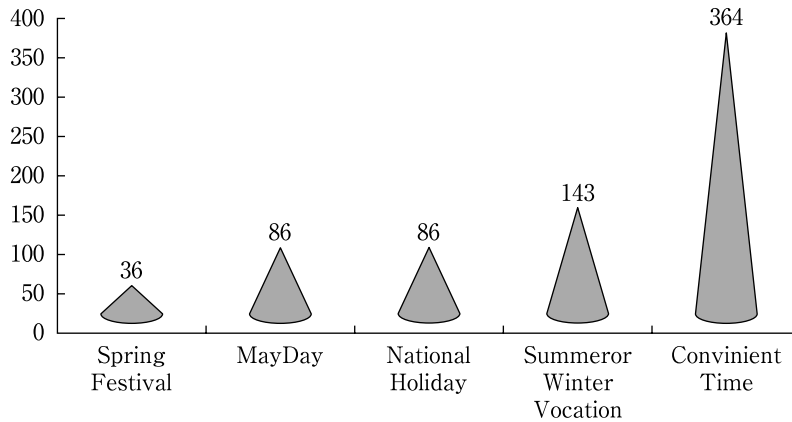


Fig.8. Travel Time Selection of Taiwan Tourists to Shandong

4.5 Selection of Service Facilities

Travel service facilities are “all the equipment and physical facilities which the tourism industry personnel utilize in the process of providing services to tourists,” including transport facilities, accommodations and catering facilities, tour entertainment facilities, and tourism shopping facilities. In order to reflect the criteria of Taiwan tourists traveling to Shandong, we chose to analyze accommodations and travel agencies.

4.5.1 Selection of Tourist Accommodations

Tourist accommodations are defined as “sheltered overnight accommodation in appropriately equipped rooms, including a bed at least, offered as a main service to tourists, travelers and lodgers” in return for a fee. The tourist accommodation sector includes hotels, serviced apartments, motels, and guesthouses. In the survey, the tourist accommodation is divided into five types: five star hotels, four star hotels, three star hotels, budget hotels, and agritainment.⁷⁾ The results (Fig.9) show that the majority of Taiwan tourists have high standards for accommodation selection; most of them choose to book at four or five star hotels, amounting to 67.8% of respondents, while a few are interested in budget hotels and agritainment. This phenomenon implies that Taiwan tourists expect good services during their trips.

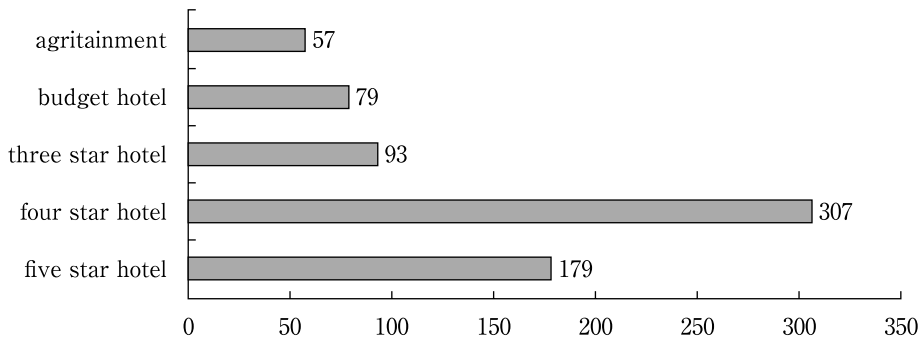


Fig.9. Accommodation Selection of Taiwan Tourists

4. 5. 2 Selection of Travel Agency

Travel agencies are not just glorified sellers of tickets, but also provide added value by helping consumers make arrangements, reduce troubles and save time and money for people's holidays and journeys. Travel agencies act as counselors, offering services to their clients. Present day tourists are more knowledgeable now about what they want. Although the Internet can reduce the need for travel agents to some extent, there are many things technology can not replicate. In the study, we examined the factors influencing how Taiwan tourists select travel agencies, from tourist routes, price, services, popularity, etc. Fig.10 clearly shows that Taiwan tourists are really sensitive to this service, and the quality of service is the most significant element that influences which travel agency they select. Among the total 715 respondents, 404 respondents consider service the primary factor when they choose a travel agency. Tourist routes and prices also affect the selection of travel agency, as does the popularity of particular travel agents. Tourists are more willing to choose an agency with high popularity and good reputation.

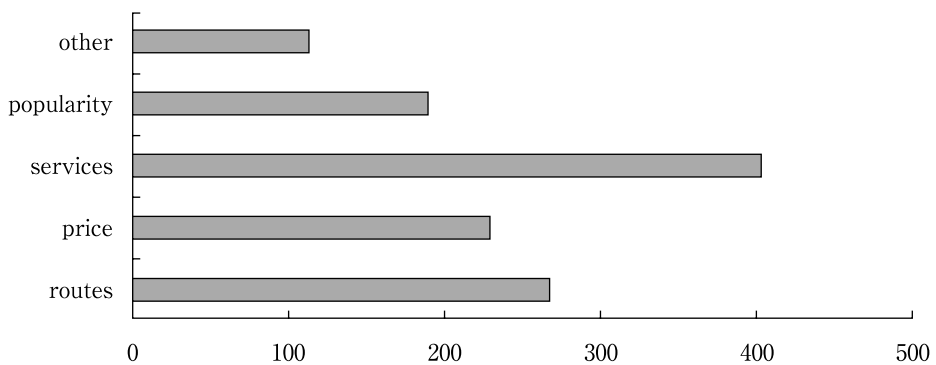


Fig.10. Travel Agency Selection Factors of Taiwan Tourists

4.6 Tourism Expenditure

Tourism expenditure is “the total consumption expenditure made by or on behalf of a visitor, for and during his or her trip and stay at destination.” This encompasses consumer goods and services inherent in travel and stays, as well as the purchase of small durable goods for personal use, souvenirs, and gifts for family and friends. Tourism expenditure is not restricted to payments made during the visit. It also includes the advance outlay necessary for preparing for and undertaking the trip and travel-related purchases made at home after returning from a trip. These categories refer to payments for travel insurance, transport, the purchase of travel guide, etc.

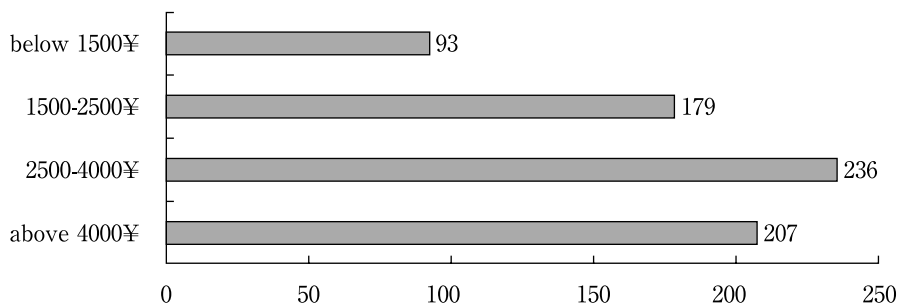


Fig.11. Per Capita Consumption Budget of Taiwan Tourists to Shandong

Given the data limit, tourism expenditure in the survey mainly refers to expenditures by Taiwan tourists during their trips to Shandong Province. According to the investigation, the expected per capita tourism expenditures for the majority of Taiwan tourists is more than 2500 RMB. Among all the respondents whose expense is above 2500 RMB, the ratio between 2500 and 4000 is about 33%, while the ratio above 4000 reaches 29%. Both proportions together account for 62%. Furthermore, the overall level of tourist consumption is relatively high (Fig.11).

5. Conclusions and Implications

5.1 Conclusions

First, the survey results show that the majority of Taiwan tourists to the mainland have high cognition of Shandong tourism, and most have strong intentions to travel in Shandong; this is especially true of those between the ages of 26 and 56. It is clear that Taiwan is a huge potential tourist market for Shandong tourism and that a range of opportunities exist for Shandong tourism destinations to develop their products for Taiwan tourists. However, there are also challenges in the future for Shandong tourism. Most

Taiwan tourists pay more attention to the east coastal region and cities with rich natural resources than to inland tourist attractions filled with historical and cultural tourism resources, which indicates that the development of some tourism resources is not yet adequate.

Second, although most Taiwan tourists indicate that sightseeing and leisure are their main motives for traveling in Shandong, culture has become another key attraction. Rich cultural tourism resources in Shandong have gained the recognition of Taiwan tourists; moreover, the program of cultural tourism helps Taiwanese tourists understand traditional Chinese cultures.

In addition, the results show that the majority of Taiwan tourists are inclined to travel to Shandong with their own family members at their most convenient time. While traveling, Taiwan tourists attach much more importance to the quality of tourism facilities, including accommodations, travel agency, and other facilities. Their consumption level is relatively high and they are willing to pay for high quality of services.

5. 2 Implication

5. 2. 1 Fully Tap the Potential of Cultural Tourism Resources

The purpose of travel is not material enjoyment, but the spiritual fulfillment of tourists, which means that the tourism process is equal to the process of cultural consumption or aesthetic consumption. Culture has now become one of the core elements of the product offered by tour operators. The higher the level of cultural satisfaction with tourism product, the more attractive the tourism site will be. On the basis of common historical origins and the cultural identity of Shandong culture, learning more about the culture has become an important motive for Taiwan tourists. Thus, it is extremely important to incorporate culture connotations into tourism offerings while also developing sightseeing and leisure tourism. As the center of Qilu culture, Confucian culture is widely known by many Taiwanese. Moreover, some elderly Taiwanese understand it very well and wish to study it further. Thus the operators of Shandong tourism companies or authorities should take some measures to promote Shandong tourism that concentrates on the beautiful natural landscape and profound cultural connotations. It is noteworthy that these cultural resources should not be interpreted by visitors as “interesting” or “distinctive,” but rather should be understood in the context of underlying local cultural beliefs.

In addition, it is critical to protect historical and cultural tourism resources, since they are easily damaged. Thus the operator should take measures to preserve the cultural resources of the areas in which tourism is developed, and pay more attention to retain the original ethnic flavor of tourism resources. The cultural assimilation phenomena caused

by over-commercialization can make cultural tourism lose its charm and value.

5. 2. 2 Improve Service Quality

Service quality is vital to tourism. It is very important to ensure visitors' satisfaction through a coordinated effort to provide high quality services, which expresses great respect for the tourists. According to the survey, Taiwan tourists to Shandong are particularly sensitive to the quality of services, including those of the guides, accommodations, restaurants, and other facilities and processes. There is no doubt that "high price but bad service" has a negative effect on the tourists' impression of the destination and can account for declines in visitors' satisfaction and revisit rates. Besides that, it is also important to pay more attention to food hygiene and to highlight the unique features of Shandong cuisine.

5. 2. 3 Develop Tour Routes and Update Tourism Products

Giving the situation of tourism demand and its changing trends in the future, it is not sufficient to just provide a kind of good product. The product or the destination has to be in the consumer's relevant set, and be judged a very good choice within this set. Thus it is very important to develop a variety of tourist routes and tourism products to meet tourist demands in the continually changing tourism market. And it is also extremely necessary to have high quality and efficient work efficiency for customers.

According to the survey, a vast majority of Taiwan tourists are very concerned about tourist routes. As we all know, tourists needs differ according to different ages, occupations, tourist time, and so on. Since Taiwan tourists like to travel to Shandong with their family members, operators should develop some family packages for them, taking into consideration children's needs and security. In addition, the survey showed that the majority of Taiwanese tourists traveling to the mainland are young and middle-aged adults. Considering this, the development and design of the tourist products should be novel and flexible. Meanwhile, the operators should develop tourist products and routes in inland areas and speed up product updates to make the products dynamic rather than static sightseeing trips. Participatory tourism should be developed to meet these tourists' demands, which will lead them to fully integrate local culture and understand the value of folk customs.

Furthermore, because there is no language barrier, many Taiwan tourists are more inclined to take self-guided tours, so self-guided tours lines aimed at those tourists should be developed. Compared to the traditional travel package, self-guided tours are more personalized and diverse. More attraction areas should be taken into consideration to provide diverse choices for tourists, rather than confining the tours to only a few popular

tourist cities. Moreover, it is noteworthy that although only a few Taiwan tourists are interested in business travel, the operators of Shandong tourism should take measures to meet their demands, which will not only help to promote Shandong tourism, but also provide an impetus for Shandong economic development.

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Notes

- 1) The Qilu Culture is a mainstream of China's outstanding traditional culture. Based on "people," Qilu Culture regards "benevolence" as a core, "gentility" as the form and "harmony between human and nature" as the goal. These thoughts have influenced China for more than 2,000 years. In a favorable position, Shandong gains special advantages to be influenced by the culture's quintessence deeply and also contributes to the evolution of the culture significantly.
- 2) Confucianism is a Chinese ethical and philosophical system developed from the teachings of the Chinese philosopher Confucius. It focuses on human morality and wrong action. It is a complex system of moral, social, political, philosophical, and quasi-religious thought that has had tremendous influence on the culture and history of East Asia. It might be considered a state religion of some East Asian countries, because of governmental promotion of Confucian values.
- 3) The Bohai Bay Economic Rim includes areas in Hebei, Liaoning and Shandong which surround the Bohai Sea.
- 4) Water Margin is well-known as one of the four greatest Chinese novels in history. It tells stories of a group of heroes, who stand for different classes of people daring to struggle against the evil during the mid Song Dynasty.
- 5) The Yangtze River Delta or YRD generally comprises the triangular-shaped territory of Wu-speaking Shanghai, southern Jiangsu Province and northern Zhejiang Province of China.
- 6) Kunshan, a county-level city under the Suzhou prefecture-level city of Jiangsu Province, just outside Shanghai, has been successfully transformed from a planned and agricultural economy to a globalized and industrialized city in the past three decades. Kunshan is one of the most Taiwanese invested localities in mainland China. And there are many Taiwanese investing in the service sectors, including banking, hospitals, schools, restaurants and so on, creating a Taiwanese home atmosphere that thereby attracted more Taiwanese investment. Therefore Kunshan is known as "Little Taiwan" in mainland China.
- 7) Agritainment is farm-based tourism, includes family style activities, such as corn mazes, haunted hay rides, pick-your-own pumpkins, etc. This growing phenomenon gives city slickers a taste of rural life while helping farmers diversify their revenue stream.

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