

Exploration of the Path of High-quality Development of Cultural Tourism Integration in Shandong Province

Tian Wang*

Department of Economic Management, Shandong Vocational College of Science and Technology, Weifang,
Shandong, China

2286217327@qq.com

*Corresponding author

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Abstract: People's desire for top-notch tourism is growing as a result of the quick advancement of socioeconomic development and the alteration of the notion of consumption. Encouraging the deep integration of culture and tourist development has emerged as a key strategy for empowering both the tourism and cultural industries and for boosting local economic growth. Using Shandong Province as its research subject, this paper examines the historical underpinnings of the integration of culture and tourism, combines the current state of that development with an analysis of the path that the integration has taken in light of the issues that the province faces. It aims to provide reference for the integrated development of culture and tourism in Shandong Province and other provinces.

1. Introduction

The merging of culture and tourism involves a respect for the distinctions between the two industries and a crossover into cultural creativity, business management, and marketing. The cultural and tourism sectors, along with their associated parts, are influenced by shifts in social demand, which causes them to reorganize and interpenetrate one another, eventually shattering the initial industrial boundaries.^[1] China's industrial and economic development will inevitably lead to the integrated development of culture and tourism. A thorough examination of the region's cultural significance is necessary to encourage the integration of culture and tourism, which in turn empowers both the tourist and cultural industries. Culture and tourism go hand in hand. Because of the abundance of cultural and tourist resources in Shandong Province, examining the state of affairs and current issues with the integration of culture and tourism in the context of the big data era and offering suggestions for rationalization are helpful in fostering the high-quality development of this integration as well as the upgrading and transformation of the economic development mode.

2. Current Situation of Cultural and Tourism Integration Development in Shandong Province

Shandong Province is on China's eastern coast, at the lower reaches of the Yellow River. The region is reflected in the sea and mountains, combines the peninsula and interior areas, and has mountains and plains that have been inhabited by people since prehistoric times. 99,460,000 sons and daughters of Qilu were raised on 157,900 square kilometers of land, 159,500 square kilometers of sea, and more than 3,000 kilometers of the gold coast.

2.1. Rich Cultural and Tourism Resources

Shandong and Old China glow like stars together, simple and generous Shandong Province, is Confucianism, medicine and agriculture and the origin of the hundred schools of thought and the development of fertile "soil".^[2] With four world-class cultural heritage sites—Mount Tai, Three Holes of Qufu, the Great Wall of Qi, and the Grand Canal—Shandong Province boasts one of the highest concentrations of both overall culture and first-class cultural artifacts in the nation. In

addition, the spirit of Yimeng—close ties with the people, go through thick and thin with them—is a significant component of the traditional culture of the Chinese people, having originated in Shandong Province, an ancient center of revolution. Shandong Province has abundant tourism resources in addition to its rich cultural heritage. According to statistics, Shandong Province has more than 1,200 Class A tourism attractions as of January 2024, including 14 Class 5A and more over 230 Class 4A attractions. In many urban regions, a network of picturesque locations with a comprehensive hierarchical structure has developed to accommodate tourists' needs at different levels. In addition, Shandong Province has a strong industrial base, high-speed railroads and highways, international airports and ports, and convenient transportation is conducive to the promotion of tourism.

2.2. Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritance Leads to Tourism Development

Shandong Province has a rich history and a wealth of intangible cultural heritage materials. Based on statistical data, the intangible cultural heritage of Shandong Province currently comprises 10 main categories, including folklore, traditional music, and folk literature. Shandong Province has 186 national intangible cultural heritages as of January 2024. Of these, folk literature makes up 14.5% (27 items), traditional music accounts for 9.8% (18 items), traditional dance accounts for 6.9% (13 items), traditional drama accounts for 17.7% (33 items), Chinese operatic singing accounts for 6.9% (13 items), traditional sports, amusement, and acrobatics accounts for 8.1% (13 items), traditional fine arts accounts for 15.1% (28 items), traditional skills accounts for 10.2% (19 items), traditional medicine accounts for 3.2% (6 items), and folklore comprises 7.6% (14 items). Shandong Province uses intangible cultural heritage as a cultural and tourism connection point to explore the living mode of intangible cultural heritage and enhance the cultural experience of the main body of tourism.^[3] To support the growth of the comprehensive integration of culture and tourism in Shandong Province, the Department of Culture and Tourism of Shandong Province announced in January 2024, 17 intangible cultural heritage featured tourism routes, like the Ancient City of Taierzhuang, and 13 intangible cultural heritage tourism experience bases, like the intangible cultural heritage space of Shihuyuan in Weifang.

2.3. Policy Support and Top-level Design

In July 2020, the Department of Culture and Tourism of Shandong Province issued the "Shandong Province Culture and Tourism Integration Development Plan" (2020-2025), which puts forward the five basic principles of adhering to integrated development, adhering to coordination, adhering to market orientation, adhering to reform and innovation, and adhering to green development, and vigorously develops high-quality tourism by highlighting the advantages of red culture and excellent traditional culture, and then creates a demonstration province for all-area tourism, and a new highland for integrated development of culture and tourism. In March 2023, the CPC Shandong Provincial Committee and Shandong Provincial People's Government issued the "Opinions on Promoting the Deep Integration of Culture and Tourism and Promoting the High-quality Development of Tourism", which is based on the concept of "everything can be traveled, and everywhere is a scene", and puts forward the objectives of building a demonstration place for the innovative development of excellent traditional culture, building a national rural tourism destination, stimulating the vitality of consumption of culture and tourism, accelerating the development of intelligent tourism, expanding the new scenes of culture and tourism, developing innovative future forms, and shaping the characteristics of the city's tourism brand.

3. Problems in the Development of Cultural Tourism Integration in Shandong Province

3.1. Lack of Character in the Tourism Integration Industry

In recent years, the tourism industry and cultural industry in Shandong Province have developed rapidly, but the development and integration of cultural and tourism resources still remain on the surface, and the cultural and tourism integration industry lacks characteristics. The tourism industry

is still dominated by sightseeing tours, and most scenic spots have homogenized and identical projects, and the level of culture and tourism products is low and of poor taste. For example, Qingzhou Ancient City, Taierzhuang Ancient City, Mingshui Ancient City and other historical and cultural cities are marked by traditional culture with uneven quality of experience projects and products, local opera and intangible cultural heritage and other cultural resources into the scenic area through the form of folk art exhibitions and performances, but the theme and characteristics are not distinctive, and the tourists have a poor experience. In addition, the cultural and tourism attractions operate separately, lack of connectivity, and fail to integrate into the logical main line of "Friendly Shandong", failing to realize the integrated development and integration of the whole region's resources with the point.

3.2. Brand influence needs to be improved

In 2008, Shandong Province launched the "Friendly Shandong" tourism brand, which fully embodies the concepts of Confucius, "the benevolent love others" and "it is such a delight to have friends coming from afar". In recent years, the brand has been publicized through TV advertisements, newspaper advertisements, outdoor advertisements and digital media advertisements, and has a certain degree of brand awareness and reputation, but the brand influence needs to be improved. Under the background of "Internet +", digital media has become an important way to enhance brand influence. "Friendly Shandong" has created a official account, video number, WeChat mini program, Tik Tok, but the form and quality of the content released on the new media platform need to be improved and enhanced. The theme of the released videos is not distinctive, for example, in the case of Tik Tok, there is overlap in the contents of the compilations such as winter travel to the seaside, winter tour to Qilu, and meeting the sea along the Yellow River; the quality of the videos is low, and the setting up of simple virtual characters to explain in many city propaganda films greatly affects the audience's visual experience, which is not conducive to the creation of emotional resonance; the official account does not take into account the active time of the positioning group when pushing, and the frequency of pushing is not fixed, which makes it difficult to establish user stickiness.

3.3. Lack of Talent in the Field of Culture and Tourism Industry

Since 2022, the Department of Culture and Tourism of Shandong Province and the Propaganda Department of the CPC East China Provincial Committee have jointly issued relevant policies to strengthen the construction of talent in the field of culture and tourism. However, the culture and tourism field in Shandong Province still faces a shortage of talents, especially high-level talents, due to the lagging mechanism of talent cultivation, the overall lack of comprehensive quality and ability of practitioners. High-level talents are crucial to the development of culture and tourism projects and the operation of the whole chain of research, production, supply and marketing of culture and tourism products. At present, Shandong Province on culture and tourism high-level talent training efforts need to be strengthened, not through the professional knowledge learning channels, the lack of corresponding project support and vocational skills training, is not conducive to the practitioners of the comprehensive quality, creative ability and artistic level of enhancement, unable to play the role of the industry within the role of the transfer of masters. In addition, the form of vocational skills training related to the cultural industry and tourism industry is mostly in the form of online meetings, the training content is superficial and limited in time, and the time, content and form of the meetings lead to a poor training effect.

4. High-quality Development Path of Cultural Tourism Integration in Shandong Province

4.1. Strengthening the Cultural Guiding Effect and Enhancing the Quality of Cultural and Tourism Integration

The integration of culture and tourism is not simply to put on the hat of cultural elements in tourism resources, but to strengthen the integration between the cultural industry and the tourism

industry, and in the process of cultural and tourism integration, it is necessary to achieve "appropriate integration is integrated, can be integrated as much as possible, promote tourism with culture, and promote culture with tourism".^[4] In the process of cultural and tourism integration, we should pay attention to the revitalization and use of local cultural resources, enrich the supply of cultural and tourism integration products, and improve the quality of cultural and tourism integration. Shandong Province supports the design and production of cultural and creative products, create unique "Hospitality Shandong" cultural tourism souvenirs, and shape the image of "Hospitality Shandong" cultural and creative products. Shandong Province should develop and prosper night tourism and off-season tourism. Shandong Province through the development of nighttime opera performances, film and television entertainment, and night-time tourism "check-in" attractions, the development of immersive experience projects, the cultivation of nighttime sightseeing and recreation, performing arts experience, cultural and leisure and other formats, to create an all-weather tourism experience, enhance the charm of cultural tourism. In-depth excavation of historical culture and revolutionary cultural resources, improve the red tourism propaganda and display methods, explore the value and connotation of revolutionary cultural relics, develop cultural and creative products, enrich the form of cultural expression, and create "red + culture" red tourism composite products, which will contribute to the healthy and high-quality development of red tourism.

4.2. Utilizing the Advantages of All-media to Tell a Good Brand story

Mainstream media in all cities of Shandong Province should give full play to the advantages of localization, dig deep into the local brand story, and at the same time, use the new media platform, according to the portrait to dig the user's main needs and implicit needs, to show the brand of "Friendly Shandong" in the way of all-media, to build a new media matrix, to release the information of culture and tourism in time, and to create hot topics to take advantage of the momentum of the marketing, to achieve good communication results. In the Internet era, short videos can meet the needs of the public for information reception based on the characteristics of short, concise and large amount of information. As of June 2023, the number of online video users in China was 1044 billion, of which the number of short video users accounted for 98.3%. The construction and promotion of the "Friendly Shandong" brand should make full use of short videos to tap into the needs and pain points of tourists, interpret abstract brand concepts through vivid storylines, so that the audience will have emotional resonance with the brand, establish an effective connection between Shandong's cultural and tourism brand stories and the audience, and then create a unique brand IP.

4.3. Cultivating Talent Teams to Empower the Integrated Development of Culture and Tourism

The integrated development of culture and tourism in Shandong Province cannot be separated from the construction of culture and tourism professional talents. First of all, the introduction mechanism, service mechanism and incentive mechanism of culture and tourism professionals should be constructed to create a good talent environment and accelerate the training of leading talents. Secondly, to deepen the integration of industry and education, Shandong Province universities should optimize and adjust the curriculum system in the process of cultivating talents in cultural industry and tourism management, focusing on innovation, paying attention to the new situation of cultural industry and tourism industry, focusing on the integration of course ideology and politics, cultivating students' cultural self-confidence, and strengthening students' understanding of Friendly Shandong; at the same time, colleges and universities in Shandong Province should pay attention to practicality, cooperate with cultural and tourism units to create a second classroom for students, carry out experiential learning in combination with practical themes, and improve the comprehensive quality of students. Finally, we will increase the cultivation of existing cultural and tourism skills, and carry out on-line and off-line vocational training for employees at all levels of the cultural and tourism industry to enhance their service awareness and service level.

5. Conclusion

In recent years, the development of cultural and tourism integration has entered a high-speed development stage, this paper takes Shandong Province as an example, discusses the current situation of cultural and tourism integration development in Shandong Province as well as the existing problems, and puts forward the development path of cultural and tourism integration in a targeted way, namely, strengthening the cultural guiding effect, improving the quality of cultural and tourism integration, playing the advantages of all-media, telling a good brand story, and cultivating the talent team, empowering the development of cultural and tourism integration. In the future, Shandong Province should continue to give full play to its own resource advantages in the integrated development of culture and tourism, strengthen cooperation with schools and enterprises, learn from the successful experience of culture and tourism integration at home and abroad, and constantly optimize its own development strategy to create a new high ground for the integrated development of culture and tourism.

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