

Study on the Motivation and Influencing Factors of Family Tourism Decision-making in the Early Stage of Empty Nest

——From the Perspective of Adult Children

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Abstract: This paper explored the motivation and influencing factors of family tourism decision-making from the perspective of adult children. Through the in-depth interviews with 18 college students, this paper collected text data and constructs a conceptual model based on grounded theory, which extended the tourism decision-making literature to the family life in the early period of empty nest, provided a reference for tourism marketers to target this market segment.

1. Introduction

Since the rise of study tour in 1998, parent-child interaction and “education through entertainment” have gradually penetrated the hearts of people, and parent-child tourism products have developed rapidly. Online travel websites continue to tap the market, channels and brand of parent-child travel to promote its further development. In 2014, the outbreak of variety shows about parent-child travel stimulated the enthusiasm of audience. Tourism enterprises with high innovation ability have launched the same tourist routes with shows or deeply excavated destination resources to introduce more attractive products, promoting the rapid growth of parent-child travel market.

With the increasing popularity of parent-child travel, family travel between adult children and their parents has become an emerging increasingly popular tourism market in China. A poll of 2,000 respondents showed that 58.9% of the samples traveled with their parents after they found a job (Wangfei Wang, 2018); another survey showed that 81.2% of the samples planned to travel with their parents, and 70% said that traveling with their parents could provide more communication time for more children (China Youth Daily, 2015). In addition, Ctrip (2016), China's largest online travel agency, reported longitudinal data on elderly travel in China and found that elderly people over 70 enjoy traveling with their adult children. The decision maker of tourism service purchase is adult children. Family tourism dominated by adult children has increasingly become an important part of the tourism market.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Concepts and Functions of "Family Tourism"

Family tourism is generally the travel of all family members. It not only increases the harmonious relationship between family members, but also promotes communication among them (Hallman & Benbow, 2007; Larsen, 2005).

2.2 Decision-making in "Family Tourism"

Family tourism market, as one of the important market segments, has attracted extensive attention of foreign scholars in the past 40 years. Lu Hengqin, Suqin and Yao Zhiguo (2006) started with the

research on the decision-making stage and decision-making factors of family tourism and summarized the research results on the decision-making process of family tourism abroad.

Family tourism consumption is an important factor in China. The higher the family income, the more family assets and the higher the education level, the greater the family tourism consumption. Zhang Jinbao (2014) found that the tourism consumption of urban households is closely related to the family life cycle.

2.3 Present Work

Existing studies have fully explored parent-child tourism. However, previous research has paid little attention to the travel behavior of parents and children in different family life cycles. In the family tourism market, the "parent-child" tourism behavior of families whose children go out to school and just enter the empty nest stage has not been paid attention to.

From the perspective of children, this paper discusses the motivation and influencing factors of empty-nest family's tourism decision. This paper takes early empty-nest families as the research object, enriches the literature on family tourism motivation based on family life cycle, and provides marketing references for tourism managers in the segment market of empty-nest families.

3. Method Selection

Based on the Grounded Theory of Qualitative Data Analysis, this paper takes the experience of 18 business undergraduates, 13 samples for theoretical construction and 5 samples for theoretical saturation test, from a university in Wuhan as an example, emphatically describing and analyzing the motivation and influencing factors of family tourism decision-making in the early stage of empty nest from the perspective of children.

In data analysis, this paper used manual coding analysis and exploratory research paradigm. The interview data were transformed into grounded theoretical analysis sub-text. The method suggested by Song Huilin et al. (2015) was used to conduct the validity test of researchers' triangle correction method.

4. Data Analysis

4.1 Interview Text

Four of the five undergraduates interviewed in this paper have never traveled with their parents and do not want to travel with their parents in the future. Therefore, only fourteen respondents have valid text data. After text screening, there are more than 7100 effective interview texts.

4.2 Open Coding

The code items selected must be related to the family at the beginning of empty nest, the motivation of tourism decision-making, and the influencing factors of tourism decision-making. Each expression can only be included in one item. There are 31 concepts in the open coding process. After eliminating invalid and duplicate concepts, 11 categories are obtained. Partially encoded contents were shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Open coding

Number	Text	Concept	Category
01-A-01	To go to school in other provinces, you must go home in winter and summer vacation...	Academic busyness	Absence of companionship
01-A-02	Sometimes there are other arrangements at school, and the time spent at home...		
01-B-01	Too little time for parents after college...	Less time for coexistence	
...
02-A-01	Destination selection...	Destination	Decision content
02-B-01	The decision involved is first and foremost the destination...		
02-B-04	Destination infrastructure should be perfected...		
...
03-A-02	Discuss with your parents on major aspects of decision-making...	Consultation with parents	Children's participation
03-C-02	Tell my parents about travel plans...		
03-A-03	But I'm in charge of hotel booking, ticket booking and route planning...	Responsible for travel planning	
...

4.3 Axial Coding

This paper continues to classify and abstract the open coding through the simplified model of "antecedent variables - phenomenal variables - mediating variables-moderating variables - outcome variables", and draws four main categories, namely "antecedent of tourism decision-making", "motivation of tourism decision-making", "content of tourism decision-making", "subject of tourism decision-making", "influencing factors of decision-making" and "tendency of decision-making behavior".

Table 2. Axial coding

Classification	Principal category	Category
Antecedents	Antecedents of tourism decision-making	Absence of companionship, travel demand, personal growth
Phenomenon variable	Motivation of Tourism Decision-making	Self-interest, rewarding, emotional
Mediating variable	Contents of Tourism Decision-making	Decision content
	Subject of Tourism Decision-making	Children's participation, parents' decision-making
Moderating variable	Influencing factors of decision-making	Influencing factors
Outcome variable	Tendency of Decision-making Behavior	Decision making tendency

4.4 Selective Coding

This paper put forward the core category of "Motivation and Influencing Factors of Family Tourism Decision-making in the Early Stage of Empty Nest". Around this core category can form a storyline that dominates all categories: the antecedent variable of family tourism decision-making in the early empty nest stage is an important driving factor for family tourism decision-making; the tendency of decision-making behavior is a result variable; the antecedent variable influences decision-making behavior by stimulating motivation. Based on this story line, this study constructed a conceptual stage of empty nest in China, referred to as "antecedent-phenomenon-mediation-moderation-result" model.

After obtaining the above conceptual model, this paper tested the theoretical saturation with remaining text data, no new categories or new relationships were found.

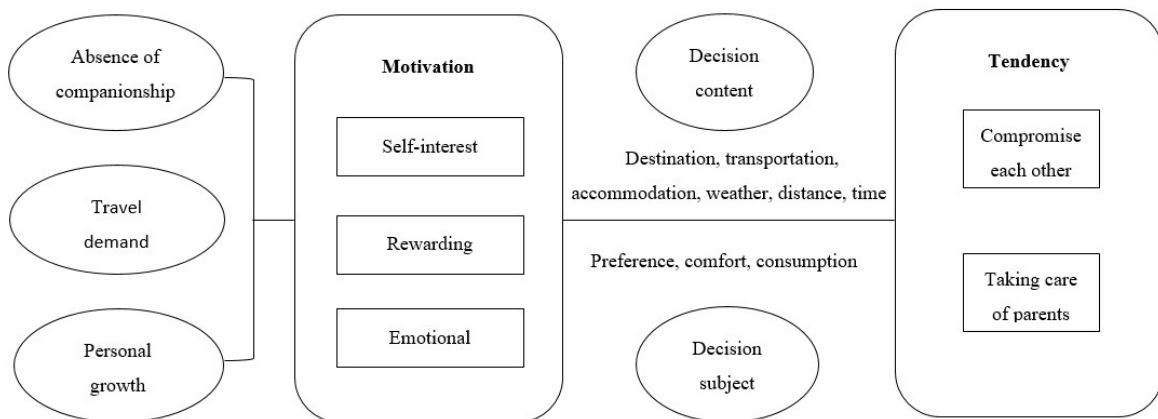


Fig. 1 Conceptual Model

5. Discussions

This paper focused on the tourism decision-making behavior of families in the early empty nest stage. Through in-depth interviews with 18 business undergraduates in a university in Wuhan, the necessary text data were obtained. Based on the qualitative research method, grounded theory, this paper makes an exploratory study of text data, and finally the motivation and influencing factors of family tourism decision-making in the early empty nest stage are constructed.

The possible theoretical contribution lies in introducing the research dialogue of family tourism behavior to the early stage of empty nest family life cycle, enriching the literature on family tourism motivation and decision-making from the perspective of children. On the managerial implications, the findings of this paper suggest that tourism destination managers attach importance to family tourism market segmentation of undergraduates, and develop corresponding tourism products in the opening season, short and long vacations. At the same time, for family tourism products, young undergraduates can also be the main marketing target. Tourism marketers should formulate corresponding marketing strategies based on the motivation and influencing factors of this group's tourism decision-making.

In the future research, we will expand the sample size and data sources, prepare enough data for theoretical saturation test, and extend the research perspective to the parents in the early empty nest. At the same time, future work will give operational definitions to empty-nest families' tourism decision-making motivation and influencing factors, measure variables and carry out empirical tests on the relationship between them.

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