

Analysis of the Current Situation and Future Prospects of Tourism Development in the Mentougou Mountainous Area

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Abstract. Mentougou District is well-known for its hilly landscape and draws a large number of tourists sightseeing each year from Beijing's metropolitan region. Tourists have been deeply impacted by both the distinctive natural setting and the voluminous cultural artifacts. This study will analyze the benefits and drawbacks of the natural and cultural environment in the Mentougou mountainous area for the development of the tourism industry, mainly exploring tourism resources, transportation facilities, supporting service facilities, and other aspects. Based on the research results, combined with relevant literature, and drawing on the development experience of similar regions, effective suggestions are proposed for the development of tourism in the Mentougou mountainous area. This research suggests that Mentougou mountainous region's natural and cultural resources are ideally suited for the growth of tourism, and the advantages of this growth exceed the drawbacks. Developing landscape amusement projects, constructing transportation lines and service facilities, and strengthening the supervision of businesses are three suggestions proposed in this paper.

Keywords: Mentougou mountainous areas, tourism, transportation, service facilities, regulation.

1. Introduction

Mentougou District is an administrative district located in the west of Beijing. It is famous for its mountainous natural landscape and attracts many tourists from the urban area of Beijing every year. The unique natural landscape and rich cultural relics have left a deep impression on tourists. In 1994, after the original coal resource depletion in the area was exhausted, Mentougou Mountain urgently needed to develop new industries to develop the local economy [1]. The tourism industry is a sunrise industry in the 21st century, containing enormous potential. Mentougou District has a beautiful natural landscape, rich history, unique agriculture, mining culture and early communist revolution. Compared with other mountainous counties in Beijing such as Fangshan and Yanqing, the development of tourism is limited. Therefore, it is particularly important to develop local tourism resources according to local conditions, which will have a very significant impact on local economic development and industrial transformation and upgrading [2].

However, the development of Mentougou's tourism industry still faces many obstacles. In the early years, the main economic source of the Mentougou mountainous area was the mining industry. Today, coal resource depletion is exhausted and coal mines are closed. However, the frequent occurrence of ecological fragility and geological disasters left behind by highly polluting industries is irreversible. In addition, the transportation routes in the Mentougou mountainous area are sparse and the road conditions are poor; Most scenic spots lack sufficient development and pose safety hazards; Insufficient supporting facilities such as accommodation and catering have affected the travel experience of tourists [3].

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the reasons why Mentougou is suitable for developing the tourism industry, the current shortcomings of Mentougou's tourism industry, and feasible methods to balance the advantages and disadvantages of the tourism industry. Based on previous research results, effective suggestions are proposed for the development of tourism in the Mentougou mountainous area, helping Mentougou District find a tourism development path suitable for its own characteristics.

2. Advantages and Disadvantages of Developing Tourism in Mentougou

2.1. Rich Natural and Cultural Resources

Mentougou District is located in the west of Beijing, and the Yongding River passes through it. The mountainous area accounts for approximately 98% of the total area. Lingshan Mountain, with an altitude of 2303 meters, is the highest peak in Beijing. In addition, Mentougou District also has a long history and culture. As early as 10000 years ago, there were traces of ancient human activities in Mentougou. Numerous cultural relics have also been left in Mentougou by various dynasties and generations. For example, ancient villages such as the Jingxi Ancient Road, Cuanxia Village, religious temples such as Tanzhe Temple and Jietai Temple, the modern Tanchang Village Anti-Japanese base, and modern coal mining sites all contain extremely unique tourism resources, and the prospect of developing tourism cannot be underestimated.

Fangshan District, adjacent to Mentougou, also has similar geological, geomorphic, and cultural backgrounds to Mentougou District. For example, the tourism industry in Shidu Town has become very mature and has become a tourism distribution center integrating mountaineering, water playing, catering, and accommodation, which is deeply loved by residents in Beijing. The Pingxi Anti-Japanese Memorial Hall in the territory has also added some cultural tourism projects to Shidu, a region dominated by natural scenery. Overall, the tourism development project in the Shidu region has been very successful.

Looking back at Mentougou, since the gradual abandonment of the mining industry in the 1990s, the industry is in urgent need of transformation and upgrading. Currently, the tourism industry in the Mentougou Mountainous Area is not developed, with fewer scenic spots developed, a relatively shallow level of development, and incomplete supporting facilities. For example, the scenic Longmenjian Scenic Area in Qingshui Town is far from the urban area, but there is no hotel for accommodation, and there is no service place inside the scenic area, resulting in an extremely small number of tourists here. Qingshui Town has also been facing economic difficulties. Similarly, there is the Yanhecheng region, which boasts ancient roads and ancient villages, a beautiful landscape combining mountains and rivers, and the Chinese railway construction culture brought by the Fengsha Railway. In fact, there is hardly any tourism development here, and even the local people in Mentougou may not necessarily know this place.

2.2. Tourism Development Can Boost Economic Growth

The development of tourism is of great help to the industrial transformation and upgrading of Mentougou region. For example, Jiangshuihe Village at the foot of Lingshan Mountain actively develops various characteristic tourism projects such as picking, mountaineering, and horse riding, relying on the advantages of Lingshan Mountain. At the same time, the development of homestays in the village has not only brought economic income to this remote plateau mountain village but also enabled the unique folk culture of this village to be inherited. Originally, most of the residents in Jiangshuihe Village were elderly people, while most of the young people went out to work. The industrial transformation and upgrading of Jiangshuihe Village will help young people return to their hometown for employment and bring new vitality [4].

Similarly, Huanren County in Liaoning Province has achieved economic growth through the development of tourism. This remote county located in the eastern part of Liaoning Province was originally economically poor, with a severe loss of young population. In recent years, the county has vigorously developed its tourism industry with four major characteristics: the location of the World Cultural Heritage Wunv Mountain, the birthplace of Goguryeo, the birthplace of the Qing Dynasty, and the birthplace of Chinese Taoism. The tourism industry has promoted employment and achieved significant results in driving the economic development of the county. From 2016 to 2019, Huanren County received over 2.4 million tourists and earned a total income of nearly 100 million yuan. During the COVID-19 pandemic, although overseas tourists were scarce and the number of domestic

tourists significantly decreased, the future development potential and endogenous driving force for the economy remained strong [5].

It can be seen that the tourism industry is obvious for the economic development of underdeveloped mountainous areas. Not only can it attract tourists from all over the country based on its own geographical advantages, bringing in rich tourism income, but it can also provide employment opportunities, slow down local population loss, cater to China's policy of encouraging college students to return to their hometowns and bring new development opportunities to the vast underdeveloped areas.

2.3. Disadvantages Brought by the Development of Tourism

Although tourism has many benefits for the local economy, which can drive local economic development and enhance local visibility, blindly developing tourism can also bring crises.

The mining industry in Mentougou District has a long history. In the 1990s, coal resources gradually dried up, and coal mines began to close. Around 2005, it completely withdrew from the industrial structure of Mentougou [6]. However, ecological problems such as fragile geological structures, vegetation destruction, and soil erosion caused by mining are difficult to reverse in a short time. Every year in the rainy season in the Mentougou mountainous area, geological disasters of different scales occur, which has a significant impact on the safety of local residents and has also posed a significant constraint on the development of tourism.

At the same time, the tourism industry in Mentougou region is not developed, so its carrying capacity is extremely limited. Except for a few well-developed scenic spots, most scenic spots do not have complete supporting facilities such as catering, accommodation, parking, etc., nor do they have rescue and service departments. Not only will tourists' tourism experience fail to match the potential inherent in tourism resources, but also will bring great security risks. In other relatively closed mountainous areas, residents have more traditional concepts and are difficult to accept the entry of an emerging industry. If there is a lack of sound management, it may lead to a further decline in the tourist experience of tourists, thereby affecting the reputation of the entire region, and the gains outweigh the losses.

Traffic in the Mentougou mountainous area is also a major constraint. The mountainous area of Mentougou has high mountains and deep valleys, with narrow roads, making it difficult to rebuild new roads. Although the existing National Highway 109 upgrade project is ongoing, the progress is slow and cannot match the passenger flow in the Mentougou area. Under such conditions, frequent traffic accidents and congestion make many tourists flinch and give up visiting the mountains, which will also bring great difficulties to the development of tourism in the Mentougou mountainous area.

3. Suggestions

3.1. Development of Landscape Recreation Tourism Projects

Mentougou District can refer to the practices of scenic spots such as the Shidu Scenic Area to investigate the favorite amusement projects of young people, such as bungee jumping, rafting, cycling, motorcycle culture, and bar culture, and combine them with landscape scenery to develop amusement projects with local characteristics of Mentougou.

At the same time, the existing cultural landscape should also be fully justified. For example, the ancient human history tour with Donghulin ancient human site as the main body, the ancient road tour with Jingxi ancient road and Lutan ancient road as the main body, the ancient village tour with Cuandixia village as the main body, the "red tourism" (tourism related to the historical development of the CPC) with Zhaitang revolutionary base as the main body, etc. [7]. The key to the development of Mentougou tourism is the combination of various forms of scenic spots without departing from the major premise of "landscape recreation" [8].

3.2. Improvement in Reception Facilities and Transportation

If there is an intention to develop tourism, the current level of reception is far from enough, and large-scale upgrading of supporting facilities and transportation is very necessary.

For example, rural accommodation can be built in some villages, providing not only basic accommodation services, but also supporting services such as catering, fitness, and karaoke. Catering mainly focuses on the distinctive rural dishes in the Mentougou mountainous area, which can help tourists from the urban area of Beijing improve their taste and provide pure natural and pollution-free food [9].

In addition to accommodation and catering, necessary service facilities are also essential. The mountainous area of Mentougou has a complex terrain and is easy to get lost. There have been many missing tourists in the past, and effective guided services are extremely important. The guide center can provide maps, GPS positioning systems, etc., and provide tourists with clear and prohibited areas to visit. It can also serve as a receiving station for receiving tourists' SOS signals, and a standing rescue team to provide necessary emergency rescue services for tourists.

Transportation is also an extremely important factor. Compared to mountainous regions and counties such as Miyun and Yanqing, the mountainous area of Mentougou is generally characterized by valley terrain, which is not suitable for the development of suburban railways. The expressway is under construction but still needs time. Before the completion of the expressway construction, the most feasible method is to increase the number of public transportation shifts, mainly developing tourism with different types and sizes of tourism groups, supplemented by self-driving tours. Relying on tourist groups to reduce vehicles can avoid congestion and accidents and make the narrow Mentougou mountain road smoother and safer [10].

3.3. Avoidance of Possible Problems in the Development of Tourism

In the development of tourism, there are two types of problems that are most likely to arise: environmental problems and human problems.

As mentioned above, the ecological environment in the Mentougou Mountainous Area is fragile, and the environmental pollution caused by the mining industry is difficult to eliminate in the short term. This requires tourists to protect the environment in the Mentougou Mountainous Area from their own perspective, not only making their journey more enjoyable but also considering the happiness of others' journeys. Advocating that tourists do not litter, do not damage wild plants, reduce the use of disposable goods, encourage driving pure electric vehicles into mountainous areas, and encourage tourists to promptly report illegal sales of wild animals to the police are highly feasible practices.

The environmental problem has been solved, followed by the human problem. According to the existing experience in China, matters will become mixed when a local tourism industry is developed to a certain extent. Malicious price hikes and fraud against tourists are common. Malicious incidents of attacking tourists have even occurred in Sanya, Yunnan, and other places, which not only greatly discounts the tourist experience, but may even affect the development of the entire region's tourism industry.

In response to such situations, it is necessary to regulate the behavior of merchants. Local police can provide legal education to businesses as needed to make them understand what acts are illegal. At the same time, reference standards for prices are provided based on the actual situation. If tourists find something wrong, they can report it to the relevant departments. The complaint hotline must be unblocked and easily accessible to every tourist.

With the support of these policies, Mentougou tourism can avoid possible adverse factors to the maximum extent and ensure the tourist experience.

4. Conclusion

According to research, the natural and cultural resources in the Mentougou mountainous area are extremely suitable for the development of tourism, and the impact of tourism development on the local area outweighs its disadvantages. However, due to insufficient experience in the development of tourism in the past, there are still problems such as a lack of facilities and inconvenient transportation in the Mentougou mountainous area. The solutions proposed in this study include developing landscape amusement projects, constructing transportation lines and service facilities, and strengthening the supervision of businesses.

This study fully considers the favorable conditions and restrictive factors for the development of tourism in the Mentougou mountainous area. Through comprehensive consideration and extensive reference to previous experiences and excellent examples, it proposes multiple effective suggestions for the development of tourism in the Mentougou mountainous area. It has certain reference values for the local economic development route and is in line with the values of "a good natural environment is wealth" in China today.

Due to limitations in length and conditions, this study is unable to exhaust all the factors that affect the development of tourism in the Mentougou mountainous area. The local people's ideology and fire prevention in forest areas also have a significant impact on the development of the tourism industry. Further research can be conducted on the basis of this study in the future.

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