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An Analysis of the Decision-Making Groups of Farmers' Travel Motivation: Insights from Micro-Surveys of Travel Motivations in Rural Communities of Changshan County with Sustainable Resource Management

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Abstract:
Although extensive research has been conducted on the tourism market, the intricate decision-making processes underlying tourism motivations remain unexplored. This study examines the theoretical foundation of tourism motivation by adjusting observation indicators based on practical considerations to devise a more scientifically rigorous measurement questionnaire. Through a comprehensive analysis encompassing basic feature analysis, exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, factor importance cluster analysis, repeated-measurement one-factor analysis of variance, K-means clustering analysis, and nonlinear canonical correlation analysis, we identified six critical motivation factors and two primary travel decision clusters from a sample of 503 rural tourists across four villages in Changshan County, encompassing diverse geographical landscapes. The key findings of this study are as follows. (1) Women and middle-aged rural tourists tend to be more involved in travel decision-making. Furthermore, a higher level of education was positively associated with increased travel intentions among rural tourists. These tourists prefer destinations rich in natural and cultural attributes that favor convenient and environmentally friendly travel modes. Family factors also play a significant role in shaping travel decisions. (2) Age demonstrated significant group differences in all six aspects of rural tourism motivation, highlighting the diverse motivations among different age groups. Notably, decision makers exert considerable influence on environmental factors. (3) Group 1, characterized by decision makers seeking a deep and immersive experience, correlates strongly with female farmer tourists, those under 30 years old, tourists from diverse occupations, and those preferring self-driving tourism modes. (4) Group 2, comprising decision-makers prioritizing leisure and enjoyment, shows a high correlation with male farmer tourists, those over 30 years old, and those favoring eco-friendly tourism. These insights provide a valuable understanding of rural tourists' motivations and decision-making processes, inform strategies for enhancing their travel experiences, and promote sustainable tourism development.

Keywords: rural tourists, tourism motivation, travel decision-making, nonlinear canonical correlation analysis, sustainable resource utilization

INTRODUCTION

With the rapid development of Chinese-style modernization and increasing improvement in people's living standards, the phenomenon of farmers' travel has gradually attracted widespread attention. Farmers' travel is not only a temporary relief from heavy agricultural work but also a pursuit and aspiration for a better life. They eagerly wanted to broaden their horizons, enrich their lives, strengthen family bonds, and find new developmental opportunities through travel. Therefore, a deep understanding of farmers' travel motivations and the decision-making factors behind them is of great significance for promoting agricultural and rural modernization, the development of farmers' tourism markets, and the promotion of urban-rural exchange and integration.

The motivations for farmers to travel are complex and diverse, encompassing both internal psychological needs and external social and environmental influences [1]. They may hope to relax and relieve the pressure of the busy farming season through travel [2]; they may also want to spend quality time with their families and strengthen family bonds; some farmers may see the economic benefits of tourism and hope to broaden their income channels through travel. Regardless of travel motivation, it reflects farmers' aspirations and pursuit of a better life [3].

Farmers and tourists are not a homogeneous group, and there are significant internal differences in their consumption behaviors and psychological motivations [4]. To gain a deeper understanding of the diversity of this group, researchers often use differentiated motivation measurement and classify these farmers' tourists into multiple types based on cultural background, destination characteristics, measurement focus, and travel companions [5]. However, the current classifications focus mainly on the consumption content level. Using push-pull theory, we can analyze the interactive relationship between farmers' individual needs and destination attractiveness, thus gaining insight into the different levels of attention that different farmer groups pay to various tourism products and resources. Such an analysis helps predict farmers' tourist products and destination choices, providing strong support for market consumption and destination planning [6].

Although many studies have analyzed farmers' travel motivations, there are still some deficiencies. In terms of research on farmers' travel motivations, a comparative analysis of farmers' psychological needs and decision-making behaviors in different regions and cultural backgrounds has not been fully conducted. To encourage more farmers to participate in tourism and gain rich emotional experiences, making farmers' travel motivation research more meaningful at the level of social welfare, this study explores the deep-seated needs behind travel motivations, combined with farmers' emotional needs for travel, refining specific travel decisions, comprehensively considering the main conditional concerns faced by farmers' tourism, and exploring farmers' travel decision-making categories and their related and differential characteristics to reveal the decision-making psychology behind farmers' tourism formation.

OBJECTIVES

Motivation is crucial for understanding human behavior, as it reveals both the superficial needs of people and the deeper meanings behind their actions [7]. To understand the underlying decision-making needs and desires of farmers participating in tourism activities, it is necessary to return to an initial understanding of their motivation. With the deepening of research, the study of farmers' tourism markets in China has gradually evolved from an initial exploration to deepening and refinement. Scholars have conducted detailed discussions on farmers' tourism markets from multiple perspectives, which not only deepened our understanding of the farmers' tourism market, but also provided solid theoretical support and practical guidance for the development of this market.

In recent years, scholars have conducted comprehensive and in-depth research on farmers' travel motivations and accumulated a large number of influential academic achievements. From 2004 to 2024, research on farmers' travel motivations showed a trend toward diversified exploration. For example, Wei and Guo proposed a fuzzy comprehensive evaluation method for farmers' evaluation of tourism service quality in Hebei Province, providing theoretical guidance for tourism destinations to improve their service levels. Chao et al. systematically analyzed the evolution of the network center-of-gravity trajectory of farmers' tourism flow in China, pointing out existing problems and proposing corresponding solutions [8]. Wang et al. conducted in-depth analysis of the regional differences in farmers' tourism market [9]. By comparing the characteristics and developmental statuses of farmers' tourism markets in different regions, scholars have revealed the diversity and complexity of these markets. These studies not only help us to understand the overall situation of farmers' tourism market more comprehensively, but also provide strong support for local governments to formulate tourism development strategies [10].

In terms of the development of farmers' tourism markets, scholars such as Lu and Jin have provided a new perspective on farmers' local tourism employment behavior in ethnic villages [11]. They delved into the factors affecting farmers' participation in tourism employment and provided new ideas for rural economic development. Zhu et al. analyzed the impact of leisure agriculture and rural tourism development on farmers' income growth through quasi-natural experimental evidence [12], providing practical references for policymakers. Zhou and Li conducted a preliminary exploration of China's farmers' tourism market in 2004, laying the foundation for subsequent research [13]. Subsequent studies have continued to deepen this understanding, such as Li's discussion on the development and management strategies of farmers' tourism markets, as well as the construction of a harmonious society and the development of farmers' tourism markets [14]. These studies not only enrich our understanding of farmers' travel motivations but also provide theoretical support for the sustainable development of rural tourism.

In terms of research on the impact of farmers' tourism motivation, Inggriati N.W.T et al. studied farmers' perceptions of using cattle as tourist attractions in the Tabanan region of Bali [15]. They found that farmers' attitudes towards using cattle as tourist attractions were influenced by various factors, including economic benefits and cultural identities. This study expands the field of farmers' tourism research and provides useful insights to better understand the operational mechanism of farmers' tourism markets. Xiang et al. conducted an in-depth analysis of the characteristics of farmers' tourists in Yanbian area. Through questionnaire surveys and data analysis, they revealed the behavioral characteristics and consumption preferences of farmers' tourists in Yanbian area [16]. This study provides a reference for the development of local farmers' tourism and helps promote the differentiated development of farmers' tourism markets. At the same time, there are also studies focusing on the impact of farmers' tourism on farmers' livelihoods. Yu and Wen [17] conducted an empirical study of farmers' tourism markets in the Hefei area. This study found that farmers' tourism not only increases farmers' income levels but also promotes the development of the rural economy. This study provides strong evidence for a more comprehensive understanding of the economic effects on farmers' tourism markets. Zhi et al. [18]. Considered the ancient villages of Hougou, Qiaojia Courtyard, and Jin Temple in Shanxi Province as examples to analyze the impact of rural tourism on farmers' livelihoods. Research shows that the development of rural tourism has provided farmers with more employment opportunities and income sources, while also promoting the

inheritance and development of rural culture. This study provides useful insights for better understanding the sociocultural effects of farmers' tourism markets.

METHODS

This study first traces back to the theoretical basis of tourism motivation and adjusts the observation indicators based on actual conditions to construct a more scientific measurement questionnaire (the Motivation Importance Scale). Second, a sample basic characteristic analysis of farmers' travel features in four villages (two mountainous areas, one hilly area, and one plain) in Changshan County is conducted. Using SPSS 26.0 software, the reliability and validity of the questionnaire were tested to assess the internal consistency of the scale. Meanwhile, through exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses, the effectiveness of each item in the scale was explored in depth, and the importance of the factors was clustered. Based on this, the types of farmers' travel motivational decisions were classified using repeated measures of one-way ANOVA and K-means cluster analysis. Finally, through a nonlinear canonical correlation analysis, the correlations and heterogeneity between different demographic characteristics, travel characteristics, and decision-making groups of farmer tourists in the case study area were further explored.

ANALYSIS OF THE SCALE

Based on the conceptual framework constructed by Spasojević and BOŽIĆ, this study has designed a more detailed measurement questionnaire. Although a consistent indicator system is lacking, empirical research on a single concept is relatively reliable. Therefore, this study has condensed and constructed a scale (see Table 1) that is consistent with the concept of Spasojević and BOŽIĆ. Questionnaires extracted from previous studies have been widely used in the academic community. To explore farmers' psychological perception of internal needs and external pull forces, this study uses "importance" measurement and investigates through a "five-point scale" form that is easy for farmers to fill out, where 1 to 5 represent (very unimportant, unimportant, average, important, and very important).

Based on the original scale, a series of detailed adjustments and improvements were made to ensure a more accurate reflection of the farmers' travel needs and motivations. Given the willingness and needs demonstrated by farmers' travel, this study added influencing indicators closely related to this group and incorporated them into the original model. During the adjustment process, special consideration was given to farmers' cultural backgrounds and values. Therefore, in the scale design, indicators closely related to farmers' cultures, such as experiencing customs and folk culture, and pursuing novelty, were included. These indicators not only reflect farmers' expectations of tourism destinations but also embody their deep-level needs for tourism activities. In addition, special requirements for tourism conditions among farmers have also been noted [19]. Considering that they may prefer to choose tourism destinations with convenient tourism facilities and the ability to relieve physical and mental stress, such factors were subdivided and included in the scale as travel conditions. This measure aims to reflect farmers' travel motivations and decision-making needs more comprehensively, thus providing more scientific support for subsequent decision-making research [20].

Relevant research results and theoretical models at home and abroad were referenced for the specific design of the scale. For example, for the motivation factor of destination attractions pulling tourists, the research results of Spasojević and BOŽIĆ were referenced and refined into multiple items such as enjoying beautiful environments, experiencing cultural customs, convenient tourism facilities, etc. These items not only have a clear theoretical basis but also combine the actual needs of farmers' tourists, thus ensuring the validity and reliability of the scale [21].

During the scale design process, special attention was paid to the connection and comparison with existing research. For example, regarding travel motivation, the corresponding concept proposed by Hsu et al. was referenced. However, considering the current rural development environment and the continuously improving rural cultural atmosphere, the author believes that farmers in modern society have a high degree of acceptance of tourism behavior. Therefore, the factors that may psychologically constrain farmers' tourism were not included in this scale. This decision aims to reflect the current situation of farmers' travel motivations and decision-making needs more accurately [22].

Through adjustment and improvement of the original scale, a scale that was more in line with farmers' travel motivations and needs was successfully constructed [30]. This scale not only has a solid theoretical foundation and empirical support but also fully considers the cultural values of the farmer group. Therefore, this study conducted an empirical test on this scale. The validity and reliability of the scale have been verified through questionnaire surveys and data analyses of farmer tourists [31].

Table 1. Motivation importance scale

Motivation Model	Motivation Factors	Importance Measurement Items	Item Source
Pull of Destination Attractions on Tourists	A. Appreciation of Beautiful Environment	1-1 Beautiful destination scenery	Spasojević and BOŽIĆ [23]
	B. Experience of cultural atmosphere	1-2 Unique destination culture	
	C.Convenient travel facilities	1-3 Safe accommodation environment	
	C.Convenient travel facilities	1-4 Clean catering hygiene	Sie et al. [24]
	B. Experience of cultural atmosphere	1-5 Diverse entertainment activities	
	D. Enhancement of emotional communication	1-6 Strong cultural atmosphere	
	A. Appreciation of beautiful environment	1-7 Fresh air quality	
	E. Relief of Physical and Mental Stress	1-8 Quiet travel environment	
	E. Relief of Physical and Mental Stress	1-9 Relaxed pace of life	Hung et al. [25]
	C. Convenient travel facilities	1-10 Convenient medical assistance	
	A. Appreciation of beautiful environment	1-11 Unique architectural style	
Tourists' Inner Needs Promote Travel Desires	E. Relief of Physical and Mental Stress	2-1 Leisure recuperation	Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi [26]
	A. Appreciation of beautiful environment	2-2 Scenery viewing	
	B. Experience of cultural atmosphere	2-3 Pursuit of novelty	
	E. Relief of Physical and Mental Stress	2-4 Stress relief	Hung et al. [25]
	F. Pursuit of Humanity's Return	2-5 Return to nature	
	D. Enhancement of emotional communication	2-6 Enhancement of emotional communication	Kazeminia et al. [27]
	B. Experience of cultural atmosphere	2-7 Experience of alternative lifestyles	Sheldon and KING [28]
	B. Experience of cultural atmosphere	2-8 Experience of local customs and traditions	
	D. Enhancement of emotional communication	2-9 Business and social needs	
	F. Pursuit of humanity's return	2-10 Reduction of mobility and gathering	Tung and RITCHIE [29]
	F. Pursuit of humanity's return	2-11 Return to humanity's roots	

DATA COLLECTION

After conducting multiple field visits from January to April 2024, this study selected four villages in Changshan County, Zhejiang Province, namely Zhalaiwan Village, Tonggushan Area, Xucun Village, and Houlong Village, as the research case sites. This selection was based on two main considerations. Firstly, these four villages in Changshan County are representative in China's rural development. Located in the western part of the Zhejiang Province, each village has unique developmental characteristics. Among them, Zhalaiwan Village and Tonggushan Area are mountainous villages, Xucun Village is located on a plain, and Houlong Village is situated in a hilly area. All four villages possess ecological advantages and the potential for development. Therefore, by thoroughly studying the decision-making processes behind farmers' tourism motivations at these case sites, we can provide useful references and insights for nationwide rural development. Secondly, the case sites had access to the data. In recent

years, Changshan County has achieved significant accomplishments in rural development. Government departments and related agencies in Changshan County also strongly supported academic research and were willing to provide the necessary assistance and support, making it more convenient for this study to obtain the required data.

The specific situations of the four research case sites are as follows:

Zhalaiwan Village is a typical mountainous Village: Located in the southern mountainous area of Changshan County. In recent years, relying on local natural resources and ecological advantages, Zhalaiwan has vigorously developed ecological agriculture and rural tourism to achieve certain results. Simultaneously, the village actively explored the development model of the rural collective economy, established farmers' professional cooperatives, and promoted income growth and prosperity.

Tonggushan Area: Located in the northern mountainous area of Changshan County, Tonggushan is a comprehensive agricultural demonstration area that integrates ecological, leisure, and cultural tourism. With the themes of "ecology, greenness, and health," the area aims to create high-quality agricultural products and excellent tourism experiences. By introducing advanced agricultural technology and management models, the Tonggushan Area has become a model agricultural area in Changshan County and Zhejiang Province.

Xucun Village: Located in the central plain area of Changshan County, the village is mainly engaged in traditional agriculture. In recent years, Xucun Village has actively adjusted its agricultural industrial structure, vigorously developed its characteristics and branded agriculture, and achieved certain results. At the same time, the village has also paid attention to rural infrastructure construction, improving villagers' production and living conditions, and enhancing their sense of happiness and satisfaction.

Houlong Village: Located in the eastern hilly area of Changshan County and is mainly engaged in fruit cultivation and processing. Relying on local fruit resources and industrial advantages, Houlong Village has actively developed its fruit cultivation and deep-processing industries, creating a series of locally characteristic fruit brands. At the same time, the village has also focused on ecological environmental protection and sustainable development, promoting green cultivation and circular economy models, and achieving a win-win situation in terms of economic and ecological benefits.

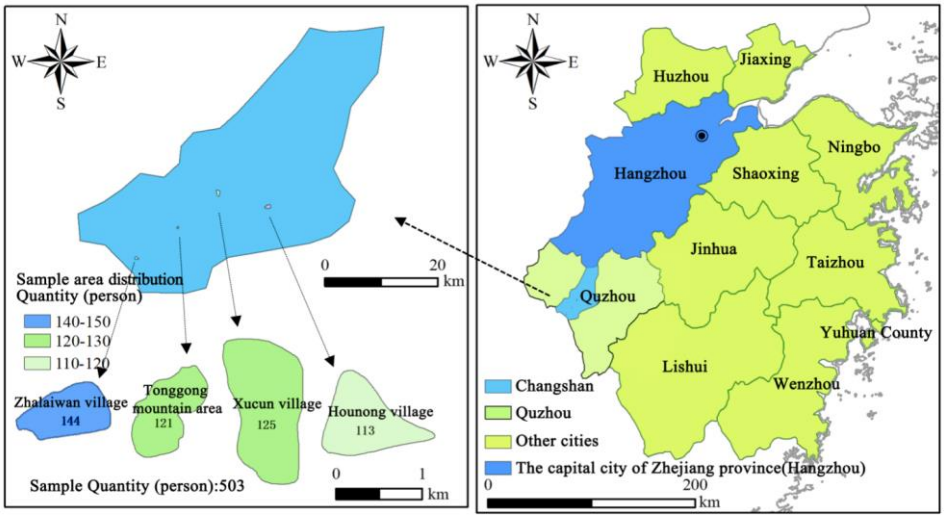

Figure 1. Sample area distribution map

This study adopted an online questionnaire was distributed in April 2024. To ensure the effective distribution of the questionnaire and the accuracy of the target group (i.e., the research subjects were only farmers with travel experience), the researchers, with the assistance of the Changshan County government agency, targeted the questionnaire to the village committee residents' communication groups in the four villages of Changshan County. During the distribution process, it was emphasized that only farmers who had participated in tourism activities could complete the questionnaire. After rigorous implementation, 503 questionnaires were collected. After strict data screening and processing procedures, the number of valid questionnaires was confirmed to be 503, more than 20 times the number of items required for analysis, thus meeting the requirements of factor analysis for the questionnaire sample size. The sample distribution is shown in Figure 1. Among the 503 valid respondents, 144 were collected from Zhalaiwan Village, 121 from the Tonggushan Area, 125 from Xucun Village, and 113 from Houlong Village, with a relatively balanced sample distribution.

Table 2. Basic characteristics of the sample population

Demographic Characteristics			Travel Behavior Characteristics		
Variable	Quantity	Percentage	Variable	Quantity	Percentage
Gender			Travel Mode		
Male	210	41.75%	Bus/ Travel Coach	207	41.15%
Female	293	58.25%	Self-Driving	282	56.06%
Age			Bicycle, Electric Scooter	14	2.78%
Under 18	29	5.77%	Travel Companion		
18~30	28	5.57%	Alone	8	1.59%
31~50	146	29.03%	With Friends/Colleagues	135	26.84%
51~60	164	32.6%	With Family Members	181	35.98%
Over 61	136	27.04%	With Travel Agency Group	179	35.59%
Marital Status			Others	0	0%
Unmarried	143	28.43%	Knowledge of Travel-Related Information		
Married	348	69.18%	Completely Unaware	5	0.99%
Divorced	12	2.39%	Not Very Aware	82	16.3%
Widowed	0	0%	Aware	155	30.82%
Education Level			Fairly Aware	193	38.37%
Primary School and Below	0	0%	Very Aware	68	13.52%
Junior High School	26	5.17%	The most Likely Time for Traveling		
High School/Vocational/Technical School	36	7.16%	Weekends	26	5.17%
Junior college	144	28.63%	Weekdays	207	41.18%
Bachelor's Degree and Above	297	59.05%	Holidays	142	28.25%
Occupation			Paid Vacation	128	25.39%
Rural Services (Farming, Fruit & Vegetable Farming, etc.)	34	6.76%	Travel Purpose (Multiple Choice)		
Construction Industry (Building Materials Sales, Decoration, etc.)	86	17.1%	Stress Relief	83	5.89%
Transportation Industry (Public Transport, Taxi Operations, etc.)	93	18.49%	Enjoying Scenery	207	14.68%
Domestic Services (Courier, Restaurant Delivery, Housekeeping, etc.)	11	2.19%	Enhancing Relationships	421	29.86%
Commerce (Supermarkets, Restaurants, Hotels, etc.)	3	0.6%	Escaping City Hustle	146	10.35%
Industry (Wood, Plastic Processing, Metal Products, etc.)	137	27.24%	Tasting specialty catering, leisure and resort	153	10.85%
Professional Services (Teachers, Medical Staff, etc.)	69	13.72%	Purchasing local specialties	111	7.87%
Students	0	0%	Collecting inspiration for work	259	18.37%
Others	70	13.92%	Meeting new friends	30	2.13%
Sample distribution area			Factors to consider in choosing a tourist destination (multiple choices)		
Zigang Street Zhalaiwan Village	144	28.6%	Travel distance	61	3.32%
Qiuchuan Town Houlong Village	113	22.47%	Sanitary conditions	60	3.26%
Tonggong Township Tonggongshan Area	121	24.06%	Local culture and catering	231	12.56%
Jinchuan Street Xucun Village	125	24.85%	Convenience conditions such as accommodation and parking	197	10.71%
Average personal monthly income (Yuan)			Beautiful natural environment	285	15.50%
0-5000 (inclusive)	117	23.26%	Tourism expenditure	246	13.38%
5001-8000 (inclusive)	236	46.92%	Online evaluation	380	20.66%
8001-10000 (inclusive)	44	8.75%	Experience projects	134	7.29%
Above10000	106	21.07%	Service attitude and safety assurance	245	13.32%

RESULTS

Basic Sample Feature Analysis.

The basic characteristic analysis of the sample population is shown (see Table 2). The total number of sample participants in this study was 503, covering different social backgrounds of farmers in the case area, including gender, age, marital status, education, and occupation. The diversity of the sample helped us comprehensively understand the travel characteristics and preferences of farmers [32]. A detailed interpretation is as follows.

Analysis of demographic characteristics

After an in-depth analysis, female farmers slightly outnumbered male farmers in terms of gender composition, which may be attributed to women's higher enthusiasm for travel decision-making and participation in rural households. Among the age groups, middle-aged farmers aged 31-60 years showed a high degree of interest in traveling, likely due to their established economic foundation and willingness to travel. Farmers under 30 years of age had a relatively low level of interest, which may be attributed to heavier work or study pressures. Married individuals accounted for a significant proportion (69.18 %), reflecting both their strong willingness to travel and the stability of rural family structures, further highlighting their positive attitude towards family life and aspirations for a better life. In terms of educational background, farmers with a bachelor's degree or above account for the majority, reaching 59.05%, indicating a significant improvement in education levels in rural areas. Based on analysis of the sample distribution, there was a clear positive correlation between farmers' educational attainment and their willingness to participate in travel surveys. The sample covers a wide range of sectors, including rural services, construction, transportation, domestic catering, commerce, industry, and professional departments, reflecting the rich diversity of occupations among farmers in mountainous areas and the diversified development trends of rural economies. Regarding personal monthly average income, middle-income groups accounted for the highest proportion (46.92 %), while high-income and ultra-high-income groups accounted for relatively low proportions of 8.75% and 21.07%, respectively, indicating that although farmers' income levels in mountainous areas have improved, they are still generally at a moderate level.

Analysis of travel behavior characteristics

In terms of transportation modes, self-driving travel dominated, with a proportion of 56.06%, reflecting modern farmers' preferences for free and convenient travel methods. This was followed by buses and tourist buses, which accounted for 41.15%. Although these two modes are slightly more expensive, they demonstrate economic development in rural areas. Another 2.78% of the respondents chose bicycles and electric bikes as their travel modes, likely emphasizing environmental protection and health and promoting sustainable travel methods.

Regarding travel companions, traveling with family members had the highest proportion (35.98 %), reflecting the important position of the family in the hearts of the farmers. Traveling with travel agencies accounted for 35.59%, a convenient option that saved farmers' time. Traveling with friends and colleagues accounted for 26.84%, likely emphasizing social interactions. Solo travel had the lowest proportion (1.59 %), possibly because of farmers' travel safety considerations.

Regarding farmers' understanding of travel-related information, the survey showed that more than 30% of the respondents understood or had a relatively good understanding of it, reflecting the popularity of modern information dissemination methods among farmers. At the same time, the proportion of farmers who were completely unaware of travel information was relatively low, indicating that most farmers maintained a certain level of attention and understanding of travel information.

In terms of travel periods, weekdays were the first choice for farmers, accounting for 41.18%, which may be closely related to their work and life arrangements. holidays ranked second, while weekends had the lowest selection proportion of only 5.17%, possibly because of conflicts between farmers' actual working hours and weekends.

Enhancing relationships with relatives and friends was the primary reason for farmers' travel, reflecting the importance of family and relatives in their hearts. Second, collecting inspiration for work and enjoying the scenery of the destination reflect farmers' pursuit of personal development and spiritual satisfaction. Stress reduction and meeting new friends accounted for the smallest proportion, possibly related to farmers' travel motivations and purposes. When considering the factors for choosing travel destinations, online reviews account for the highest proportion, reflecting the importance of network information in modern society [33]. This was followed by travel costs and service safety guarantees, reflecting farmers' concerns about economic costs and safety during travel. The consideration of travel distance and hygiene conditions was relatively low, possibly due to farmers' travel habits and preferences.

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

This study employed SPSS software (version 26.0) to conduct an exploratory factor analysis of the samples [34], utilizing 22 items to extract common factors. Ultimately, the 22 indicators are divided into six dimensions, and the six common factors are named as appreciation of beautiful environments, enhancement of emotional communication, experiencing cultural customs, pursuit of humanistic regression, alleviation of physical and mental stress, and convenience of tourism facilities.

Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to measure the internal reliability of the scale, and the overall Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.919, indicating that the scale used in this study had good reliability. The KMO test value for the overall scale was 0.968. Meanwhile, the results of Bartlett's test of sphericity showed that the p-value was 0.000, indicating significance at the 1% level, and there was a correlation between variables, indicating that factor analysis was effective. The total variance explanation rate of the overall scale was 58.179% (higher than 50%), and the factor loadings of all factors were above 0.6, indicating good reliability [35]. The results are summarized in Table 3.

The results of the exploratory factor analysis effectively demonstrate that the items and dimensions formulated in this study are reasonable and meet the requirements of the empirical analysis. Table 3 presents the results of the factor analysis, which includes six factors, each with a specific meaning and related items. Detailed explanations and discussions were provided for each factor.

Table 3. Exploratory factor analysis

Factor	Interpretation	Item	Mean	Factor Loading	Variance Explained (%)	KMO
Factor 1(3.7634)	Appreciation of Beautiful Environment	1-1. The beautiful scenery of the destination attracts me	3.85	0.646	58.536	0.711
		1-7. The destination has fresh air quality	3.73	0.679		
		1-11. The destination has unique architectural styles	3.70	0.721		
		2-2. I want to visit scenic spots	3.78	0.737		
Factor 2 (3.6958)	Enhancing Emotional Exchange	1-6. The destination has a strong cultural atmosphere	3.72	0.754	57.048	0.646
		2-6. I want to enhance emotional exchange with local residents	3.68	0.742		
		2-9. For the needs of business networking	3.68	0.770		
Factor 3(3.7252)	Experiencing Cultural Customs	1-2. The unique culture of the destination attracts me	3.74	0.680	56.768	0.798
		1-5. The destination has diverse entertainment activities	3.75	0.679		
		2-3. I want to pursue novelty	3.73	0.686		
		2-7. I want to experience an alternative lifestyle	3.71	0.663		
		2-8. I want to experience customs and folklore	3.69	0.711		
Factor 4(3.7482)	Pursuing a Return to Human Nature	2-5. I want to return to nature	3.74	0.724	54.994	0.632
		2-10. To reduce movement and gathering	3.78	0.771		
		2-11. To pursue a return to human roots	3.73	0.729		
Factor 5(3.7247)	Relieving Physical and Mental Stress	1-8. The destination has a quiet travel environment	3.71	0.676	50.474	0.728
		1-9. The destination has a relaxed pace of life	3.72	0.713		
		2-1. I want to go for leisure and recuperation	3.71	0.706		
		2-4. I want to relieve stress	3.76	0.746		
Factor 6 (3.7203)	Convenient Travel Facilities	1-3. The destination has a safe accommodation environment	3.69	0.712	53.516	0.627
		1-4. The destination has clean catering hygiene	3.77	0.742		
		1-10. The destination has convenient medical assistance	3.70	0.740		

Factor 1 (Appreciating Beautiful Environment) included four items. It mainly focuses on the natural landscapes of tourism destinations. As can be seen from these items, beautiful scenery, fresh air quality, and the unique architectural style of the destination are all important factors. These elements jointly constitute the unique charm of tourism destinations, enabling farmers and tourists to appreciate the beautiful scenery and gain pleasant and relaxing experiences.

Factor 2 (Enhancing Emotional Communication) included three items. This emphasizes the need to establish emotional connections and business networks among residents. These items indicate that the tourism destination has a strong cultural atmosphere that helps farmers establish connections with local residents and enhances mutual understanding.

Factor 3 (Experiencing Cultural Customs) included five items. It covers the destination's unique culture, diverse entertainment activities, and pursuit of novelty and alternative lifestyles. By participating in local cultural activities and experiencing different ways of life, farmers gain a deeper understanding of local cultural customs, thereby enhancing their travel experiences.

Factor 4 (Pursuing Human Nature Regression) covered three items. It focuses on tourists' need to return to nature, reduce movement, gather, and pursue the return of human nature. In modern society, farmers face pressure and a fast-paced life; therefore, seeking inner peace and returning to nature have become the pursuits of farmers' tourists. The quiet environments and natural landscapes provided by tourism destinations have enabled farmers to achieve this goal.

Factor 5 (Relieving Physical and Mental Stress) included 4 items. Farmer tourists seek a peaceful travel environment, relaxed pace of life, and opportunities for leisure recuperation and stress relief. These elements play crucial roles in farmers' travel decisions. By avoiding busy work, farmers can achieve physical and mental recovery and balance during their journey, further promoting their comprehensive personal development [36].

Factor 6 (Convenient Tourism Facilities) includes three items. It focuses mainly on the accommodation environment, catering to hygiene and medical assistance of tourism destinations. Safe, clean, and convenient tourism facilities can provide farmers with better travel experiences, ensuring comfort and safety during trips.

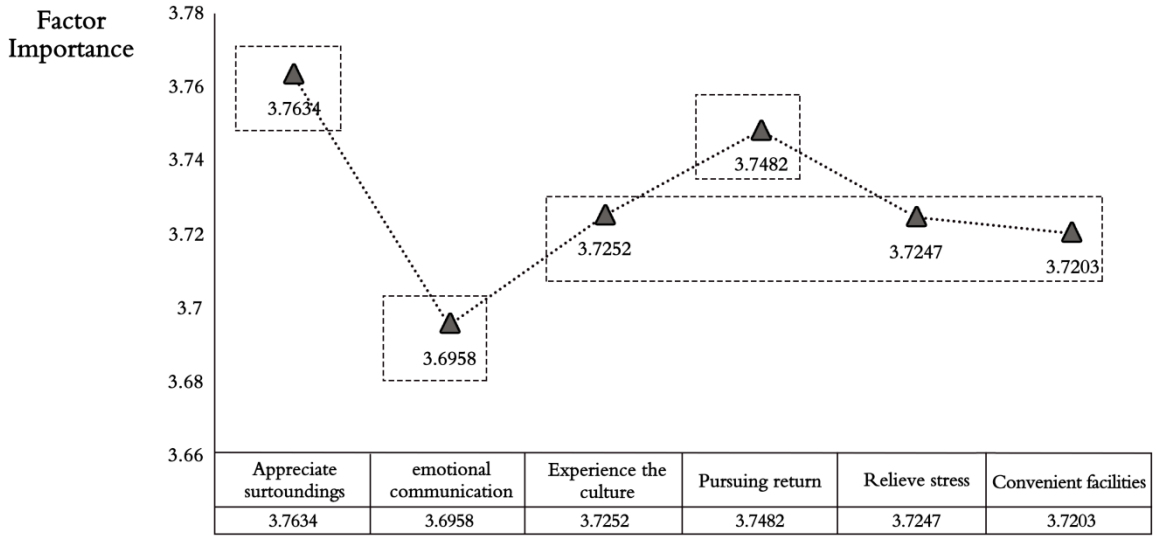

Figure 2. Factor importance

After in-depth research, an importance assessment was conducted on six key factors. To intuitively understand the weight distribution of these factors, the average value conversion method was adopted to classify each evaluation index into the identified six factors. Subsequently, a one-way analysis of variance with repeated measures was used to test the differences in the average values of multiple related groups. After careful post-hoc analysis, the results were presented in a concise and clear manner in Figure 2. The factors falling within the same dashed circle indicate that they are considered to be of the same importance within a 95% confidence interval. The analysis results observed four levels of motivation with significantly different effects, among which Factor 1 (appreciation of beautiful environments) and Factor 4 (pursuit of human nature regression) were considered to be significantly important, while Factor 2 (enhancement of emotional communication) was considered to be relatively less important.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

First, the convergent validity was assessed. The standardized factor loadings for all the variables - appreciating beautiful environments, enhancing emotional communication, experiencing cultural customs, pursuing the return of humanity, relieving physical and mental stress, and providing convenient travel facilities-ranged from 0.535 to 0.589, 0.569 to 0.621, 0.560 to 0.604, 0.565 to 0.573, 0.551 to 0.626, and 0.487 to 0.577, respectively. The standardized factor loadings were good and significant at the 1% level. The Composite Reliability (CR) value reflects whether all items in each variable consistently explain the variable. The CR values for each factor were 0.647, 0.624, 0.716, 0.591, 0.672, and 0.561, all above 0.5, indicating good convergent validity.

Second, discriminant validity was assessed. Table 4 presents the model fit index parameters and judgment criteria. Among them, the chi-square to degrees of freedom ratio (χ^2/df) is 0.945 (less than 3), and the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) is 0.000. Other indicator coefficients: chi-square value (χ^2), chi-square degrees of freedom (df) are close to a normal distribution, the Goodness of Fit Index is close to 1 (indicating good fit), the Root Mean Square Residual value is 0.031, less than 0.05, indicating small model fit residuals and a high degree of fit. The relative fit indices CFI (Comparative Fit Index), NFI (Normed Fit Index), and NNFI (Non-normed Fit Index) are all close to 1, indicating a high degree of model fit, i.e., good discriminant validity, indicating that the model has a good fit effect.

Table 4. Model fitting metrics

Common Metrics	X^2	df	Chi-Square to Degrees of Freedom Ratio	GFI	RMSEA	RMR	CFI	NFI	NNFI
Criteria for Judgment	-	-	<3	>0.9	<0.10	<0.05	>0.9	>0.9	>0.9
Actual Values	183.289	194	0.945	0.949	0.000	0.031	1.003	0.949	1.004

In summary, based on the values of the model-fitting indicators in Table 4, it can be concluded that the model had a good fit and could effectively explain the data.

One-Way ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) of Single Factor (Age, Group)

Through the above analysis, this paper identified six factors that affect farmers' travel, including enjoying beautiful environments, enhancing emotional communication, experiencing cultural customs, pursuing the return of humanity, relieving physical and mental stress, and convenient tourism facilities. To gain a deeper understanding of whether there are differences in the six factors among different demographic characteristics, travel characteristics, and groups, this paper conducted a one-way ANOVA, and Table 5 presents the results of the relevant one-way ANOVA.

Table 5. Factor analysis of different age groups and categories

Feature	Factor	F	Significance
Age	Appreciation of Beautiful Environment	120.699	0.000
	Enhancement of Emotional Communication	104.003	0.000
	Experience of Cultural Customs	132.209	0.000
	Pursuit of Human Nature Regression	127.445	0.000
	Relief of Physical and Mental Stress	121.777	0.000
	Convenience of Tourism Facilities	94.372	0.000
Category	Appreciation of Beautiful Environment	939.118	0.000
	Enhancement of Emotional Communication	832.027	0.000
	Experience of Cultural Customs	1268.873	0.000
	Pursuit of Human Nature Regression	1011.792	0.000
	Relief of Physical and Mental Stress	1112.784	0.000
	Convenience of Tourism Facilities	869.722	0.000

Table 5 shows the results of the factor analysis of the tourism experience among different age groups and categories. These factors include appreciation of a beautiful environment, enhancement of emotional communication, experience of cultural customs, pursuit of human nature regression, relief from physical and mental stress, and convenient tourism facilities. The results indicate that there are significant differences in the six travel behaviors among farmers of different age groups in terms of

appreciation of the beautiful environment, enhancement of emotional communication, experience of cultural customs, pursuit of human nature regression, relief from physical and mental stress, and convenient tourism facilities. In the different categories, the significance of each factor was less than 0.01, indicating that they were significant at a significance level of 1%, and there were clear differences in the factors among the different categories.

First, from the perspective of age as a demographic characteristic, each factor showed extremely high significance. This means that people of different age groups have significant needs regarding the environment, emotion, culture, human nature, body and mind, and facilities in their tourism experiences. With age, people's appreciation of beautiful environments, interest in experiencing cultural customs, and the desire to pursue the return of human nature have increased.

From the perspective of categories, each factor showed extremely high significance. This indicates that people from different categories have significant needs regarding the environment, emotion, culture, human nature, body and mind, and facilities in their tourism experiences. Farmers' decision-makers from various categories have shown extremely high significance in appreciating beautiful environments. This may be related to rural tourists' aspiration and pursuit of natural beauty [34].

Table 6. Cluster analysis results

Factors	Group 1(N=45) Decision-makers of Seeking Deep Experiences	Group 2(N=458) Decision-makers of Pursuing Leisure and Enjoyment	F-Value	P-Value	Post Hoc Comparison (Groups)
Appreciation of Beautiful Environment	3.4527	3.9702	59.622	0.000	1<2
Enhancement of Emotional Communication	3.4444	3.8631	33.193	0.000	1<2
Experiencing Cultural Atmosphere	3.3900	3.9483	74.412	0.000	1<2
Pursuing the Return of Human Nature	3.5240	3.8974	25.991	0.000	1<2
Relieving Mental and Physical Stress	3.4764	3.8899	35.919	0.000	1<2
Convenient Travel Facilities	3.5041	3.8642	24.869	0.000	1<2

K-Means Cluster Analysis

To further understand the characteristics of farmers' travel motivations, this study conducted a cluster analysis on six common factors based on the results of the factor analysis. Using SPSS 26.0, we first attempted to use the motivation importance factor as a variable through hierarchical clustering, obtain initial points using the hierarchical process of the Ward method, and determine the number of clusters by observing the dendrograms and clustering coefficients. The system determines that a solution with to 2-3 clusters is appropriately classified. Subsequently, we performed k-means clustering based on the number of hierarchical clusters. Through comparison and judgment, it is believed that a two-category division can better explain the differences between the clusters. Table 6 presents the division of the clustering analysis.

Table 6 shows the results of the cluster analysis. Two clusters were obtained by grouping the different factors: Cluster 1 (N=45) and Cluster 2 (N=458). It can be clearly observed that there were significant differences between Clusters 1 and 2 for the six common factors. Cluster 2 had higher scores for aspects such as appreciating beautiful environments, enhancing emotional communication, experiencing cultural customs, pursuing the return of humanity, relieving physical and mental stress, and providing convenient tourism facilities. This may be related to Cluster 2's greater emphasis on natural scenery, social interaction, cultural characteristics, self-exploration, physical and mental relaxation, and the convenience and comfort of tourism at the destination. These differences reflect the different travel needs and preferences of different clusters, which have important reference values for the development and positioning of tourism destinations and products. Based on this interpretation of the two clusters, their performance in travel decision-making is as follows.

Cluster 1. A total of 45 data samples were included, and the perceived intensities of the six motivation factors were relatively low. This group of rural tourists did not have particularly strong emotional desires and had a weak perception of general tourism experiences. Therefore, they are called decision-makers who seek in-depth experience.

Cluster 2. A total of 458 sample data points were included, accounting for a large proportion. This group shows a strong perception of the six motivation factors in travel decision-making; therefore, they are referred to as decision-makers pursuing leisure and enjoyment.

Based on this, we discuss the correlation between these two decision-making clusters and the travel characteristics of farmers.

Correlation Analysis between Groups and Travel Characteristics

Although the above content effectively classifies and identifies the sample population through K-means clustering analysis to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the deep-seated connections between variables, such as demographic characteristics and travel characteristics of decision-making groups, considering the complexity of variable types, a traditional linear correlation analysis is difficult to achieve. Therefore, this study uses nonlinear canonical correlation analysis based on optimal scaling transformation to properly address issues such as discontinuous variables and nonlinear correlations, and thus obtain more robust correlation results between the two decision-making groups and variables such as demographic characteristics and travel behavior. As shown in Figure 3, taking (0,0) as the origin and based on the principle of judging possible correlation patterns between different variable categories falling in approximately the same direction and region starting from the origin, the following results were obtained:

Group 1: Decision-makers seeking in-depth experiences are closely related to female farmer tourists, age groups (under 18, 18-30 years old), occupations (industry, construction, teachers, medical professionals, domestic service and catering, transportation, business, and other occupations), and the habitual travel mode of self-drive travel. In the process of making travel decisions, young people under the age of 30 are more willing to travel self-driven.

First, female farmers typically pay more attention to the in-depth experiences of tourist destinations. Through travel, they hope to feel the tranquility and purity of the destination and understand the local culture and traditions. Therefore, they are more likely to choose travel products/services that provide in-depth experiences during the travel decision-making process. Second, in terms of the impact of age on travel decisions, the statistics show that farmers under 30 are more willing to choose self-driven travel in their travel. This group is usually more independent and enjoys freely exploring the world. Self-drive travel not only meets their need for independence, but also allows them to arrange their itineraries based on their interests and pace. Third, occupational background also impacted farmers' travel decisions. Professionals in industries such as construction are usually busier at work and tend to choose short distances, relaxing their travel methods. Farmers in occupations such as teaching, medical, domestic services, and catering may have higher expectations and needs for travel because of the unique nature of their work. They may pay more attention to the cultural content and quality of travel experiences; therefore, they are more likely to choose travel products and services that can provide in-depth experiences in their travel decisions.

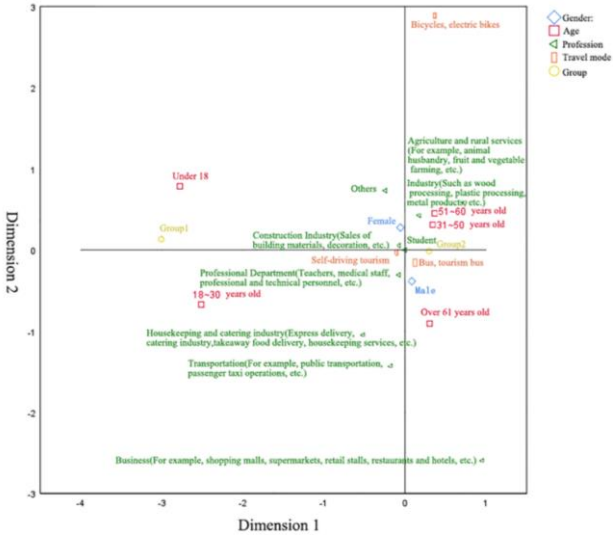

Figure 3. Results of Nonlinear Canonical Correlation Analysis

In summary, there is a significant correlation between decision-makers seeking in-depth experiences, female farmer tourists, those aged under 30 years, different occupations, and self-driven travel modes. In the process of making travel decisions, they not only pay attention to the quality and price of travel products, but also focus more on the depth and personalization of travel experiences. At the same time, it should also be noted that self-drive travel is popular among young people. With changes in the consumption concepts and lifestyles of young people, self-driven travel has become one of the main travel modes. Therefore, tourism companies and practitioners should actively adapt to this trend and provide more personalized and diverse self-driven travel products and services to meet the needs of young farmers for freedom, independence, and in-depth experiences. In addition, attention should be paid to the impact of different occupational backgrounds on travel decisions. Different occupational groups have different needs and preferences, and tourism companies and practitioners should provide travel products and services that meet their needs based on the characteristics and needs of different occupations. For example, cultural and educational travel products can be launched for teachers and medical professionals, and travel products focusing on food experiences and relaxation can be provided for those in domestic services and catering.

Group 2: Decision makers pursuing leisure and enjoyment are a special group that values leisure and enjoyment, closely linked to male farmer tourists, different age groups (31-50 years old, 51-60 years old, over 61 years), and occupational backgrounds (agriculture and rural services, students, and supermarket retail). When choosing travel modes, they preferred transportation modes such as bicycles, electric vehicles, buses, and tour buses, reflecting their love for leisure travel and commitment to environmentally friendly travel.

A deeper exploration of this group reveals its unique preferences and considerations in the process of making travel decisions. In particular, middle-aged and elderly farmer tourists aged over 30 years were more willing to choose public transportation (such as buses and tour buses), bicycles, and electric vehicles as travel modes. This choice is not accidental but stems from their emphasis on travel experiences and concerns about their own health. Public transportation, a convenient and economical mode of travel, provides more opportunities for middle-aged and elderly farmers. They can easily reach their destinations and enjoy their leisure time by taking a bus or tour bus. At the same time, the popularization of public transportation has also reduced travel costs, enabling them to participate more frequently in travel activities. As green travel modes, bicycles and EVs are favored by middle-aged and elderly tourists. These modes of transportation not only allow them to exercise their bodies and improve physical fitness, but also allow them to better appreciate the scenery along the way and feel the charm of nature. In addition, the flexibility and convenience of bicycles and electric vehicles also allow them to freely plan their itineraries and explore travel destinations at will.

In summary, the decision makers in Group 2 demonstrated their love for leisure travel and commitment to environmentally friendly travel through their unique travel modes and preferences. Their choices not only reflect personal preferences and needs but also reflect the current society's emphasis and advocacy for green travel and leisure.

CONCLUSION

This study employed a micro-level survey analysis to investigate the decision-making categories behind farmers' travel motivations. A motivation-importance scale was constructed by tracing the theoretical basis of travel motivation and adjusting observational indicators based on actual conditions. A sample-based analysis of the basic characteristics of 503 survey samples from four villages (two mountainous, one hilly, and one plain) in Changshan County was conducted. SPSS software (version 26.0) was used to test the reliability and validity of the questionnaire to evaluate its internal consistency. Through exploratory factor analysis, six common factors were extracted (appreciation of a beautiful environment, enhancement of emotional communication, experience of cultural customs, pursuit of human nature, relief from physical and mental stress, and convenient tourism facilities). A confirmatory factor analysis was used to verify the effectiveness of each item on the scale, and a cluster analysis was performed to classify the importance of the factors. Furthermore, the types of decision-making regarding farmers' travel motivations were divided into two categories: decision makers seeking in-depth experiences and decision makers pursuing leisure and enjoyment, using repeated-measures single-factor analysis of variance and K-means cluster analysis. Finally, the correlations and heterogeneity among different demographic characteristics, travel characteristics, and decision-making groups of farmer tourists in the case study area were further explored through a nonlinear canonical correlation analysis. The findings revealed the following:

1. Female and middle-aged farmers are more involved in travel decision making. There is a positive correlation between educational level and farmers' willingness to travel. Farmers tend to choose tourist destinations with unique natural scenery and rich cultural histories, paying attention to the convenience and environmental friendliness of tourism activities. Family factors

also play an important role in farmers' travel decisions. Moreover, farmers had a high level of understanding of tourist destinations.

2. Age had significant effects on all six aspects of farmers' travel motivations. Farmers' travel decisions have a significant impact on environmental factors. Farmers of all ages have significant needs in terms of the environment, emotions, culture, humanity, body, mind, and facilities. As age increases, the desire for beautiful environments, cultural customs, and the regression of human nature also increases.

3. The travel decisions of Group 1 (decision-makers seeking in-depth experiences) were highly correlated with female farmers, individuals under 30 years old, different occupations, and self-driving travel. Female farmers tended to prefer in-depth experiences, whereas people under 30 preferred self-driving travel. Farmers engaged in industries, such as manufacturing and construction, tend to prefer short and relaxed trips, whereas farmers in professions, such as teaching and healthcare, have more expectations and need for travel because of the specificity of their work.

4. The travel decisions of Group 2 (decision makers pursuing leisure and enjoyment) were highly correlated with male farmers, individuals over 30 years of age, and environmentally friendly travel modes. This type of decision-maker prefers environmentally friendly travel modes such as bicycles, electric bikes, buses, and tour buses, especially for middle-aged and elderly farmers over 30 years old. Their choices stemmed from their emphasis on travel experiences and health concerns, reflecting their high regard for green travel and leisure tourism.

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