

Promotion strategies for Chinese tourists to choose tourist destinations based on the city's cultural image: Case study of Phuket

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Abstract

Culture and tourism have always been inextricably linked. Cultural tourism is not merely the simple combination of cultural elements and tourism activities; it is a deep-level integration practice that not only relates to the activation and dissemination of local cultural resources but also reflects the increasingly diverse spiritual needs of contemporary tourists. This research aims to study how Phuket can achieve the two-way integration of cultural value and tourism value, become an important destination for Chinese tourists to choose cultural tourism cities. Additionally, this research studies the deep development of Phuket's tourism industry through the promotion of Cultural industries. This study employed both qualitative and quantitative research methods. It collected data through in-depth interviews with two groups of selected information providers, namely government cultural tourism officials and managers of tourist attractions in Phuket, as well as by distributing 200 questionnaires to Chinese tourists who traveling to Phuket. Phuket has made notable progress in integrating cultural value with tourism value, successfully attracting Chinese tourists through government initiatives such as visa facilitation and social media marketing, as well as cultural attractions offering tailored experiences like festival-based activities and Chinese-language services. cultural activities significantly enhance Phuket's attractiveness and tourist satisfaction, but sustained improvement in service quality, cultural authenticity, and market regulation is essential for the deeper integration of cultural industries and tourism development.

Keywords: Promotion strategies, Chinese tourists, Tourist destinations, City's cultural image

Introduction

Culture and tourism have always been inextricably linked. Cultural sights, attractions and events provide an important motivation for travel, and travel in itself generates culture. But it is only in recent decades that the link between culture and tourism has been more explicitly identified as a specific form of consumption: cultural tourism. (Richards, 2013)

After decades of development, the tourism industry has entered a new stage of high-quality development. The market needs tourism products that are more characteristic, more meaningful, more attractive and more diverse. The in-depth integration of cultural elements such

as cultural resources, cultural content, cultural symbols, and cultural stories with tourism can not only make tourism products richer and tourism content more attractive but also allow more tourists to deeply appreciate the beauty of culture.

The integration of cultural elements, the creation of cultural themes, and exploring cultural depth have also become an important path for various places to enrich tourism products, improve tourism experience, and shape personalized services. From cultural theme hotels, homestays, to theme parks, characteristic blocks, to regional cuisine, tourism and performing arts. Cultural elements are being fully integrated into all aspects of the tourism industry, as tourism consumption shifts from "quantity growth" to "quality improvement", cultural tourism, as an important direction for the high-quality development of the tourism industry. Cultural tourism is not merely the simple combination of cultural elements and tourism activities; it is a deep-level integration practice that not only relates to the activation and dissemination of local cultural resources but also reflects the increasingly diverse spiritual needs of contemporary tourists. This research aims to study how Phuket can achieve the two-way integration of cultural value and tourism value and become an important destination for Chinese tourists to choose cultural tourism cities. Additionally, this research will also attempt to explore multiple dimensions such as tourist behavior, destination construction, and cultural reproduction, how culture is understood, consumed, and recreated during the tourism process.

Purpose of Study

1. To study the development status of cultural tourism in Phuket.
2. To study the combination of cultural connotations with the development of tourism resources.
3. To study the development of Phuket's tourism industry through the promotion of Cultural industries.

Significant of the Study

1. To provide Chinese tourists with the relevant advice and attractions of cultural tourism in Phuket.
2. To provide promotion strategies for cultural tourism organizations or tourism industries in Phuket.

Theoretical Framework

To analyze the phenomenon of cultural tourism in Phuket and the promotion strategies of Chinese tourists in choosing a tourist destination, this study used two main theories to describe it: Tourist behavior theory, Destination Image theory and Marketing Mix (4Ps) Theory.

Push and Pull Theory

Dann (1977) proposed the push-pull theory of tourism motivation, which is one of the fundamental theories used to explain tourists' motivations. According to this theory, the occurrence of tourism behavior is the result of the combined effect of internal motivation and external attractions. Among them, the push factors stem from the internal needs of tourists themselves, such as escaping reality, relaxation and leisure, cultural exploration, and the realization of personal value; while the pull factors come from the attractiveness of the tourist destination, including natural landscapes, cultural resources, infrastructure, and cultural characteristics. After Dann (1977) proposed the push-pull theory, Crompton (1979) further systematically classified and expanded the "push motivation". He believed that tourists' travel was not merely driven by a simple "escape" factor, but was the result of the combined effect of multiple psychological and social needs. Crompton classified the motives for leisure tourism into eight types, including:

First, escape: temporarily distancing from the pressures and monotony of daily life, seeking psychological relaxation and liberation.

Second, social interaction: making new friends or spending time with family and friends.

Third, self-exploration: deepening the reflection on oneself.

Fourth, relaxation: pursuing physical and mental relaxation.

Fifth, prestige: obtaining social recognition through tourism and satisfying the need for conspicuous consumption.

Sixth, novelty: experiencing different cultures and environments.

Seventh, education and learning: acquiring knowledge and broadening horizons through travel.

Eighth, family bonding: facilitates interaction among family members.

The behavior of Chinese tourists choosing Phuket can be understood as the result of the interaction between their internal motivations (such as curiosity about culture and the need for relaxation) and the urban cultural image presented by Phuket (including Buddhist culture, historical buildings, and festive atmosphere). Therefore, the push-pull theory not only helps to reveal the reasons for tourists' travel but also provides a theoretical basis for how the cultural image of a destination constitutes "attractiveness". Crompton (1979) classification of motivations provides further theoretical support for understanding the psychological needs behind Chinese tourists' choice of Phuket, especially when exploring the tourists' focus on foreign cultures and novel experiences. For example, for tourists whose main motivation is "cultural exploration", the destination can strengthen the dissemination of its urban cultural image, highlighting elements such as historical heritage, religious beliefs, and local traditions, thereby enhancing the destination's attractiveness.

Destination Image theory

Destination image is one of the important factors influencing tourists' travel decisions. Baloglu and McCleary (1999) proposed that the overall impression of a destination by tourists mainly consists of two parts: cognitive image and affective image. The cognitive image refers to tourists' perception of the objective attributes of the destination, such as history and culture, urban facilities and price levels, the affective image reflects tourists' subjective emotional responses to the destination, such as the degree of liking and interest. As the role of urban culture in tourism continues to grow, cultural image has become a key factor in building the differentiated competitive advantage of a destination. This study incorporates the cultural image of Phuket into the category of destination image and explores its role in the destination selection process of Chinese tourists.

Marketing Mix (4Ps) Theory

McCarthy (1960) proposed that the 4Ps of Marketing Mix is the theory of modern marketing management. This theory states that enterprises can achieve the goals of meeting consumers' needs, enhance market competitiveness and achieve organizational objectives by combining the four core elements of Product, Price, Place and Promotion.

In the tourism field, the application of the 4Ps marketing theory has shifted from the traditional "attracting tourists" to "building brands and conveying cultural values". Modern tourists are increasingly focusing on the cultural experience and emotional identification with the destination. Especially in market segments like Chinese tourists, who are culturally-oriented, the perception of a city's cultural image plays a crucial role in tourism decision-making (Kotler et al., 2017; Chen & Phou, 2013).

Review Literature

Development of Cultural Tourism in Phuket

Virdee (2016) studied the image of Chinese temples and shrines in Phuket as cultural tourism attractions from the perspective of international tourists. the study found that Asian and European tourists had different views on Chinese temples. Asian tourists were more likely to experience religious and traditional imagery than European tourists, who experienced more feelings of peace and fascination. In conclusion, Chinese temples and shrines in Phuket also are seen as unique and heritage and cultural tourism attractions. Krutwayscho et al. (2020) explored the cultural tourism development of the Leam Tukkae Gypsy village off Phuket Island, emphasizing the promotion of the sustainability of cultural tourism through community participation. Zehsaung and Monpanthong (2024) from the perspective of quality standards proposed that cultural attractions on Phuket Island should establish a unified service and cultural expression system to enhance the overall image.

The Basis for Chinese tourists to choose tourist destinations

With the popularization of technologies such as the Internet, mobile applications, and social media, the way tourists choose their destinations has changed significantly. Research focuses on the impact of information technology on the formation of destination image, tourists' decision-making process, and tourism marketing strategies. Sigala (2018) discussed how social media affects tourists' cognition and choice of tourist destinations in social media and customer engagement in the tourism industry: A review of literature, emphasizing the important role of online reviews, social platforms, and travel bloggers in destination selection. Social media provides tourists with a large amount of instant information and interactive platforms, helping them make more personalized decisions in the process of destination selection. (Chen, Loverio, Wang, Bu, & Shen, 2021) explores how mien-tzu may be a vital motivation to travel, influencing travel behaviors and destination choices among Chinese tourists. Destination management organizations should include in their plans a way for tourists to create more memories that can be shared on social media. More places can be developed where tourists can take photos or videos to record their experiences. Providing treasured memories that tourists can constantly share helps promote the destination because tourists become the experts in their social circles and are willing to do marketing for the destination. Due to the popularity of social media and its influence, destination management organizations that want to increase their influence in the Chinese market should include advertising on Chinese social media in their plans.

The Roles of Government on Cultural Tourism Development.

Qun, Wall & Liu, (2011) taking Yangshuo in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China as an example, explores the impact of government participation on the development of heritage tourism. Yangshuo's success in developing tourism is partly because the Yangshuo government attaches great importance to tourism, actively encourages the development of tourism, and adopts a variety of support measures. Zehsaung and Monpanthong (2024) in their research proposed that the quality standard policy for cultural tourism attractions in Phuket is an important measure to drive the government to enhance the attractiveness of cultural tourism. This includes the government formulating or encouraging the formulation of unified standards for attractions' services, cultural display, and experience facilities, in order to increase tourist satisfaction and strengthen the shaping of the cultural image.

Methodology

This study uses quantitative and qualitative research to find accurate data and appropriate strategies. Quantitative research methods focus on using statistical analysis to explore the relationships between variables, mainly relying on questionnaire surveys to assess various factors influencing tourists' choice of tourist destinations. Qualitative research methods, on the other hand, focus on understanding the deep-seated motivations and psychological mechanisms

behind tourists' choice of tourist destinations. This research is analyzed using research literature and in-depth interviews as research methods.

Samples

The sample population of this study can be divided into relevant categories based on the research method. Sample size of Quantitative data Cochran formula is used to calculate the minimum sample size needed for a survey or study when dealing with a large or unknown population size

1. Purposive Sampling- Key Informant

This study selected including government organizations, head of Phuket Cultural Tourist attractions tourism industry experts and Chinese tourists in Phuket. These groups of research samples will cover the entire Phuket tourism market.

2. Convenience Sampling

By collecting data on all three parts of the role of government organizations in cultural tourism development, this study is conducive to the full realization of Phuket cultural tourism development targeting Chinese tourists. The three categories of research samples are as follows

1) Informants from 5 government organizations in Phuket city

The researcher selected key informants from each government organization in Phuket municipality in which those organizations are outstanding organizations on provincial development. These organizations were chosen to fulfill the comprehension of cultural tourism development in Phuket.

2) Respondents from staff of 5 cultural tourism attractions in Phuket

The researchers selected 5 important key respondents who are all staff of major cultural tourism attractions in Phuket.

3) Informants from 5 Tourism industry experts

Tourism industry experts are an important source for understanding how Phuket's cultural image is effectively conveyed.

3. Chinese tourists in Phuket (20 persons)

Choosing Chinese tourists of this study focused on Chinese tourists who came from the Mainland of China and traveled in Phuket municipality area according to the case study content. Besides, this Chinese tourists' key informants of this study were emphasized on FIT (Free Independent Tourist) tourists who mostly are young generation or millennial that managed their own vacation including hotels, restaurant, transportation, tour package, etc. and made a decision of travel by themselves.

Instruments and Data collection

1. Questionnaire

In this study, 200 questionnaires were distributed to Chinese tourists traveling to Phuket Island.

For data analysis for Quantitative Data, statistical methods Chi-Square test, T-Test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

2. In-depth interviews

This study employed the in-depth interview method to conduct interviews with key information providers from three selected groups.

Result

1. Result from government agency

Based on in-depth interviews with several government officials, the Thai government has played an active role in promoting tourism culture in Phuket towards the Chinese market. Most respondents mentioned that vigorously developing tourism culture is regarded as an important strategic direction for addressing seasonal limitations and enhancing the resilience of tourism, which is conducive to Phuket's transformation from "relying on weather conditions" to "internal growth". Moreover, tourism culture provides a platform for the display, dissemination and market-oriented operation of Phuket's intangible cultural heritage. In terms of attracting Chinese tourists, the Thai government has repeatedly introduced visa-free or visa-on-arrival policies for Chinese visitors, simplifying the entry procedures and lowering the travel barriers. This has significantly enhanced the outbound travel intentions of Chinese tourists. The Tourism Authority of Thailand actively utilized Chinese social media platforms (such as Weibo, Xiaohongshu, Douyin, etc.) for targeted marketing, inviting Chinese influencers, bloggers, and celebrities for promotional cooperation, thereby expanding the influence of Phuket Island in the Chinese market. However, there are still some shortcomings in the treatment of Chinese tourists. Firstly, some local governments lack experience and sensitivity in handling emergencies and fail to promptly and properly deal with tourism safety or service disputes that cause public opinion, thereby damaging the trust feelings of Chinese tourists. Secondly, although the surface service measures are complete, there are still deficiencies in deep cultural understanding and service details. Moreover, some tourist areas have problems such as price fraud and forced shopping, and the regulatory and law enforcement efforts of relevant government departments are insufficient, which has undermined the overall tourism experience of Chinese tourists. Therefore, the Thai government still needs to strengthen the regulation and management of the tourism market, enhance the cross-cultural competence of service personnel, and establish a more comprehensive safety and protection system for tourists' rights and interests, in order to build long-term trust and a favorable international image.

2. Result from cultural tourism attraction managers

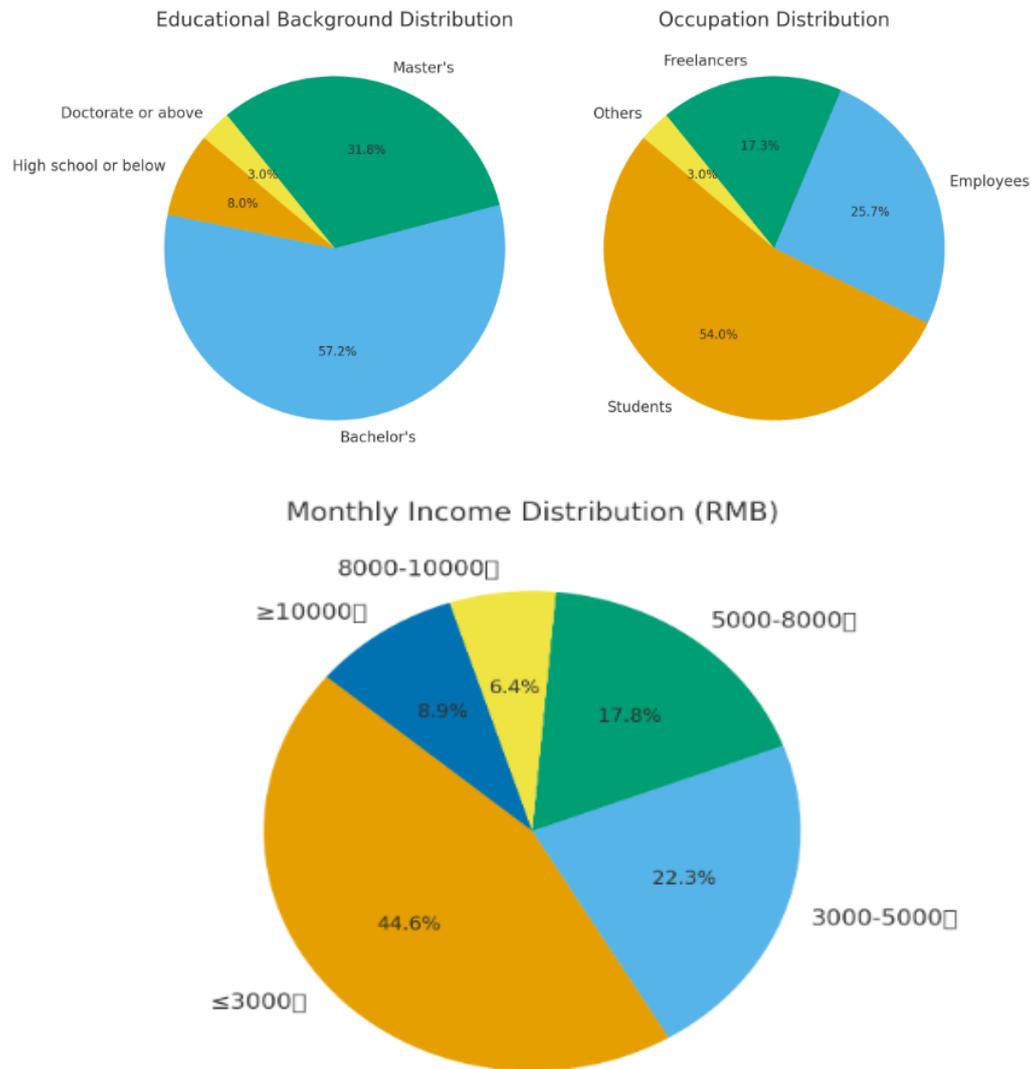
Based on the in-depth interviews with the managers of various cultural tourism attractions in Phuket, it can be seen that the attraction management authorities attach great importance to the Chinese tourist market and have generally adopted measures such as setting up Chinese-language directional signs and developing cultural products suitable for Chinese tourists to

enhance Chinese tourists' understanding and participation in Thai culture. Some attractions have also attempted to launch customized cultural activities for Chinese festivals to enhance tourists' sense of belonging and cultural experience. However, the managers also mentioned that although the government has set up relevant training programs, there are still problems such as insufficient understanding of Chinese cultural background and limited communication skills among front-line practitioners. Some cultural resources have been affected by excessive commercialization during the development process, mostly focusing on "check-in" activities, which has weakened the original cultural connotation. In the future, further optimization needs to be achieved through mechanism improvement and resource support.

3. Result from Chinese tourists in Phuket

3.1 Analyze the basic information of the respondents

This article uses the purposive sample statistical approach to survey 202 Chinese tourists who traveled in Phuket. A questionnaire with 24 items was provided to Chinese tourists, which included 58 male tourists (28.7%) and 144 female tourists (71.3%). Participants ranged from under 18 (3.5%) to over 45 (1%). From the perspective of the educational attainment of the respondents, the group with a bachelor's degree accounted for the highest proportion, with a total of 115 individuals, accounting for 57.2% of the total; followed by those with a master's degree, with a total of 64 individuals, accounting for 31.8%; respondents with a high school education or below accounted for 16 individuals, accounting for only 8%; and those with a doctoral degree or above had the fewest, with only 6 individuals, accounting for 3%. Overall, the respondents were mainly from the youth student group. The student group accounted for the largest proportion, with a total of 109 individuals, representing 54.0%; followed by employees of enterprises or institutions, with a total of 52 individuals, accounting for 25.7%; freelancers totaled 35 individuals, representing 17.3%; and the "other" category had only 6 individuals, accounting for 3.0%. Overall, the sample was dominated by students, followed by employees and freelancers, indicating that the respondents in this survey mainly came from the young student group. Most respondents have a monthly income (or student living expenses) of below 3,000 RMB (44.6%) and 3,000–5,000 RMB (22.3%), together accounting for nearly two-thirds of the sample. In contrast, only about one-third of respondents fall into the above 5,000 RMB category, with just 8.9% earning over 10,000 RMB.



3.2 Analyze the factors related to tourists' behavior in choosing tourist attractions

3.2.1 Monthly income is related to purchasing behavior in choosing tourist attractions

The chi-square test revealed a significant difference in the preference for high-priced travel destinations among students with different income levels ($\chi^2 = 40.638$, $df = 16$, $p = 0.001$). The linear-by-linear association further indicates that students with higher income levels are more likely to prefer expensive travel destinations.

Table 1 Monthly income is related to purchasing behavior in choosing tourist attractions

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	40.638 ^a	16	.001
Likelihood Ratio	39.271	16	.001
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.814	1	.003
N of Valid Cases	202		

3.2.2. Social media is related to tourist attraction selection behavior

The results of the chi-square test indicate that relationship between the two variables is statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 144.291$, $p < .001$), suggesting a positive association between social media usage and interest in cultural tourism. Respondents who frequently use social media platforms to seek travel recommendations are more likely to choose destinations with cultural activities.

Table 2 social media is related to tourist attraction selection behavior

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	144.291 ^a	16	.000
Likelihood Ratio	87.838	16	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	42.909	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	202		

3.2.3. Cultural activities are related to tourist attraction selection behavior

The analysis reveals a strong and significant association between the two variables: individuals who perceive cultural activities (such as festivals, performances, and local customs) as enhancing the attractiveness of a destination are also more likely to enjoy experiencing different cultures during their travels. The Pearson Chi-Square test ($\chi^2 = 253.810$, $df = 16$, $p < 0.001$) confirms that this relationship is highly significant, indicating that the alignment of attitudes is not due to chance. Tourists who have a stronger preference for cultural activities tend to choose scenic spots with more cultural activities during their travels.

Table 3 Cultural activities are related to tourist attraction selection behavior

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	253.810 ^a	16	.000
Likelihood Ratio	118.099	16	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	77.018	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	202		

3.2.4. Age related to tourist attraction selection behavior

There are significant differences in the evaluation of whether "cultural activities enhance the attractiveness of tourist destinations" among different age groups ($p < 0.05$). Among them, the young group aged 18-35 generally showed high agreement, while the group over 36 years old had relatively scattered attitudes. Overall, young tourists prefer to choose destinations with cultural activities.

Table 4 Age related to tourist attraction selection behavior

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	29.380 ^a	16	.021
Likelihood Ratio	26.804	16	.044
Linear-by-Linear Association	.812	1	.368
N of Valid Cases	202		

3.3 Analyze the factors that influence tourists' satisfaction with cultural tourism

3.3.1 Compare the level of interest in cultural tourism between male and female tourists

The independent samples t-test results show that males ($M = 3.64$, $SD = 1.02$) and females ($M = 3.85$, $SD = 0.97$) differ slightly in their preference for “travel with cultural experiences rather than purely leisure vacations,” but the difference is not statistically significant. Levene’s test indicates equal variances can be assumed ($p = 0.483 > 0.05$). The t-test result ($t = -1.366$, $p = 0.173 > 0.05$) confirms that there is no significant gender difference.

Table 5 Compare the level of interest in cultural tourism between male and female tourists

	Gender:	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
I prefer trips that involve cultural experiences rather than purely leisure-oriented ones.	A. Male	58	3.64	1.021	.134
	B. Female	144	3.85	.970	.081

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
I prefer trips that involve cultural experiences rather than purely leisure-oriented ones.	Equal variances assumed	494	.483	-1.366	200	.173	-.209	.153	-.511	.093
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.337	100.720	.184	-.209	.157	-.520	.101

3.3.2. Compare satisfaction with cultural tourism attractions between tourists who have studied information before and those who have not

The results of t-test show a significant difference in overall satisfaction with cultural tourist attractions between the two groups. Specifically, respondents who agreed more strongly that “understanding the local culture before arrival enhances the travel experience” reported significantly higher satisfaction ($M = 3.91$, $SD = 0.72$, $n = 189$) compared to those with lower agreement ($M = 2.23$, $SD = 1.24$, $n = 13$). In other words, travelers who value learning about local culture before visiting tend to report much higher satisfaction with cultural attractions.

Table 6 Compare satisfaction with cultural tourism attractions between tourists who have studied information before and those who have not

	Learning culture before arriving will enhance the experience.	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Satisfied with the cultural tourism attractions I have visited.	≥ 3	189	3.91	.720	.052
	< 3	13	2.23	1.235	.343

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			t-test for Equality of Means					
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
I am generally satisfied with the cultural tourism attractions I have visited.	Equal variances assumed	13.776	.000	7.698	200	.000	1.679	.218	1.249	2.109
	Equal variances not assumed			4.846	12.567	.000	1.679	.347	.928	2.431

3.3.3. Compare the level of expectation before traveling and satisfaction after traveling

This t-test compares satisfaction with cultural tourist attractions between two groups: those who had high expectations before visiting (≥3) and those with lower expectations (<3). Results show a clear difference: the high-expectation group reported significantly higher satisfaction (M = 3.90, SD = 0.73, n = 186) than the low-expectation group (M = 2.69, SD = 1.40, n = 16). In other words, tourists who entered with higher expectations that were met or exceeded reported much greater satisfaction with cultural attractions.

Table 7 Compare the level of expectation before traveling and satisfaction after traveling

	Exception	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Satisfied with the cultural tourism attractions I have visited.	≥ 3	186	3.90	.732	.054
	< 3	16	2.69	1.401	.350

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances			t-test for Equality of Means					
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Satisfied with the cultural tourism attractions I have visited.	Equal variances assumed	27.571	.000	5.796	200	.000	1.210	.209	.799	1.622
	Equal variances not assumed			3.416	15.712	.004	1.210	.354	.458	1.963

3.3.4. Compare the level of intention to return to travel between tourists who travel in groups and alone

From this t-test, the results show that individuals who preferred solo travel (M = 3.87, SD = 0.91, n = 187) and those who preferred group travel (M = 3.73, SD = 0.96, n = 15) had very similar mean scores regarding whether travel mode influences their cultural tourism experience. Whether traveling individually or in a group, respondents expressed largely similar views on cultural tourism experiences.

Table 8 Compare the level of intention to return to travel between tourists who travel in groups and alone

	15.Which way	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
The way I travel significantly affects how I experience cultural destinations.	Alone	187	3.87	.913	.067
	Group	15	3.73	.961	.248

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances				t-test for Equality of Means		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
The way affects how I experience cultural destinations.	Equal variances assumed	.012	.913	.563	200	.574	.138	.246	-.346	.623
	Equal variances not assumed			.538	16.092	.598	.138	.257	-.406	.683

3.3.5. Compare satisfaction with cultural tourist attractions between different age groups

The post-hoc test results (Tukey and Waller-Duncan) indicate significant differences in overall satisfaction with cultural tourist attractions across age groups. Respondents aged under 18 reported the lowest satisfaction (M = 2.00), followed by those above 45 (M = 3.00). In contrast, the 18–25 (M = 3.86), 26–35 (M = 3.81), and 36–45 (M = 4.04) groups showed higher satisfaction levels, with no significant differences among them. Younger visitors (under 18) and older visitors (above 45) tend to be less satisfied, while middle-aged groups (18–45) report relatively higher and more consistent levels of satisfaction.

Table 9 Compare satisfaction with cultural tourist attractions between different age groups

Subset for alpha = 0.05				
	Age	N	1	2
Tukey B ^{a,b}	Under 18	7	2.00	
	Above 45	2		3.00
	25-36	48		3.81
	18-25	117		3.86
	36-45	28		4.04
Waller-Duncan ^{a,b,c}	Under 18	7	2.00	
	Above 45	2	3.00	3.00
	25-36	48		3.81
	18-25	117		3.86
	36-45	28		4.04

I am generally satisfied with the cultural tourism attractions I have visited.

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 7.063.

3.3.6. Compare interest in cultural tourism between different social statuses

The results show differences in willingness to pay more for high-quality cultural tourism experiences across occupational groups. Among them, freelancers reported the highest willingness to pay ($M = 3.74$), followed by employees ($M = 3.58$), students ($M = 3.51$), and others ($M = 3.33$). Freelancers showed the highest average willingness to choose culture tourists.

Table 10 Compare interest in cultural tourism between different social statuses

			Subset for alpha = 0.05
	Occupation	N	1
Tukey B ^{a,b}	Other	6	3.33
	Student	109	3.51
	Employee	52	3.58
	Freelance	35	3.74
Waller-Duncan ^{a,b,c,d}	Other	6	
	Student	109	
	Employee	52	
	Freelance	35	

I am willing to pay more for high-quality cultural tourism experiences.

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 17.886.

3.3.7. Compare expectations of cultural tourism between different income groups

Higher-income groups (especially those in the 8,000–10,000 RMB bracket) tend to show stronger preferences for cultural travel.

			Subset for alpha = 0.05
	Monthly income	N	1
Tukey B ^{a,b}	5000-8000 RMB	36	3.67
	Under 3000 RMB	90	3.72
	3000-5000 RMB	45	3.78
	Above 10000 RMB	18	3.94
	8000-10000 RMB	13	4.38
Waller-Duncan ^{a,b,c,d}	5000-8000 RMB	36	
	Under 3000 RMB	90	
	3000-5000 RMB	45	
	Above 10000 RMB	18	
	8000-10000 RMB	13	

I prefer trips that involve cultural experiences rather than purely leisure-oriented

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 25.828.

Conclusion

This study finds that Phuket has made notable progress in integrating cultural value with tourism value, successfully attracting Chinese tourists through government initiatives such as visa facilitation and social media marketing, as well as cultural attractions offering tailored experiences like festival-based activities and Chinese-language services. However, issues such as over-commercialization, weak cross-cultural communication, and insufficient regulation undermine the overall experience. Survey results further show that higher-income groups and freelancers are more willing to pay for high-quality cultural tourism, young tourists (18–35) express the strongest interest and satisfaction, and social media plays a decisive role in shaping destination choices. Overall, cultural activities significantly enhance Phuket's attractiveness and tourist satisfaction, but sustained improvement in service quality, cultural authenticity, and market regulation is essential for the deeper integration of cultural industries and tourism development.

Suggestions

1. Suggestions for Management Organizations and Government Departments

Deepen Digital Marketing and Precision Communication

Continue and increase investment in Chinese social media platforms such as Douyin, Xiaohongshu, and Weibo. Efforts should not be limited to inviting influencers for promotion but should also involve establishing a long-term content matrix. For instance, regularly release short videos about Phuket's cultural stories and collaborate with top travel bloggers to create in-depth cultural experience routes, reaching high-potential target groups interested in culture, history, and cuisine.

2. Suggestions for Future Research

2.1 Expand the Sample Size and Research Scope

This study has revealed the significant influence of cultural activities, income, age, social media, and other factors on Chinese tourists' destination choices. However, it also has limitations such as a sample structure biased towards students and employees and a relatively single research method.

2.2 Exploring other influencing factors and research methods

Future studies can incorporate more variables, such as how the "face culture" specifically affects consumer behavior, and the process of forming tourists' emotional images. By using longitudinal tracking research, follow the same group of tourists throughout the entire process from decision-making, experience to post-trip evaluation for a long time, to more deeply reveal the dynamic mechanism of the influence of cultural images.

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