

Investigating Chinese Tourists' Perceived Value and Purchase Intention of Cruise Holidays after Covid-19

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Despite the potential of benefiting from the rapid growth of China's tourism industry, the development of Chinese cruise tourism is constrained by several factors. There is high competition with many cruise lines operated by international cruise companies offering similar products. Cruise lines operating in China compete on price, which is not the best way to develop the industry. Cruise products also face intense competition from air travel for overseas holidays. Chinese tourists do not know much about cruise holidays' value proposition as a new outbound tourism product, which accounts for the slow pick up in popularity among Chinese tourists. Therefore, understanding Chinese tourists' perceived value and purchase intention are crucial to understanding the problems faced by China's cruise tourism industry and laying the basis for China to build more dynamic and flexible cruise tourism. The study will also investigate the destination image of a cruise holiday and the perceived risk in the context of the COVID-19 global outbreak. The COVID-19 pandemic has seriously affected and disrupted the cruise industry and gave rise to cruise tourism's negative perception among tourists. This study will attempt to assess the extent to which Chinese tourists' perceived value and purchase intentions are affected by COVID-19 and how confidence in cruise holidays will recover after the outbreak subsides. The quantitative methods research design has been adopted in this study. Firstly, the literature review will preliminarily identify perceived value, destination image, perceived risk, and purchase intention items. Secondly, based on the literature review and previous interview results, this questionnaire has been designed and divided into three parts. The first part investigates the social demographic characteristics of the interviewees (gender, age, occupation, marital status, educational background, etc.). In the second part, respondents will be asked about their perceived value, destination image, perceived risk, and purchase intention of cruise holidays. The five-point Likert Scale will measure this part. The third part is further to understand the perception of respondents' perceived risk. Third, to improve the readability and clarity of the questionnaire tools, two pilot tests have been conducted in this study. Fourth, by issuing questionnaires and analyzing data. The questionnaire was carried out in the form of an online survey. The research has conducted with the assistance of a travel agency in Shanghai. After the researcher sends the questionnaire link to the person in charge of the travel agency, he has assisted the researcher in distributing the questionnaire link to the WeChat customer groups and asking the customers to help fill in the questionnaire. The study subjects have been selected based on three criteria: Chinese citizens aged 18 and over and tourists with cruise tourism experience. A total of 362 valid questionnaires were received. In this study, SPSS and PLS-SEM were combined to analyze

the data. The study examined the relationship among Chinese tourists' perceived value, destination image, perceived risk, and purchase intention on cruise holidays after COVID-19 and put forward a theoretical framework. Finally, this study summarizes the extent to which COVID-19 negatively impacts Chinese tourists' perceptions of a cruise vacation and how effectively the cruise industry addresses these perceptions. This study is the first attempt to explore the impact of Chinese tourists' perceived value on the development of cruise tourism in China and identify the factors that influence the development of cruise tourism in China. This study attempts to construct the theoretical framework of Chinese tourists' perceived value and purchase intention for cruise tourism and explore the countermeasures for China to develop cruise tourism under COVID-19. The study explores the importance of Chinese tourists' perceived value on developing China's cruise tourism through reviewing and criticism of the existing literature. It identifies two significant stakeholders of exploring Chinese tourists' perceived value: cruise operators and tourists. Examining Chinese tourists' perceived value and purchase intention will help cruise operators sell cruise tourism products better and attract tourists to cruise tourism. The study will also help operators address the sharp drop in demand for cruise holidays caused by COVID-19 and restore confidence in cruise tourism. Once cruise operators genuinely understand the perceived value and purchase intention of cruise tourism in China, they can provide cruise tourism products to meet the needs of tourists and improve the satisfaction and loyalty of cruise tourists. By examining the relationship among perceived value, destination image, perceived risk, and purchase intention of Chinese tourists on cruise holidays, cruise operators can develop and innovate cruise tourism products to meet the needs of cruise tourists. Especially in COVID-19, this study provides a reference for cruise operators and contributes to cruise tourism's sustainable and healthy development in China and the world.

Keywords: *China, COVID-19, Cruise Holidays, Perceived Value, Purchase Intention*