

Children Tourism Investigation and Analysis in Zhejiang Province, China

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Asia Pacific Journal of Multidisciplinary Research

Vol. 6 No. 3, 74-81

August 2018

P-ISSN 2350-7756

E-ISSN 2350-8442

www.apjmr.com

CHED Recognized Journal

ASEAN Citation Index

Date Received: March 11, 2018; Date Revised: July 20, 2018

Abstract – *This study aimed to determine the main characteristics of the tourism demands of children and their families in Zhejiang Province; to determine the various influences of children on their family's tourism decision-making; and try to predict the tourism consumption behavior of children and their families. The author chooses 350 families of children aged 1-14 years old in Zhejiang Province to investigate the behavioral characteristics of children and their families, the demand situation and the related factors that influence family travel decision-making. The children are mainly divided into three age groups of 1-6 years old, 7-9 years old and 10-14 years old. Then the tourist status of children and their families in different age groups is classified and analyzed. The results show that Zhejiang children have an important direct impact on family travel decision-making. Children in different age groups and their families have obvious differences in terms of tourism demand, tourism motivation, travel mode, travel time, travel duration and cost, and tourism focus and so on.*

Keywords – Children tourism; Preferences; Attitude; Decision-making

INTRODUCTION

Zhejiang's economy is highly developed and the quality of education is high. Preliminary surveys show that Zhejiang parents like "tourism" as the way of children's education and experience. However, among the 355 tourist attractions that have been opened in Zhejiang, the proportion of scenic spots suitable for children is less than 5%. Most tourist attractions, travel agencies, and other travel service companies have not paid enough attention to the children's tourism market. The tourism products developed for children and their families are scarce. Therefore, the existing children's tourism market cannot satisfy the general demands of children and their families. In order to promote the development of children's tourism in Zhejiang, this study starts from the demand side and aims to obtain accurate information on the tourism demands of children and their families through in-depth investigation. In this way, guide the effective supply of the children's tourism market, and further balance the supply and demand relationship of children's tourism in Zhejiang.

According to the medical profession and modern educational psychology research, people in preschool and elementary school are generally called children. They are divided from the age group, mostly referring to children aged 0-14 years old [1]. Nowadays, tourism has become a way of life for people, people are eager to return to nature in tourism. Tourism is becoming an

increasingly acceptable way for parents to arrange leisure and education for their children. The whole society's tourism concept is affecting the children's travel demands. Zhejiang province is an economically developed province in China. Children's travel demands are very strong and the travel frequency is very high. Children travel often have "one towing two" mode, or even "one towing four" and "one towing six" mode, that is, children traveling at the same time driven father and mother, grandparents (on father's side), grandparents (on mother's side) traveling. Chinese survey firms have conducted sample surveys in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Chengdu and Xi'an five cities. The survey results show that urban residents will take out an average of 18 percent to 30 percent of family income to raise their children. In Zhejiang province, there are more single-child families, and a large proportion of household consumption expenditure is spent on children. Therefore, if children's tourism market is viewed as a big family market, the potential of the children's tourism consumer market in Zhejiang is invaluable.

Throughout the relevant research at home and abroad, the academic community has begun to study the tourism behavior of a particular group (such as college students, the elderly, the disabled, etc.), However, there is very little research on the travel behavior of this children special group. As early as the early 1980s, the

author Graburn [2] had mentioned the lack of research on children's tourism, and Small [3] believed that this situation has hardly changed much. The authors Timothy and Poria [4] analyzed the reasons for the lack of children's tourism research from the perspectives of theory, method and ethics. Cullingford [5] believed that for most children, travel meant vacation, and the personal experience of their trip was a family vacation on the beach and pool. This is the tourism perception of early foreign children [6]. Xiao Wei and Qin Kun's study on children's tourism is more in-depth and comprehensive [7], they defined the connotation of children's tourism products, and more specifically analyzed the prominent problems in the development of children's tourism products in China., although their development strategy is also macroscopic, they can put forward some very innovative strategies for the subject of children. The authors Feng Xiaohong and Li Mimi summarized the large amount of literature on children's tourism research and pointed out: "At present, the research on children's tourism in domestic and foreign literature mainly focuses on 3 aspects: the impact of children on family tourism, children's tourism experience, and the impact and role of tourism on children." [6]. Overall, at present, scholars pay little attention to the research of children's tourism market, and their research perspectives are quite general.

So far, there is no specific definition of children's tourism, because defining children's tourism is indeed a very complicated job. Carr [8] believed that children's tourism should be defined by the children themselves. From the perspective of participating members of children's tourism, children's tourism could be divided into two categories: "child-only tourism" and "family tourism" [8]. "child-only tourism" mainly includes staying overnight at other children's homes, such as boarding [8] and summer camps, etc; "family tourism" is really a very complex and research-oriented topic of children's tourism. According to the different forms and arrangements of children and their families, there are currently 4 classification methods and 8 types of children's tourism patterns [6].

OBJECTIVES

The main purpose of this paper is to fill the gaps in the field of Chinese children's tourism research, at the same time also aim to develop children's tourism market this virgin land, to meet the growing demands of children tourism, and to make the children's tourism market development achieving comprehensive benefits.

Investigate and analyze the current demands of children and their families in tourism. By summarizing and analyzing the survey data, the precious statistics are received. The paper summarizes the children and their families' tourism consumption characteristics, parents' attitudes towards children's tourism, children's influence on family tourism decision-making in Zhejiang province.

METHODS

The descriptive type of research is utilized to determine the Main characteristics of tourism consumption demands of children and their families in Zhejiang Province. The research involves collecting quantitative information by using the self-constructed questionnaire. This paper uses the questionnaire survey to investigate children aged 1-14 in Zhejiang Province and their parents and obtain first-hand information about the consumption status of children and their families in Zhejiang Province. To this end, the author spent about 5 months' time, in-depth to children and parents to carry out the investigation on the demanding status of children's tourism in Zhejiang. The survey questions include not only the basic information of children and their parents, but also the travel willingness, the number of trips, the travel frequency, the travel mode, the tourist duration and timing, the tourist expenses, tourist motivation, tourist decision making and the tourist purpose. In the initial stage of information collection, sampling was conducted according to factors such as geography, level of economic development and development status of tourism industry, and questionnaires were sent to qualified children and their families in all parts of Zhejiang province. The questionnaire survey of this research was conducted using the very famous survey website in China - "Questionnaire Star". The author designed the questionnaire online and then distributed the designed questionnaire online to the target population. A total of 350 questionnaires were distributed online through Questionnaire Star website and 340 valid questionnaires were recovered. The questionnaire recovery rate was 97.14 percent. The paper divides three children's age groups: 1-6 years old, 7-9 years old and 10 -14 years old. Through summarizing and statistical analysis of survey data, this paper analyzes the demand characteristics of children's travel market in different age groups and their impact on family travel decision-making. The statistics show that the proportion of children aged 1-6 years is 45.59 percent, that of children aged 7-9 years is 29.41

percent, and that of children aged 10-14 years is 25 percent.

The following shows the range and scale used to interpret the results:

Range	Scale (percent)	Verbal Interpretation Children's Tourism Preference
4	≥60%	Most preferred
3	60% > & ≥30%	Generally preferred
2	30% > & ≥10%	Less preferred
1	<10%	Not preferred

The data gathered from all the research questions was commissioned to the Questionnaire Star for statistics and processing. The Questionnaire Star website provides data statistics and results analysis services to the authors free of charge. However, statistical analysis of SPSS software data is a paid service.

The authors who wish to publish a questionnaire on the Questionnaire Star website must register and be authenticated. In this study, all questions in this questionnaire are designed by the author himself and are publicly available to all users of the Internet through the Questionnaire Star website. So, the design, release, completion and recycling of the questionnaire are all open and transparent.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of the basic situation of children tourism in Zhejiang province

Analysis of Children's tourism willingness. Zhejiang children's tourism market overall strong desire to travel. 58.82 percent of the surveyed children said that there is a willingness to travel in the near future, and the older the children, the stronger the willingness to travel.

Analysis of Children's tourism ratio. Zhejiang children's tourism market has a higher travel rate. Of the children surveyed, they made it clear that 82.35 percent of them traveled in the past year, while only 17.65 percent did not travel, not only the high travel rate, but also the high travel frequency. In the past year, the surveyed children who traveled more than two times accounted for 58.82 percent, did not ever traveled only accounted for 8.82 percent. So, it can be proved that Zhejiang children's tourism demand market is very active.

Analysis of children and their families' tourism consumption. Children and their families in Zhejiang

have a high level of tourism consumption. From the duration of the trip, the average length of travel that children with their parents is mostly 2 days, it is noteworthy that the proportion of children traveling longer than 3 days is also higher, reaching 19.12 percent. In addition, from the point of tourism consumption, the result is basically consistent with the previous survey and analysis, the children's tourism expenses for each time is relatively high in Zhejiang province.

Analysis of children and their families' tourism preferences. According to the survey data, in the view of children and their parents, the children's amusement parks and zoo are the most interesting attractions, while the Red tourist destinations and Industrial tourist destinations are the least interesting. This result shows that children and their parents in Zhejiang have a great interest in children's amusement parks and zoos and also have high interest in water features, botanical gardens and cultural theme parks. However, there is a lack of interest in two types of attractions: Red tourism and Industrial tourism. The main reason is that children's instinct is fond of interesting, ornamental, participatory attractions and items. The current Red tourism destinations and Industrial tourist destinations in Zhejiang relatively lack of interestingness, ornamental and participatory, making it difficult to attract the attention of children and their parents.

Zhejiang children are interested in a variety of tourism activities. Children's favorite travel content is watching animal shows. Although stimulating, breathtaking and challenging projects are appealing, children and parents have less preference to these items for safety reasons. Zhejiang's parents believe that the significance of children's tourism is multifaceted. But the most important thing is to increase the children's knowledge and broaden their horizons, and secondly, to contact nature and keep fit. Table 1 analyzes the tourism preferences of children and their parents based on the types of tourist attractions, the content of tourist activities, the role and significance of tourism, and classifies the preferences into three categories according to the preference ratio: the most preferences (the preference ratio is greater than or equal to 60 percent), general preferences (the preference ratio more than 30 percent, less than 60 percent), less preferences (preference ratio greater than or equal to 10 percent, less than 30 percent).

Table 1: Zhejiang Children's Tourism Preference Analysis

	Preference items in children's tourism	Preference ratio (percent)	Preference types
The preference for type of tourist attractions	Children's amusement park	79.4	Most preferred
	Zoo (including animal themed attractions)	72.1	Most preferred
	Waterscape tourist destination	36.8	Generally preferred
	Botanical Garden (including plant themed attractions)	30.9	Generally preferred
	Cultural exhibition venues and various cultural theme parks (including science and technology museums, museums, wax museum and so on)	30.9	Generally preferred
	Food tourism destinations	13.2	Less preferred
	Red tourism destinations	1.5	
	Industrial tourism destinations	0	
	Others	8.8	
The preference for content of tourist activities	Watch animal show	69.1	Most preferred
	Buy toys	47.1	Generally preferred
	Tasting food	33.8	Generally preferred
	Participate in interactive activities	33.8	Generally preferred
	Take all kinds of transport	26.5	Less preferred
	Enjoy the beautiful natural scenery	25.0	Less preferred
	Appreciate the flower plants	20.6	Less preferred
	Buy (or read) books	16.2	Less preferred
	Participate in exciting, thrilling and challenging events	16.2	Less preferred
	Enjoy the architecture, arts and crafts, folk customs show which having the local cultural characteristics	16.2	Less preferred
	Staying at Hotels	13.2	Less preferred
	Watch television	5.9	
	Others	8.8	
The preference for tourist meaning and functions	Increase knowledge and broaden horizons	91.2	The most preference
	Contact with nature, keep fit	64.7	The most preference
	Feel the warmth of the family, enhance family feelings	60.3	The most preference
	Develop children's good moral sentiments in order to achieve the goal of education and guidance	52.9	General preference
	Have fun and enjoy life	51.5	General preference
	Make more friends and cultivate the character of their cheerful group	42.7	General preference

Analysis of parents' attitude towards children tourism in Zhejiang province

The survey of parents' attitudes toward the necessity of children's tourism revealed that the proportion that parents think children's tourism extremely necessary is as high as 50 percent, necessary ratio is 30.88 percent, unnecessary ratio is 16.18 percent, and considered meaningless ratio only is 2.94 percent. This survey statistics shows that parents in Zhejiang province attach great importance to children's tourism activities, they have a high degree of recognition to children's tourism. The reason why Zhejiang parents value and encourage children to travel so much is that parents generally believe that children's tourism plays an important role in children's growth, the improvement and promotion of the relationship between children and parents, and the development of children's healthy lifestyles and moral values.

Zhejiang parents believe that the greatest significance of children's tourism is to increase knowledge and broaden their horizons, calling them "knowledge-seeking" needs, the proportion of this need is as high as 91.18 percent. Contact with nature and physical health ranked the second highest significance, calling them "healthy" needs, the proportion of this need is relatively high, 64.71 percent. The third significance is to feel the warmth of the family and enhance the family feeling, calling them "emotional" needs, the proportion of this need is 60.29 percent. The fourth significance is to cultivate children's good moral sentiment in order to achieve the purpose of education and guidance, calling them "moral education" needs, the proportion of this need is 52.94 percent. The fifth significance is to make children happy to enjoy their life, calling them "enjoyment" needs, the proportion of this need is 51.47 percent. Lastly, let their children make more friends and cultivate the personality of optimistic

and love to communicate with people, calling it a "mass group" needs, the proportion of this need is 42.65 percent.

The above survey statistics show that Zhejiang parents believe that the significance of children's tourism is multi-faceted. Parents place more expectations on children's tourism and expect children to have all-around enjoyment and education in travel. Thus, it can be seen that the landscape and attractions which the form, content and significance are all very simple will not be able to meet the demands of children's tourism market in Zhejiang province.

Analysis of the children's impact on family travel decision-making in Zhejiang province

Nuclear family tourism decision-making model in Zhejiang

Lu Hengqin, SuQin and Yao Zhiguo [9] put forward that the foreign scholars' research on family tourism decision-making mainly focus on the two spouses' family and the nuclear family (that is, one couple has one or two minor children), their research mainly focuses on the role played by husbands, wives and children in all stages of decision-making and in each individual decision-making. Family members play different roles in making tourism decisions, according to the influence of each family member, YinPing and Cai Anya [10] think there are three main types of decision-making model: husband-led decision-making, wife-led decision-making, and husband and wife make decisions together, later, some scholars also proposed the fourth type of decision-making, that is, child-centered decision-making. This paper focuses on the study of the nuclear family and regroups family travel decision-making model into three types: parent-led decision-making

model, child-led decision-making model and parents and children are involved decision-making together model.

Among the 340 nuclear families surveyed, there are 175 families belong to the parent-led decision-making model, accounting for 51.47 percent of the total respondent's families, there are 15 families belong to the child-led decision-making model, accounting for 4.41 percent of all respondent's families, and there are 145 families belong to the parents and children decision-making together model, accounting for 42.65 percent of all respondent's families. These data showed that the current decision-making of nuclear families in Zhejiang province is still the traditional parent dominant decision-making model. However, the proportion of parents and children making decision together model is second only to the parent-led model. The percentage of children participate in family tourism decisions is very high, only 1.47 percent of children do not participate in family tourism decisions at all. Therefore, Zhejiang children have an important influence on family tourism decision-making.

Zhejiang children's impact on family tourism decisions

The impact on family tourism motivation. The survey results show a positive correlation between children's willingness to tourism and family tourism motivation. More children tourism willingness, the more their family tourism demands. Moreover, family tourism is highly relevant to children's tourism, almost every trip, the parents travel with their children. Table 2 details the motivation of Zhejiang's parents traveling with their children.

Table 2: The Influence Statistics of Zhejiang Children on Family Tourism Motivation

Age bracket	traveling situation of children and their parents in the near one year	The number of trips and the number of tourists of children and their parents traveling in the near one year					Total	Percentage of parents traveling with their children
		0 time	1 time	2 times	3 times	More than 4times		
1-6 years old	The parents ever travelled in the near one year	5	20	65	35	20	140	96.4
	The parents ever travelled with their children in the near one year	15	35	50	40	10	135	
7-9 years old	The parents ever travelled in the near one year		50	35	5	10	100	100.0
	The parents ever travelled with their children in the near one year		45	40	5	10	100	
10-14 years old	The parents ever travelled in the near one year	5	40	20	15	5	80	87.5
	The parents ever travelled with their children in the near one year	15	30	25	15		70	
Total		10	110	120	55	35	320	95.3
		30	110	115	60	20	305	

Table 3 : The Influence Statistics of Zhejiang Children on Family Tourism Attractions Choosing

Age bracket	The circumstances of children choose the tourist attractions	The number of children choose the tourist attractions		The percentage of children choose the tourist attractions among the families traveled
		Yes	No	
1-6 years old	Whether the children have traveled in the near one year	120	35	37.5
	Whether the attractions is for children's own choice	45	110	
7-9 years old	Whether the children have traveled in the near one year	95	5	57.9
	Whether the attractions is for children's own choice	55	45	
10-14 years old	Whether the children have traveled in the near one year	65	20	61.5
	Whether the attractions is for children's own choice	40	45	
Total		280	60	50
		140	200	

The surveyed parents travelled a total number of 320 in the near one year, of which 305 were travelled with their children, the total number of parents traveling with children accounted for 95.3 percent of the total number of parents traveling. This shows that children in Zhejiang are not currently the main decision-makers of family tourism, however, children's willingness to tourism, their behaviors in tourism and family tourism plans, tourism activities are highly relevant. Children of all ages have a greater impact on family tourism demands. Among them, the children who are 1-6 years of age have the most intense desire to travel, the families of these children have the most tourism plans and the most trips, and children in this age group have the most influence on family travel demand.

The impact on family choosing tourist attractions. In the selection of tourist attractions, the result is the older the age of children, the greater the impact on family tourism decisions. Children aged 10-14 have the most impact on family tourism decision making, with the highest percentage of children choosing tourist attractions. While children aged 1-6 have the least impact on family tourism decision making, with the lowest percentage of children choosing tourist attractions. The influence of Zhejiang children on family tourist attractions choosing is shown in Table 3.

Zhejiang children are mostly concentrated in the winter and summer vacation travel, followed by weekend travel, the proportion of choose to travel at other times is low. Children of different ages have some differences in the travel time, children aged 1-6 differ greatly from the travel time of the other two age groups. The children aged 1-6 are mainly traveling on weekends with a proportion of 58.06 percent, and the proportion of traveling on summer and winter vacation is 22.58 percent. While the children aged 7-9 and 10-14 are mainly concentrated in winter and summer vacation with a ratio of 65 percent and 76.47 percent respectively, and the proportion of traveling on weekends is only 15 percent and 11.76 percent respectively. Therefore, this finding shows that the older the child, the higher the proportion of people who choose to travel during winter and summer vacations; the younger the child, and the higher the proportion of people who travel on weekends.

The impact on focus of attention of family tourism. Zhejiang parents travel with their children first concern the travel itinerary and the time spent on the road, second concern whether the attractions are interesting, third concern the weather conditions. Parents of children of all ages focus on roughly the same, with a slight difference.

Table 4: The Impact Statistics of Zhejiang Children on Family Tourism Ways

Age bracket	Way of traveling					
	With travel agencies		Do-it-yourself tourism		Others	
	Number of people	Percentage	Number of people	Percentage	Number of people	Percentage
1-6 years old	15	9.7	110	71.0	30	19.4
7-9 years old	10	10.0	85	85.0	5	5.0
10-14 years old			80	94.1	5	5.9
Total	25	7.4	275	80.9	40	11.7

Table 5: The Tourism Duration and Expenses Statistics of Zhejiang Children and Their Family

Age bracket	One time tourism duration and the percentage		One time tourism expenses and the percentage		
	Less than or equal to 2 days	Greater than or equal to 3 days	Less than or equal to 1000 RMB	1000-3000 RMB	Greater than or equal to 3000 RMB
1-6 years old	90.3%	9.7%	71.0%	16.1%	12.9%
7-9 years old	65.0%	35.0%	25.0%	45.0%	30.0%
10-14 years old	82.4%	17.7%	29.4%	41.2%	29.4%
Total	80.9%	19.1%	47.1%	30.9%	22.0%

Parents of children aged 1-6 are most concerned about the travel itinerary and the time spent on the road, most of these parents want their children to travel nearby because of the short travel distance and less time spent on the road. Parents of children aged 7-9 are most concerned about the scenic spots features and interesting, these parents hope the tourist attractions to be more childlike and participatory, and to develop more children's theme park, and more entertainment programs that parents interact with their children. Parents of children aged 10-14 are most concerned about the weather during the trip.

The impact on the way of family traveling. Traveling with their children, more parents in Zhejiang choose the form of do-it-yourself tour, the proportion of up to 80.88 percent. Choosing to travel arranged by the travel agency is the least proportion of 7.35 percent. The survey of children's tourism in all age groups shows that the older the child, the more likely their family is to opt the way of do-it-yourself tour. Table 4 shows the influence of children on family tourism ways.

The impact on the duration and expenses of family tourism. From tourism duration perspective, when traveling with children, Zhejiang parents more like short tours within 2 days and rarely more than 3 days. Although children of different ages have different travel duration and distance, they are generally the same. The travel duration of children aged 7-9 is greatly different from those of the other two age groups, the percentage of this age group tourism more than 3 days is higher. Children aged 1-6 have the lowest proportion of their families travel more than 3 days. From tourism expenses perspective, Zhejiang children and their families have great potential for tourism consumption. Children in the 7-9 age group and their families have the highest potential both in terms of tourism duration and spending on tourism. Table 5 shows the tourism duration and expenses of Zhejiang children and their families during their tours.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based from the results drawn in the study, it can be constructed that touring has become a lifestyle and an essential consumption for children and their family in Zhejiang province. Zhejiang children and their families have a strong desire to travel, the travel rate is very high, the travel time is long, and the cost of a trip is high. Parents are expecting more and more children's travel products and forms, and they willing to spend more money and energy for children's tourism. With conclusions drawn from these study results the researcher recommends and speculates the following:

More and more businesses will see the enormous wealth that children's tourism implies. Derivatives market around the consumption of children's tourism will usher in rapid growth. The supply of children's tourism products can effectively stimulate children's tourism demands while meeting the demands of children's tourism. Where there is demand, there will be supplies, where there is supply and demand, there will be industry, as the industry continue to develop, they will form an industrial chain. Businesses such as children's travel agencies, children's guides, children's travel websites, children's travel books, children's travel products, children's travel apparel and children's travel facilities that serve children's tourism will continue to emerge. Children's tourism industry will move toward rationality and maturity, and the children's tourism industry chain will be gradually constructed and developed.

Self-driving travel has become a new trend of Chinese travel; self-driving travel is suitable for traveling with children. Zhejiang and the Yangtze River Delta economically developed, the car ownership is high and continue to climb. The popularization of the internet makes it very convenient for tourist to self-booking single item while traveling, coupled with car navigation equipment and other high-tech products are widely used, therefore, more and more families will choose self-driving tour when touring with their children.

Although this study selected a large sample of surveys, a comprehensive analysis of the all-round

characteristics of Zhejiang children and their families' tourism demands was conducted. However, the number of survey samples is best amplified further, and the age distribution of the samples should be more reasonable, in order to increase the reliability and accuracy of data analysis. The sample size of children aged 1-6 in this survey was significantly higher, while the number of children aged 7-9 and 10-14 was significantly less. This study didn't define the concept of children's tourism. The main forms and types of children's tourism in Zhejiang are not classified according to relevant standards. Future research should clearly explain the concept and connotation of children's tourism, and should refer to relevant standards to study the form and type of children's tourism in Zhejiang. This study used a lot of descriptive analysis methods, and only a simple calculation method such as mean and frequency summation was used for the large amount of data obtained in the survey. Future research should focus on the use of more complex, quantitative data calculation and analysis methods to mine deeper and more valuable research results behind the data.

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