

Senior Tourism: Challenges and Opportunities in the Context of Aging, Social Change, and the Well-Being of the Chinese Elderly

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Abstract

A large portion of the older population constitutes a substantial market for a range of sectors since they have much greater buying power than younger groups. The People's Republic of China, one of the world's populous superpowers, has joined the aging society. In recent years, China's population has been aging at a pace that has never been witnessed before, with the country's elderly population forecast to reach 418 million by 2035. With an aging population, a significant number of older persons will need assistance in improving their functional capacities to maintain a healthy lifestyle as they age. Travel as a component of well-being has been the subject of increased study, leading to the development of the idea of senior tourism. Because of the growing importance of senior tourism around the world, as well as the numerous serious issues that are impeding its growth, it is critical to understand the underlying challenges associated with senior tourism, as well as the opportunities for the tourism industry to cater to the global emerging market of senior tourists. By understanding these challenges and developing policies and programs that promote senior tourism, the tourism industry can contribute to the growth of the global economy. Specifically, the objective of this study is to analyze the issues and possibilities that senior tourism faces, with a specific focus on the Chinese elderly and how an aging population impacts the tourist sector in general. Senior tourists' motivations for leisure and travel, as well as the obstacles they experience, are discussed in detail in this article. The study also discusses the possibility for the tourist sector to solve these concerns, paving the way for more research into the elements that impact the tourism business, both positively and negatively, today and in the future.

Keywords: Aging society, Senior tourism. Chinese elderly, tourism industry, aging population, motivation and satisfaction.

Tob Regul Sci.™ 2022; 8(1): 769-786

DOI: doi.org/10.18001/TRS.8.1.65

1. Introduction

The fundamental demographic phenomenon of the twenty-first century is population aging. Globally, elder shares are increasing because of falling fertility, greater lifespan, and the aging of large cohorts. Population aging is a unique phenomenon that results in fundamental changes in population needs and capabilities, with potentially significant implications for employment, savings, consumption, economic growth, asset prices, to cite a few (Bloom et al., 2016).

When a country's population over the age of 65 hits 8%, it becomes an aging society. In 1999, China, as one of the world's population superpowers, was classified as an aging nation. The Chinese population is aging at an alarming pace. By 2035, China's elderly population is expected to exceed 500 million. This indicates that China will dramatically age in the near future. The influence of population aging on total market demand will necessarily result in changes in market structure, consumption, and quality of life, as well as consequences on the social economy's development (Feng et al., 2012).

The elderly population represents a significant market for a wide variety of sectors due to their relatively higher spending power than younger generations. Specifically, the tourist industry is emerging as one of the largest benefactors of the aging process, owing to the present generation's more leisure-oriented lifestyle (Arensberg, 2018). Four distinct consumption tendencies exist among the elderly: a rise in tourism expenditure, an increase in demand for older universities, an increase in health consciousness, and increased online activity. In comparison to the elderly, who are defined as "frugal with their spending, inclined to stay at home, and frequently devoted to the care of grandkids," the new seniors are described as "having time and money, as well as the inclination to spend as active consumers" (Qiao et al., 2022).

Retirement may be difficult for seniors, and it is widely considered to be damaging to their health. Throughout the literature, leisure has been identified as an important component of later life well-being. Generally speaking, the term "leisure" refers to time spent without the requirement of work for a living, such as employment or daily duties; activities that relieve one of one's responsibilities; and an experience that is seen to be enjoyable and joyful by those who participate in it (van der Heide et al., 2013). A considerable number of older persons will need functional capacity augmentation in order to continue living a healthy lifestyle as they age. A healthy lifestyle includes physical, social, and mental health functions that are adapted to an individual's preferences and predispositions while remaining within the confines of his or her age cohort. Given that health and well-being are becoming increasingly important to the elderly, the concept of "successful aging" has generated significant interest in the concepts of "healthy aging, active aging, and productive ageing," all of which can be applied to overcoming the challenges of old age and retiring successfully (Foster & Walker, 2015). The concept of active aging emphasizes the importance and relevance of older people maintaining great health while remaining in their home or other familiar environment. With this viewpoint in mind, researchers have focused their attention on the development and maintenance of talents and skills that are connected with a feeling of well-being as people get older. Several prior studies investigated the association between tourism and psychological states such as feelings of wellbeing, perceived accessibility, and life satisfaction, among other things (Park & Ahn, 2022). Travel, as a component of well-being, has received more attention in recent years, leading to the concept of senior tourism (Godovykh & Ridderstaat, 2020).

Tourism-related activities are among the most important economic sectors in the world. It not only generates a vast variety of career opportunities on a global scale, but it also promotes growth and prosperity in the community. Tourism provided 313 million jobs in the United States in 2017. Tourism has surpassed global economic indicators for the last seven years in a row. As has been the case for the last year, Asia's performance has been excellent (Mazoor et al., 2019). There is emerging evidence that seniors represent the most significant and fastest growing segment of the tourism business, making them more important than

ever. The booming senior market is expected to account for nearly a quarter or more of the population by 2050, according to estimates (Zielińska-Szczepkowska, 2021).

In developed countries, the notion of effective aging has acquired widespread acceptance, but it has only lately gained ground in underdeveloped countries. A total of 549.2 million senior Asians were counted in 2017, with a projected increase to 1,273.2 million by 2050. This massive growth in Asia's senior population heralds the beginning of a rapidly increasing demographic in the region. As a consequence of the demographic transition, senior tourism will expand to become one of the fastest growing and most important areas of the tourism industry, converting it into a growth engine for the whole tourism industry. The reason for this is because, in comparison to previous generations, the elderly put a larger value on travel during their retirement years. According to the World Trade Organization, there would be more than 2 billion international travelers aged 60 and over by 2050, a significant increase from the 593 million who traveled internationally in 1999. These alterations in demographics will have an impact on the supply and demand structures of the tourist industry. In this regard, it is important to note that, although the tourist industry has started to address some of these changes, more radical solutions will be required in the coming decades (Sudharsanan & Bloom, 2018).

With a large amount of leisure time on their hands, the elderly populations constitute a distinct and valuable customer base that may contribute significantly to economic development if properly used. Some elders, on the other hand, are prevented from participating in long-distance tourist excursions because they lack the necessary financial resources. In conjunction with the growing market for senior tourism, challenges develop as a result of factors such as tourist promotion and a scarcity of senior-friendly tourist destinations. The inability to contact seniors with tourist goods, the absence of marketing of local tourist items tailored for seniors, and, ultimately, a lack of financial resources to implement local initiatives supporting senior tourism development are all examples of these difficulties (Liew et al., 2021).

Because of the growing importance of senior tourism around the world, as well as the numerous serious issues that are impeding its growth, it is critical to understand the underlying challenges associated with senior tourism, as well as the opportunities for the tourism industry to cater to the global emerging market of senior tourists. By understanding these challenges and developing policies and programs that promote senior tourism, the tourism industry can contribute to the growth of the global economy (Sharma & Paul et al., 2021).

Specifically, the focus of this study is to analyze the challenges and opportunities that senior tourism faces, with a special focus on China and the impact of an aging population on the tourism industry. Senior travelers' motivations for leisure and travel, challenges they face, and opportunities for the tourism industry to address are all discussed in this paper, which paves the way for further research into the drivers that affect the tourism industry, both positively and negatively, to shape this growing market of senior tourism. There are four major sections to this paper's discussion of the important information: (1) background on the drivers and consequences of an aging society, (2) social, economic and demographic aspects of senior tourism, (3) motivations and satisfaction of senior tourists, and (4) challenges and opportunities in senior tourism.

2. The Aging Society: Drivers and Consequences

The demographic age structure of the globe is experiencing a significant transformation. People are living longer lives, and the share of elderly persons in the overall population is growing all the time. Almost every nation on the planet will witness an increase in the proportion of its population aged 60 and above between 2005 and 2050. Approximately 3.4 million older individuals will be living in the world by 2050, representing a more than fourfold increase from the current level of 1.3 million (Bongaarts, 2009). The aging of the population has a number of socioeconomic and policy ramifications for the future. Changes in demographics have the potential to lower labor force participation and savings rates, increasing health-care expenses, and place further burden on pension and health-care systems. The elderly are disproportionately affected by the rising incidence of noncommunicable diseases, and it is unclear if the extra years gained via increased longevity will be spent in bad health. The living circumstances of the elderly must be taken into consideration, and many people believe that reduced labor force participation and savings, as well as increased demands on pension and healthcare systems, would impede economic progress. History has shown that population aging has induced behavioral changes; yet, technical and institutional innovations have the potential to mitigate the negative consequences of population aging. The improvements include, among other things, better retirement laws, more women-friendly employment legislation, changes to healthcare systems, more educational investments in people, and increased private savings (Jarzebski et al., 2021).

There have been considerable changes in the global age and population structure during the preceding half-century, with the expansion in population shares at advanced ages being one of the most apparent aspects of this trend. According to projections, the senior population will expand fast in both numbers and percentage to the total population during the first half of the twentieth century, and will continue to grow, albeit at a slower pace, until the end of the twentieth century (Bloom & Luca, 2016). Over the preceding half-century, the world's population has grown at an alarming rate, more than doubling from roughly 2.5 billion in 1950 to more than 7 billion now. By 2050, it is predicted to reach 9 billion people, and by 2100, it will reach 11 billion. For children and adolescents (0–14 years), population growth has slowed dramatically over the last several decades, particularly in the developing world (Kanasi et al., 2016). Despite the fact that this development has been fueled mostly by developing markets, both the number and proportion of the working-age population (15–59 years old) have expanded dramatically in the decades after 1950. People aged 15–59 have been relatively steady in more industrialized countries, although the proportion of individuals aged 15–59 in the population is expected to fall to around 50% by 2100 (Vollset et al., 2020).

The elderly of the world's population superpowers, including China, must be examined in order to have a better knowledge of the world's rapidly growing elderly. China's population has been aging at an alarming rate, and this trend is expected to continue throughout the first decade of the twenty-first century. However, although population aging is a relatively recent phenomenon, it is occurring at an unprecedented pace, and the senior population is substantial in number. As of 2016, 15.5 percent of the population was 60 years or older in China, indicating that the country is already aging. By 2030, the senior population is predicted to account for 25 percent of the total, or more than 340 million people. According to projections, China will have almost 450 million individuals aged 60 and above by 2050, representing around 30 percent of the country's entire population. It is important to remember that the current legal retirement age in China

is 60 for male employees and officials, 50 for female workers, and 55 for female officials (men may retire at 55 years old and women can retire at 45 years old in specific professions with difficult working circumstances, as noted above) (findlaw.cn 2014). Considering the average life expectancy in China is 74.8 years, the bulk of seniors will be in retirement for roughly 15 years, on average (Fang et al., 2020).

It is indisputable that the demographics of the elderly population are changing rapidly and will continue to do so in the future years as a result of changes in socioeconomic conditions, the gender ratio, and other variables. Despite the fact that the consequences are minor, it is vital to be aware of these concerns since the senior population has a considerable influence on the economy of a country due to their purchasing power.

3. Senior Tourism: Social, Economic, and Demographic Changes

Retirement may be challenging, and it is generally seen as being damaging to the well-being of the elderly. As an essential component of later-life well-being, leisure has long been recognized in the scientific literature. Participating in recreational and leisure activities helps to boost mental health and well-being in people. The participation of older people in leisure and recreation activities varies depending on their age group (Ryff, 2014)

In spite of this, older persons may participate in a variety of leisure and recreational activities that boost mental health wellness, including social, creative or expressive, cognitive, emotional, spiritual, and physical activities, among other activities. In previous study, it was shown that older people who engage in leisure or recreational activities had better mental health and live longer lives than those who do not. Improvements in mental health via the decrease of anxiety, depression, and negative mood states, as well as positive impacts on self-esteem, cognitive function, and quality of life, are all established benefits of leisure and recreation activities for older people in terms of mental health. Over the course of their lives, adults over the age of 65 are more likely to engage in leisure and recreation activities that provide them with satisfaction, pleasure, and entertainment, as well as activities that empower them, and add to their feeling of belongingness (Pressman et al., 2009).

There is no consensus on how Chinese culture influences how leisure is interpreted in the Chinese context, even though the notion of leisure as leisure time, leisure activities, and a subjective experience has been adopted and changed for leisure study in China. According to the findings of a recent research (Huang & Li, 2019), the key constraints on leisure participation seen by Chinese people are time and money, which is comparable with the findings of studies conducted in western countries. A person's capacity to relax, to do things that make them happy, to spend idle time, to engage in activities that are unrelated to their profession, and to do nothing is characterized as "leisure" (Pressman et al., 2009).

Previous research has proven that aging is a contributing factor to the degradation and loss of physical and psychological health in later life, and that this is true. Following the conception of "successful aging," there has been an explosion of interest in the concepts of "healthy aging," "active aging," and "productive aging" as approaches to resolve these challenges. The concept of active aging emphasizes the importance and relevance of older people maintaining great health while remaining in their home or other familiar environment. With this viewpoint in mind, researchers have focused their attention on the development and

maintenance of talents and skills that are connected with a feeling of well-being as people get older. Travel is one facet of well-being that has garnered more attention in recent years (Martinson & Berridge, 2015).

Tourism is one of the world's most important sectors from an economic standpoint. It not only generates a plethora of work opportunities throughout the globe, but it also promotes advancement and riches. In 2017, the tourism industry supported 313 million jobs and contributed \$8.3 trillion, or more than 10%, to global GDP. Despite a 4.6 percent drop in 2017, the tourism industry has outpaced global economic indexes for seven consecutive years. A good performance by Asia has continued to be seen in recent years, following a continuous trend (Mazoor et al., 2019). Today, business executives and political leaders throughout the globe are quickly understanding that tourism has already established itself as a substantial economic and social force in their own countries. Developing countries are seeking its advantages, while developed countries are battling to keep their share of the global market. Although tourism research cannot replace outstanding management approaches, it may be used to enhance such management by providing objective, systematic, logical, and empirical evidence. The significance of this sort of research is in the progress of development, management, policy making, and education in this constantly expanding field (Rasool et al., 2021).

In the present period of social and commercial management, the senior tourist sector can unquestionably be seen as a rapidly growing and increasing business, and much research has been performed to better understand its distinctive characteristics. The senior tourist sector is a profitable source of income for tourism-related enterprises, not only because of the growing number of seniors, but also because of the seniors' availability and availability of time when they travel. Determining motivation is the first stage in determining the potential of the senior tourist group (Zielińska-Szczepkowska, 2021).

It is difficult to categorize the tourism industry since, unlike other businesses, it does not have a single distinguishable product to sell to customers (Chen et al., 2020). It includes a wide range of industries, including the hotel, transportation, attractions, and travel agencies. For the purposes of this definition, tourism is defined as when persons go to and stay in areas other than their usual surroundings for a time of less than one year consecutively for the purpose of enjoyment, business, health, or other considerations. In 2020, travel and tourism will have contributed around 4.7 trillion US dollars directly to the global gross domestic product (GDP). With a direct contribution to global GDP of 1.1 trillion US dollars in 2020, the United States' travel and tourism business ranked first among countries that made direct contributions to global GDP of more than \$1 trillion. Meanwhile, according to a list of the countries with the biggest proportion of GDP from travel and tourism, Macau's city and special administrative region earned the highest percentage of GDP from direct travel and tourism of any economy in the world. The global coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic that began in early 2020 caused significant disruption to the tourism industry (Uğur & Akbıyık, 2020).

Because the new seniors have far more purchasing power than younger generations, the elderly population provides a large market for a broad range of industries. In particular, the tourism business is emerging as one of the most significant beneficiaries of the aging process, thanks to the more leisure-oriented lifestyle that the current generation has adopted. As a consequence of the demographic transition, senior tourism will expand to become one of the fastest growing and most important areas of the tourism industry, converting it into a growth engine for the whole tourism industry. The reason for this is because, in

comparison to previous generations, the elderly put a larger value on travel during their retirement years. According to the World Trade Organization, there would be more than 2 billion international travelers aged 60 and over by 2050, a significant increase from the 593 million who traveled internationally in 1999. These alterations in demographics will have an impact on the supply and demand structures of the tourist industry. In this regard, it is important to note that, although the tourist industry has started to address some of these changes, more radical solutions will be required in the coming decades (Arensberg, 2018).

For its part, senior tourism includes a diverse variety of activities carried out by the elderly, whether they are retired or not, over the age of 55, and with various levels of income, education, and other characteristics. It seems reasonable to believe that senior tourism should no longer be regarded a seasonal activity, or that active seniors should no longer be considered a minority group, but rather a much larger segment of the market. Additionally, as clients, the elderly display a wide range of buying behaviors, similar to those of travelers. To meet the leisure and tourism needs of this market, it is necessary to have a comprehensive grasp of it and debunk the idea that the senior market is homogenous. This step necessitates a thorough investigation of the senior travel industry (Liew& Abdullah, 2021).

It is expected that tourism-related research will expand in scope and magnitude as the industry grows in importance as a sector of the global economy. Tourism-related research will play a critical supporting role in the development of the tourism industry (Gössling et al., 2020). In the case of China, fast international and domestic tourism boom increased the country's economy while also resulting in a spate of serious social, cultural, and environmental challenges, including pollution. Because tourists' planning and marketing are becoming more difficult, as is product development, research is becoming more important in supplying the required knowledge for decision-making. Although academic papers on Chinese tourism have been published for many years (Fallon, 2004), no empirical analysis of articles published in major hospitality and tourism publications has been carried out. Taking stock of current tourism research operations in China at this moment seems to be a realistic course of action, allowing us to evaluate where we are now, how far we have gone, and where we need to go in the future.

Amid rapid growth in the national economy, China's domestic tourism sector rose to prominence and became a key source of demand for the rest of the world. In 1997, there were 644 million domestic visitors who spent a total of 211.27 billion RMB Yuan. That tourism has turned into a substantial component of the service sector was proven by this example. During this time, China's outbound tourism is seeing rapid growth. In 1992, 2.93 million outbound visitors visited the country, representing a 37.3 percent increase over the previous year. As of 1998, 8.4 million Chinese have gone overseas, ranking them tenth in the world in terms of international travel. "The market was developing considerably more swiftly than anybody had expected, and China was already delivering considerable numbers of tourists to any nation prepared to accept them. The country is forecast to overtake the United States as the world's top tourist destination by 2020, with 130 million visitors visiting each year and 100 million Chinese expected to go outside of the country (Zhao et al., 2020).

Retirement brings a unique set of options, especially in terms of leisure activities that encourage older people to maintain an active lifestyle in their later years. Older people, on the other hand, may engage in a few leisure and recreational activities that are beneficial to their psychological well-being. In China, the concept of leisure has been embraced and modified for the purpose of leisure research. However, there is no

agreement on the extent to which Chinese culture has an impact on how leisure is perceived in the country. Many seniors take advantage of the opportunity to be active and engage in activities that promote their general well-being, even though aging has been proved to have a role in the deterioration and loss of physical and psychological health in later life. Consequently, the notion of senior tourism was formed, which is now a booming industry as a result of an aging population.

4. Senior Tourism: Motivation and Satisfaction

The study of elder motivations is becoming more popular among academics that are interested in the subject. A market segmentation strategy is being pursued by the tourism sector, which recognizes the great potential for providing senior-oriented services. Senior tourists are classified based on a range of parameters, including demographic and psychological traits, lifestyle, and attitude characteristics, as well as educational and financial levels, in order to better meet their requirements. Researchers that study tourism have classed elderly people based on their activities, suggesting that there are many types of senior tourists to choose from (Strough et al., 2015).

Current study on the motivations of senior travelers is focused on two areas of motivation, namely "pull" factors and "push" variables, which are both referred to as "pull" variables. The distinction between push and pull pressures was articulated in the context of motivation for the first time in the subject literature, providing an answer to the question "what motivates tourists to travel?" As defined by the study, pull factors are any exterior elements that lure a tourist to a certain region. Examples of pull factors include the sea and mountains, the sun, and the beach. In addition, other researchers have demonstrated that the primary attributes of a destination that attract seniors are natural, cultural, and historical attractions, as well as favorable weather conditions. These attributes include security, trip cost, cultural and natural attractions, as well as historical sites, medical service (facilities), and the weather. However, internal variables drawn from genuine visitors' predispositions, attitudes, experiences, and goals were incorporated as push factors. These included sentimentalism, a desire to get away from the city's noise and bustle, and other similar desires, among other things. It is hypothesized that humans move because of internal factors "pushing" them and external factors "pulling" them in different directions (Bayih et al., 2020).

Persons are pushed to travel by both motivational reasons and the desire to visit a certain location. While pull factors are primarily concerned with the attractiveness of a destination, such as beaches, accommodations, recreation facilities, cultural and historical resources, and other such factors, push factors are origin-related and refer to the desires of the individual traveler, such as rest and relaxation, health, adventure, and status directions (Bayih et al., 2020). For senior travelers, the motivations for traveling in terms of push and pull factors are also a source of worry. The elderly's travel decisions are influenced by both internal factors (such as spiritual requirements, medical requirements and health condition, employment opportunities, financial resources, meeting people, the availability of travel companions, and traveling for recreational purposes) and external factors (such as the destination's suitability for the elderly's condition, its accessibility, and the availability of travel companions). There has been a slew of studies conducted to understand what inspires elder travelers to travel. Among the many different human behaviors and experiences that may be had when traveling are relaxation, excitement, social connection with friends or family, adventure, achieving a

higher social position, and getting away from boredom or tension (Pressman et al., 2009). Each of these factors is crucial to the decision-making process in one way or another.

The most major push motive category for Chinese senior travelers is "knowledge seeking," while the most significant pull motivation category is "advantages of the gorgeous place." "Scenic security," "beautiful scenery," and "service quality of scenic service personnel" are the three most important influencing elements on the satisfaction of Chinese senior tourists, according to the study. The demographic characteristics of senior visitors have an impact on their motivation and on the variables that define their level of enjoyment. When it comes to traveling, fitness is a big incentive for those between the ages of 50 and 55, but it is not important for those above the age of 55. Senior people with more knowledge will be more concerned about the needs of intangible cultural assets than their younger counterparts. The "beautiful scenery" is the most significant factor influencing male seniors' overall visitor satisfaction. "Scenic security," on the other hand, is the most important factor influencing tourist happiness among older women. Furthermore, the data show that as travel motivation grows, Chinese senior tourists put a greater emphasis on the overall quality of their trip. In a similar vein, as tourists' expectations of a trip grow, Chinese senior travelers put a higher value on the quality of their journey, hence enhancing tourist satisfaction. China's elderly citizens' future behavioral intentions are negatively influenced by their level of pleasure with their vacation. The mean value of future behavioral intentions among tourists reveals that when Chinese seniors are satisfied with their travel experiences, they are more inclined to spread the word about them to their friends and family. The less happy Chinese seniors are with their travel experiences, the more probable it is that they would voice their dissatisfaction (Bai et al., 2017).

Several studies have looked at the motivations of Chinese senior travelers, and they have discovered that their motivations fall into one of eight categories that describe the reasons for foreign travel. Following the sensation of socializing; pursuing time with family; pursuing self-esteem; escaping; experiencing culture or nature; pursuing education; pursuing a once-in-a-lifetime encounter; and pursuing nostalgia. When it comes to seniors, self-esteem has previously been linked to their perception of their own age, their own confidence, and their own self-consciousness. As a result, identifying and supporting critical components of self-esteem, such as positive word of mouth, should be the starting point for understanding seniors' travel behavior (Otoo et al., 2020).

There is an increasing number of professionals who are identifying factors that influence the motivations of elder travelers. The 'pull' and 'push' variables provide insight on the ways in which older adults are influenced by a variety of internal and external factors. When it comes to Chinese senior travelers, the most significant push motivation category is "knowledge seeking," while the most important pull motivation category is "advantages of the beautiful destination." As a result of this information, chances to meet the needs of senior tourists, as well as to identify and support the important components that encourage them to travel, become obvious, resulting in a positive impact on the tourism industry.

5. Senior Tourism: Challenges and Opportunities in the Tourism Industry

As people get older, they experience a range of changes, including physical, psychological, and social changes, which might have an influence on their ability to seek out opportunities for tourist activities. Additionally, constraints such as a lack of financial resources and deteriorating health limit the amount of

time that elders spend on vacation. Therefore, specific social tourism initiatives are implemented to encourage older citizens' participation in tourism. This is also supported by the research that has been done. Several senior tourist ideas were produced and implemented because of the outcomes of the studies and the resources that were available (Khalid et al., 2019).

Despite tremendous progress and a promising future for tourism growth, there are still several challenges to overcome, both locally and globally, that must be overcome. For example, the destruction of tourist attractions and natural landscapes, environmental pollution, pandemics, a lack of financial resources for infrastructure development, persistent attitude problems among service personnel, and competition from competitors in the Asia-Pacific region who offer a more diverse tourism product and a higher level of service quality are all examples of issues that must be addressed (Kaushal et al., 2021). Because of the rising global relevance of the Chinese tourism industry, as well as the many important difficulties that are preventing it from expanding further, it is necessary to boost both the number and the quality of research in this area to meet international standards. Considering the above, an examination of historical research efforts will assist in evaluating the academic direction of this issue, detecting the gap between supply and demand for research, and anticipating future research requirements in this field (Hao et al., 2020).

Increased demand for tourism services and travel for medical reasons, rehabilitation, and youth extension; increased demand for out-of-season vacations; increased demand for quiet places with mild climates; and the necessity of offer adaptation are just a few of the consequences of an aging society and the challenges associated with senior consumer service for the tourism industry, among other things. With this understanding of the challenges, the tourist industry can give opportunities that meet the needs of older visitors, therefore contributing to economic growth via senior tourism (Budeanu et al., 2005).

It is projected that senior tourism will become a key component in the twenty-first century as the population becomes older. While seniors are as diverse as any other demographic group and many seniors do not have the financial means to travel, it is critical to understand the following characteristics of senior tourists to transform them into opportunities for the tourism industry: While seniors are as diverse as any other demographic group, many seniors do not have the financial means to travel (Kim et al., 2015). Travel is frequently a lifestyle priority for many, and many are willing to pay for travel on a regular basis; they typically have more savings and assets and fewer financial obligations, particularly in the early years of retirement; they can be more flexible with travel dates, frequently preferring off-peak seasons; and they are generally more discerning travelers (Szromek et al., 2021).

Senior travelers, on the other hand, are more likely than younger travelers in their 50s and 60s to choose for guided package tours rather than independent travel. Coach travels are especially popular since they are priced, provide protection and companionship for alone travelers, and are quite inexpensive. Moreover, because of the large number of passengers, travels may be quite inexpensive, especially during the low season, and older travelers seem to be more willing to travel during the off-season to take advantage of the reduced prices. To comply with this requirement, the tourism industry must develop programs for elderly visitors visiting during the off-season. Tourist marketers are encouraged to use advertising strategies that take advantage of current information technologies. A practical consideration for older Chinese seniors going overseas is their need for family companionship while away from home, as well as their preference for low-cost accommodations. It is possible that offering package vacations oriented toward families will be equally as

popular as offering inexpensive tours. Reaching this sector of the population, which is less likely to use travel information technology, may be more successful via a word-of-mouth campaign (Totsune et al., 2021).

A further motivation for senior tourists to select guided excursions is health-related considerations. People who are suffering from health problems may be motivated to travel if they feel they may not be able to travel again in the future or if they desire to take advantage of the opportunities presented by their circumstances. A person's advanced age may also motivate them to travel to places of interest that they want to see "before they die." When it comes to ill health, though, it may be a deterrent, albeit the risk of not being able to seek care is lessened when older visitors go in groups. By incorporating this notion into tour itineraries and packages that cater to the requirements of elder tourists, the tourism industry may be able to profit from this approach. It is possible that creating and publicizing educational excursions, such as trips to museums and other historical sites, may draw more business to this area. A hitherto undiscovered opportunity to develop meaningful contact and expose seniors to education tourism has appeared as educational tourism experiences become more popular among the elderly (Darrat & Flaherty, 2019).

During the course of the travel, it is possible to have health problems (Satariano et al., 2012). Elderly people may be more susceptible to environmental and nutritional changes than younger people, which is something that tour operators should keep in mind when planning a trip. Rather of experimenting with novel cuisine to avoid the negative consequences of a diet change or to preserve the management of pre-existing health difficulties, it is rare for senior tourists to eat conservatively from familiar foods rather than trying with foreign cuisine. Others may just be set in their ways, such as the elderly gentleman who becomes agitated if he is unable to obtain porridge in time for breakfast. Instead of relying on stereotypes, older travelers, particularly those who exercise caution when it comes to their nutrition, may be even more adaptable and inventive in meeting their needs than younger travelers (Cerin et al., 2017). They may also be more diligent in communicating their requirements to service providers well in advance.

It is also important to evaluate the pace and breadth of a journey for older citizens and their caregivers. Many visitors want to see as much as they can in their short time, but the pace required to do so may be incompatible with the demands of senior citizens traveling alone (Vaportzis et al., 2017). When traveling with a mixed-age group, different tolerances for long driving hours, day excursions, and daily changes of accommodations may be accommodated by booking a variety of activities. For example, locations that offer both active attractions that require a significant amount of walking and relaxing attractions such as good cafés, parks, beautiful views, or local museums and shops for persons who like to spend the day roaming or resting may be chosen. Organizing day trips to and from the same facility is another technique to accommodating such variances, since it allows tourists to choose between 'staying in' and seeing the area around the hotel or inn.

However, this does not imply that older citizens would be left behind. They often do, and many of them are physically fit and enthusiastic, and they are eager to go to bed early to feel refreshed for the following day's activities. Senior citizens, on the other hand, may want to take things a little slowly, with two-night stays rather than one-night stays and dedicated "free" hours to recoup or explore attractions at their own convenience (Clark et al., 2015). It is possible for tourist service providers to ensure that less active visitors are not left out of the fun by including extra entertainments such as sing-alongs, games, and informative lectures on local avian life into their events.

Tourism operators must develop plans to address health challenges that may arise in the future or that are now occurring among the aging population. Health information will be gathered prior to the trip, participants will be warned of any potential health concerns associated with scheduled activities such as a lengthy uphill climb, and health care choices will be located along the planned itinerary. While it is important to avoid interfering with participants' rights to participate in activities, it is also important to be on the lookout for signals that a person is stressed, even if he or she claims to be in excellent health (Sundling, 2015). It may be necessary to talk with the individual's spouse in a discreet manner on occasion.

The fact that older persons are generally free of work and family duties means that they have more flexibility when it comes to vacation times. Older travelers may also be able to aid in bridging the gap between seasons when resources are overused. Weather and the surrounding environment may have a considerable impact in determining how tempting off-season travel is to older people, especially given that they are frequently more sensitive to harsh weather, heat, and cold than younger people (Pandolf, 1997). This adds to the growing number of worries about elderly travelers. They are curious, they like learning, and they see the importance of life for what it really is. This is not to imply that they all like listening to educational lectures, but they often do so because they are interested in learning about new topics, verifying their past knowledge, and adding to their already extensive knowledge base. Travelers in their golden years generally have a deeper sense of history and tradition than younger tourists, and they are attracted to architectural landmarks, museums, and cultural events in particular (Lin et al., 2021).

When compared to younger visitors, who may have a limited awareness of history and geography, older visitors may be more informed and, as a result, more interested in learning new things about what they already know (Alon et al., 2010). Younger travelers are often on the lookout for adventure, novelty, and a sense of escape. Senior travelers often travel to get a more comprehensive picture of their lives. They find delight in social connection, in developing friendships, and in simple pleasures such as beautiful scenery, delectable food, calming walks, laughing, and other simple pleasures, among others. In many cases, elder travelers have outgrown their youth's self-consciousness and are now more willing to engage in talks and ask questions, as well as to participate happily in social events or to propose new concepts and ideas (and to otherwise be an embarrassment to younger family members). A family-type package for such elderly is suggested, which would enable them to spend time with their children, spouses, and grandchildren while still receiving a financial benefit. Chinese elders should be encouraged to take advantage of opportunities to see foreign cultural and natural wonders in their native habitats. For example, short haulers may visit Jeju Island in South Korea while long haulers could visit Niagara Falls in Canada. Once again, service providers are urged to provide price reductions to customers. Based on their preference for mid-priced housing, it seems that sites do not need to enhance its amenities and services to accommodate this group of seniors (Chang et al., 2021).

People often gain an understanding of the need of cooperation and tolerance for healthy social functioning as they get older, which explains why older travelers are frequently courteous, polite, and expect respect in return from their companions and other travelers (though they may have different ideas about what is and is not good manners). A tour guide who lectures senior visitors about maintaining a respectable level of noise or staying in line, or who dismisses the concerns of one or two members, may not be displaying a sufficient degree of respect (Hwang et al., 2020). Visitor groups from non-western cultural origins, where age gives more personal authority, may have a lesser tolerance for perceived or real disrespect than visitors from

western cultural backgrounds. If it is possible, it is advisable to explain certain procedures and rules in advance as well as the reason behind them to encourage visitors to participate and therefore maintain their sense of personal autonomy. As a bonus, organizations may be encouraged to self-monitor in this way: by exerting their own influence on disloyal members.

In fact, many senior travelers prefer to travel by themselves, and it is not uncommon to see older women traveling by themselves, especially since women often live longer lives than men. Many facilities do not accommodate single visitors, and they may end up spending much more per person for their accommodations because of this. Single room accommodations may be difficult to come by in many big cities, and those that are available are often priced at the same level as a standard double room. Sometimes, rooms are shared, however this might be troublesome if there is no one else in the tour group who is interested in sharing a room or if the roommates are total strangers. Packages and services designed specifically for single travelers are effective in enticing potential customers. Then the elderly, solo travel affords for more choice and the opportunity to meet new people in a more relaxed environment. Besides that, travel may give an opportunity for this group to seek an experience that they would otherwise be unable to afford. It is possible that a marketing phrase such as "Crown your life with a once-in-a-lifetime cruise" would appeal to a senior demographic that is searching for an experience of a lifetime.

6. Conclusions

While aging society obviously brings with it new challenges, apocalyptic forecasts of irrevocable economic suffering are almost certainly overblown, to say the least. The demographic shift brought about by aging population has the potential to inspire behavioral changes as well as technological and institutional advancements, which might help to greatly minimize any negative implications of this transition. A combination of factors will be required to mitigate the negative consequences of population aging: increased labor supply from women, immigrants, and older people; increased investment in education and training at all ages; increased savings rates during the working years; slower benefit growth; and faster tax contributions to finance government transfers to the elderly.

It is undeniable that the demographics of the elderly population are changing fast, and that this trend will continue in the coming years as a consequence of changes in socioeconomic circumstances, the gender ratio, and other characteristics, among other things. The elderly population has a significant impact on the economy of a nation, despite the fact that the effects are minimal. Because of their buying power, it is important to be aware of these problems.

Older adults may keep an active lifestyle in their later years because of the variety of leisure activities available to them throughout retirement. A variety of leisure and recreational activities are available to older persons that are good to their psychological well-being, on the other hand. The notion of leisure has been accepted and changed in China for the purpose of leisure research, which is now underway. Despite this, there is no consensus on the degree to which Chinese culture influences how leisure is seen in the nation. Although aging has been shown to have a role in the degradation and loss of physical and psychological health in later life, many seniors take advantage of the chance to stay active and participate in activities that support their overall well-being. Therefore, the concept of senior tourism was born, which has since grown into a thriving sector because of the aging population.

A growing number of seniors are continuing to enjoy excellent health and physical condition for an increasing amount of time, and more importantly, they want to retain this condition for as long as they possibly can. Tourist attractions and recreational activities may prove to be especially beneficial in this regard. Seniors, particularly those of the baby-boomer generation, begin to substitute family dedication for self-education, enjoyment, and entertainment in their later years, and they consider travel and leisure as the reward for a difficult life filled with sacrifices. Seniors are not appealing targets during the tourist season because they prefer to go outside of the season while the season is open rather than during the season itself. In addition, it is vital to address societal problems. When developing strategies and programs for senior tourists, the tourism sector must address the motives that drive them. Only then can they be tailored to meet their requirements and provide them with pleasure. In light of the senior tourist ideas that have been developed and put into action as a result of the research findings and the resources that have been made available, the tourism industry must address the growing market that is being driven by demographic change and the shift of the market to elderly cohorts, which in the long run can pave the way for further advancement of understanding in this dynamic industry and the creation of new opportunities in the future.

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