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# A Study on Tourist Satisfaction of Rural Tourism Products in Southern Jiangsu Area of China

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## Abstract

**Purpose:** Rural tourism, as a green and sustainable new development method, has become a new economic growth point in China's rural revitalization. The current research on rural tourism has not formed a complete and mature theoretical system, especially the study of tourist satisfaction. This paper is based on the perspective of tourist satisfaction and takes rural tourism in southern Jiangsu, China as the research object. Starting from the current situation of rural tourism development in southern Jiangsu, it elaborates on the current situation of rural tourism development in southern Jiangsu. **Research design, data and methodology:** Through literature analysis, it is concluded that the factors that affect tourist satisfaction are divided into four major aspects: personal factors, perceived effect factors, destination experience factors, and social factors. Design a survey questionnaire from four aspects: diversity, safety, convenience, agreeableness, and draw conclusions through data analysis. **Results:** From the four dimensions of the survey, tourists pay more attention to the diversity, agreeableness, and convenience of rural tourism products. This requires increasing the development of tourism products and improving the richness and diversity of rural tourism products. **Conclusions:** Therefore, optimization measures such as continuously implementing local rural cultural construction, establishing brand effects, and increasing policy support have been proposed.

**Keywords :** Rural tourism, Customer satisfaction, Southern Jiangsu area

**JEL Classification Code :** M38, Z32, Z33

## 1. Introduction

In the 19th century Europe, with the development of the Industrial Revolution, the speed of social development accelerated, and the pressure of life increased. A large number of urban residents began to return to rural areas and use rural areas as tourist destinations, resulting in the

emergence of "rural tourism" (Sharpley, 2002). Many countries in Europe and America, represented by Spain, have supported rural tourism through legislation, making it an effective way for countries to improve their economic structure and increase farmers' employment. Rural tourism in China began in the 1950s, especially after the reform and opening up, with Chengdu, Chongqing, and Xi'an as the

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main representatives of rural tourism, which mainly focused on "rural leisure", rapidly spreading nationwide (Jiang & Huang, 2008). In recent years, influenced by factors such as the national "three rural" policies and market positioning, rural tourism has been vigorously developed. The implementation of the "Three Rural" policy has attracted a large amount of funds and greatly improved rural infrastructure. As the pace of life for urban residents gradually accelerates, traditional scenic spots may also become overcrowded during holidays. Therefore, more and more tourists are choosing rural tourism for their main purposes of leisure, sightseeing, and visiting family and friends. Rural tourism is not only a very important part of the tourism industry structure, but also a powerful lever for Chinese rural residents to achieve poverty alleviation and prosperity.

However, with the rapid rise of rural tourism, China's rural tourism industry is also facing a series of problems, and its rapid development mode has had a significant impact on China's rural tourism industry. At present, the construction and updating of infrastructure in China cannot keep up, such as obstacle free facilities and poor internal transportation, insufficient parking lots and road signs, and insufficient coverage of communication facilities such as wireless networks. With the increase in travel time and paid travel methods, people's requirements for travel quality are also constantly improving, such as the hygiene and cultural environment of accommodation. If the above content cannot meet the needs of tourists or the cost-effectiveness is not high, the satisfaction of tourists will be reduced, which will have an impact on the market and development of tourist destinations. In addition, under the enormous challenges of new rural construction, there have been phenomena of "plagiarism" and "imitation" in some places, leading to the homogenization of local tourism products and content. The evaluation of rural tourism products plays an important role in understanding tourists' satisfaction with the products, identifying the advantages and disadvantages of the products, and improving the direction of the products. The evaluation of rural tourism products can be studied from multiple perspectives, including diversity, safety, convenience and agreeableness.

Therefore, the rapid development of rural tourism requires us to propose reasonable and specific suggestions to address the new challenges discovered. This paper takes this topic as the starting point, reads and compares literature, and conducts research using scientific methods.

## 2. Literature Review

Rural tourism is a kind of tourism activity that takes agricultural production and rural life as the background,

rural Natural landscape, social science environment, local conditions and other resources as tourism attractions, and sightseeing, leisure, entertainment and vacation as the main purpose (Lee et al., 2011).

Rural tourism is an important extension and expansion of the tourism industry in rural areas of China. It attracts more and more tourists with its unique local culture, agricultural civilization, folk customs, pastoral scenery and other resources, bringing huge economic and social benefits to the countryside. Developing rural tourism is of great significance in promoting agricultural structural adjustment and improving rural ecological environment. Li et al. (2021) mentioned with the high attention paid by the country to the development of rural tourism, various regions have strengthened the construction of rural tourism infrastructure and organized various forms of rural tourism activities. Therefore, actively promoting the development of rural tourism has become an important breakthrough in the development of China's rural economy.

Tourist satisfaction is a psychological state that arises by comparing tourists' expectations with the experience after visiting the destination. Yu et al. (2023) found if the actual perception of the destination exceeds the psychological perception before the tourism activity, tourist satisfaction is high; On the contrary, if the actual perception of the destination is lower than the psychological perception before the tourism activity, tourist satisfaction will be low. If the actual perception of the tourist destination is lower than the expected value before the trip, the satisfaction of tourists will decrease (Ding & Su, 2021). According to the organization of literature, the influencing factors of rural tourism tourist satisfaction are divided into personal factors, perceived effect factors, destination experience factors, and social factors.

### 2.1. Personal Factors

In the TDCSI model, Lian and Wang (2004) used tourist expectations as the antecedent variable and conducted empirical research. After verification, Devesa et al. (2010) found a significant negative correlation between tourist expectations and satisfaction. Del Bosque et al. (2008) showed in their study that tourist expectations as a antecedent variable have a significant impact on satisfaction. In addition, some researchers have shown that tourist satisfaction mainly depends on previous expectations and perceived outcomes after the experience. When tourists feel happy or unhappy, they compare their expectations with the post travel experience. When they compare their expectations with their post travel experience, they may feel dissatisfied or unsatisfied.

## 2.2. Perceived Effect Factors

Perceived value plays an important role in exploring factors that affect tourist satisfaction. Woodruff (1997) believes that research on tourist satisfaction needs to focus on the impact of perceived value. Similarly, Huang and Huang (2007) believe that when evaluating factors that affect tourist satisfaction, it is necessary to pay attention to what the perceived value of tourists is at the tourist destination. In TI-CSI, TACSI, and other models based on them, the impact of tourists' perceived value on satisfaction is direct, positive, and significant. A positive relationship between tourists' perceived value and satisfaction in their study of Chinese tourists in South Korea. Perceived value has a direct impact on tourist satisfaction.

## 2.3. Destination Experience Factors

The foreign scholars took the American Cod as a case to study the tourists' satisfaction. From the perspective of the supply factors of tourist destinations, they proposed six influencing factors, namely: beach, food, residents' enthusiasm, tourism environment, accommodation conditions, and local commercialization. Chinese scholars Dong and Zhou (2011) took tourist attractions as the type of tourist destination, and divided the factors affecting tourist satisfaction into two parts, including nine indicators, namely, objective indicators such as tourist landscape, image of scenic spots, infrastructure and traffic conditions, and direct service indicators such as catering, accommodation, entertainment, shopping, management and service. Taking the domestic market in Xi'an as an example, the prior study divided tourism attractions and facilities into eight aspects: tourism landscape, tourism atmosphere, food, tourism souvenirs, hotel accommodation, entertainment, traffic signs, communication conditions, service reception and management.

## 2.4. Social Factors

Guang-hui (2015) found in this survey of tourist satisfaction, social factors mainly include the surrounding environment of rural tourism destinations, transportation, social environmental capacity, economic level, and social stability. Among these factors, such as economic level and social stability, it is difficult to quantify, and the relationship between them is also very complex, so this article did not study them. From the perspective of literature analysis, there is little research on the impact of social factors on tourist satisfaction both domestically and internationally. However, social factors are also an important factor affecting tourist satisfaction.

## 3. Model Construction and Research Assumptions

The southern part of Suzhou is located near international metropolises and provincial capitals such as Shanghai and Nanjing, which are unique in terms of history, politics, economy, and culture. Xu (2020) found the area has a good development foundation and advantages, with the characteristics of early development, high starting point, large quantity, and large scale. The development of rural tourism in southern Jiangsu has now formed five major thematic development situations, with water towns as the theme, folk customs as the theme, and sightseeing tourism as the theme, food culture as the theme, and fitness and recuperation as the theme.

### 3.1. Research Model Construction

Based on the research and analysis of relevant achievements in satisfaction both domestically and internationally, this article mainly refers to the tourist satisfaction model (TDCSI) and the evaluation index system of tourist satisfaction summarized by scholars Wang Xia and Lian Yi on the basis of customer satisfaction theory. Starting from the aspects of tourist perceived quality, perceived value, destination experience, and social factors, combined with the actual situation of rural leisure tourism in southern Jiangsu, Construct a theoretical model for evaluating the influencing factors of tourist satisfaction. The study on Chinese tourist satisfaction indicates that tourist perceived quality refers to the subjective evaluation of the overall image, environment, atmosphere, and overall tourism product performance of the tourist destination. Perceived quality refers to the degree of satisfaction of tourists with various influencing factors of the tourist destination, such as catering, accommodation, environment, transportation, etc. Destination experience refers to the satisfaction of tourists with the product value of the destination and the cost-effectiveness of the trip. Tourist satisfaction refers to the degree to which tourists are satisfied with various elements of the tourist destination after traveling, and it is a result variable.

Based on reference to relevant literature and previous analysis, this study constructs a model for the impact of diversity, safety, convenience, and agreeableness on consumer satisfaction. Among them, diversity includes types of entertainment activities, rural characteristics of catering, etc. Convenience includes the accessibility of internal and external transportation, the convenience of parking, etc. Safety includes the safety of activity facilities, local social security conditions, etc. Agreeableness includes natural environmental conditions, hygiene and comfort of

accommodation, etc. Therefore, a research model as shown in Figure 1 is proposed.

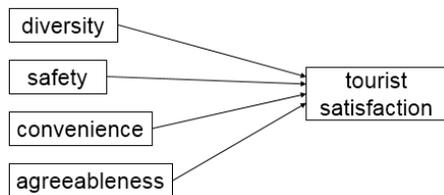


Figure 1: Model of influencing factors tourist satisfaction

### 3.2. Research Hypothesis

The diversity, safety, convenience, and agreeableness directly affect consumer satisfaction and are key factors for tourists to choose tourist attractions. Therefore, this study proposes the following assumptions based on relevant references and the questionnaire model constructed above:

**H1:** The diversity of rural tourism products has a positive impact on tourist satisfaction.

**H2:** The safety of rural tourism products has a positive impact on tourist satisfaction.

**H3:** The convenience of rural tourism products has a positive impact on tourist satisfaction.

**H4:** The agreeableness of rural tourism products has a positive impact on tourist satisfaction.

### 3.3. Sample Collection and Analysis Methods

This study conducted reliability and validity tests on the data collected from the questionnaire through SPSS 26.0, and based on the questionnaire data and feedback from the respondents. The main analysis methods include:

(1)Descriptive statistical analysis: Descriptive statistical analysis is conducted on the data collected after distributing the questionnaire. This article reflects the sample characteristics and data distribution by analyzing the age, gender, income, education, and other data of the respondents.

(2)Reliability and validity analysis: Reliability mainly refers to whether the data obtained after several tests have consistency and reliability; Validity mainly refers to whether the survey questionnaire distributed in this article can accurately and accurately measure the expression level of the characteristics of the test question.

## 4. Empirical Analysis

Based on the previously proposed definition of variable operability and related basic assumptions, and based on the

relatively mature scales in domestic and foreign literature, this study has developed a questionnaire. The content includes the design, distribution, and collection of questionnaires, as well as preliminary analysis of sampling data.

### 4.1. Descriptive Statistical Analysis

By further modifying the questionnaire, the final questionnaire for investigating the satisfaction of rural tourism products in southern Jiangsu was determined. Subsequently, a large-scale survey was conducted, and the links or QR codes of the questionnaire survey were distributed online through the questionnaire survey. A total of 270 questionnaires were distributed and 250 were collected in this survey. The statistical data investigated are shown in Table 1.

In terms of age composition, the largest number of respondents were between the ages of 20 and 29, with a total of 112 people, accounting for approximately 44.8%. From the educational background of the surveyed population, those with a bachelor's degree are the most, accounting for 49.2% of the total population, while those with junior high school or below are the least, accounting for 6.8%. In terms of career distribution, the proportion of students is the highest, with a total of 155 people, accounting for 62%. From the perspective of monthly income level, the proportion of 4000 to 6000 is the highest, accounting for 43.6%. From the perspective of transportation mode, the majority choose trains, accounting for 51.6%. From the perspective of the purpose of tourism, sightseeing travel accounts for a large proportion. Through the analysis of sample characteristics, we can find that the overall structure of this survey is relatively reasonable, which can well reflect the current situation of the problem to be studied.

Table 1: Basic Information Descriptive Statistics

	Group	Frequency	Percentage
Age	under 20 years old	56	22.4%
	20 - 29	112	44.8%
	30 - 39	44	17.6%
	40-49	19	7.6%
	50-59	13	5.2%
	over 60 years old	6	2.4%
Education	Middle school and below	17	6.8%
	High school/ Polytechnic school	22	8.8%
	Junior college	64	25.6%
	University	123	49.2%
	Graduate and above	24	9.6%
	Professional	5	2%

Profession	Self-employed worker	16	6.4%
	Civil servant	22	8.8%
	Staff	39	15.6%
	Farmer	0	0%
	Student	150	60%
	Other	18	7.2%
Monthly income level	under 2000	21	8.4%
	2001-4000	73	29.2%
	4001-6000	109	43.6%
	6001-8000	25	10%
	over 8000	22	8.8%
Transportation	self-driving	36	14.4%
	bus	55	22%
	Car Rental	6	2.4%
	train	129	51.6%
	airplane	18	7.2%
Reason for travel	Other	6	2.4%
	Rest and relax	74	29.6%
	sightseeing	106	42.4%
	shopping	23	9.2%
	folk custom	42	16.8%
Other	5	2%	

### 4.2. Reliability Analysis

Reliability is generally used to describe the stability and consistency of questionnaire results, and it reflects the consistency level of the results obtained when researchers use differential measurements for the same or similar phenomena. All measured values cover the actual value and the error value. The higher the reliability of the measurement result, the lower the error value of the result, and the better the stability of the measurement value. The results of the overall reliability analysis of this questionnaire are shown in the table below.

**Table 2:** Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items
.863	20

The Cronbach Alpha coefficient of the scale is 0.863, and the reliability is generally greater than 0.8, indicating that the overall consistency of the questionnaire items is relatively good, and the questionnaire design is relatively scientific and reliable, so the design reliability of this questionnaire is very high.

### 4.3. Validity Analysis

#### 4.3.1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Firstly, we will conduct confirmatory factor analysis on the effective data we have collected. The calculation results of these factors are shown in Table 3. Generally speaking, AVE values are greater than 0.5 and CR values are greater than 0.7, indicating good aggregation validity of the research data. The standardized factor load and T-test data

results of this study meet the significance level, with CR values greater than 0.7 and AVE values greater than 0.5, and VIF values also belonging to the excellent level, The clustering validity of the data is high.

**Table3:** Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Variable	Question	Factor loading	t-test	CR	AVE	VIF
Diversity	1	0.712	3.765	0.816	0.710	2.688
	2	0.703	3.655			2.522
	3	0.706	3.782			2.221
	4	0.722	3.833			1.988
	5	0.708	3.710			2.006
Convenience	1	0.712	3.765	0.766	0.696	1.998
	2	0.721	3.665			1.963
	3	0.703	3.731			2.236
	4	0.709	3.852			2.452
	5	0.636	3.659			2.326
Safety	1	0.704	3.856	0.877	0.689	2.404
	2	0.711	3.822			2.347
	3	0.701	3.756			2.091
	4	0.634	3.699			1.996
	5	0.699	3.829			2.423
Agreeableness	1	0.708	3.861	0.835	0.699	2.309
	2	0.712	3.815			2.220
	3	0.681	3.765			2.348
	4	0.709	3.766			2.472
	5	0.686	3.699			1.955

#### 4.3.2. Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis mainly uses the size of the correlation coefficient between two variables to determine the level of correlation between variables. The correlation analysis results between the four survey dimensions of the survey questionnaire are shown in Tables 4. The results show that the correlation coefficients between the diversity, safety, convenience, comfort, and customer satisfaction of rural tourist attractions are all greater than 0.3, indicating a positive correlation.

**Table 4:** Correlation Analysis

	Diversity	Safety	Convenience	Agreeableness	Satisfaction
Diversity	1				
Safety	0.855	1			
Convenience	0.796	0.814	1		
Agreeableness	0.802	0.836	0.816	1	
Satisfaction	0.832	0.776	0.799	0.803	1

### 4.4. Model and Hypothetical Test

From the fitting results of the model in Table 3-5, it can be seen that the P-values for diversity, convenience, and suitability are all less than 0.05, indicating that the above three types have a significant impact on tourist satisfaction. In addition, the P-value of safety is greater than 0.05, which proves that the hypothesis is not valid. It can be seen

that the survey subjects in this study did not pay high attention to safety.

**Table 5:** Hypothesis Test Results

Hypothesis		P value	Result
H1	The diversity of rural tourism products has a significant impact on tourist satisfaction	0.000	Accept
H2	The safety of rural tourism products has a significant impact on tourist satisfaction	0.249	Reject
H3	The convenience of rural tourism products has a significant impact on tourist satisfaction	0.020	Accept
H4	The agreeableness of rural tourism products has a significant impact on tourist satisfaction	0.000	Accept

Based on the above analysis, from the basic information of the respondents, it can be seen that the majority of respondents are those aged 20 to 29 with a bachelor's degree, which may be related to the social and cultural environment in which the respondents are located. Therefore, it is not difficult to explain the survey results that the proportion of respondents with incomes ranging from 4000 to 5000 is relatively high, and the proportion of respondents with hot vehicles is relatively high. The Cronbach's alpha of the survey results is greater than 0.7, AVE value is greater than 0.5, CR value is greater than 0.7, and the correlation coefficient is greater than 0.3. It can be seen that the survey has good reliability and validity. From the perspective of model and hypothesis testing, the p-value of the safety dimension is greater than 0.05, indicating that the safety of rural tourism scenic spots does not have a significant impact on tourist satisfaction. Therefore, it can be concluded that the focus of tourists on rural tourism products today is mainly on the first intuitive perception of tourism scenic spots to tourists.

## 5. Results and Discussion

Based on the perspective of tourist satisfaction, taking rural tourism in southern Jiangsu as an example, through analysis methods such as questionnaire survey and influencing factor analysis, the following conclusions are drawn:

From the basic information of the respondents, the number of tourists is mainly concentrated among young people aged 20-29 and 30-39. In this regard, rural tourism products with the characteristics of the times and the characteristics of young people should be launched based on the characteristics of the population and the current internet popular culture; From the perspective of consumer education distribution, the number of tourists with college and undergraduate degrees is relatively large. We can carry

out cultural promotion and knowledge popularization projects in combination with local traditional culture; From the perspective of consumer profession, there are more private, corporate, and individual businesses, as well as students and tourists. We should strive to create rural tourism projects for leisure and sightseeing; From the perspective of rural tourism tourists arriving at the local area, the main methods are buses and self-driving. To continuously improve the automotive service industry and improve transportation accessibility; From the perspective of overall satisfaction with rural tourism, the average number of people accounts for a large proportion, indicating that we still have significant room for improvement.

From the four dimensions of the survey, tourists pay more attention to the richness, comfort, and convenience of rural tourism products. This requires us to increase the development of tourism products and improve the richness and diversity of rural tourism products. Strengthen humanistic care, incorporate local traditional culture into the process of tourism, incorporate derivative products of tourism, and promote tourism to enhance the dual spiritual and material humanity of tourists. Improve the safety performance of tourism facilities, implement safety awareness in all aspects of the tourism process, and let tourists experience that this is not only a trip, but more importantly, a learning of safety knowledge.

Rural tourism products not only allow tourists to experience a strong rural atmosphere, but also experience a completely different way of life and culture from urban life. The evaluation of rural tourism products is of great significance for improving the quality and attractiveness of rural tourism. In the future, further research can be conducted from aspects such as experience, service quality, and scenic area environment.

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