

THE INFLUENCE OF RELIGIOUS TOURISM MOTIVATION ON LOYALTY: THE CHAIN MEDIATING EFFECT OF TOURISM SATISFACTION AND HAPPINESS

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Abstract

Background: As an important part of the tourism industry, religious tourism attracts a large number of religious and non-religious people, and its motivation is increasingly important. In the process of religious tourism, satisfaction and happiness are of great significance to the evaluation of religious tourism places. For religious tourism, the loyalty of tourists to whether to recommend revisiting and preference devotion is more important. **Objective:** The purpose of this study was to clarify the relationship between religious travel motivation, travel satisfaction, happiness and loyalty. **Methodology:** The convenient sampling method was used to investigate the tourists of Foguang Temple in Wutai Mountain. A total of 465 valid samples were received. Data were analyzed using structural equation models. **Finding:** The results of data analysis show that (1) religious tourism motivation has a significant positive impact on loyalty. (2) Travel satisfaction has a significant positive impact on happiness. (3) Tourism satisfaction plays an intermediary role in the influence of religious tourism motivation on loyalty. (4) Tourism happiness plays an intermediary role in the influence of religious tourism motivation on loyalty. (5) Form a chain mediation model. **Conclusion/contribution:** This study developed and validated the religious tourism motivation scale, and again validated the existing travel satisfaction, happiness and loyalty scales. The research results can provide reference for the sustainable development of religious tourism, and provide guidance for improving the overall service quality of Wutai Mountain scenic spot.

Keywords: Religious Tourism Motivations; Nostalgia; Satisfaction; Happiness

1. INTRODUCTION

Throughout the history of Eastern and Western tourism, religious tourism has an irreplaceable status and is the oldest way to travel. In ancient Greece, the nobles were going to the islands around the Aegean Sea for religious tourism, and the Olympic Festival was one of the important incentives. In Roman times, it became fashionable for the privileged to travel to see the temples of the Mediterranean and the pyramids of Egypt. After the Crusades, the cultural exchanges between the East and the West were more profound, stretching for thousands of miles. The "Silk Road" across the Eurasian continent was a road for the spread of religions, and the monks, believers and business travelers came and went on the road, and the Eastern and Western cultures merged. It can be said that in a sense, the Silk Road was a "road of religious tourism". "Where there is hope, there is religion" (Bloch, E. 1868). It can be seen that religion not only provides hope but also enriches people's spiritual life. Throughout Chinese and foreign history,

religion has played an extremely important role in politics, economy, culture, art, literature and other fields, and is crucial to the formation and development of tourism. World cultural heritage is widely regarded as the most outstanding spiritual and material wealth of mankind, of which religious heritage accounts for the vast majority.

As far as human activities and behaviors are concerned, religious tourism has existed since ancient times. However, from the perspective of academic research, the analysis and summary of religious tourism mainly began in the 1970s. In earlier studies, religion and tourism were two distinct and even contradictory concepts. Both in the activities, ideas, rules are opposite: travel is to enjoy happiness, pursuit of happiness, happiness for the purpose of the secular activities. Religion, on the other hand, needs to find secluded places to communicate with gods and divine acts of faith. Religion often requires adherence to established rituals, ordinances, etc., and is a relatively rigorous activity. Travel, on the other hand, puts more emphasis on self-pleasure and freedom from constraint.

Therefore, when religion and tourism are combined, religious tourism pays more attention to the purpose of "religion", carrying out an ancient (Gao Ke, 2009), pilgrimages, seeking dharma (Bao Jigang et al., 1996), and preaching (Song Yunfei et al., 2006; Hu Bocui, 2008) for the purpose of tourism activities. In fact, the earliest mode of religious tourism is a "grand tourism" activity, that is, a large-scale tourism activity that takes "preaching" as its main goal and spreads its religious ideas and religious thoughts from inside out to Europe, the main source of religious tourism and the place where Christianity and Catholicism are prevalent (Brodsky, 1981).

The end of the antagonism between religion and tourism was revolutionized in 1973 by Dean MacCannell (1973). He believes that tourists tend to have a psychological state of "love" and "reverence" when viewing "tourist attractions", which can be called a "secular pilgrim" in a devout worship journey.

This view was further supported by Turner (1978). Every tourist is half a pilgrim, if a pilgrim is half a tourist. The Vatican also gives a specific definition of "religious tourism", stating that "in the areas administered by the Holy See, as long as it is a religious tourism destination related to faith, regardless of its size, the services it can provide, whether visitors based on religious activities, visitors for non-religious activities, or stakeholders, can be regarded as religious tourism."

Different scholars have given theoretical definitions to religious tourism from different directions and angles. Rinschede (1992) was the first to pay attention to and give a specific definition of religious tourism. He believes that religious tourism is "a mode of tourism that is compatible and complementary with other types of tourism, such as tourism based on culture, art and history", and is "a multi-functional and multi-perspective tourism activity, which was dominated by religion in ancient times, but weakened by religious motivation in modern times". He defined religious tourism from the time dimension, believing that it can be a short-term tour to the nearest religious place, such as a one-day tour to a Buddhist temple, or a long-term sightseeing activity, such as spending a few days to several weeks to go to religious sites (such as Buddhist temples, churches, mosques), etc., which is a time-consuming long-term

religious tourism mode. For example, the current popular form of travel - to visit the Buddhist resort in India to visit Sakyamuni enlightenment, and learn the "Buddha worship group" for several weeks.

According to the comprehensive literature of this study, religious tourism is a kind of religious pilgrimage behavior for religious believers to worship and seek Dharma, or leisure tourism behavior for non-religious believers to religious places, or both, a series of activities for religious places, religious buildings, religious landscapes, etc., to investigate, study, participate in, watch and relax.

The following are the research questions of the study:

- 1) What is the relationship between religious travel motivation and loyalty?
- 2) What is the relationship between travel satisfaction and happiness?
- 3) What are the mediating effects of travel satisfaction and happiness on the image of religious travel motivation and loyalty?

Following are the research objectives of the present study which are to be accomplished:

- 1) To study the relationship between religious travel motivation and loyalty.
- 2) To study the influence of travel satisfaction on happiness.
- 3) To study the Travel satisfaction and happiness have a chain mediated effect on the influence of religious travel motivation on loyalty.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Religious Tourism Motivation

Shi Xinzhi (2016) pointed out that after visiting the Dharma activities, tourists receive merit, Dharma joy, and satisfaction, which means they can understand their emotions in a timely manner. When they feel under pressure and want to rest their hearts, they will travel with religious groups to relieve pressure. Jiang Jingying (2007) believes that meditation is a true rest, whether it is happiness or sadness, or seeking the true meaning of life, or perhaps hoping to discover more of oneself and learn the meditation methods of entering the Dharma body, which will inevitably lead to answers. So, meditation is very important, and one cannot lack it in life, just like people cannot lack food every day, and their psychology naturally cannot lack tranquility.

Pritchard (1992) pointed out that religious special anniversaries and annual celebrations are the motivation for religious tourists to travel to the Holy Land. Zhang Junyan (1996) pointed out that elderly, female, educated, and government-employed Chinese people have a higher probability of engaging in religious leisure activities, while those who are unmarried and have a higher number of working hours have a lower probability of engaging in religious leisure activities. Chen Senen (2006) pointed out in his study on the application of the hierarchical structure analysis method to construct and evaluate indicators for meditation activities that

religious tourism and meditation tourism have become increasingly popular around the world. In addition, IsoIsoIso Ahola and Allen (1982) also believe that tourism motivation is a driving force that motivates tourists to meet social and psychological needs, which is the main reason why tourists engage in religious tourism activities. Iso Ahola and Allen (1982) defined travel motivation as a driving force, which drives tourists to meet their psychological and social needs and is also the main cause of tourism activities.

Wang Yuwen (2012) defined tourism motivation as four dimensions: religious psychological needs, physical and mental adjustment, social relationships, and word-of-mouth promotion. Ye Bihua, Cai Jinfa, and Huang Zongcheng (2004) defined the motivation of religious tourism in the Vatican as five dimensions: religion, soul, novelty, culture, and tourism.

The operational definition of the motivation for religious tourism in this study is that the driving force for tourism to the Buddha Temple is the main reason for tourists to engage in tourism activities. In this study, religious tourism motivations are divided into: Divine Faith, Divine Protection, In Search of Self, Learning Exploration, Social Emotions, Sightseeing and Curiosity Hunting, Nostalgia.

2.2 Tourism Satisfaction

The perspective of tourism satisfaction is explained by Schreyer and Roggenbuck (1978) using the theory of difference, which is determined by the distance difference between tourists' pre-travel and actual perception. Zhang Yazhen (2010) conducted a study on the satisfaction of tourists from Nankun Prefecture with religious or non-religious activities, defined as the actual feelings of the recreational environment, tourist services, psychological experiences, and recreational activities. Chen Zhiyuan (2006) divided tourism satisfaction into five dimensions: spiritual level, environment, facilities, services, and prices.

David (2023) found through extensive research on the driving factors of tourism satisfaction that tourism satisfaction is a comprehensive evaluation of tourists' travel itinerary, attractions, accommodation, time arrangements, and other factors. Kong Zhuolin and Shen Shiguang (2023) believe that the level of satisfaction is the main manifestation of tourists' perception of the image of the scenic spot. Hu Zhicong, Zou Xiaodan, and Cai Xiaomei (2023) believe that tourism satisfaction is a comparison of tourists' experiences and expectations towards the destination.

In short, satisfaction can be considered from multiple dimensions. Due to the difference of tourist individuals, they will have their own satisfaction level for the purpose of visiting tourist places and scenic spots according to their different evaluation standards and systems. Foguang Temple in Wutai Mountain, the destination studied in this paper, is not only a religious tourism destination, but also a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage. Therefore, this study uses the research results of Zhou Weiwei (2011) on the satisfaction of Longmen Grottoes. The tourist satisfaction of Foguang Temple in Wutai Mountain is divided into five factors: World heritage resources, landscape and experience content, environment and accessibility, scenic area management and scenic area reception and service.

2.3 Tourism happiness

Subjective well-being is a very important term in psychology. Many scholars at home and abroad have conducted long-term research on this and defined their own definitions. Kant believes that subjective well-being is an individual's perception and evaluation of their life satisfaction. Bradbury (1969) believes that the main reason why individuals can experience subjective well-being is that they perceive positive emotions more than negative emotions. Subjective well-being plays a balancing role between positive and negative emotions. Diener (1984) believed that subjective well-being is a comprehensive and comprehensive assessment of an individual's living standards from an individual's perspective. He believes that it mainly includes three aspects: positive emotions, negative emotions, and life satisfaction. Positive and negative emotions belong to the emotional component, while life satisfaction belongs to the cognitive component. Dina's definition of subjective well-being is highly representative in the field of psychology, and to this day, most scholars still use his definition of subjective well-being.

Existing studies on tourist happiness are mostly based on Psychological studies, that is, tourist happiness is equated with Subject Well-being (SWB) or psychological Well-being (PWB) in psychology. In fact, it is biased and limited. The operational definition of this study adopts the concept of tourism happiness. Tourism happiness refers to the happiness experience that people actually experience in the process of traveling, which is different from the general sense of happiness. It is a comprehensive experience from simple sensory pleasure to a more profound spiritual self-realization. The measurement dimension of travel happiness is based on the research results of Tuo Yan (2020), which is divided into six dimensions: positive emotion, sense of control, personal growth, achievement experience, social connection and immersion experience.

2.4 loyalty

Smith (1998) pointed out that if a company can satisfy tourists' needs and other companies cannot replace them, then tourists will generate loyalty to that company. Baker&Crompton (2000) defined the loyalty of festival participants as three dimensions: speaking positive words to others, encouraging family and friends to participate, and participating annually in the future. Zhou Zhongxue, Liu Jia, and Zhang Fang (2009) defined customer loyalty as factors such as service quality, customer trust, psychological contract, conversion cost, and competitive substitution. Lin Yongsen, Lin Bowen, and Zhou Shaokai (2006) analyzed loyalty as factors such as word-of-mouth communication, willingness to revisit, and complaint behavior when studying Matsuo, a top tier. Lin Xiuhua (2011) divided loyalty into two factors: willingness to revisit and word-of-mouth recommendation when studying Thailand's Fa Shen Temple.

Tourism loyalty is generally measured in terms of dimensions related to research topics, such as willingness to revisit, price tolerance, and recommendation to other relatives and friends during the Yilan whale watching event (Huang Wenxiong et al., 2007). Hong Yuqing (2008) obtained three loyalty dimensions through factor analysis when studying audience loyalty in the Super Basketball League, namely attitude loyalty, behavioral loyalty, and cognitive loyalty.

Yang Shumei (2009) studied the Taiwan Railway cruise train based on three loyalty dimensions: willingness to revisit, willingness to pay more, willingness to recommend, and active participation. Lin Zongxian (2008) divided the research on tourist hot spring tourism resorts into two dimensions: attitude loyalty and behavioral loyalty. Among them, attitude loyalty is divided into two sub dimensions: identification and place dependence. Behavioral loyalty is divided into three sub dimensions: proportion of tourism frequency, duration of stay, and proportion of expenses. On the other hand, Wei Da and Zou Shulan (2009) measured loyalty in three dimensions: voluntary dedication, place attachment, and time and space distance in the study of outdoor morning activities at the Science and Technology Museum.

In terms of loyalty measurement indicators, the most widely used one is "willingness to revisit", especially in Taiwan, where scholars directly explore tourists' willingness to revisit rather than loyalty, followed by recommendation willingness and word-of-mouth promotion. With a further understanding of the connotation of loyalty, measurement projects such as "price tolerance", "finding alternative destinations", "prioritizing this destination in the future", and "providing feedback to organizers" have also been used by scholars. Due to the fact that the willingness to revisit varies over time, Chen Haibo (2012) divided the time into 2 years, 5 years, and 10 years to explore tourists' willingness to revisit at different time periods. Moreover, Sun Shugen et al. (2008) found a progressive relationship between recommendation intention, word-of-mouth promotion, and revisiting intention. Wu Xuefei (2010) found that the impact of destination terrain on recommendation is greater than that of backtracking. Based on this, in the process of research, this article takes into account various factors mentioned above and measures loyalty from two aspects: recommendation and revisiting, preference and dedication.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 research hypothesis

Huang Wenxiong et al. (2007) conducted a model construction and validation study on tourism motivation, satisfaction, and loyalty during the whale watching event in Yilan. Through structural equation model analysis, it was found that the tourism motivation of whale watching tourists has a significant positive impact on the loyalty of whale watching activities. Zhang Shuqing and Zhong Yuming (2008) conducted a study on the impact of tourism motivation as a key driving force on satisfaction and loyalty. They found that both push and pull have a direct positive and significant impact on loyalty. Path analysis also showed that pull is the key factor driving tourist loyalty. When Song Yuanfeng (2009) studied the motivation, perceived value, satisfaction, and loyalty of foreign tourists traveling to Taiwan, it was found that tourism motivation has a positive impact on loyalty. Wang Mingyuan and Chen Xinzhang (2011) studied the correlation between tourist motivation, satisfaction, and loyalty in the Qinghu Scenic Area, and found that different tourism motivations have a significant positive impact on loyalty.

Xu Junlin (2012) conducted a study on the recreational motivation and overall image of organic corridor tourists in Chishang Township, Taitung. Although it was not possible to directly verify the relationship between positive recreational motivation and loyalty, it was still found that the

recreational motivation and loyalty have an impact on the willingness to revisit aspect. Song Yongkun and Deng Meijuan (2012) used confirmatory factor analysis and linear structural model analysis to explore the relationship between tourism motivation, imagery, satisfaction, and loyalty in the freshwater region. The results showed that motivation had a direct and positive impact on imagery, while imagery had a direct and positive impact on loyalty. Based on this, hypothesis 1 is proposed:

H1: tourist motivation is positively correlated with destination loyalty, and tourist motivation significantly affects their loyalty to the destination.

Tourism can bring positive emotions to tourists, and tourism satisfaction is the evaluation and judgment of tourists' perception of the tourism experience. When tourists' tourism satisfaction is high, positive emotional feelings will be generated; as a subjective cognitive evaluation, subjective well-being is influenced by various factors such as emotional attitudes and life satisfaction. Tourism satisfaction and subjective well-being are both subjective psychological feelings of individuals, and the relationship between them has also received attention and research from scholars. Neal (2007) and other scholars used quantitative analysis to verify the relationship between tourism service level and tourists' quality of life. They found that tourists' satisfaction with tourism experience has a positive impact on their overall life satisfaction, and overall life satisfaction is an important dimension to measure subjective well-being. It can be seen that there is a certain connection between tourism satisfaction and subjective well-being; Sirgy et al. (2011) used overall life satisfaction as a measure of individual subjective well-being. Through empirical research, it was confirmed that tourist satisfaction with tourism has a positive impact on tourists' subjective well-being. Scholars also constructed a relationship model between tourism leisure satisfaction and subjective well-being, targeting college students and middle-aged and elderly groups.

Melville Saayman (2018) proposed an index method to study the impact of travel experience on tourists' satisfaction and its further impact on their happiness. The structural equation modeling results were used to obtain the overall tourist satisfaction index and tourists' happiness index of the destination. Some important findings include that this trip has a greater impact on tourists. Feelings of happiness will higher the loyalty to the destination. As for why tourism can affect the happiness of life after travel, researchers analyzed it from a static perspective and concluded that travel satisfaction is an important factor in the overflow of travel happiness to the life after travel (Su Lujun, 2012; Chen et al., 2016). Based on this perspective, the study believes that the impact of tourism on life happiness is bottom-up, and the overall life of an individual includes many sub-fields such as tourism, work and leisure (Dolnicar et al., 2012; Sirgy et al., 2011). Therefore, the more satisfied an individual is with the subfield of tourism, the greater the overall happiness of life will inevitably increase (Chen et al., 2016). They found that individual leisure satisfaction has a positive impact on their subjective well-being. Therefore, improving tourists' leisure satisfaction is of great significance in enhancing their subjective well-being. Based on existing analysis and understanding of theories related to subjective well-being, this article proposes Hypothesis 3:

H2: Tourism satisfaction has a significant positive impact on their tourism happiness

Jong-Hyeong Kim (2017) developed a theoretical model of the impact of memorable travel experiences on behavioral intentions by examining the structural relationships among destination image, tourist satisfaction, re-visit intention, and word-of-mouth publicity. The results show that satisfaction has a mediating effect.

Ana M. Dominguez-Quintero (2018) studied the mediating effect of satisfaction in the context of cultural heritage tourism. He used structural equation modeling technology to conduct a questionnaire survey on 205 tourists from 205 cities in the United Kingdom. The results confirm the mediating role of satisfaction. Later, Ana M. Dominguez-Quintero further studied the role of cultural heritage tourism destinations in 2019 and revealed that satisfaction has an important influence on cultural heritage tourism.

Aurea Rodrigues (2021) studied the awe-inspiring effect and behavioral intention of tourists on the astrotourism experience, and took satisfaction as the intermediary effect. The results showed that awe directly affected tourists' satisfaction, and then affected their behavioral intention when satisfaction was the intermediary. Milan Zuli et al. (2021) studied and analyzed the relationship among destination attraction factors, satisfaction, destination image and re-visit intention to test the mediating role.

The study confirmed the mediating role of satisfaction between destination attraction and destination image. Yakup Durmaz (2022) studied how covid-19 affects consumer behavior in food tourism and the mediating role of destination satisfaction in this relationship. It is found that destination satisfaction plays a partial mediating role between food travel perception and consumer behavior.

Jinde Jiang (2017) discussed the influence of natural soundscape and tourists' loyalty to natural tourism destinations, and used the intermediary variable of tourists' satisfaction. The results showed that tourists' attitudes directly affected natural soundscape images, but did not affect tourists' satisfaction and loyalty. When the natural soundscape image is mediated by the tourist satisfaction, it directly affects the tourist satisfaction and indirectly affects the tourist loyalty. Liu Yufei (2018) took Jinggangshan as an example to make an empirical analysis of the relationship between brand personality, tourist satisfaction and loyalty in red tourism destinations, and explored the mediating role of tourist satisfaction.

The results show that the brand personality of red tourist destinations has a significant positive predictive effect on tourist satisfaction and loyalty, and tourist satisfaction has a significant positive predictive effect on loyalty. Tourist satisfaction plays a partial mediating role in the relationship between local customs, red education, leisure, beautiful scenery and tourist loyalty, and plays a complete mediating role in the relationship between red cognition and tourist loyalty. The mediating effect of tourist satisfaction is larger in the dimensions of leisure, country style and folklore and tourist loyalty, smaller in the dimensions of red education, red cognition, beautiful scenery and tourist loyalty, and the ratio of the mediating effect and the total effect of tourist satisfaction is larger in the dimensions of brand personality and tourist loyalty. Zhang Jinyue (2019) analyzed the study on the impact of travel APP user experience on college students' travel satisfaction, and conducted a study based on user satisfaction and

travel decision-making as intermediary variables. The study showed that travel APP user experience could significantly enhance travel satisfaction through two intermediary variables of good APP user satisfaction and travel decision-making. Based on this, the researchers proposed the hypothesis :

H3a-b: Travel satisfaction has an intermediary effect between religious travel motivation and loyalty

Similarly, tourism happiness as an intermediary variable has also made progress in tourism-related research. Chen Ruixia (2018) studied the influence mechanism of cultural tourism authenticity perception on tourist loyalty, and tourist happiness was regarded as the intermediary effect. The research results showed that the influence of object-related authenticity on tourist loyalty was partially mediated by hedonic happiness and fulfilled happiness. The influence of existential authenticity on tourist loyalty is completely mediated by hedonic happiness and realization happiness. Taking happiness as the medium, this paper enriches the research on the mechanism of influence of cultural tourism authenticity perception on tourist loyalty. Wang Jinwei (2022) This paper takes three ethnic villages around Fanjing Mountain in Guizhou Province as examples to explore the complex relationship and mechanism among community residents' perceptions of tourism-led poverty alleviation effects, subjective well-being (SWB) and tourism participation intention. The results show that, to a certain extent, improving residents' subjective well-being plays a role in promoting residents' willingness to participate in tourism-driven poverty alleviation. Perceptions of the positive impact of tourism-led poverty alleviation had a significant positive impact on respondents' willingness to participate. In other words, the more significant the residents' perception of the positive role of tourism poverty alleviation, the stronger the willingness to participate. Subjective well-being plays an intermediary role in residents' cognition of the positive impact of tourism-driven poverty alleviation and their willingness to participate in tourism. Lu-Luan Pi (2021) explored the relationship between serious leisure, happiness and the intention to visit again among walking tour participants. Happiness had an intermediary effect between serious leisure and the intention to visit again. Deniz Karagoz (2023) examined the hypothesized relationship between loneliness, travel nostalgia, subjective well-being, and prevention-mediated focus, testing a moderating model. Based on this, the researchers proposed hypothesis:

H4a-b: Travel happiness has an intermediary effect between religious travel motivation and loyalty

3.2. Questionnaire Design

In this study, questionnaire is the main investigation method. The questionnaire design of this study is divided into four parts: religious travel motivation, travel satisfaction, happiness and loyalty. Demographic variables include gender, age, education, occupation, marital status, residence and monthly income. Except for the demographic variables measured on the category scale, the remaining variables were measured on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

3.3. Research Subjects

Mount Wutai, located in Xinzhou City, Shanxi Province, China, is one of the four famous Buddhist Mountains in China and one of the world's cultural heritage. Mount Wutai, named for its five peaks like Wutai, is an important pilgrimage site and Buddhist cultural center in ancient China, as well as an important part of the world's cultural heritage. Foguang Temple is an important part of the World Cultural Heritage of Wutai Mountain, surrounded by mountains, towering ancient trees, towering temples, important historical sites, and heavy historical culture. It is not only a holy place for Buddhist worshippers, but also an important tourist destination for tourists.

3.4 Samples' Criteria

The questionnaire was distributed on-site, and 3 students and researchers were invited to Wutai Mountain Scenic spot to distribute the questionnaire. The questionnaire star and the paper version are distributed and collected at the entrance of the scenic spot. The confidentiality and anonymity of the questionnaire were stated to tourists before collection, and tourists were also informed that they could refuse to fill out the questionnaire. A total of 552 points were sent out. After excluding the invalid questionnaires with confusing and completely consistent answers, there were 465 valid questionnaires, with an effective response rate of 84.2%. The valid questionnaire is larger than the recommended sample number (460), which meets the requirements and can be used for data analysis.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Demographic Statistics

Firstly, the basic background of the interviewees is understood, including gender, age, education level, occupation, monthly income, religious belief, residence place and marital status. In terms of gender, there were 254 men, accounting for 54.6%, and 211 women, accounting for 45.4%; the respondents were roughly equally divided between men and women. In terms of age distribution, 6 respondents were under 18 years old, accounting for 1.3%; 77 people aged 18-25, accounting for 16.6%; There were 72 people aged between 26 and 30, accounting for 15.5%; 141 people aged 31-40, accounting for 30.3%; 115 people aged 41 to 50, accounting for 24.7%; 44 people aged 51-60, accounting for 9.5%; 10 people over 60 years old, accounting for 2.2%; From the point of view of age distribution, it shows a normal distribution. From the distribution of education level, 19 people were below high school, accounting for 4.1%; 53 college students, accounting for 11.4%; 253 undergraduate students, accounting for 54.4%; There were 119 postgraduate students, accounting for 25.6%; 21 doctoral students, accounting for 4.5%; From the distribution of educational background, the respondents showed a normal distribution. From the occupation distribution of respondents, 38 civil servants, accounting for 8.2%; There were 79 managers in enterprises and institutions, accounting for 17.0%; 136 professional and technical personnel (such as doctors, lawyers, teachers, etc.), accounting for 29.2%; There were 37 private owners and self-employed people, accounting for 8.0%; 34 workers, accounting for 7.3%; 2 farmers, accounting for 0.4%; 39

students, accounting for 8.4%; 17 retired people, accounting for 3.7%; 16 service or sales personnel, accounting for 3.4%; Other 67 people, accounting for 14.4%; From the perspective of occupational distribution, professional and technical personnel accounted for the most, 29.2%, while farmers were the least, with only 2 people, accounting for 0.4%. From the monthly income distribution of respondents, 32 people were less than 2,000 yuan, accounting for 6.9%; 81 people with 2000-4000 yuan, accounting for 17.4%; 4000-7000 yuan 111 people, accounting for 23.9%; 7000-10000 yuan 96 people, accounting for 20.6%; 145 people with more than 10,000 yuan, accounting for 31.2%; The monthly income of the respondents shows a normal distribution. From the distribution of religious belief, there were no 369 respondents, accounting for 79.4%; There were 56 Buddhists, accounting for 12.0%; Taoist 12 people, accounting for 2.6%; 6 Christians, accounting for 1.3%; Catholic 4 people, accounting for 0.9%; Islam 6 people, accounting for 1.3%; The other 12, accounting for 2.6%; Among them, the proportion of non-religious belief is the largest, there are 369 people, accounting for 79.4%, and among the respondents with religious belief, Buddhist believers are the largest, 56 people, accounting for 12%. From the distribution of living places of respondents, 394 people were from cities, accounting for 84.7%; Township 71 people, accounting for 15.3%; The data showed that respondents from cities were higher than those from towns. From the distribution of marital status of the respondents, 250 were married, accounting for 53.8%; there were 215 unmarried people, accounting for 46.2%. Married and unmarried people are about the same.

Table 1: Cross Loadings

	Loyalty	Religious Tourism Motivation	Tourism Happiness	Tourism Satisfaction
Preference and dedication	0.929	0.617	0.655	0.592
Recommend revisiting	0.929	0.631	0.66	0.564
In Search of Self	0.546	0.823	0.368	0.376
Learning exploration	0.547	0.768	0.408	0.37
Social emotions	0.474	0.757	0.296	0.308
Divine protection	0.486	0.747	0.349	0.38
Sightseeing Curiosity Hunting	0.471	0.743	0.295	0.321
Divine Faith	0.492	0.722	0.341	0.266
Nostalgia	0.517	0.705	0.379	0.304
Immerse Experiences	0.542	0.371	0.782	0.366
Personal growth	0.551	0.338	0.764	0.354
Achievement Experience	0.516	0.366	0.762	0.338
Sense of control	0.529	0.357	0.739	0.369
social connection	0.472	0.278	0.711	0.295
Positive emotions	0.488	0.322	0.616	0.296
Scenic Area Management	0.521	0.373	0.422	0.834
Scenic Area Services	0.525	0.38	0.39	0.782
World Heritage Resources	0.481	0.327	0.342	0.769
Environment and accessibility	0.438	0.328	0.276	0.756
Landscape Experience Content	0.445	0.31	0.351	0.743

Structural equation model analysis

PLS-SEM (PartialLeast Squares Structural Equation Modeling) is a method to explore the mutual influence and correlation degree of different variables.

Hypothesis testing

SmartPLS 3 was used to analyze the data, and the model's determination coefficient R^2 was obtained. R^2 is a measure of the model's explanatory ability. R^2 ranges from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating greater explanatory power. As a guideline, the values of R^2 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 can be considered substantial, medium, and weak. In this model, the R^2 of Loyalty is 0.704, and the adjusted R^2 is 0.702.

The R^2 of Tourism Happiness is 0.298, and the adjusted R^2 is 0.295. The R^2 of Tourism Satisfaction is 0.197, and the adjusted R^2 is 0.195. It shows that the explanatory power of loyalty in the whole model is 70.2%, which is substantial.

The explanatory power of happiness and satisfaction is weak. But in fact, Hair, J. F. (2019) et al also argue that acceptable R^2 values are context-based, with R^2 values as low as 0.10 considered satisfactory in some disciplines.

Therefore, R^2 should always be examined in the light of the similarity of relevant studies and the complexity of the model, and the R^2 value should be interpreted in the context of the study.

Table 2: The path coefficient of the model in this study

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Religious Tourism Motivation -> Loyalty	0.358	0.357	0.039	9.303	0.00***
Religious Tourism Motivation -> Tourism Happiness	0.324	0.326	0.052	6.262	0.00***
Religious Tourism Motivation -> Tourism Satisfaction	0.444	0.449	0.041	10.692	0.00***
Tourism Happiness -> Loyalty	0.416	0.416	0.033	12.426	0.00***
Tourism Satisfaction -> Loyalty	0.272	0.273	0.035	7.685	0.00***
Tourism Satisfaction -> Tourism Happiness	0.319	0.318	0.055	5.758	0.00***

Note: *** $p < 0.001$

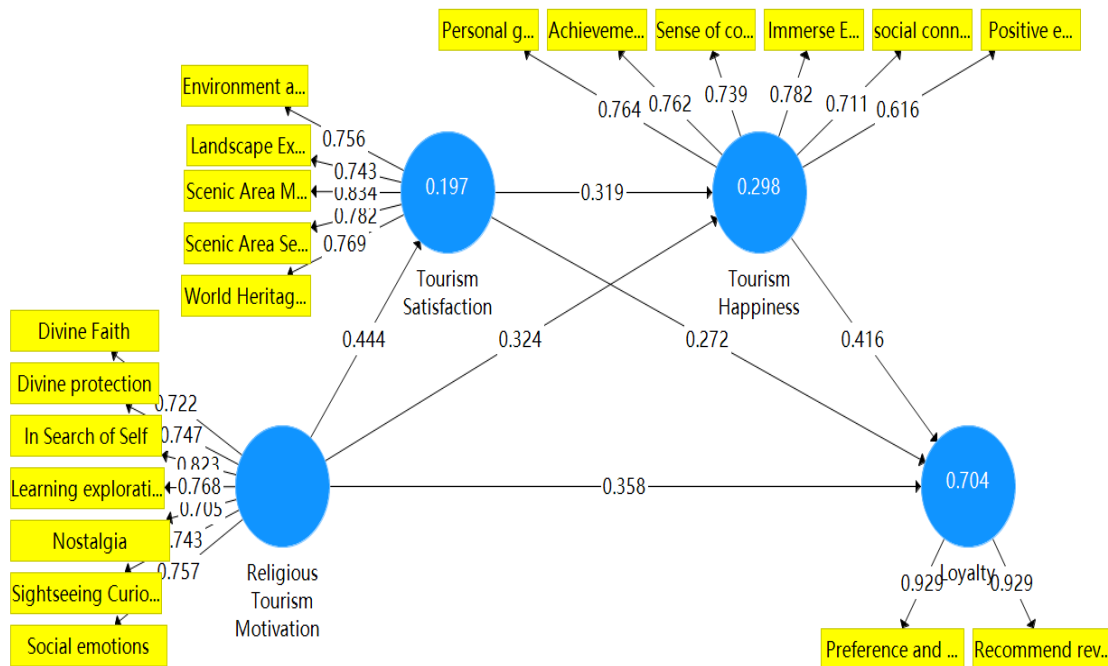


Figure 1: Study the path coefficient of the model

As shown in Table 2 and Figure 1, Religious Tourism Motivation -> Loyalt (T=9.30***); Religious Tourism Motivation -> Tourism Happiness (T=6.262***); Religious Tourism Motivation -> Tourism Satisfaction (T=10.692***); Tourism Happiness -> Loyalty (T=12.426***); Tourism Satisfaction -> Loyalty (T=7.685***); Tourism Satisfaction -> Tourism Happiness (T=5.758***), the above results show that the path coefficients are all valid, and there is an influence effect among all dimensions.

Table 3: Specific indirect effects of the model in this study (intermediary effects)

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard Deviation(STDEV)	T statistics ((O/STDEV))	P values
Religious Tourism Motivation -> Tourism Happiness -> Loyalty	0.135	0.136	0.023	5.864	0.00***
Tourism Satisfaction -> Tourism Happiness -> Loyalty	0.132	0.132	0.025	5.207	0.00***
Religious Tourism Motivation -> Tourism Satisfaction -> Tourism Happiness -> Loyalty	0.059	0.059	0.012	4.835	0.00***
Religious Tourism Motivation -> Tourism Satisfaction -> Loyalty	0.12	0.122	0.019	6.374	0.00***
Religious Tourism Motivation -> Tourism Satisfaction -> Tourism Happiness	0.141	0.142	0.027	5.209	0.00***

Note: *** p < 0.001

By using SmartPLS 3 to test the mediating effect of the model, specific path coefficients can be obtained, and the results are shown in Table 3 and Figure 2: Religious Tourism Motivation -> Tourism Happiness -> Loyalty (T=5.864***). Tourism Satisfaction -> Tourism Happiness -> Loyalty (T=5.207***); Religious Tourism Motivation -> Tourism Satisfaction -> Tourism Happiness -> Loyalty (T=4.835***); Religious Tourism Motivation -> Tourism Satisfaction -> Loyalty (T=6.374***); Religious Tourism Motivation -> Tourism Satisfaction -> Tourism Happiness (T=5.209***). The above results indicate that the travel satisfaction and happiness in the study hypothesis have an intermediary effect.

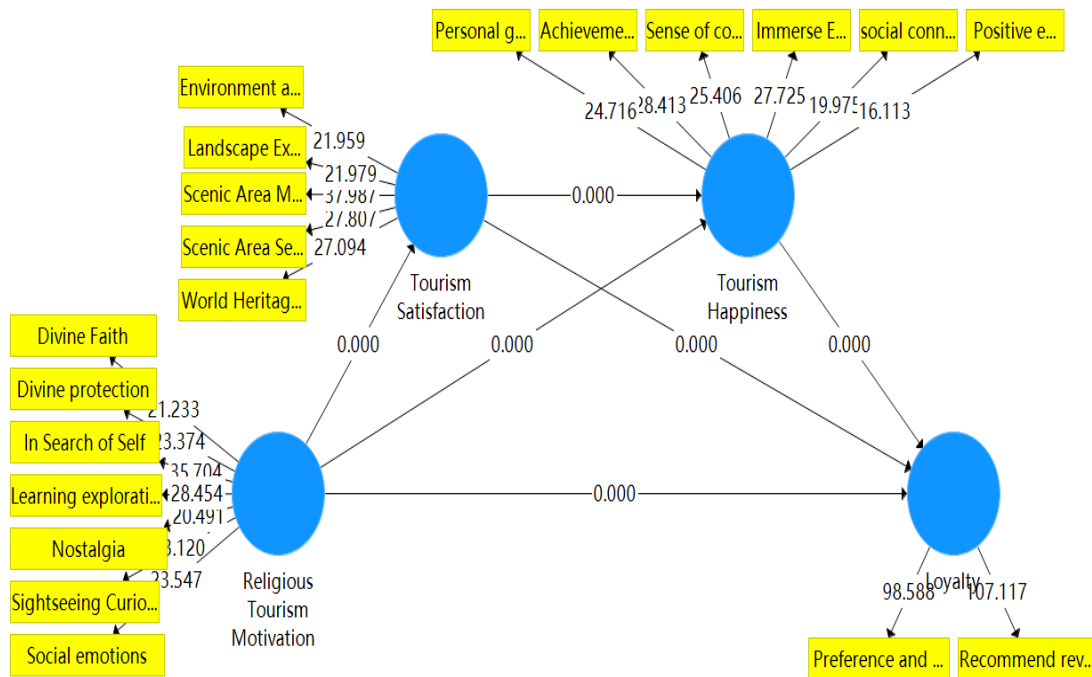


Figure 2: The mediation effect test of the research model

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Religious tourism motivation has a significant positive impact on loyalty.

Structural equation model analysis shows that religious travel motivation has a significant positive impact on loyalty (T=9.30***). The importance of tourism motivation is increasingly recognized in tourism studies (Pestana et al., 2020; Kusdibyo, 2022), the influence of travel motivation on travel satisfaction and destination loyalty has been recognized and widely studied as a key factor in tourism success (Al-Okaily et Al., 2023). The research of Homer C. Wu (2007) also shows that tourist motivation and satisfaction have a significant positive impact on loyalty. In the study of religious tourism. Huang Yaode (2014) conducted an empirical study on the Buddha Memorial Hall in Taiwan and analyzed the relationship among travel motivation, satisfaction and loyalty through a questionnaire survey, indicating that travel motivation has a significant positive impact on loyalty. This study reconfirms the studies of

Huang Yaode (2014) and Al-Okaily et Al (2023), which show that religious travel motivation can positively affect loyalty. Therefore, only by doing a good job in the various factors displayed in the tourism motivation can tourists' loyalty be enhanced and tourists' re-visit, recommendation and preference be promoted.

5.2 Travel satisfaction has a significant positive impact on happiness.

Structural equation model analysis shows that travel satisfaction has a significant positive impact on happiness ($T=5.758^{***}$). The relevant theories of satisfaction have been discussed by Chinese and foreign scholars in behavioral science and psychology for a long time, and its classification is very rich, including customer satisfaction (Liu Kun, 2005), user satisfaction (Luo Bening, 2005), and job satisfaction (Zhang Ping, 2005). The prevailing theory is life satisfaction (Yao Benxian, 2011). As far as the theory of happiness is concerned, it is also an important research topic in psychology, sociology, anthropology and other disciplines. Subjective well-being is mostly used in happiness research, which mainly includes self-difference theory, goal theory, personality-environment interaction theory, etc. (Hu Di, 2023). It can be seen from the above literature review that there is a lack of specialized research on both satisfaction and happiness based on tourism.

This study not only inherits the existing research on satisfaction and happiness, but also develops the application of satisfaction and happiness in tourism, especially in religious tourism. Travel satisfaction and travel happiness are selected as research variables, and religious tourism and heritage tourism are targeted more accurately. In terms of the impact of travel satisfaction on happiness, the existing research has made some progress. Hyun Ji Kim et al. (2016) collected data from 158 Korean tourists to Sapporo, Japan, and 111 Japanese tourists to Busan, South Korea. The results show that the satisfaction of tourism activities has some significant effects on the subjective well-being of participants and non-participants. KangJae Jerry Lee (2022) et al. investigated African Americans' leisure participation in outdoor recreation and its impact on leisure satisfaction and subjective well-being. The study showed that the dimensions of attraction and identity expression of leisure participation not only had a positive impact on leisure satisfaction, but also indirectly promoted happiness through leisure satisfaction. These studies mainly come from traditional tourism and leisure tourism, but do not focus on religious tourism. The empirical results of this study show that in religious tourism, travel satisfaction positively affects happiness.

5.3 Tourism satisfaction plays an intermediary role in the influence of religious tourism motivation on loyalty.

Structural equation model analysis shows that travel satisfaction has a mediating effect in the influence of religious travel motivation on loyalty ($T=6.374^{***}$). In previous studies, some scholars have confirmed that tourist satisfaction plays a chain intermediary role (Chen Ruixia, 2018), whose research provides a new perspective and ideas for the cultivation of tourist destination loyalty, and has certain enlightening and guiding significance for the operation and management of scenic spot enterprises and the improvement of their profitability. However, some scholars pointed out that tourists who think they are satisfied may not necessarily visit

the destination again, and they prefer new things (Mechinda et al., 2009; Dolnicar et al., 2015). However, more studies by scholars have verified the mediating role of satisfaction. Ziad Alrawadieh (2019) et al. focused on the relationship between overall satisfaction and destination loyalty.

The study's survey of visitors to Petra, Jordan, produced 249 valid samples. The results confirm that self-identification of traditional tourist attractions is positively correlated with overall satisfaction and tourist participation. Overall satisfaction has a strong and positive relationship with destination loyalty. Milan Zulic et al. (2021) analyzed the relationship among destination attraction factors, satisfaction, destination image and re-visit intention. They analyzed the data using structural equation models (SEM). The results reveal the mediating role of satisfaction between destination attraction and destination image. In terms of religious tourism research, Shen Jincheng (2003) studied religious tourism in Foguang Temple in Kaohsiung, Taiwan through a questionnaire survey, and mainly analyzed the relationship among travel motivation, satisfaction and loyalty. The research table shows that satisfaction has a significant positive impact on loyalty.

Mehraj Din Wani et al. (2023) analyzed the effects of perceived value (PV), sensation seeking (SS), and low congestion (LC) on satisfaction and behavioral intention (BI) of pilgrims in the Kartapur Corridor, India. They also identified the mediating role of satisfaction in the structural relationship between PV, SS, LC as exogenous variables and BI as endogenous variables. The results show that PV, SS and LC have a positive impact on tourist satisfaction across international borders, while satisfaction is a positive and significant prerequisite for BI. In addition, the indirect effects of PV, SS, and LC on BI through satisfaction were found to be significant.

The above studies all show that the use of satisfaction as an intermediary variable has a long history and has achieved rich academic achievements. However, reviewing the literature, we also find that in the field of religious tourism, travel satisfaction is rarely used as an intermediary variable for analysis. This study shows that travel satisfaction plays an intermediary role in the influence of religious travel motivation on loyalty. This not only enriches the study of religious tourism, but also fills the gap in the application of satisfaction and tourism satisfaction in cross-disciplines.

5.4 Tourism happiness plays an intermediary role in the influence of religious tourism motivation on loyalty.

Structural equation model analysis shows that travel happiness has a mediating effect on the influence of religious travel motivation on loyalty ($T=5.864^{***}$). Reviewing the literature, it is found that the influence of happiness has been paid more and more attention in the literature (Pomfret, 2021); however, it was introduced relatively late in the study of tourism (Smith and Diekmann, 2017). In the crossover study of religion and tourism in the subdivision of religious tourism, there are no clear research results.

In fact, religious tourism destinations attract more and more tourists and play an important role in the development of tourism economy. Under the theme of high-quality economic development, religious tourism and cultural heritage tourism have become an important factor influencing tourists' destination loyalty. Both believers and non-believers choose to travel to religious destinations.

Happiness, as an intermediary effect of tourism research, has been widely applied before, which enriches the research on the mechanism of the influence of motivation on tourist loyalty. At the same time, starting from hedonic happiness and fulfillment happiness, it expands the research direction of tourist happiness and provides a new perspective for the study of tourist destination loyalty (Chen Ruixia, 2018). Moreover, happiness is also an important intermediary effect affecting the intention of revisiting in leisure tourism.

Happiness will affect the intention of revisiting through leisure tourism motivation and effectively explain the intention of revisiting (Bi Luluan, 2021). The research of Reitsamer and Brunner-Sperdin (2015) also confirmed that the happiness of tourists is affected by the attraction of the destination, and the happiness generated by travel will make people feel happier, and they hope to share this happy feeling with their relatives and friends when they visit again.

The happiness brought by the travel experience will make them willing to come back next time. Bi Lulu et al. (2017) also has similar research results. She believes that tourists feel happy with their travel experience, and will be willing to go to a certain destination again or feel subjective happiness after experiencing the scenic spot, and then participate again and actively recommend to others.

This study shows that religious travel motivation has a high degree of influence on loyalty, while happiness has an intermediary effect. This not only enriched the research of religious tourism, but also enriched the research of happiness and tourism happiness, and filled the theoretical gap of happiness as an intermediary effect in the research of religious tourism.

5.5 Form a chain mediation model.

Through literature review, this study established the research hypothesis and constructed an innovative religious tourism model "RSHL"(Figure 2), where R refers to religious tourism motivation, S refers to satisfaction, H refers to happiness, and L refers to loyalty. In this study, the hypothesis was verified by structural equation model and a chain mediation model was formed ($T=4.835^{***}$). According to the theory of chain mediation model, in this model, there is a sequential relationship between the two mediating variables in time. In this study, travel satisfaction and happiness have mediating effects at the same time, and there is a sequential order (travel satisfaction is the first, travel happiness is the second). The validation of the "RSHL" model makes the hypothesis of this study valid, which shows that religious travel motivation, travel satisfaction, happiness and loyalty have an influence relationship, and travel satisfaction and happiness have an intermediary effect. The construction of this model enriches the research of tourism, innovatively enriches the research of religious tourism, and also has reference significance for the research of satisfaction and happiness.

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