

Analysis on the Hot Spring Tourism Depth Tour in Shandong Province under the Background of Leisure Tourism

Li Xing^{1,a}

¹Tourism College of Mount Tai University, Tai'an, Shandong, China

^axingli0910@163.com

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Abstract: In recent years, the hot spring tourism in Shandong Province has continued to heat up, and hot spring tourism has soared to become a hot spot for leisure and holiday tourism. The corresponding hot spring economy is thus known as a dark horse in this sunrise industry. The hot spring investments have boomed gradually and its market potential is estimated to be huge. Through a field investigation of various hot spring tourist sites in Shandong Province and the search, screening and summarization of related materials, a SWOT analysis on hot spring tourism in Shandong Province was conducted comprehensively and scientifically in this paper, and constructive advices have been put forward in the hope that hot spring tourism in Shandong Province can be better developed and utilized under the concept of green sustainability, and it is expected that a sustainable development model with both cultural characteristics and a broad modern market potential could be established.

1 Introduction

Closely following the upsurge of the era development, people's pace of life has also accelerated, and the hot spring tourism integrating leisure, entertainment, healthcare and culture has become the first choice for people to spend holiday vacation. Shandong Province is located in the eastern part of China. The reserve of hot spring resources is tremendous. The development of hot spring tourism is not only guaranteed by resources, but also by increasingly mature technology. As a sunrise industry in emerging industries, hot spring vacation tourism is of great significance for transforming the economic development mode of Shandong Province and adjusting the tourism industry structure of Shandong Province.

2 Research Overview

2.1 Researches on Foreign Hot Spring Tourism

The hot spring tourism projects in European countries pay more attention to the cultural value of hot springs in the core links of tourism projects. In the European tourism environment, the historical and humanistic spirit emitted from the hot springs are more attractive than the hot springs themselves in the long run. Claude Kaspar proposed that, the development of the hot spring tourism industry needs to start from the psychology of consumers from different regions and create a hot spring project that is in line with it. Among them, sightseeing hot springs and medical hot springs agree with the social development. Abdul Rahim Samsudin took the hot spring development project in Malaysia as a research object to review the development parameters between the hot spring

tourist generating region and the tourism project, providing a data support and reference for the development of tourism projects.

2.2 Researches on domestic hot spring tourism

Zhang Ming (2007) [1] conducted a comparative study on the types of tourism economy and the corresponding use of natural resources from the perspective of China's sustainable development strategy. The research results show that, among many tourism resources and tourism projects, the pattern of hot spring tourism can play a role in protecting the existing natural resources and avoiding serious man-made damage to the resources in the process of tourism development. The hot spring tourism model is in line with the strategic requirements of national sustainable development. Li Rongyu and Wang Yanping (2008) [2] pointed out that, the Shandong region possesses generous domestic hot spring tourism resources, but it stays at the final place in terms of the development of tourism projects in China.

The insufficient excavation of the tourism economy and the lack of ability to integrate hot spring tourism with its surrounding projects are the bottlenecks of Shandong's tourism economic development in the past few decades. Song Lingling (2011) [3] conducted statistics on the development of tourism resources in Chongqing City before and after 2010 from the perspective of tourism economy in Chongqing, and carried out a statistical research on Chongqing City hot spring tourism economy and the new tourism projects developed under it in the same period from the perspective of tourism economic development and urban economic construction, and fully discussed the value of Chongqing's hot spring tourism economy and put forward suggestions that can be used as lessons for the contemporary tourism industry to learn from from the perspective of urban economic construction, diverse urban units and tourism consumer market reconstruction.

3 Developing Situation of Hot Spring Leisure Tourism in Shandong Province

Although the development and utilization of hot spring resources in China can be dated nearly 5,000 years ago, it was not until nearly 20 or 30 years that hot spring tourism was recognized as a characteristic tourism pattern, and it also showed an ever-advancing trend in its development process. An organized development of the hot spring tourism projects in Shandong province hasn't been performed until 1950s. At present, the most common pattern of hot spring tourism development in Shandong province is the combination of leisure health care projects with hot springs, mainly concentrated on the development of indoor hot springs, with hot spring hotels and hot spring SPA as the main business model.

The scenic area should provide professional physiotherapy services, equipped with professional physiotherapy coaches, fitness instructors and so on, aimed to create a large-scale and dedicated hot spring tourism development. Apart from continuing to develop leisure health care functions, it is also necessary to combine peripheral and cultural resources to create a customized hot spring tourism destination. Its connotation lies in the enjoyment of hot springs and satisfies the desire of participation by tourists. Shandong's current highly-developed hot spring tourism sites are listed in Table-1:

Table-1: Situation of development of some hot spring tourism sites in Shandong Province

Project name	Site	Situation of development and exploitation
Culai Mountain hot spring	Taian	Mostly moderate or moderate-high temperature hot spring, the established hot spring city enjoys a certain popularity
Liaocheng Tianmu Hot spring	Liaocheng	Mostly moderate-temperature hot spring, enjoying a higher popularity
Yantai Zhaoyuan hot spring	Yantai	Moderate-temperature hot spring, extensive development mode
Yingtai ecological hot spring resort	Tengzhou	Moderate-temperature hot spring, a hot spring resort has been built up.
Aishan hot spring resort	Yantai	Moderate and high-temperature hot spring, having a good market influence
Tangtou hot spring town	Linyi	Moderate and high-temperature hot spring, hot spring sanatorium and other facilities have been built up
Shanghe hot spring	Shanghe	A hot spring base integrating bath, healthcare and recuperation
Yangdu hot spring	Yinan	High-temperature hot spring, trial run during New Year's Day, exploitation quantity: 700 m ³ /day
Jimo hot spring town	Jimo	High-temperature hot spring, Qiling Villa and other facilities established.

As can be seen from the above table, the types of hot springs developed in some hot spring scenic areas in Shandong Province are mostly moderate-temperature hot springs. Their developments begun to take shape, mostly in the form of resort or hot spring city, and having a certain influence in the market.

4 SWOT Analysis of Hot Spring Tourism Development in Shandong Province

As a sunrise tourist industry with huge growth potential, the society has also redefined the new operational type of hot spring tourism, which is an opportunity that is ushered in the development process. In the context of good opportunities, there are also challenges to be faced when dealing with new projects. The sustainable development of the environment and the deeper exploration of the cultural connotation of the scenic spots are what we need urgently to solve.

4.1 Development Advantage Analysis

4.1.1 Advantages of geographic location

Shandong Province is located in the northeast of China. The Shandong Peninsula is China's largest peninsula. It is also the location in China that is the closest to South Korea and Japan. It has advantaged economic developmental conditions and conditions for external development. It occupies a vantage position in the economic coordination and distribution between China and Northeast Asia and in promoting the coordinated development of the North and the South and it is expected to become an extremely influential economic uplifted zone in China's economic sector and Northeast Asia [3]. The superior geographical conditions have brought abundant tourist resources and huge economic benefits to Shandong Province. The improvement of economic benefits has driven the development of the tourist economy, leading to the continuous perfection of the facilities for the development of hot spring tourism, and creating new demand for tourism consumption, plus the fact that it is encircled by the oceans on three sides, conditions surrounding the three sides of the sea, which renders it preponderate in the development of inbound tourism.

4.1.2 Shandong hot spring resource reserve is abundant, having a huge development potential

Seventeen cities in Shandong Province are found to have geothermal resources. Most of the geothermal resources are reserved in the underground area which is about 3,000 meters deep. The temperature of the water basically ranges from 40 to 100 °C. Roughly estimated, the amount of geothermal resources available in Shandong Province is about five times the amount of the reserved coal resources in Shandong Province, which is equivalent to the heat released by the combustion of more than 15 billion tons of standard coal. If it is industrialized and developed, the covert yearly economic benefits can be up to more than 85 billion yuan.

4.2 Development Disadvantage Analysis: Weaknesses

4.2.1 The form of hot spring tourism products is too singular

Hot spring tourism continues to develop as a new model of tourism, but the development of hot spring tourism products still stays in its infancy. The development of hot spring tourism products has created a great mass fervor, but the phenomenon of sameness becomes increasingly serious in respect to the development model and the publicity and design of products. The uniqueness of hot spring tourism products is not obvious in several aspects, and a sound product system has not yet been founded. The hardware facility in the scenic area is relatively low-level, and the potential of the hot spring resources fails to be fully utilized. In the propaganda and design of hot spring tourism products, the product's health care function is overemphasized, and its tourism value and cultural connotation are ignored, and so arises the phenomenon of sameness of product propaganda. It is easy for tourists to experience aesthetic fatigue and find it difficult to choose.

4.2.2 The hot spring tourism is misunderstood, and people's environmental awareness is weak.

In the course of development of hot spring tourism in Shandong Province, the concept of environmental sustainable development has not been well embodied. The correct understanding of the development of hot spring scenic spots and the functional significance of hot spring tourism are ambiguous. There are many misunderstandings about the hot spring projects. Hot spring is a special geothermal resource. It not only contains a lot of heat, but also many minerals that are beneficial to the human body. Its value should be higher than average hot water.

However, the price of hot spring water in Shandong Province is comparable to that of average hot water. In some areas, its price is even lower than that of average hot water. This is easy to cause the owners and users of hot springs to not cherish the hot spring resources. There is no restriction on the use of hot spring bathing water in the scenic spot. Tourists have a poor awareness in saving the hot springs, resulting in a waste of a large amount of resources. The strict standards and management methods for wastewater treatment measures are also lacking in hot spring resorts.

4.3 Development Opportunity Analysis :Opportunities

4.3.1 As a sunrise industry with huge growth potential, it promises a good developmental prospect.

Most of the tourism activities are intended for leisure vacation, which is an important factor for people to choose the type of tourist activities. Hot spring tourism, as a field having a great potential in expanding space, stands out from the sector of leisure economic consumption, plus the country's focus on the leisure economy, a series of policies to promote the leisure economy have been introduced one after another, and a series of vacation systems has been updated. Massive supportive policies have also played a powerful role in promoting the development of hot spring tourism.

4.3.2 Redefining the new identity of hot spring tourism and showing the new operational type of hot spring tourism

With the rapid development of hot spring tourism, the developers are launching a variety of hot spring tourism projects like a raging fire. Numerous hot spring tourism projects not only meet people's needs for leisure and healthcare tourism, but also allow the hot spring culture to be widely

recognized. The number of people choosing hot spring tourism projects is increasing, and the combination of hot springs and resorts and hotels is becoming more and more common. It has developed into a situation that where there is hot spring, there is hot spring resort or hotel. According to the statistics of the 2019 industry development report, as of the end of 2018, the number of hot spring enterprises nationwide has reached 2,714 (except Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan). The combination of hot springs with hotels has become a new operational type of urban hot springs. This new type has enabled hot spring tourism to expand the width and depth of industry.

4.4 Developmental challenge analysis: Threats

4.4.1 The challenge posed by blind development to environmental sustainable development

At the same time as hot spring tourism resources are developed, whether it can complement each other with the sustainable development of the environment has become the current challenge we are up against. The hot spring scenic spot relies on geothermal water resources, which has a strong environmental sensitivity and relatively high requirement for the scenic area environment. The development of hot spring scenic spots not only consumes the geothermal resources to some extent, but also has different degrees of impact or even damage upon the ecological environment. However, as far as the current situation is concerned, the low-level development of hot spring tourism resources in Shandong Province still exists. Part of high-quality resources have still not been fully exploited and utilized. If the development and management are not strengthened timely, the future development of Shandong hot spring tourism will be affected definitely.

The competition between hot spring tourism products with identical property in the market is relatively fierce, which lowers the economic benefits of hot spring tourism enterprises gradually, and shortens the life cycle of hot spring products gradually, the management level of scenic spots is not high, the awareness of resource protection is poor, and too much emphasis are placed on the profitability during the development of the scenic spots and the sustainability of resources has been ignored. All these problems have caused the wanton use of hot spring bath water and serious waste of resources. The concept of sustainable development has become one of the biggest challenges facing the development of hot spring tourism in Shandong Province and even the whole country.

4.4.2 Inadequate use of hot spring tourism products

Shandong Province not only has the ecological culture of “Unity of Heaven and Man”, but also owns rich historical and cultural resources. The development and design of hot spring tourism products should be combined with local culture, but this is not well realized in many scenic spots. Some hot spring scenic spots target mainly the high-end consumers, limiting tourism activities to buildings or so-called consumptive ecotourism instead of the mass tourism that has a deep cultural connotation. At the same time, the hot spring culture lacks a materialized construction. For example, the hot spring tourism area lacks the architectural facilities that are rich in cultural color such as the local custom hall corresponding to the local civilization.

5 Countermeasures for the development of hot spring tourism in Shandong Province

5.1 Highlight the characteristics of the scenic spot and enrich the connotation of hot spring tourism products

In order to fully meet the mental and physical need of tourists, Shandong Province should adopt the strategy of “one hot spring, one morality” to determine the theme of different hot springs, and fully explore the different connotations of hot spring products to create a distinctive product style and produce a customized brand image, set foot on the path of feature optimization. However, most of the hot spring resources are distributed in mountainous areas, and it is difficult to achieve

sustainable development by relying on their own resources. At present, the development of hot spring tourism in Shandong Province is based on a cross-regional cooperation model including resources, brand and management.

On the basis of comprehensive control and development, the theme of the scenic spot is embodied in environmental construction, project setting, service implementation, etc. In order to strengthen the promotion of the hot spring market and brand marketing, the culture of Qi and Lu shall be deeply explored to highlight the connotation of ecological health and leisure. The hot spring products shall be integrated into government public marketing programs, online marketing, and event marketing.

5.2 Enhance the concept of sustainable development and raise awareness of environmental protection

Comrade Xi Jinping emphasized that “Green hills and clear waters are the mountains of gold and silver”, and the concept of environmental sustainability is an important factor for product development and planning. The sustainable development of hot spring tourism can optimize the environment of the tourist site, enrich the kinds of vacation tourism products, and extend the life cycle of hot spring tourist site. The sustainable development of hot spring tourist site not only motivates the sustainable development of China's tourism industry, but also boosts the sustainable development of the national economy.

It is expected that, when the hot spring products are developed, environmental conservation concepts such as the laws of natural development, limited development, and reasonable capacity should be respected, and environmental protection should be executed since the source of development.

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