

# Exploration of Factors Influencing Taiwanese's Choice of Japan as the Travel Destination - A Case Study of Miaoli County Residents

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**Abstract-** With the promotion of weekend holidays, people's leisure time increases. Recreation and entertainment become a popular topic, and more and more people regard travel as the measure of recreation. As the neighboring country of Taiwan, Japan has natural geographic advantage, exquisite landscape and rich humanities and history. It is a favorable travel destination. This study explores main factors of people in Miaoli County to travel in Japan. Based on past literatures, it selected the major factors to travel in Japan. By Delphi Method, this study obtained three major factors, Japanese intention, travel motivation and personality trait and 14 sub-factors to search for principal factors to travel in Japan. After adopting AHP and investigating professional opinions of 6 experts, this study acquires major factors of people in Miaoli County to travel in Japan: geographic location of Japanese intention and humanity and history of travel motivation. Personality traits do not significantly influence the travel in Japan.

**Keywords:** Japanese intention, travel motivation, personality trait, Analytic Hierarchy Process

## I. INTRODUCTION

This research aims to explore the importance degree of the factors influencing Taiwanese's choice of Japan as the travel destination, as well as the key influencing factors of Miaoli County residents' choice of Japan as the travel destination. The subjects were the general public over the age of 20 and residing in Miaoli County, and their choice of Japan as the travel destination was discussed. Based on literature review and Delphi experts panel, this study analyzed the indicators of the influencing factors, and constructed a hierarchical structure. The results of questionnaire survey and Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) were used to obtain the weights of the influencing factors on the choice of travel destination for discussion.

This research aims to explore the importance degree of the factors influencing Taiwanese's choice of Japan as the travel destination. Discussions included the image of Japan, tourism motivation, and personality traits of the subjects.

After the technology entered people's daily life and the two-day weekend policy was implemented, various leisure activities have emerged, among which tourism is very popular. According to the "2017 Tourism Intention Survey" by Visa, Taiwanese's most desirable travel destination is Japan (39.9%), followed by Northern Europe (27.8%), France (20.3%), United Kingdom (19.4%) and the United States (19.3%). It is clear that Japan has gradually become Taiwanese's first choice of overseas tourism.

Tourism has various forms and provides different life experiences for the travelers. Once a different way of travelling is chosen, the experience would also be totally different. Japan is a neighboring country of Taiwan and has rich tourism resources, such as Mount Fuji, the "sacred mountain" worshipped by the people in Japan, Tokyo, the hub of politics, economics, culture, transportation and other areas, the picturesque Hokkaido and Akihabara, a booming animation technology city, each having its different characteristic tourist attractions and attracting the tourists from all over the world.

The author has lived in the mountain city of Miaoli for more than 40 years having a very strong bonding toward his hometown, and thus chose the residents in Miaoli County over the age of 20 as the research objects. This study intends to explore the importance degree of the factors influencing Taiwanese's choice of Japan as the travel destination, as well as the different factors and key influencing factors of Miaoli County tourists' choice of Japan as the travel destination. Questionnaire survey was conducted. The purposes of this study are summarized as follows:

1. Explore the key factors influencing Miaoli County tourists' choice of Japan as the travel destination.
2. Provide references of related research topics for the subsequent researchers.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A psychological-level motivation would be triggered before people are engaged in a tourism activity. The "motivation" is a kind of psychological activity, an activity and behavior as a result of the combined action of the triggering by people's psychological need coupled with the stimulation of external environment.

The image is considered to be the foundation on which people construct their inner development of the environment in the process of travelling in the tourism studies, which also refers that people would have an impression of things. Therefore, an individual's overall feeling and cognition of a tourism area is the so-called "tourism image" where the tourist's overall cognition and belief of the destination becomes a set of overall impression. The tourism image is regarded as a kind of tourist's expectation of the destination and is an individual tourist's positive impression produced for the beneficial travel experience. The tourism image is usually taken as one of the factors influencing the satisfaction or travel destination choice.

As mentioned above, the tourism motivation consists of internal need and external environmental factor. Based on the research purposes, motivation and research method of this study, the external environmental factor is the tourist's expectation of Japan and the attraction of Japan to a tourist is the image of Japan.

The "personality trait" is used to represent the general totality of a person's thinking mode, feeling expression and behavior characteristics. It is a unique feature used to distinguish self from others. This kind of trait is the impression and influence a person gives to others, from which a person's behavior can be predicted.

## III. RESEARCH METHOD

Two research tools were used in this study. First, the "Modified Delphi Expert Questionnaire" was used to conduct the pre-test survey and select the appropriate influencing factors for the hierarchical analysis. Then, the Modified Delphi Expert Questionnaire and AHP were employed for the survey.

The purpose of using the Delphi method is to seek for the consistent consensus on the issues among the expert group, but the process of sending the questionnaire back and forth may be complicated. The modified Delphi method changes the original open-ended questionnaire to structured questionnaire, based on literature review, for the first round of survey. This study used the consensus items to determine the evaluation items of the influencing factors of the subjects' choice of Japan as the travel destination. The evaluation items were used to define the research questions, establish the evaluation criteria, sub-criteria, and hierarchical structure. The questionnaire results were used to establish the rating scale for the influencing factors of Taiwanese's choice of Japan as the travel destination. The purpose was to find out whether the subjects' willingness of choosing Japan as the travel destination, the challenges they faced, and related coping strategies, could support Taiwanese's choice of Japan as the travel destination.

The test was conducted individually. The subjects were the residents in Miaoli County over the age of 20, totaling 12 subjects. The modified Delphi expert questionnaire was administered to collect data. The statistical analysis was conducted using the MS Excel (2010) software to calculate the mean value and standard deviation. The results indicated the convergent validity of the experts' opinions and the degree of difference on each item among the experts. There were two analysis methods, namely, the average method and standard deviation method.

The results of the modified Delphi method questionnaire were used to conduct systematic hierarchical classification of the complex issues. The hierarchical structure was used to determine the hierarchical dimensions and evaluation criteria. The hierarchical questionnaire was designed, the questionnaires were distributed. The Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP) was adopted to organize data. MS Excel (2010) and Expert Choice were used for computation to analyze the weights of each evaluation criterion and identify the influencing factors of Taiwanese's choice of Japan as the travel destination.

## IV. RESEARCH ANALYSIS

According to the AHP, this study first selected the subjects, and distributed questionnaires to 6 experts, 6 valid samples were retrieved with a valid response rate of 100%. The ultimate goal was to find out the weight ratio of the relative importance of each weighing factor based on experts' opinions, and identify the comparative matrix of each hierarchy and the coincidence indicator of the overall hierarchy is less than 0.10. The key influencing factors of Taiwanese's choice of Japan as the travel destination.

This research adopts the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) to conduct analysis and uses the Expert Choice software to obtain the comparative matrix and weight of each factor in each hierarchy. The consistency of software is represented by the I.R. (Inconsistency Ratio) and it meets the consistency requirement when the I.R. value does not exceed 0.1.

The first part of the analysis content is the target hierarchy, namely, the target of "the factors influencing Taiwanese's choice of Japan as the travel destination" of this research expected to be achieved, being the main criteria, which are the three criteria of Japan intention, tourism motivation and personality trait respectively.

Ultimate Goal (1st hierarchy)	Factors of Choosing Japan as the Travel Destination		
Influencing factor (2nd hierarchy)	A. Japan intention	B. Tourism motivation	C. Personality trait
Influencing Dimension (3rd hierarchy)	A1. Beautiful scenery A2. Humanity history A3. Food attraction A4. Suitable climate A5. Geographical location A6. Shopping	B1. Relieve pressure B2. Seek stimulation and adventure B3. Entertaining & socializing B4. Achieve growth B5. Experience the culture	C1. Openness C2. Accountability C3. Extroversion C4. Friendliness C5. Emotional Stability

## V. RESEARCH RESULTS AND SUGGESTIONS

- AHP was used to organize data. The weight ranking of the key factors influencing Taiwanese's choice of Japan as the travel destination in order of size is obtained as follows: Japan intention ( $L=0.493$ ) >tourism motivation ( $L=0.416$ ) >personality trait ( $L=0.091$ ). It shows from the weight distribution condition that the principal influencing factor of Taiwanese's choice of Japan as the travel destination is Taiwanese's intention to Japan followed by the tourist motivation with these two factors accounting for more than 90%; and the personality trait accounts for a very small proportion in Taiwanese's choice of Japan as the travel destination; therefore, the personality trait has a very low influence on Taiwanese's choice of Japan as the travel destination.
- There are 4 sub-factors under the tourism motivation factor. After the questionnaire answering by the 6 experts and the standardized weights calculation, it can be learned from the results that  $C.I.=0.029 < 0.1$  and  $C.R.=0.032 < 0.1$ , indicating that the pairing of the sub-factors of tourism motivation is consistent according to the before-and-after comparison. AHP is used to organize data. The weight ranking of the factors influencing the Japan intention in order of size is obtained as follows: experience the culture ( $L=0.506$ ) >seek stimulation and adventure ( $L=0.216$ ) >entertaining & socializing ( $L=0.161$ ) >achieve growth ( $L=0.117$ ).

It can be learned from the weight distribution condition that experiencing the culture is the main factor influencing the tourism motivation with its weight accounting for more than the half followed by seeking stimulation and adventure and entertaining & socializing and the influence of achieving growth is very weak. The motivation of Taiwanese's choice of Japan as the travel destination is mainly because one can experience the Japan culture. Both belonging to Asia, although the culture of Japan and Taiwan is similar but not identical. Taiwan's culture has been affected in a certain degree by Japan's culture in the history of Taiwan. Therefore,

experiencing the culture has gradually become the main influencing factor of the motivation of Taiwanese's choice of Japan as the travel destination.

3. There are 5 sub-factors under the personality trait factor. After the questionnaire answering by the 6 experts and the standardized weights calculation, it can be learned from the results that  $C.I.= 0.005 < 0.1$  and  $C.R.= 0.004 < 0.1$ , indicating that the pairing of the sub-factors of personality trait is consistent according to the before-and-after comparison. AHP is used to organize data. The weight ranking of the factors influencing the Japan intention in order of size is obtained as follows: friendliness ( $L=0.374$ ) > emotional stability ( $L=0.332$ ) > openness ( $L=0.140$ ) > extroversion ( $L=0.097$ ) > accountability ( $L=0.058$ ).

It can be learned from the weight distribution condition that the two sub-factors of personality trait, namely, friendliness and emotional stability, have relatively big influence on the personality trait with that of friendliness slightly higher than that of emotional stability. The accountability and extroversion have relatively low influence on the personality trait. It is presumed that it may be because people more prefer friendliness and emotional stability in the travel destination choice. One can only easily blend in with the local during travel by being nice, having certain affinity and controlling own temper well.

4. The weights of the 16 sub-factors influencing Taiwanese's choice of Japan as the travel destination are scored comprehensively to further find out the relative importance between the influencing factors. It is found that the most important factor influencing Taiwanese's choice of Japan as the travel destination is geographical location followed by experiencing the culture. Whereas the sub-factors of personality trait have very small influence on Taiwanese's choice of Japan as the travel destination.
5. It is shown by synthesizing the evaluation factors of 3 main factors and 16 sub-factors that the No. 1 to No.5 factors at the overall weight ranking are as follows: geographical location (0.233), experience the culture (0.210), seek stimulation and adventure (0.091), suitable climate (0.089) and entertaining & socializing (0.067).

These 5 evaluation criteria also account for 69% of the total weight. In this research, these five evaluation criteria are classified as the high influencing factors of Taiwanese's choice of Japan as the travel destination.

6. The overall research results show that the influence of tourism motivation is extremely important and takes up 3 items in the top five subordinate criteria items. It is shown that experiencing the culture, seeking stimulation and adventure as well as entertaining & socializing has a significant influence on Taiwanese's choice of Japan as the travel destination followed by Japan intention. It is thus clear that tourism motivation is an important influencing factor of Taiwanese's choice of Japan as the travel destination.

#### Suggestions:

1. The most important factor to the choice of Japan as the travel destination is the geographical location of Japan, which is an objective existence and cannot be changed. However, it can stress the advantages of the geographical location of Japan during promotion to attract more tourists. The second powerful influencing factor is humanity history. It can develop new cultural tours specific to the humanity history of Japan or promote the historical culture of Japan during promotion. Different itineraries can be developed specific to different groups of people to meet the needs of tourists.
2. Due to the limitation of manpower and material resources, the survey research has only been conducted specific to 6 experts in Miaoli County in this research. Therefore, the results of this research can only show the opinions of Miaoli County residents. It is suggested that the future researchers expand the research scope to make the research results more adaptive.

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