

Research on the High-quality Development Path of Tourism in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area under the Background of Cultural and Tourism Integration: The Mediating Effect of Tourist Satisfaction

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Abstract. This paper aims to study how the tourism industry in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area can achieve high-quality development under the background of cultural and tourism integration. As one of the regions with the highest degree of openness and the strongest economic vitality in China, the development of the cultural tourism industry in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area has always been favored by national policies and markets. Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macao have a long history and culture, intensive tourism resources, superior geographical location, and excellent infrastructure. However, they still need help with problems such as insufficient integration of cultural and tourism industries, serious homogenization of tourism products, and backward digital talent training models. Therefore, this paper analyzes the correlation between tourism experience, tourist satisfaction, and recommendation intention, and the mediating effect of tourist satisfaction through empirical research, and concludes that the quality of tourism experience can significantly affect tourists' post-trip recommendation intention and can also indirectly affect recommendation intention through tourist satisfaction. Finally, this paper proposes establishing a cultural community, strengthening collaborative exchanges among the three places, breaking the homogenization of tourism products, innovating the tourism digital talent training model, and paying attention to the changes in tourists' needs. By improving the quality of the tourism experience and enhancing tourist satisfaction, we will achieve high-quality and healthy tourism development in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

Keywords: Cultural and tourism integration; tourist satisfaction; high-quality development.

1. Introduction

In 2020, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Office of the Leading Group for the Development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and the People's Government of Guangdong Province jointly issued the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Culture and Tourism Development Plan, proposing to use culture as a bridge to further deepen the coordinated development of culture and tourism within the Greater Bay Area through the construction of a humanistic bay area and a leisure bay area. As early as 1977, McIntosh & Gebert [1] (1985) first proposed the concept of tourism culture in their book; most beginners regard culture as a subsidiary of tourism; with the deepening of research, scholars began to realize that culture is the soul of tourism, tourism is the carrier of culture, and there are ancient sayings "the mountain is no longer high, there are fairies and spirits." The integration of culture and tourism is the only way to the future high-quality development of the tourism industry.

With the advent of the experience economy era, people are no longer satisfied with simple sightseeing tours and have begun to pursue more novel and unforgettable travel experiences. Therefore, how to meet the changing tourism needs of tourists, creating a unique tourism destination image based on the irreproducible characteristics of culture, and impressing tourists are vital for the tourism development. Based on this, this study will start from the experience of tourists, analyze the mediating effect of tourist satisfaction through investigation and research, and provide

some targeted suggestions for the high-quality development of the cultural and tourism integration industry in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area.

2. Literature Review

At the end of the 90s of the 19th century, Xie Yanjun first mentioned the proposition of tourism experience in his book "Basic Tourism." Since then, Chinese scholars have begun to study the tourism experience. Xie Yanjun[2, 3] pointed out that tourism is the process of people from the place of daily life and work to a new place, that is, an unaccustomed environment, to find new experiences and new feelings. That is, tourism itself is an experience. Su Qin[4] found that the degree of satisfaction obtained by tourists in the tourism process results from the interaction between infrastructure, tourism landscape, service quality, and price of tourism products presented by tourist destinations. By 2014, domestic scholar Huang Xiang[5] found that the tourism experience is the pleasant mood and psychological pleasure that tourists feel during play, and the better the experience they feel, the higher the level of satisfaction. In fact, satisfaction and dissatisfaction are a kind of psychological activity of people, and many factors, in reality, will affect the satisfaction of tourists, such as the subject-guest relationship of tourist destinations, service quality, and the difference between the public image and the actual image. Therefore, this study believes that what tourist destinations need to consider is how to minimize the psychological gap between tourists before and after visiting, continuously meet the travel needs, and improve their play experience from the perspective of tourists' demand preferences to have a positive impact on tourists' post-tour behavior intentions.

Behavioral intent refers to the likelihood that people intend to perform a particular behavior. Including recommendation intention, revisit intention, Etc[6]. Tourists' behavioral intentions not only reflect tourists' attitudes toward tourist destinations but also reflect a certain extent, the level of demand for that destination in the coming period[7]. According to the chronological order, the tourists' behavioral intentions can be divided into pre-travel and post-tour intentions, pre-tour intentions refer to tourists' behavioral tendencies before traveling, and post-tour intentions refer to tourists' behavioral tendencies after travel. Based on the research background of this paper, this study takes tourists' post-tour behavior intention after completing a specific tourism activity as a measurement index, that is, recommendation intention.

3. Research hypotheses and model

When tourists have pleasant, unprecedented, and novel psychological feelings during travel, they will feel more satisfied (this study intends to comprehensively consider the travel experience from two aspects: a unique experience and an emotional experience). Tourist satisfaction refers to a tourist's inner comparison before and after visiting and the overall evaluation of tourism activities. When tourists are satisfied, it can directly affect their willingness to revisit and recommend [8]. Scholars Zhang Xueting and Li Yongquan [9] found through empirical analysis that the mediating effect of tourist satisfaction is manifested in the fact that the tourism experience affects tourist satisfaction and then affects tourists' post-tour behavior decisions. In addition, from the perspective of scenic spots, Zhang Shangzheng [10] believes that the quality of the tourist experience is not only related to the infrastructure and service quality of scenic spots but also depends on the innovation of scenic tourism products and the richness of activities. Based on the above analysis, this paper proposes a hypothesis: unique experience significantly positively affects traveler satisfaction (H1a); Emotional experience significantly positively affects traveler satisfaction (H1b); Unique experiences significantly positively influence recommendation intent (H2a); Emotional experience significantly positively influences recommendation intention (H2B); Traveler satisfaction significantly positively affects recommendation intention (H3); Unique experiences

significantly affect recommendation intention through traveler satisfaction (H4a): Emotional experiences significantly affect recommendation intention H4b through traveler satisfaction.

The research model is shown in Figure 1:

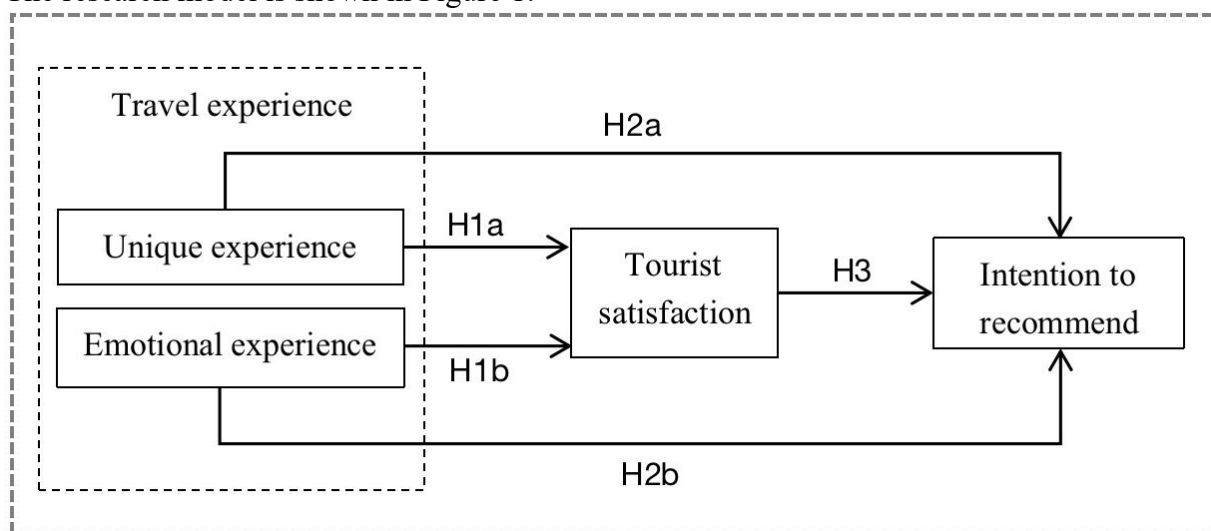


Fig. 1 Research model

4. Questionnaire design and data collection

4.1 Questionnaire design

4.1.1 Sub heading

The questionnaire was divided into four parts: (1) the measurement of tourists' travel experience dimension; (2) Tourist satisfaction measurement; (3) The measurement of tourists' intention to recommend; (4) Socio-demographic characteristics. The mature scales available to domestic and foreign scholars were used for each measurement item. Among them, tourism experience includes two dimensions, namely unique experience and emotional dimension, both adapted from the scale of Ali [11] and others; The satisfaction measure draws on scales from Mehmetoglu [12] et al.; The recommendation intention is measured using the scales of scholars Hawsani [13] et al. The 18-question study questionnaire took the form of a Likert five-level scale, with 1 to 5 indicating "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree."

In this study, the Cronbach α reliability coefficients of travel experience, tourist satisfaction, and recommendation intention scales were 0.858, 0.755, and 0.802, respectively, all greater than 0.7.

4.2 Data collection

From August 1 to August 20, 2022, this study adopted a combination of online and offline forms and distributed questionnaires on multiple platforms such as WeChat groups, Xiaohongshu, and Douban groups. A total of 313 questionnaires were distributed, excluding tourists who had not traveled to Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macao, 46 invalid questionnaires with an answer time of less than the 30s, and finally obtained 267 valid questionnaires, with a questionnaire effective rate of 85.3%.

In the survey sample, the proportion of women (67.4%) was much higher than that of men (32.6%), and the respondents were mainly concentrated in the young group aged 18-25, accounting for 62.9%. The proportion of children under 17 and 46 years old and above was relatively small. Education level, the proportion of undergraduate students is 50.9%, more than half; in occupations, the proportion of students was the highest, at 41.2%, indicating that most of the tourists participating in this questionnaire survey were college students with higher education and relatively sufficient time so that they could answer the questionnaire questions carefully and accurately. The

monthly income level is mainly concentrated in a month below 5,000, which is also in line with the situation that most respondents are students.

4.3 Data processing

In this study, SPSS26.0 was used for descriptive statistics, differences, correlations, Etc., and Mplus 8.3 was used for mediation effect testing.

5. Empirical result analysis

5.1 Descriptive statistics

For unique experiences, the average score of tourists in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area was 3.8105, which was between general and comparative consent, but they were more inclined to agree more; for unique experiences, the average score was 3.7912, between general and comparative consent, and they were more willing to agree comparatively; for the current situation of tourist satisfaction and recommendation intention, the average score was about 4.02, and they were more inclined to more agree, indicating that tourists' travel satisfaction and recommendation intention in Guangdong, Hong Kong, and Macao were relatively strong.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics

		N	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Travel experience	Unique experience	267	1.25	5.00	3.7912	0.67
	Emotional experience	267	1.00	5.00	3.8105	0.71
Tourist satisfaction		267	1.00	5.00	4.0225	0.62
Intention to recommend		267	1.00	5.00	4.0262	0.65
Overall travel experience		267	1.67	5.00	3.8019	0.71

5.2 Gender Difference Analysis

In this section, tourism experience is used as the independent variable, the recommended intention is the dependent variable, and an independent sample T-test is used to investigate whether each variable is affected by gender differences. The statistical results (Table 2) show significant differences in the unique experience dimension of the independent variable tourism experience among tourists of different genders. The P value of the independent sample T-test is 0.013, which is less than 0.05, and the emotional experience felt by women during travel is significantly higher than that of men.

Table 2. Gender difference analysis

Fator		Male (N=87)	Female (N=180)	t	p
Travel experience	Unique experience	3.62±0.85	3.87±0.54	-2.533	0.013
	Emotional experience	3.77±0.79	3.83±0.67	-0.643	0.521
Tourist satisfaction		3.92±0.73	4.07±0.61	-1.658	0.1
Intention to recommend		3.97±0.75	4.05±0.69	-1.684	0.094
Travel experience		3.7±0.74	3.85±0.55	-0.852	0.395

5.3 Correlation analysis

Pearson Correlation Analysis was used to examine the correlation between travel experience, traveler satisfaction, and recommendation intention, and the results are as follows (Table 3):

Table 3. Correlations analysis among variables

	Emotional experience	Unique experience	Travel experience	Tourist satisfaction	Intention to recommend
Emotional experience	1				
Unique experience	.593**	1			
Travel experience	.923**	.858**	1		
Tourist satisfaction	.735**	.598**	.756**	1	
Intention to recommend	.697**	.535**	.701**	.736**	1
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).					

The above table results show that the two dimensions of tourism experience have a significant positive correlation with tourist satisfaction and recommendation intention, respectively, with the correlation coefficient all less than 0 and the P value less than 0.01, which is the significance of the correlation coefficient.

5.4 Analysis of the influencing factors of tourism experience on recommendation intention

Based on the correlation analysis in the previous step, it is concluded that there is a significant correlation between travel experience, tourist satisfaction, and recommendation intention. Next, the influence of travel experience on recommendation intention is further investigated by multiple linear regression, and the calculation results are as follows (Table 4):

Table 4. Analysis of influencing factors

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	VIF
		B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)		1.059	0.191		5.543	<.001	
Travel experience	Unique experience	0.198	0.057	0.187	3.484	<.001	1.542
	Emotional experience	0.582	0.053	0.587	10.955	<.001	1.542
R square				0.505			
F				136.84			
Sig.				<0.001			
Dependent variable: Intention to recommend							

The results of the above table show that the fitting degree of the model in this study is good, and the R square of the fitting degree is 0.505. This means that the influence of the independent variable travel experience on the recommendation intention of the dependent variable reached 50.5%. Furthermore, the regression equation was significant (F=136.84, P<0.05), meaning that at least one of the independent variables participating in this study significantly affected the dependent variable recommendation intention. Finally, through the t-test of the regression coefficient, it is concluded that the two dimensions of travel experience can significantly affect the recommendation intention. Furthermore, the impact coefficient of a unique experience on recommendation intention is 0.198>0, which means that the impact of a unique experience on recommendation intention is significantly positive, and the quantitative relationship between them is: the unique experience increases by 1

point, the recommendation intention will increase by 0.198 points; in the same way, the influence coefficient of emotional experience on recommendation intention is $0.582 > 0$, which means that for every 1 point increase in emotional experience, the recommendation intention will increase by 0.582 points. Therefore, it is assumed that H1a and H1b are true.

5.5 Analysis of the mediating effect of tourist satisfaction

Firstly, the structural equation model was constructed with unique experience and emotional experience as independent variables, recommended intention as the dependent variable, and tourist satisfaction as the mediating variable, and the results showed that the model fit was good ($\chi^2/df=2.02$, CFI=0.95, TLI=0.929, RMSEA=0.062, SRMR=0.049). Then to test whether the mediating effect of tourist satisfaction is significant, a 95% confidence interval was generated by 2000 random sampling of the original data by the Bootstrap method in Mplus 8.3. If the indirect 95% confidence interval did not include 0, it indicated a mediating effect between the independent variable travel experience and the dependent variable recommendation intention. If the direct 95% confidence interval also includes 0, it indicates that tourist satisfaction has a full mediating effect, and vice versa, it has a partial mediation effect. The results of the analysis are as follows (Table 5).

Table 5. The Bootstrap test of the mediating effect of tourist satisfaction

Path	Bootstrap SE	Estimate	95% Bootstrap	
			Lower 2.5%	Upper 2.5%
Unique experience→Intention to recommend	0.078	0.1599	0.049	0.2627
Unique experience→Tourist satisfaction→Intention to recommend	0.096	0.4103	0.2971	0.5422
Emotional experience→Intention to recommend	0.357	0.338	-0.459	0.925
Emotional experience→Tourist satisfaction→Intention to recommend	0.325	0.3538	-1.683	-0.329

Based on the above analysis results, tourist satisfaction partially mediates between unique experience and recommendation intention. It plays a complete mediating role between emotional experience and recommendation intention.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

Under the background of cultural and tourism integration, based on the needs of tourists in the era of the experience economy, this paper constructs a research model of tourist satisfaction as the mediator and uses the Bootstrap test method to explore the mediating effect of tourist satisfaction in the influence of tourism experience on recommendation intention, and quantifies the direct and indirect impacts on the high-quality development of tourism in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area. The study found that female travelers had a significantly higher sense of unique experience than men for the travel experience. The experience and experience in the process of tourism can affect the satisfaction and recommendation intention of tourists. Tourist satisfaction plays a significant intermediary role in the tourism experience, and post-tour recommendation intention, so paying attention to tourists' travel experience and improving their satisfaction is very important for the high-quality development of the tourism industry.

Based on the research conclusions and the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area Cultural and Tourism Development Plan, this study puts forward the following suggestions: First, establish a cultural community with Lingnan culture as a link, continue to tap the cultural tourism resources of the three places, and at the same time rely on the geographical advantages of the coast to build a cultural brand IP in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, build an

intelligent cultural tourism platform in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and strengthen the synergy between the three places. Secondly, by highlighting Lingnan characteristics such as Cantonese opera, Cantonese embroidery, and Cantonese cuisine, the attractiveness of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area will be enhanced, and China's role as a window to the outside world will be brought into play to drive the development of neighboring provinces. The second is to take the national policy as the base point, break the homogenization of cultural tourism products, carry out industrial innovation, and bring high-quality tourism experience to tourists by building tourism product exhibition areas, historical industrial heritage sightseeing areas, distinct production technology experience areas, Etc. The third is to innovate the talent introduction and training mode of the tourism industry in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, keep up with the pace of development in the digital era, strengthen the depth and breadth of tourism talent training, and continuously improve the professionalism and innovation of tourism services.

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