

Exploring Revisit Intentions of Senior Tourists in Rural Tourism

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Abstract: The senior population has steadily grown in importance within the tourism industry as the world's population ages. Rural tourism has recently garnered significant attention as a new form of travel; however, research on senior travelers is still limited. This study aimed to investigate senior tourists' intentions to return to rural tourism sites in Zhejiang Province, China. The findings indicated that while travel destination attractiveness and tourist-host interaction had no discernible effects on revisit intention, perceived value had a substantial impact.

Keywords: senior tourists, rural tourism, perceived value, travel destination attractiveness, tourist-host interaction

Introduction

Rural tourism is now seen as a new avenue for the growth of rural industries and a key component of the development of rural regions^[1]. Rural tourism has been described as “the overall experience of the countryside, offering an extensive variety of recreational opportunities and sights in agricultural as well as non-urban locations”. Four categories of rural tourism are distinguished based on geographic conditions: suburban regions, picturesque peripheries, distinctive communities, and unique agricultural bases^[2].

Rural tourism in China began to take off at the end of the 1990s, known as “Nong jia le” (Happy Farmer Home). Over the past 20 years, rural tourism has grown rapidly and become a significant aspect of tourism in China.

Due to the challenges posed by an aging population, senior travelers are becoming increasingly important within the travel industry^[3-4]. According to UNDESA 2019, the number of elderly people worldwide will exceed 1.5 billion by 2050, increasing from 11% to 16% of the global population^[5]. Senior travel holds significant potential not only as a market for business expansion but also as a driver of social participation and advancement^[6].

Age 60 is considered elderly in China, in contrast to the age of 65 used in Western Nations with advanced economies. This distinction is due to both the national government's definition and traditional cultural perspectives^[7-8]. Compared to past generations, seniors today have higher incomes, more leisure time, and a greater motivation to travel. Many people are now more physically fit, maintained and active lifestyle, take longer vacations more frequently, and are open to trying new travel experiences^[9].

1. Literature review and proposed hypothesis

1.1 Travel destination attractiveness

The attractiveness of a travel destination is determined by the emotions, convictions, and perspectives a person have about the destination's capacity to fulfill their unique vacation requirements^[10]. The appeal of tourist destinations stems from unique physical, natural, and cultural assets that are exceptional, distinctive, and irreplaceable^[11]. Tourists find

pleasure in rural tourism experiences for various reasons such as appreciating the proximity to nature for spiritual experiences and relaxation^[12]. Rural tourism always offers visitors the opportunity to interact with locals, experience local customs, and enjoy regional food and drink. The attractiveness of tourism significantly influences the intention to return^[13].

H1: Travel Destination Attractiveness has significant impact on Revisit Intention

1.2 Tourist-host interaction

In tourism studies, the term “host-guest relations” refers to the examination of interactions between residents and tourists within a particular location^[14]. Welcoming and supportive interactions foster trust and enhance the overall experience^[15]. Positive relationships offer friendliness and cultural integrity, fostering a wish to come back. These interactions directly impact perceptions of the destination^[16]. The study’s findings emphasize the significance of both host-guest relationships and visitor satisfaction in boosting consumer desire to repurchase^[17].

H2: Tourist-Host Interaction has significant impact on Revisit Intention

1.3 Perceived value

“The consumer’s perception of the worth of what they gain and what they sacrifice” defines perceived value^[18]. Customers’ perceptions of value are based on their perceptions of the fees and prices relative to the level of the output^[19]. Put another way, the fact that rural tourism is often less expensive than visiting big cities doesn’t mean travelers will find it less worthwhile. According to previous study, the perceived value of the event predicts attendees’ preference to return^[20]. Meanwhile, the intention to return is influenced by perceived value^[21].

H3: Perceived Value has significant impact on Revisit Intention

1.4 Revisit intention

Behavioral intention is the concept from which revisit intention originates. The term “revisit intention” specially describes a person’s desire to return to the same setting and to suggest it to others^[22]. Visitors’ intentions to return to a particular location may be influenced by the performance of the place of interest itself, including marketing initiatives and the dissemination of information about new attractions^[23]. Repeat tourists typically expend more resources and extend their visits than first-time visitors^[24]. In addition to being a significant aspect of visitor behavior, revisit intention, a key variable that measures a visitor’s desire to return- is also an important indicator of a destination’s potential for positive growth^[25].

2. Research methodology

To obtain data for the research study, WJX created a structured questionnaire that was used to collect the data. Of the 100 senior tourists from Zhejiang provinces, China, all of whom have rural tourism experience, 98 had their answers verified as complete (seen as table 1).

Table 1 The demographic profile

Demographic Measures	Category	Frequency	%
Age	60 - 65	30	30.61
	65 - 70	58	59.18
	> 70	10	10.2
Gender	Male	35	35.71
	Female	63	64.29

Source: Created by the Author

3. Research results

After assessing the validity the reliability of the data gathered from the questionnaire, multiple regression analysis was performed used by Jamovi software to determine the validity of the hypothesis (seen as table 2).

Table 2 Cronbach's alpha and The MLR Results on Revisit Intention(n=98)

Variables	Cronbach's alpha	t-value	p-value	Stand. Estimate (β)	R ²
Travel Destination Attractiveness	0.904	0.06	0.952	0.0066	0.739
Tourist-Host Interaction	0.893	1.48	0.143	0.1486	
Perceived Value	0.908	7.51	<.001	0.7325	

Source: Created by the Author

According to Table 3.2, the perceived value had a significant, favorable, and beneficial influence on revisit intention ($\beta=0.7325$, $p<0.01$), supporting hypothesis *H3*. *H1* and *H2*, however, received no assistance.

4. Discussions and conclusion

This study examined senior travelers' intentions to return to rural tourism sites. The findings demonstrate the importance of perceived value in influencing their intention to return. This implies that senior travelers are more inclined to consider revisiting these locations if they perceive their rural tourism experiences as highly valuable. Tourism marketers and destination managers need to focus on improving the perceived value of senior tourists, perhaps by providing more specialized and value-added services that are tailored to their specific requirements and tastes. Through achieving this, they can build stronger customer loyalty and promote repeat business from this expanding market segment.

Conflicts of interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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