

# Sustainable Tourism Development of Kaifeng in 2021

## Monitoring Report

(2022.01)

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# Foreword | Origin of the Monitoring

**United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)** has launched the Global Observatory of Sustainable Tourism (GOST) project to promote the sustainable development of tourism around the globe. The GOST project is designed to monitor the impact of tourism on typical tourist destinations around the world. It covers many aspects, including the social and cultural aspects of tourism, economic development, and environmental protection. Through monitoring activities, it purposes to guide the scientific development of tourist destinations, improve the exemplary status of tourist destinations, and promote international exchange and cooperation among tourist destinations.

In 2014, Henan Province became the sixth UNWTO monitoring observatory (station) for sustainable tourism development in China, promoting the protection and sustainable development of tourism resources in Henan Province. Located in the eastern part of Henan Province, **Kaifeng** has more than 4,100 years of history of city construction and capital construction. It is one of the first national famous historical and cultural cities with rich historical and cultural resources.



# MCSTO

# Foreword | Methods for Monitoring

With the solid support of the Kaifeng Municipal Bureau of Culture, Radio, Television and Tourism, the Kaifeng Monitoring Team successfully carried out **the annual monitoring of sustainable tourism development in Kaifeng in 2021**. The monitoring team consisted of Associate Professor Liu Yi, two doctoral students, and nine undergraduate students from the School of Tourism Management, Sun Yat-sen University. The research was conducted from October 31<sup>st</sup> to November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

The survey included major tourism and leisure areas in Kaifeng, such as Millennium City Park, Kaifeng House, and Zhouqiao Ruins. **Paper questionnaires** were used in this study. At the same time, some secondary information and data were collected through the symposium with the government, interviews with tourism enterprises, and **field research**. Besides, data from **three in-depth interviews** were obtained. The team had a good understanding of the general situation of tourism development in Kaifeng in the post-pandemic era and after the 2021 Henan Floods.



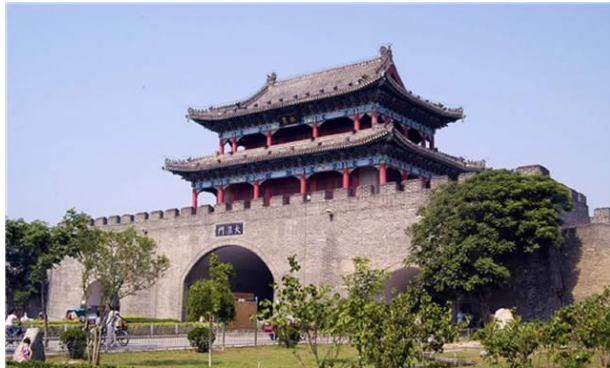
# Overview of Sustainable Tourism Development | Protection of Resources

- Known as the ancient capital of the eight dynasties, **Kaifeng** is one of the first **national famous historical and cultural cities** with rich historical and cultural resources. Kaifeng has more than 4,100 years of history of city construction and capital construction. Kaifeng is one of three cities with relatively well-preserved ancient city walls.
- In terms of **resource protection**, Kaifeng has been relatively successful in cultural heritage protection. The government has also paid great attention to this aspect and put it into practice in actions, such as initiating legislation, formulating measures, repairing city walls, protecting underground sites, and displaying heritage sites.
- As for the **archaeological investigation**, the drilling and excavation technology developed and adopted by Kaifeng Municipal Cultural Heritage Administration has been advanced, which has solved the difficulties in the drilling and excavation caused by the high water level of the flood area of the Yellow River and the thick sediment accumulations. Besides, it has started to promote the technology, which is of great significance to the archaeological investigation work in the flood area of the Yellow River.



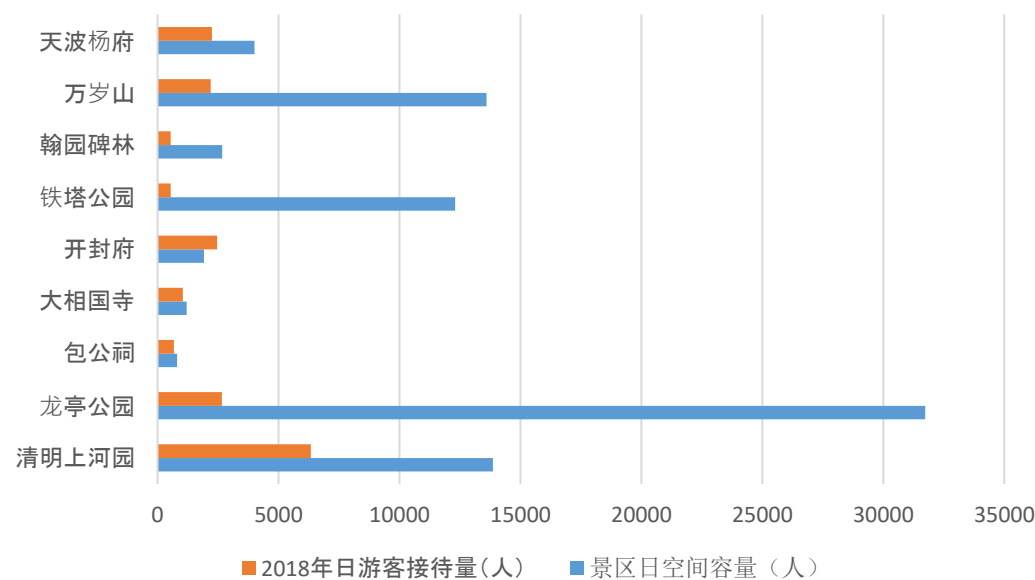
# Overview of Sustainable Tourism Development | Protection of Resources

- **In general**, the existing cultural relics protection in Kaifeng is relatively adequate and effective. A lot of human resources, material resources, and financial funds have been devoted to protecting cultural relics, but there is still more room for the utilization of cultural relics' heritage resources. The main reasons can be concluded as follows. On the one hand, naturally, Kaifeng has specific geographical features, forming the scene of “City Pile City”. Moreover, most Chinese historical buildings or cultural relics were built of wood, making it difficult to preserve them for a long time.
- On the other hand, during Kaifeng's history, warfare was frequent and dynastic changes occurred quite often. In this sense, the remains of each dynasty can be easily destroyed due to the changes and difficult to be preserved intact.
- In modern times, limited by funds and technology, the development of Kaifeng has remained difficult.



# Overview of Sustainable Tourism Development | Environmental Protection

In terms of the ecological carrying capacity of tourism, the daily spatial capacity of the tourism environment and the tourist psychological capacity of Millennium City Park, Dragon Pavilion Park, Kaifeng Baogong Temple, Xiangguo Temple, Kaifeng House, China Hanyuan, Tieta Park, Tianbo Yang House, and the Song Dynasty of Kungfu City were measured. Besides, the tourism psychological capacity and the social carrying capacity of the tourism of Kaifeng as a tourist destination were measured.



Number of Received Tourists Per Day and the Daily Spatial Capacity of Scenic Areas (2018 vs. 2020)

# Overview of Sustainable Tourism Development | Environmental Protection

Characteristics of the tourism psychological capacity and the social carrying capacity of tourism of Kaifeng can be listed as follows:

- **A great imbalance arose** between the number of visitor arrivals per day and the daily spatial capacity of the tourism environment. In some scenic areas, the number of visitor arrivals did not exceed the daily spatial capacity of the tourism environment; however, in some overloaded scenic areas, the number of visitor arrivals exceeded the environmental capacity, which was not conducive to sustainable development. Therefore, there was an urgent need for reasonable guidance and rerouting of visitor flows. Besides, scenic areas visited by a limited number of tourists, such as Dragon Pavilion Park and Tieta Park, should be innovative in marketing.



# Overview of Sustainable Tourism Development | Environmental Protection

Characteristics of the tourism psychological capacity and the social carrying capacity of tourism of Kaifeng can be listed as follows:

- **Kaifeng was promoting the development of tourism**, and the overall psychosocial capacity was large. Nevertheless, since most popular attractions were located in the ancient city district, **tourism resources were unevenly distributed in Kaifeng**. So, some errors might exist in the results - the difference in psychosocial capacity inside and outside the ancient city district might be more obvious.



## Overview of Sustainable Tourism Development | Quality Enhancement of Tourist Destinations

- In terms of **management system reform**, Kaifeng Municipal People's Government adopted the reform of the management mechanism, merging the original municipal departments of culture, radio and broadcast, tourism, and cultural relics to the Kaifeng Municipal Bureau of Culture, Radio, Television, and Tourism. It is also called the Kaifeng Municipal Bureau of Cultural Relics. In addition, Kaifeng Municipal People's Government adopted the reform of the management institution, requiring that officials should be responsible for specific projects for the effective implementation of projects.
- In terms of **industry management and supervision**, Kaifeng implemented the reform of the management system, promoting the supervision mode of "1+3+N+1".



## Overview of Sustainable Tourism Development | Quality Enhancement of Tourist Destinations

- As for **tourism public service improvement**, Kaifeng City attached importance to addressing the problems of traffic congestion and tour services in short supply, achieving good results.
- As for **tourism destination image enhancement**, Kaifeng built the brand of the Song culture. To promote Kaifeng's tourism destination image as an ancient capital, Kaifeng used the association as a platform, integrated online and offline resources, and actively adopted new media marketing strategies to promote Kaifeng.



# Overview of Sustainable Tourism Development | Summary

1

In terms of resource protection, Kaifeng was relatively successful in cultural heritage protection. Some progress had been made. Although new progress had been made in the archaeological investigation of sites, it could be a long time before tourists might pay a visit to those sites.

2

In terms of environmental protection, due to the pandemic, expect that the number of tourists received in Kaifeng House exceeded the capacity of the tourism environment, most scenic areas were confronted with a small number of tourists. Kaifeng was promoting the development of tourism, and the overall psychosocial capacity was large. Nevertheless, since tourism resources were unevenly distributed in Kaifeng, the differentiation in the psychosocial capacity among different districts district might be more obvious.

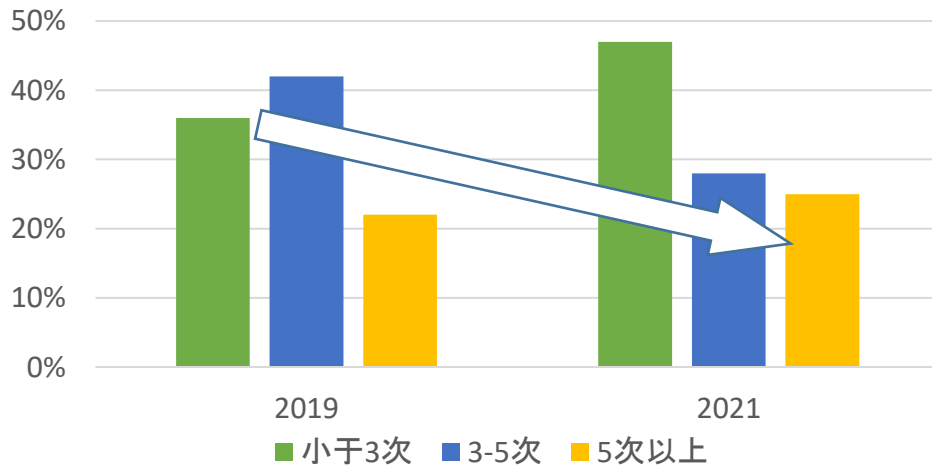
3

In terms of the quality enhancement of tourist destinations, Kaifeng made significant improvements in management system reform, industry management and supervision, tourism public service improvement, and tourism destination image enhancement, achieving good results.

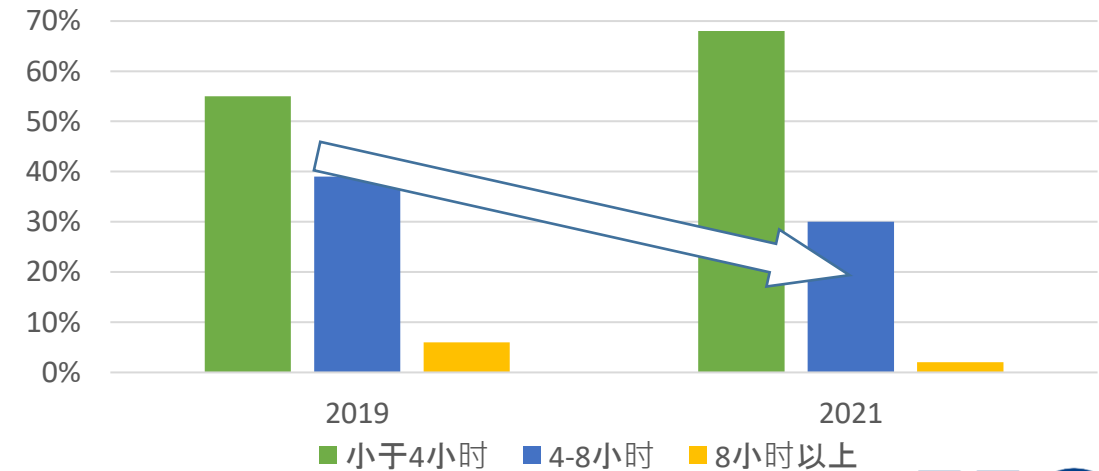
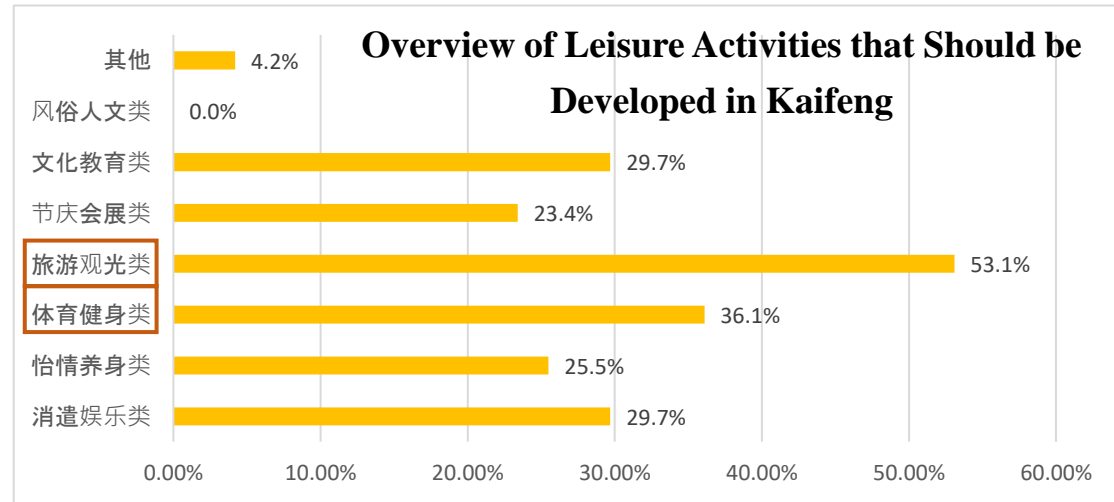
# Tourism and Community | Leisure Activities for Community Residents

## In the pandemic:

- The frequency of local residents' participation in leisure activities, the average time of single participation in leisure activities, and their consuming capacity **all decreased**.
- Residents were more health-conscious, and the development demand for **sports and fitness activities** increased, ranking second in all leisure activities.



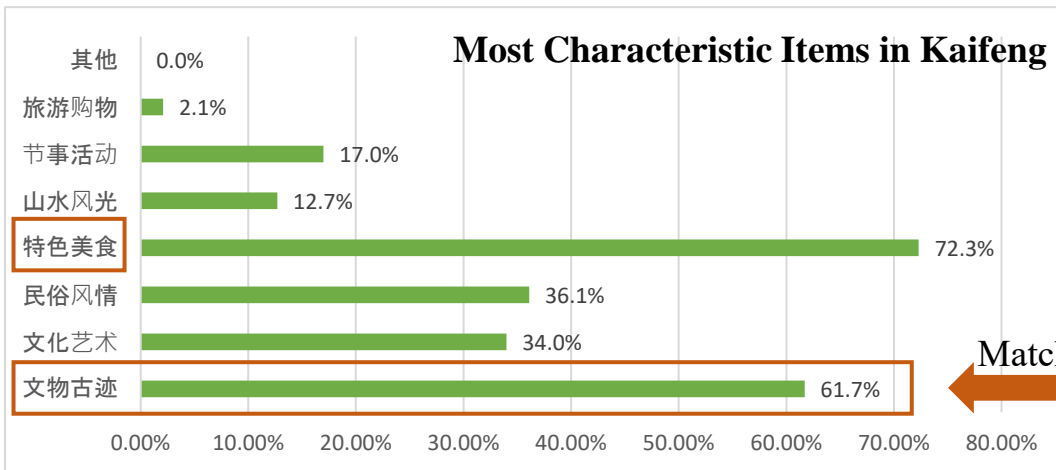
Frequency of Residents Participating in Leisure Activities



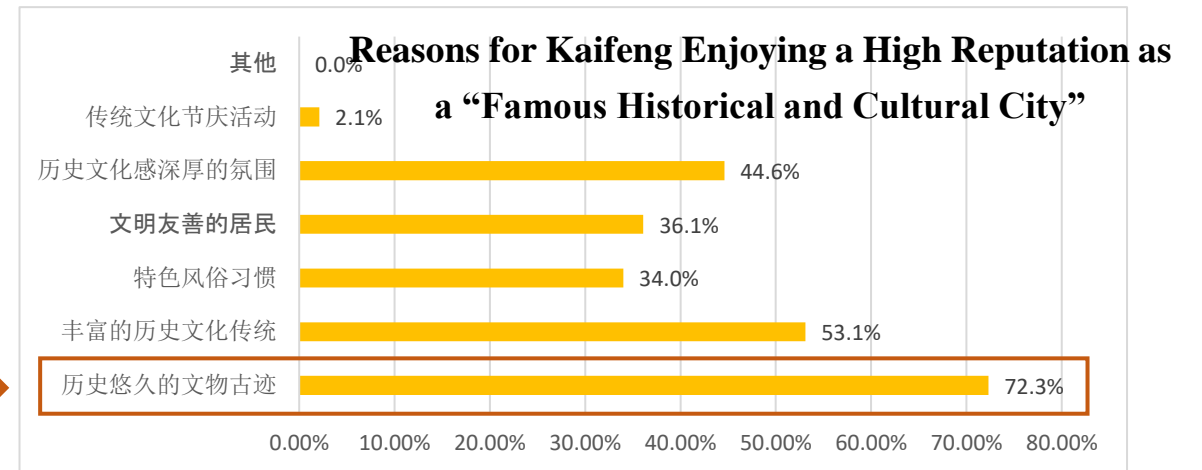
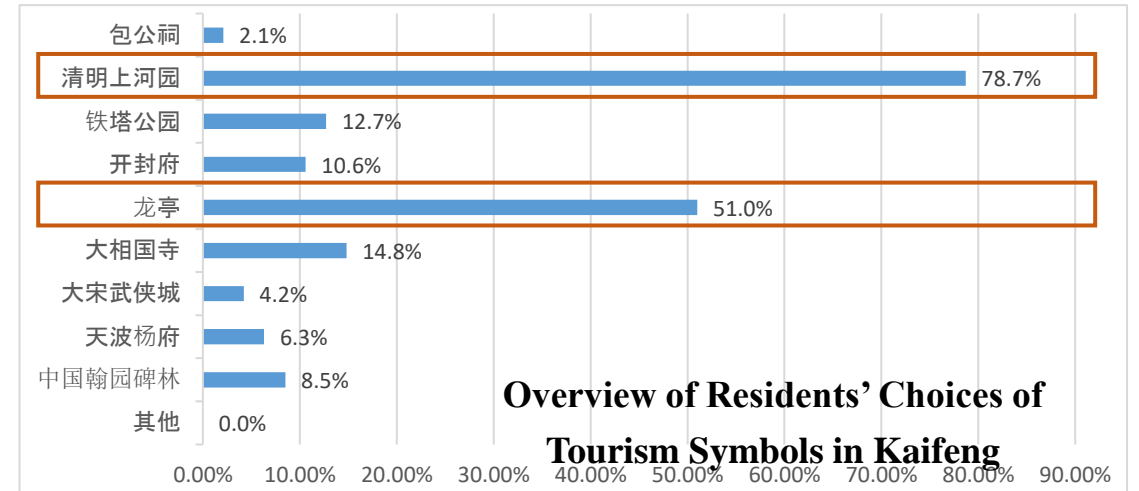
Time of Single Participation in Leisure Activities of Residents

# Tourism and Community | Community Residents' Perceptions of Tourist Attractions

Residents still considered **special food** to be the most characteristic item in Kaifeng, followed by **cultural relics and monuments**. The result matched with reasons for Kaifeng enjoying a high reputation as a “famous historical and cultural city”. **Millennium City Park** took the lead among multiple kinds of destinations, followed by **Dragon Pavilion Park**. Significant differences were not found among other attractions in terms of residents' preference for tourist attractions in Kaifeng.

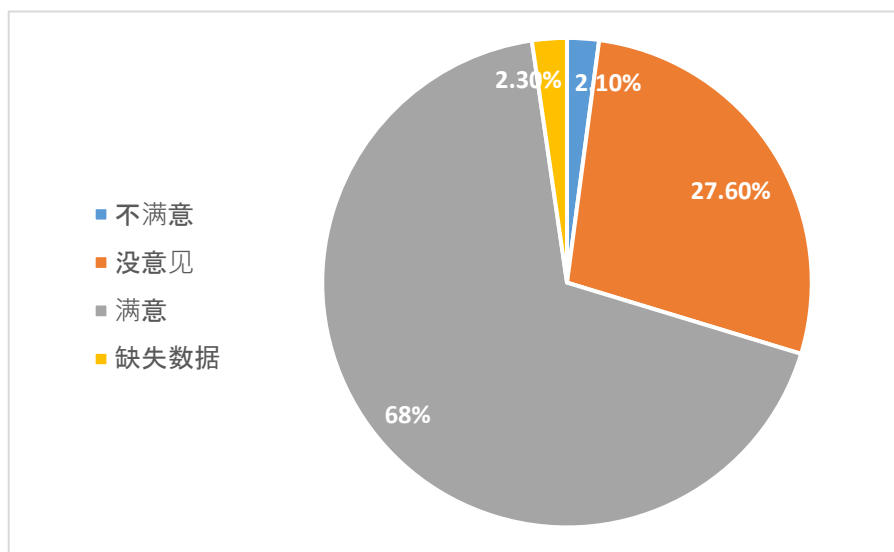


Matched

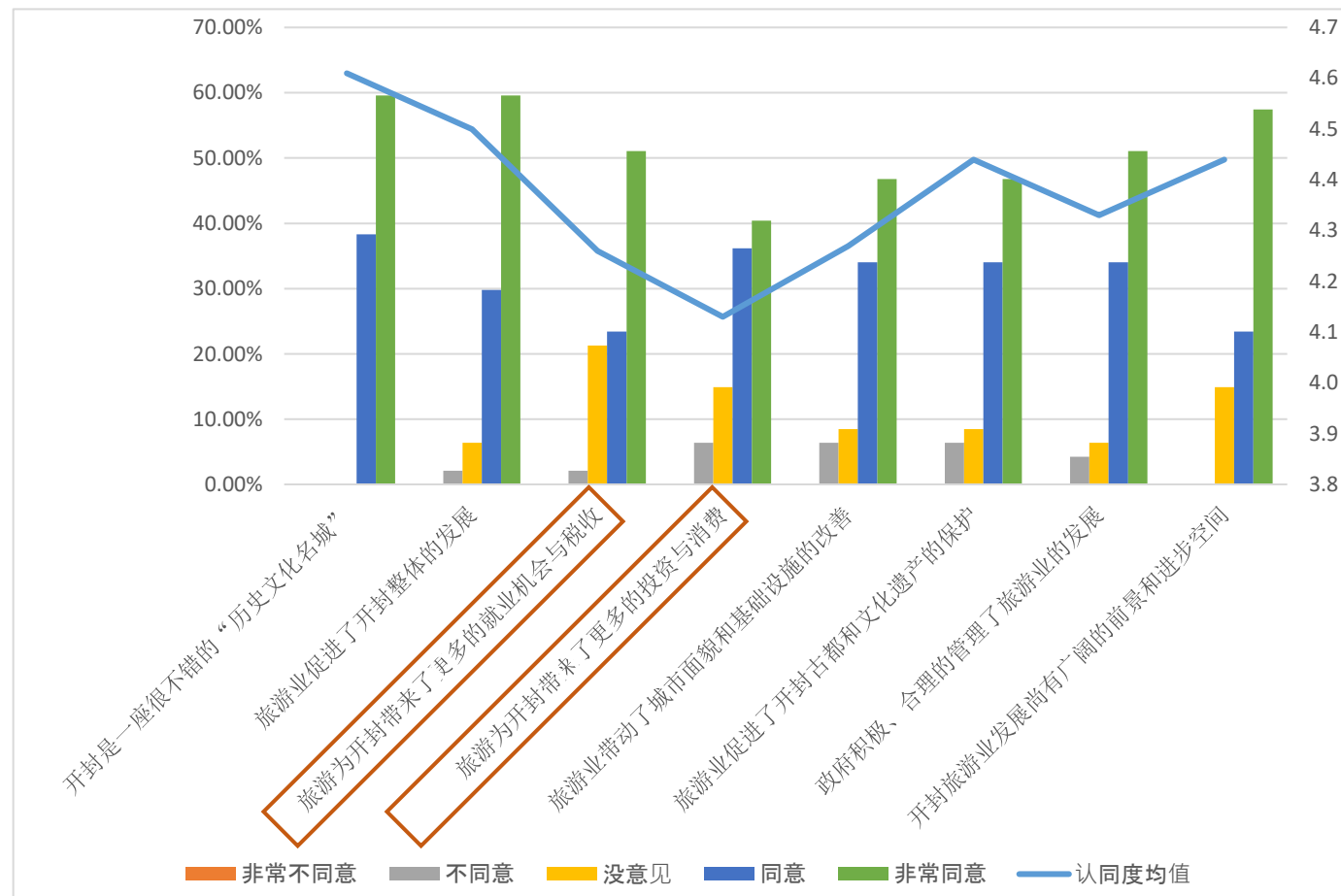


# Tourism and Community | Community Residents' Satisfaction

- Residents had a positive attitude towards Kaifeng's tourism development in general, with a high level of satisfaction.
- However, it should be noted that residents believed that tourism development could only bring **limited external economic benefits**



Overall Satisfaction of Residents with Tourism Development in Kaifeng

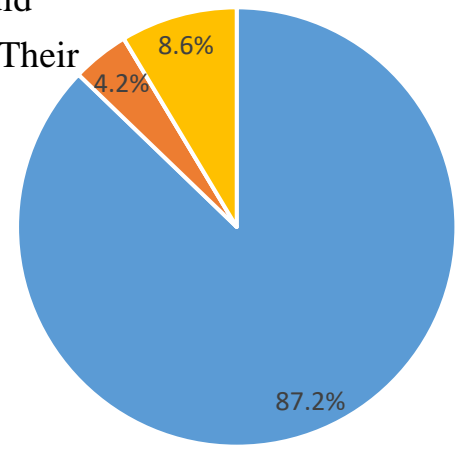


Residents' Comments on Tourism

# Tourism and Community | Community Residents' Attitudes and Behavior

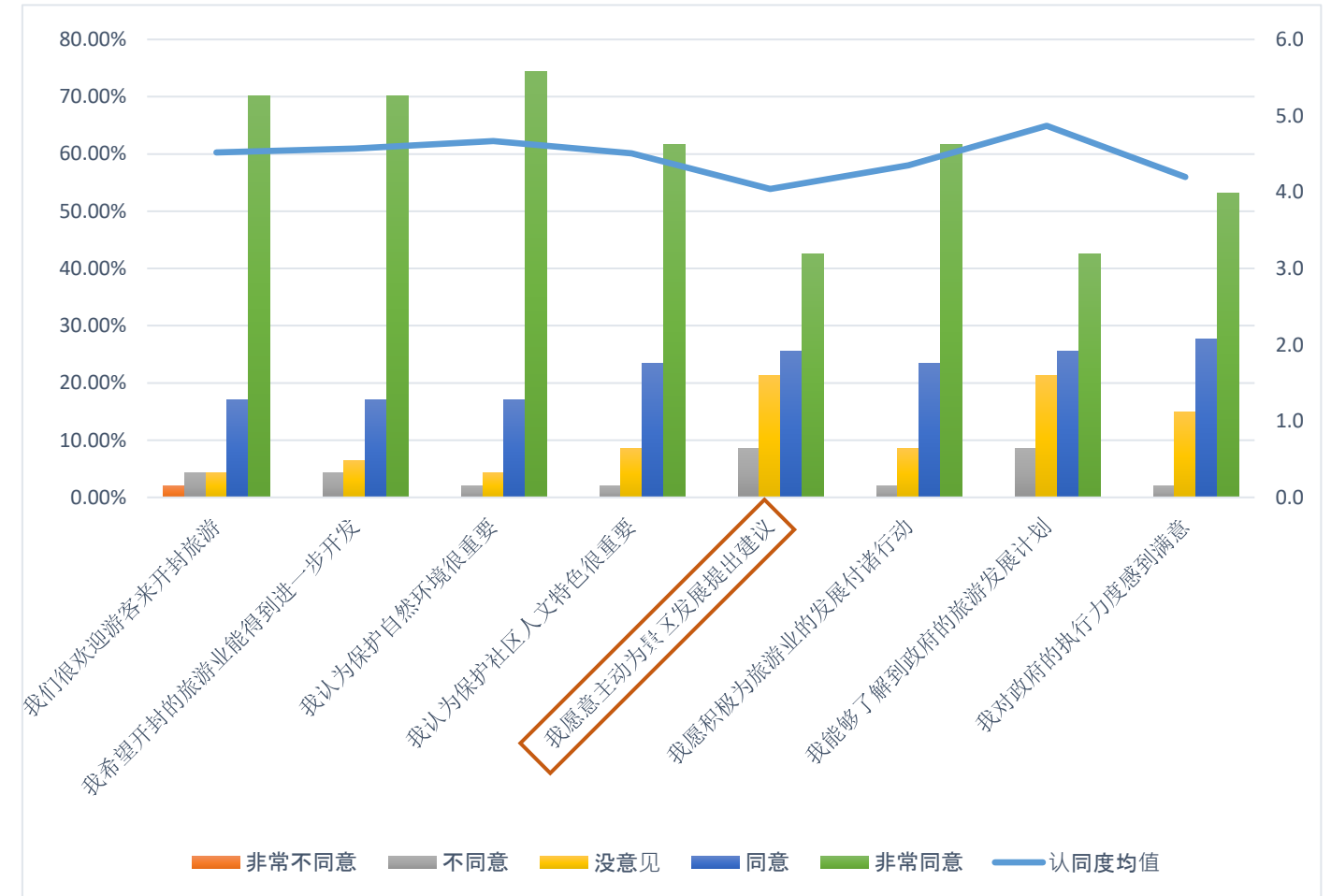
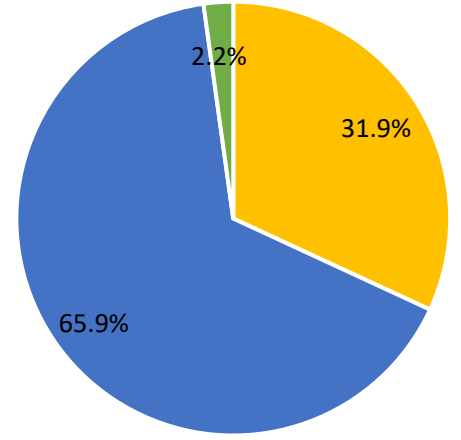
Whether Local Residents Would Recommend Kaifeng Tourism to Their Relatives and Friends

- 会
- 不确定
- 不会
- 缺失数据



Local Residents' Level of Support for Tourism Development in Kaifeng

- 非常反对
- 反对
- 无所谓
- 支持
- 非常支持
- 缺失数据



# Tourism and Community | Community Participation and Awareness

- Residents had a positive attitude towards Kaifeng's tourism development. They were willing to contribute to the development of tourism in Kaifeng.
- In scenic area management, **more channels should be developed to obtain people's comments and feedback** and encourage residents to provide ideas.
- Residents had a deeper understanding of sustainable development; however, there was still a great deal of room for improvement.

biggest changes in tourism and personal concerns:

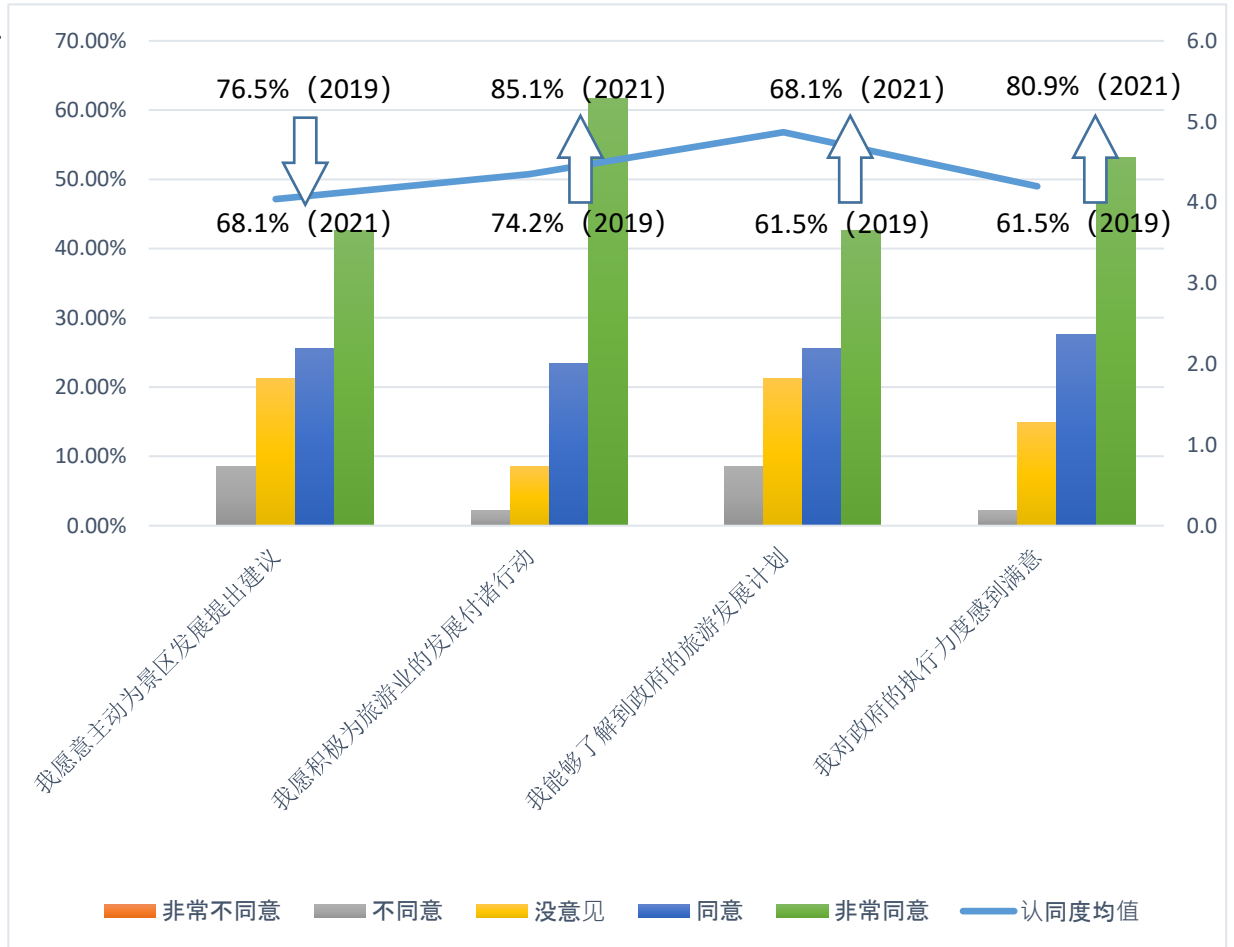
- improvement of the urban environment; standardization of tourism services; improvement of transportation
- concerns about fewer tourists due to the pandemic and floods

suggestions for tourism development:

- developing more diversified tourism projects and improving services to attract more tourists
- improving the incomes and welfare of employees

influence on individuals' work:

- Employees in the tourism industry: Tourism development facilitated the increase in incomes.
- Employees in other industries: Tourism development led to more tourists and traffic congestion.



Community Participation in the Tourism Industry

# Tourism and Community | Summary

1

## Residents' daily leisure activities:

The frequency of leisure activities was high. The pace of life was relatively slow. The average time residents spent on single participation in leisure activities was short. Residents' consuming capacity was medium. The demand for sports and fitness activities increased due to the pandemic.

2

## Residents' perceptions of tourist attractions:

Rich historical resources in Kaifeng were an important part of contemporary tourism development. Most people had a preference for sightseeing activities. Millennium City Park and Dragon Pavilion Park were the main attractions.

3

## Residents' perceptions of the influence of tourism:

Residents had an overall positive attitude towards Kaifeng's tourism development, with a significant increase in satisfaction compared to last year. The negative effects were mainly about traffic, prices of goods, and housing prices; however, perceptions of negative impacts decreased in comparison to the previous year.

4

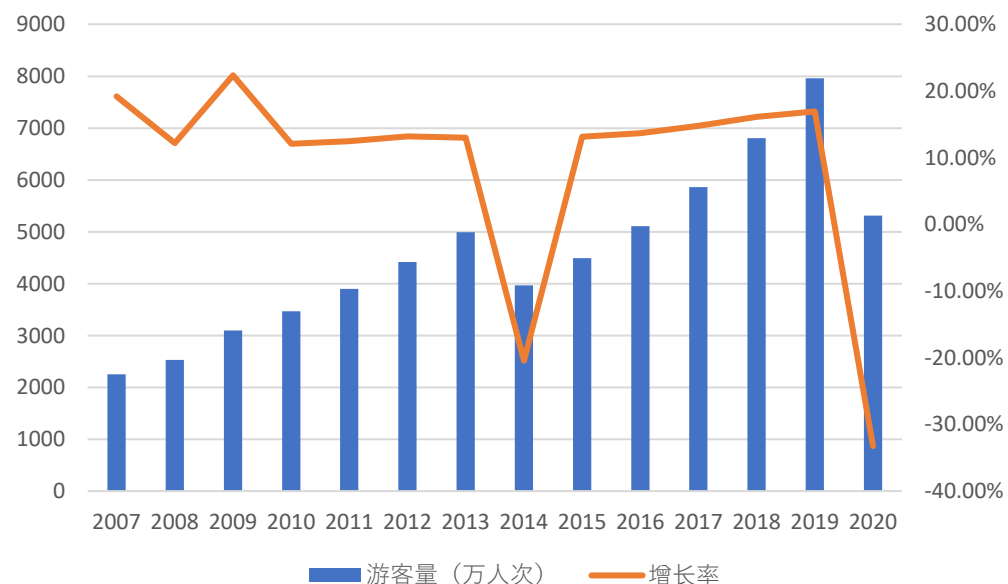
## Residents' community participation:

Residents' willingness to support tourism was high. They should be further encouraged to provide suggestions. They were more concerned about the negative influence of the pandemic on tourism.

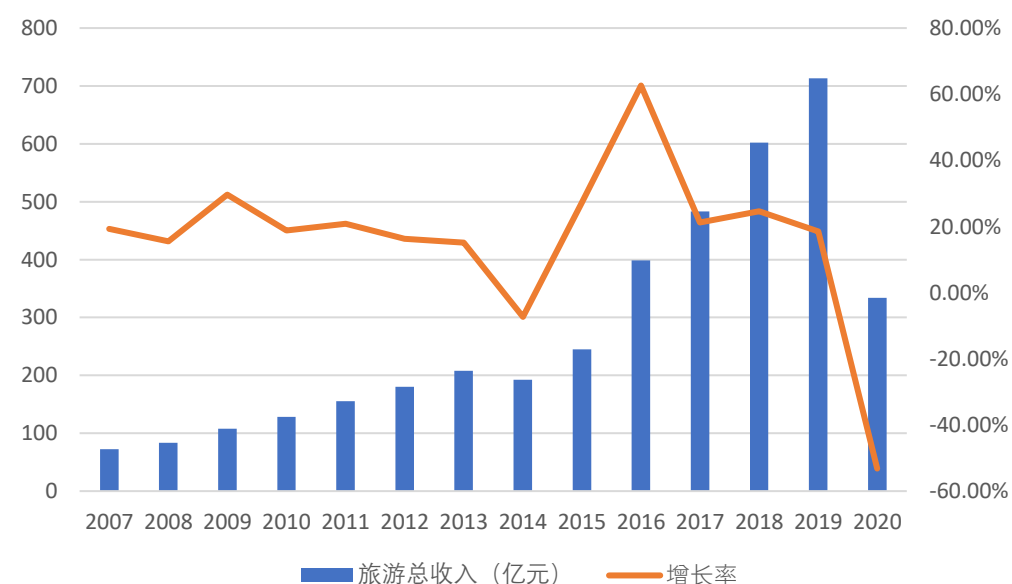
# Tourists' Perceptions and Satisfaction | Overview of the Tourism Market

## ► Overall tourism development in Kaifeng, 2021

- In 2020, Kaifeng received a total of 53.126 million tourists, down 33.26% on a year-on-year basis, equal to 66.74% of tourists received in Kaifeng in the previous year.
- In 2020, the total tourism revenue of Kaifeng was 33.42 billion yuan, down 53.16% year on year, equal to 46.84% of the total tourism revenue of the previous year.



Number of Tourists Received and the Growth Rate of Kaifeng in Recent Years (Source: Kaifeng Municipal Bureau of Statistics)



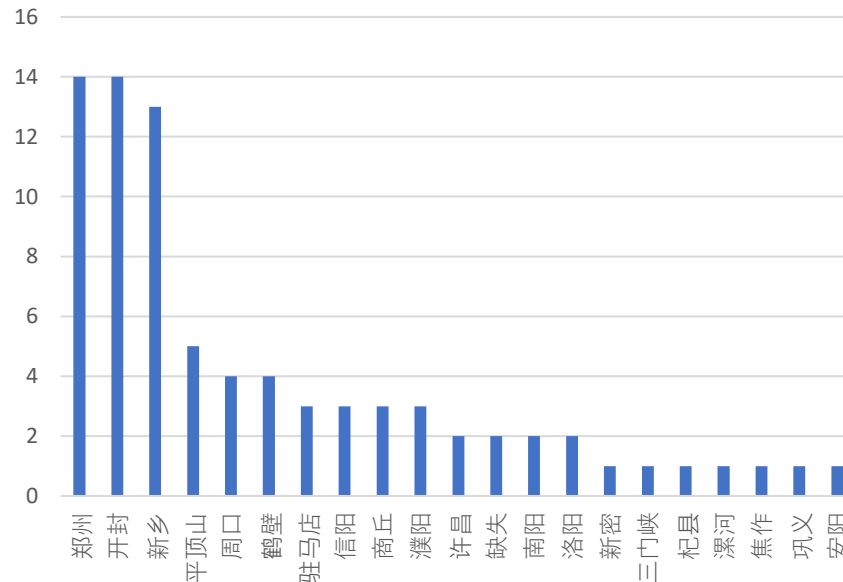
Total Tourism Revenue and the Growth Rate of Kaifeng in Recent Years (Source: Kaifeng Municipal Bureau of Statistics)

# Tourists' Perceptions and Satisfaction | Analysis of Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

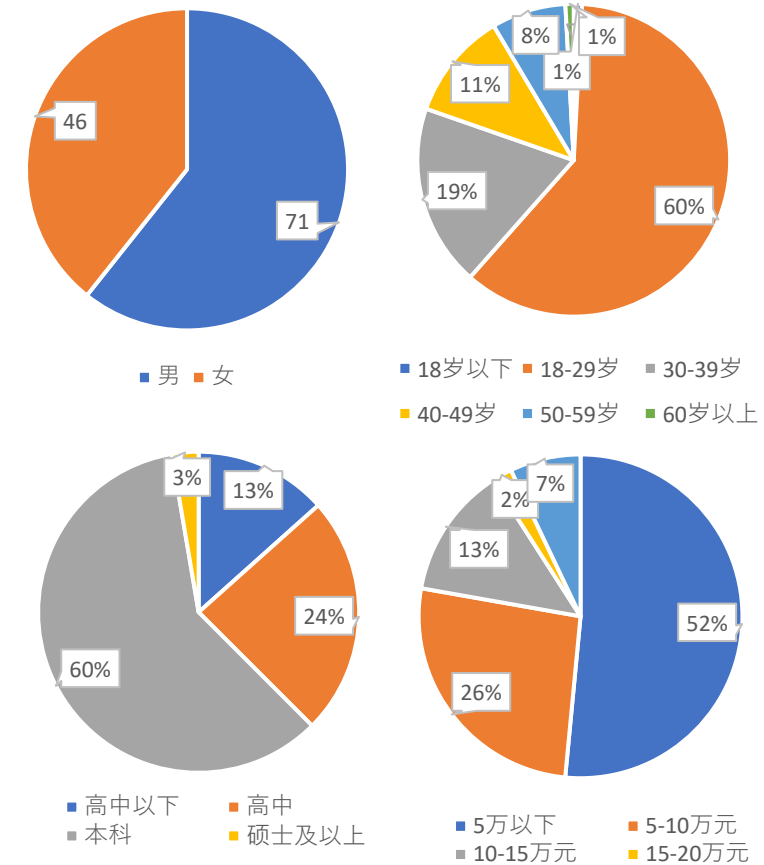
- As for the ratio of males to females, the proportion of males was larger. As for the age structure, most tourists were young. In terms of tourists' education level, the largest number of people had a bachelor's degree.
- Most tourists' annual incomes were below 100,000 yuan. Generally, most tourists did not have high incomes.
- In terms of tourist source regions, tourists were predominantly from Henan Province, surrounding provinces of Henan, and economically developed areas. Among tourists from Henan, most tourists were from Zhengzhou (17.28%), Kaifeng (17.28%), and Xinxiang (16.05%), followed by tourists from surrounding places including Pingdingshan (6.17%), Zhoukou (4.94%), and Hebi (4.94%).

Statistics of Tourist Source Regions

Regions	Number	(%)
Henan	81	69.23
Guangdong	13	7.69
Hubei	3	2.56
Jiangsu	3	2.56
Shandong	2	1.71



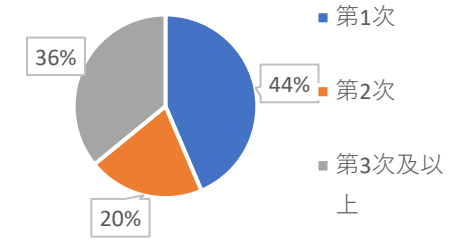
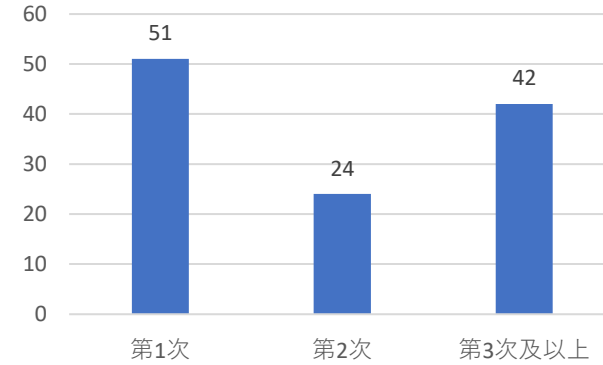
Statistics of Tourist Source Regions in Henan



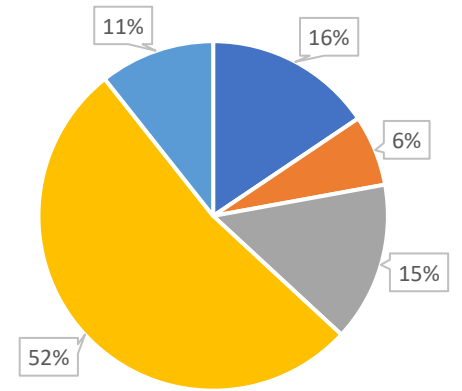
Tourists' Age, Gender, and Education Level

# Tourists' Perceptions and Satisfaction | Travel Motivation

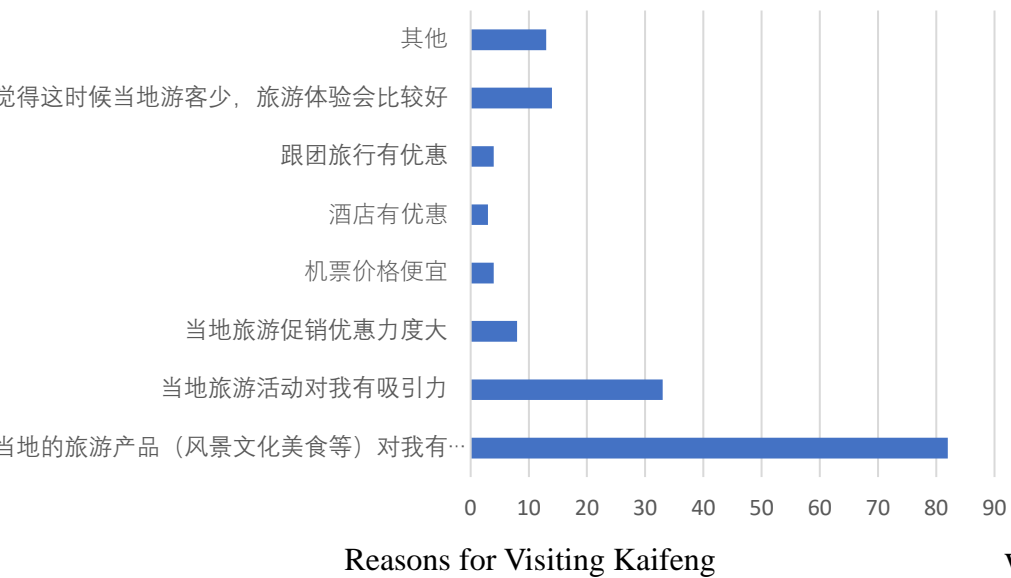
- The rate of revisiting among tourists was high.
- The main reasons for visiting Kaifeng were the indicators “local tourism products are attractive to me” and “local tourism activities are attractive to me”.
- Tourists mainly obtained tourist information through the introduction offered by relatives and friends and the Internet.
- Most tourists drove to Kaifeng by themselves. Some tourists chose to go to Kaifeng by train/high-speed railway and bus.



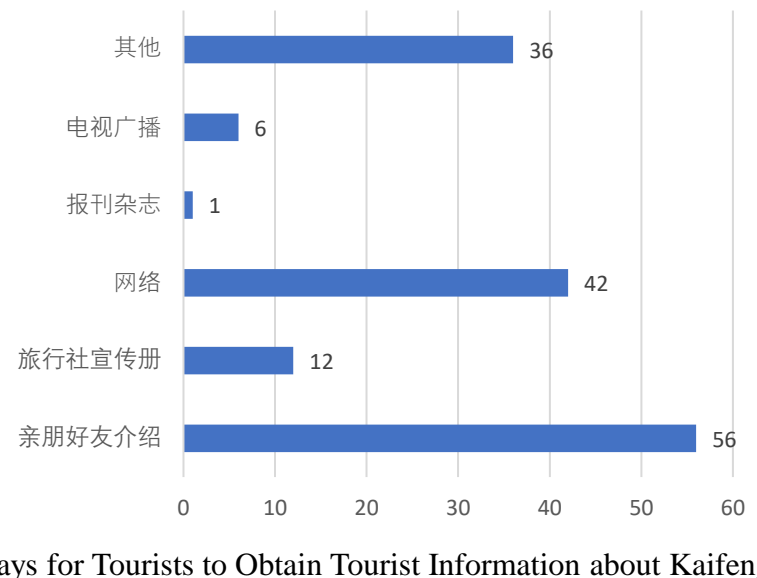
Number of Visits to Kaifeng



Modes of Transportation Chosen by Tourists



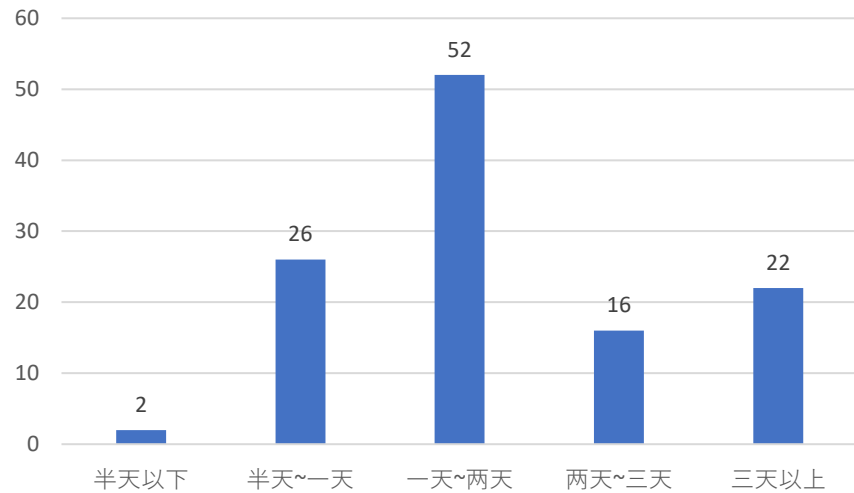
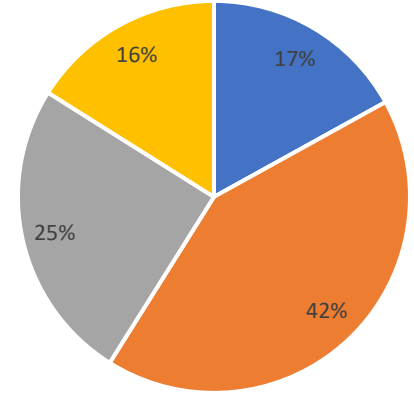
Reasons for Visiting Kaifeng



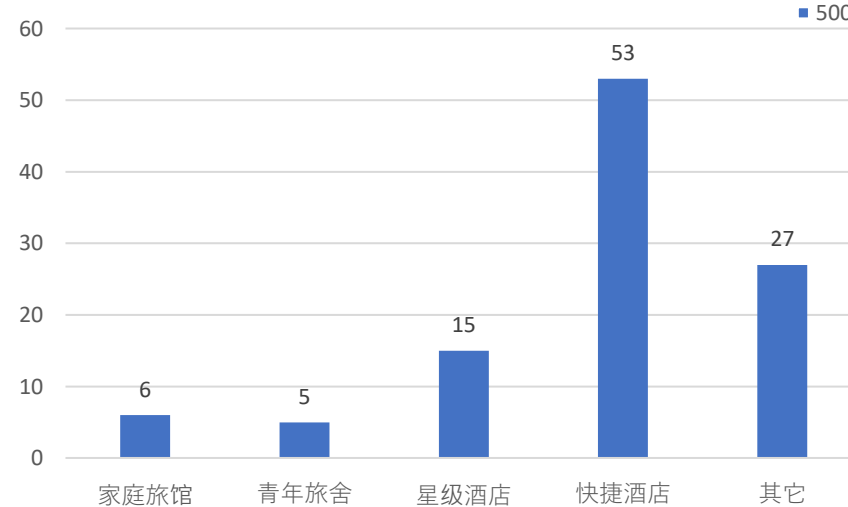
Ways for Tourists to Obtain Tourist Information about Kaifeng

# Tourists' Perceptions and Satisfaction | Tourists' Tourism Consumption

- The length of stay in Kaifeng of tourists was relatively short, mainly ranging from one to two days.
- While choosing accommodation, most tourists would choose affordable budget hotels.
- While staying at Kaifeng, most tourists' expenditure ranged from 501 to 1000 yuan, reflecting that the overall consumption level of tourists in Kaifeng was medium. There was a slight increase in tourists' expenditure compared to the past few years.



Expected Length of Stay in Kaifeng of Tourists

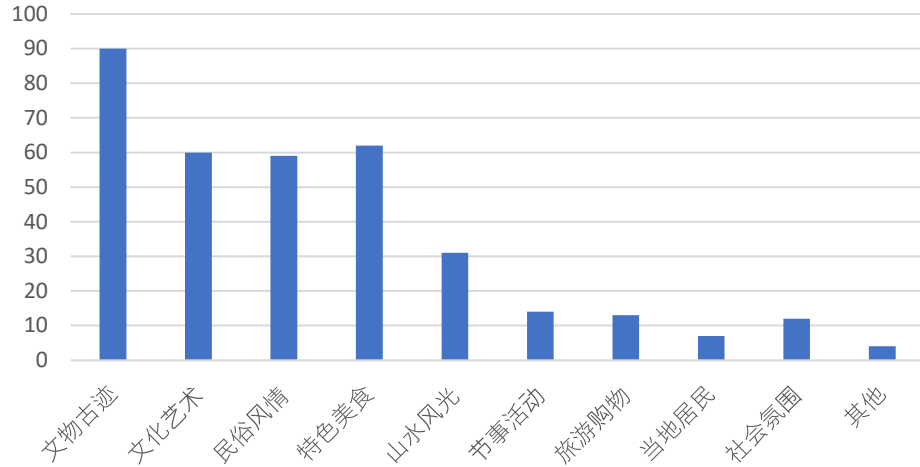


Tourists' Choices of Accommodation

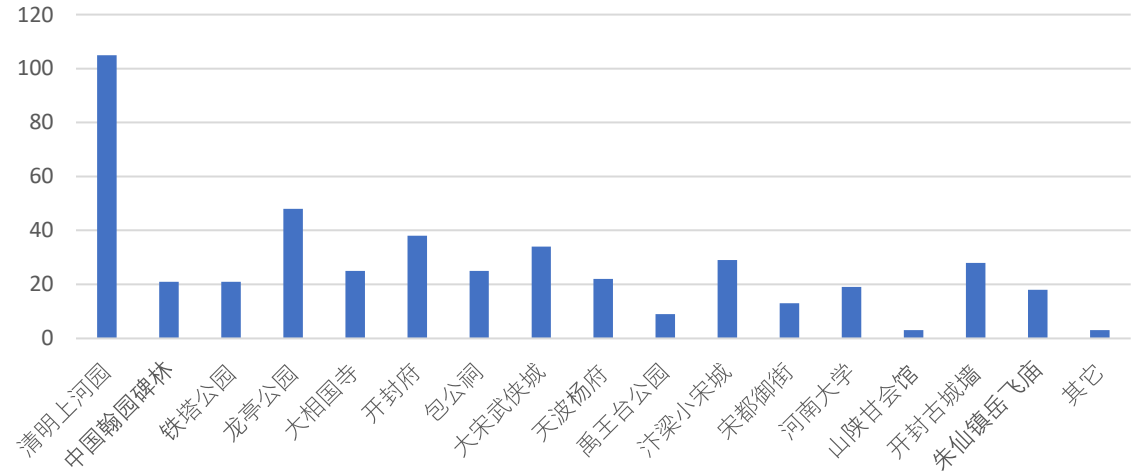
■ 500元以下 ■ 501-1000元 ■ 1001-2000元 ■ 2000元以上

Individual Expenditure of Tourists in Kaifeng

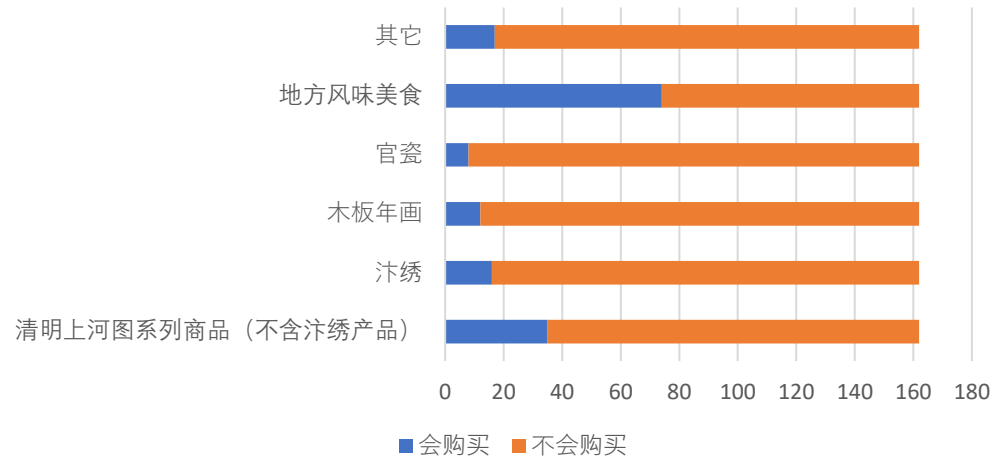
# Tourists' Perceptions and Satisfaction | Overall Perception



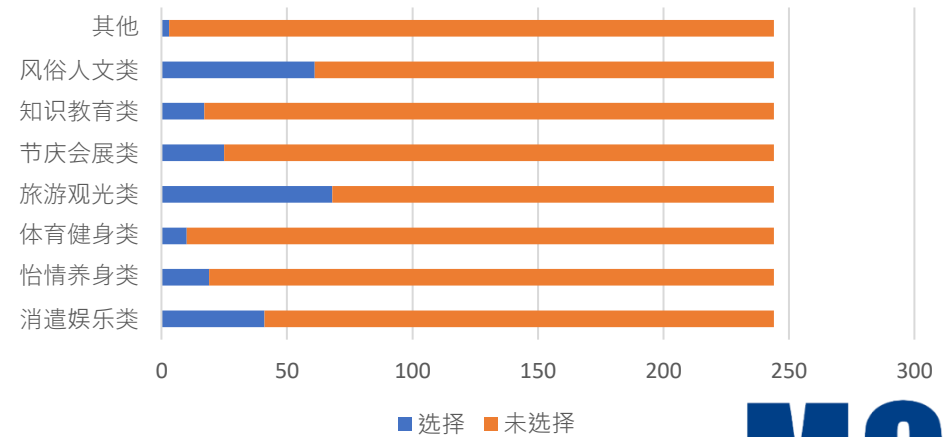
Items that Have Left a Deep Impression on Tourists



Tourist Attractions that Have Been Visited by Tourists and Tourist Attractions that Tourists Have Planned to Visit



Tourism Goods that Tourists Will Purchase

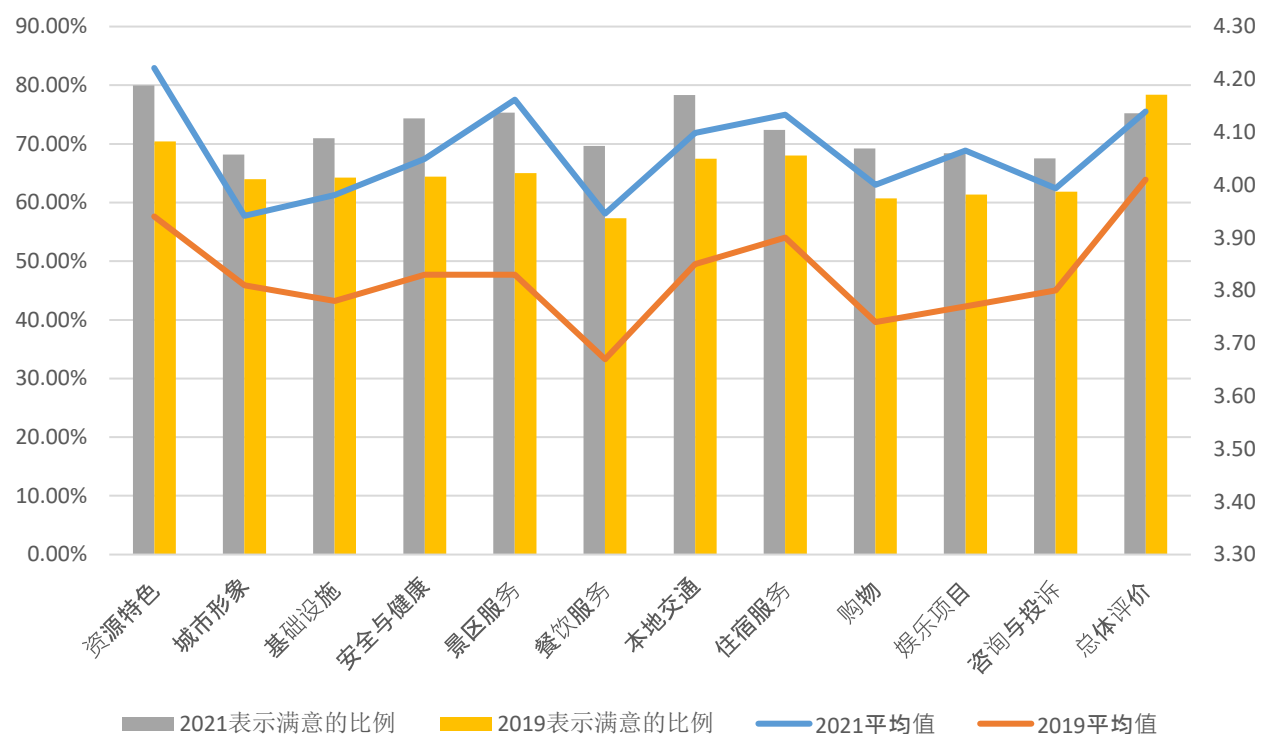


Overview of Leisure Activities that Should be Developed in Kaifeng from Tourists' Perspective

# Tourists' Perceptions and Satisfaction | Tourists' Satisfaction

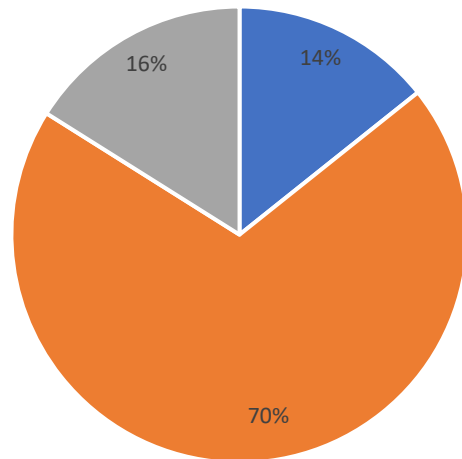
- The average value of tourist satisfaction was greater than 3.90, and the overall satisfaction was high.
- The most satisfying aspect was “resource features”, followed by “local transportation” and “services in scenic areas”. The most dissatisfying aspect was “consultation and complaints”.

	Mean	Satisfaction
Resource Features	4.22	79.98%
City Image	3.94	68.16%
Infrastructure	3.98	70.94%
Safety and Health	4.05	74.36%
Services in Scenic Areas	4.16	75.32%
Food and Drinks	3.95	69.66%
Local Transportation	4.10	78.35%
Accommodation	4.13	72.36%
Shopping	4.00	69.23%
Recreation	4.06	68.38%
Consultation and Complaints	3.99	67.52%
Overall Assessment	4.14	75.21%



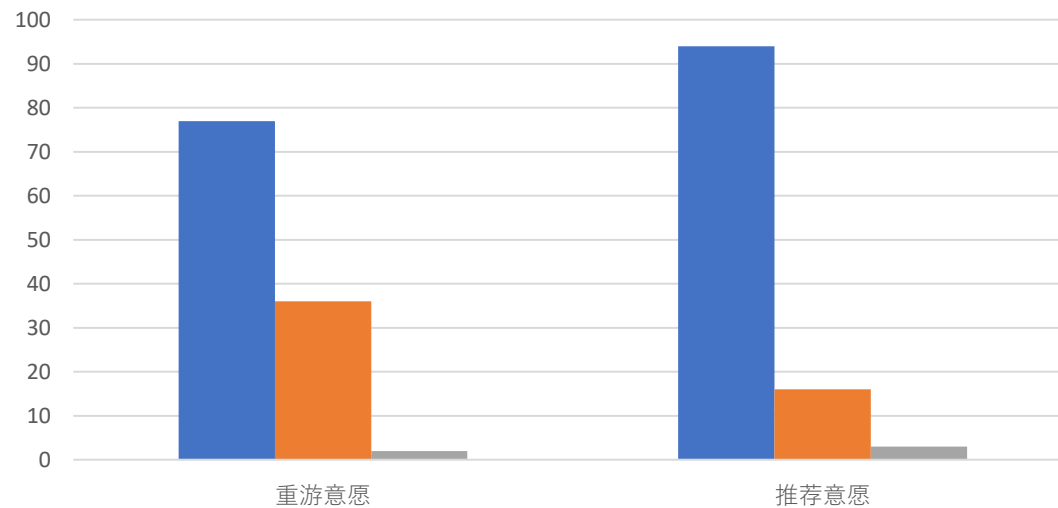
## Tourists' Perceptions and Satisfaction | Tourists' Perceptions and Willingness to Revisit

- The actual tourism experience in Kaifeng lived up to most tourists' expectations. Some tourists even pointed out that it exceeded their expectations.
- By comparing the monitoring data in 2019, the percentage of tourists who thought the actual experience exceeded their expectations and tourists' willingness to revisit and recommend Kaifeng increased steadily.
- There were still a number of tourists who were not sure whether to recommend Kaifeng. Besides, as for tourists' willingness to revisit and recommend Kaifeng, a lot of tourists were willing to recommend Kaifeng while not willing to revisit Kaifeng.



■ 高于预期 ■ 和预期一样 ■ 低于预期

Tourists' Expectations and the Actual Tourism Experience



■ 会 ■ 不确定 ■ 不会

Tourists' Willingness to Revisit and Recommend Kaifeng



# Tourists' Perceptions and Satisfaction | Summary

1

In terms of tourist source regions, tourists were predominantly from Henan Province, surrounding provinces of Henan, and economically developed areas. Tourists from Henan accounted for the largest proportion. Among tourists from Henan, most tourists were from Zhengzhou, Kaifeng, and Xinxiang.

2

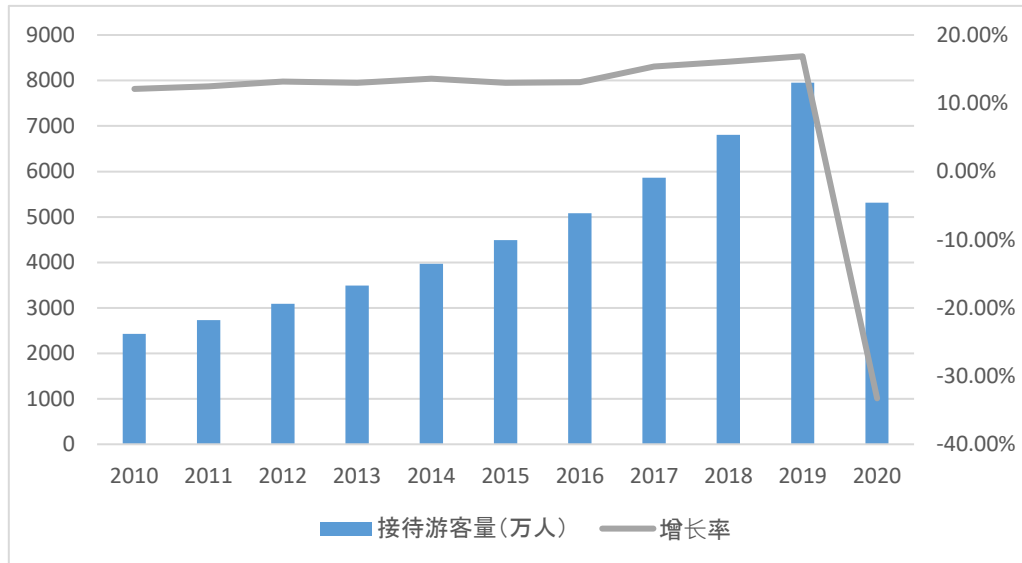
In terms of travel motivation, most tourists came to Kaifeng to experience history and culture, participate in leisure activities, broaden horizons, learn, and enjoy food. They mainly obtained tourist information from their friends and relatives as well as the Internet. Typically, they would drive to Kaifeng by themselves or go to Kaifeng by train and long-distance bus. Their length of stay was less than two days. Their consuming capacity was low-medium level.

3

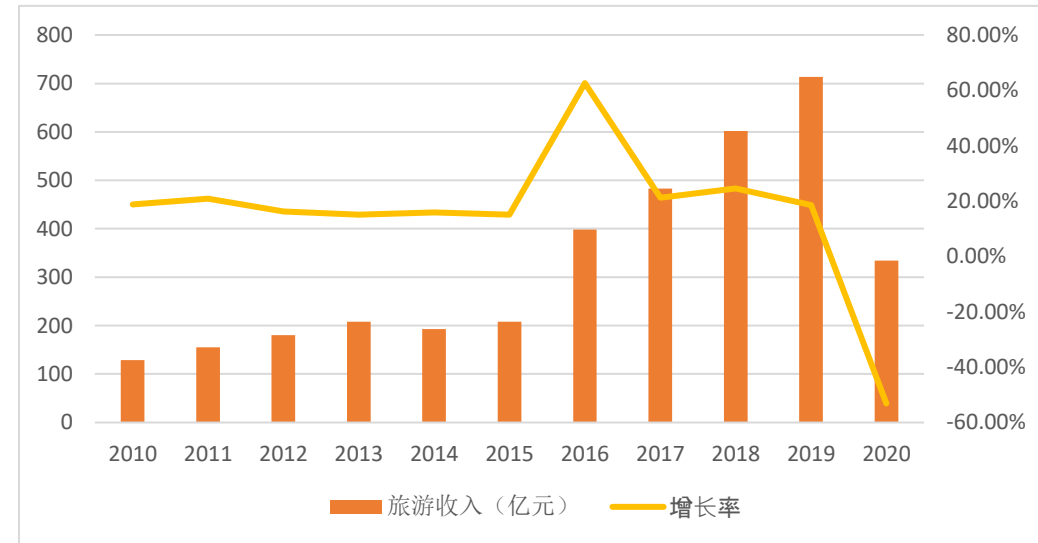
In terms of tourist satisfaction, tourists were generally satisfied with Kaifeng tourism and accommodation, but there were also some shortcomings. Tourists' willingness to revisit and recommend Kaifeng was not low.

# Tourism and Economy | Tourism Development Status

- In the past ten years, Kaifeng's tourism industry has achieved fundamental changes and made dramatic progress. The number of tourists and tourism revenue increased significantly.
- The structure of the visitor source regions should be optimized. Domestic tourists still dominated the tourism market in Kaifeng. There were fewer international tourists.
- **The number of tourists and revenue of Kaifeng dropped sharply due to the pandemic in 2020.**



Number of Tourists and the Growth Rate of Kaifeng, 2010-2020



Tourism Revenue and the Growth Rate of Kaifeng, 2010-2018

## Feedback from Tourists

### ■ Scenic areas should be more interesting and diversified

Tourism projects in Kaifeng were predominantly sightseeing tours and performances. There was a lack of recreation activities and night tourism programs. Meanwhile, the quality of the development of programs concerning delicious food should be improved.

### ■ Tourism in Kaifeng could not embody the culture well

The integration of the tourism industry with the cultural industry should be greater. Similar buildings in the old style in Kaifeng made tourists feel that Kaifeng did not have rich cultural resources. Tourists hoped that there would be more in-depth cultural programs and that Kaifeng's tourism could be integrated with education.

### ■ The urban infrastructure and the environment should be improved.

Some visitors stressed the need for better urban environmental management, especially air quality. Also, tourists believed that the traffic situation for tourism should be improved. For instance, the walking paths should be leveled to make it easier for tourists to get around with their suitcases.

### ■ The regulation of the tourism market should be tightened.

Some people might sell tickets outside scenic areas. Unauthorized people and tour guides enticed customers. The government should tighten the regulation.

## Feedback from Residents

### ■ The quality of the service of employees in the tourist industry should be improved.

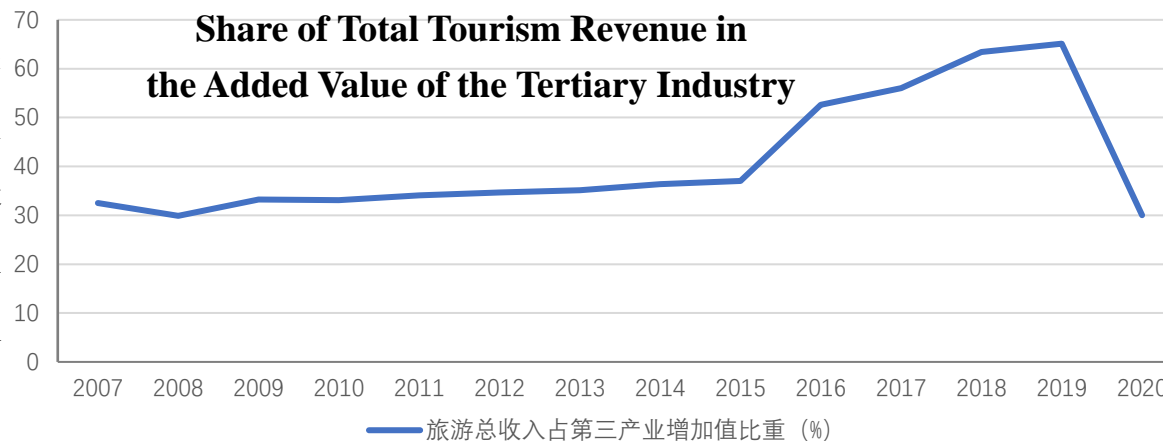
Residents hoped that tourism practitioners would be more enthusiastic while providing services to make the visitor gain a better experience and increase the rate of revisiting. In this way, Kaifeng's tourism market could achieve a fast recovery.

### ■ Incomes and the welfare of tourism practitioners should be enhanced.

Some of the residents interviewed were tourism practitioners who believed that the pandemic considerably impacted the tourism industry and that it was difficult for tourism practitioners to make a living. They hoped that the government and enterprises could improve incomes and the welfare of tourism practitioners so as to increase their confidence in continuing to work.

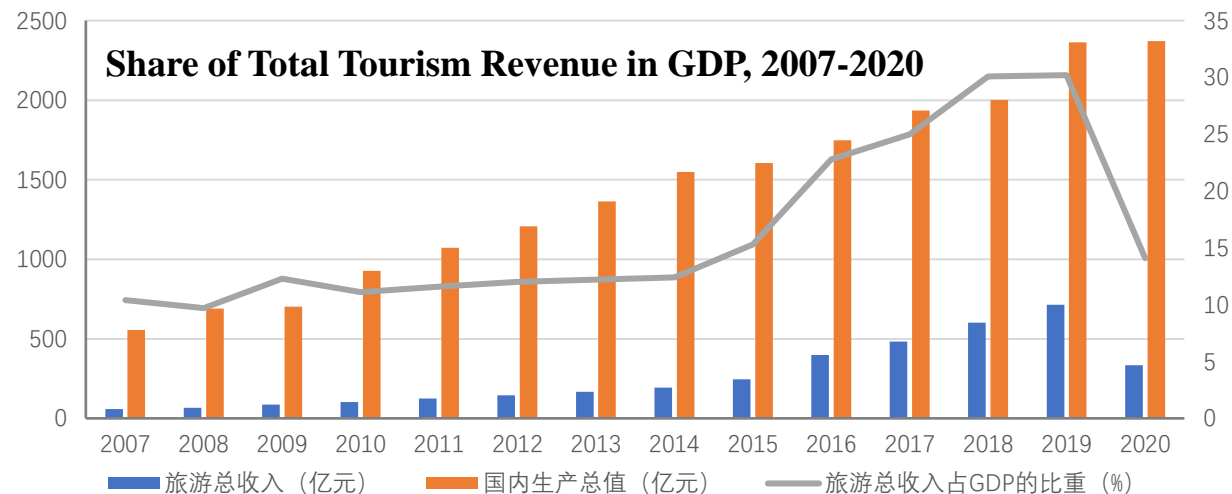
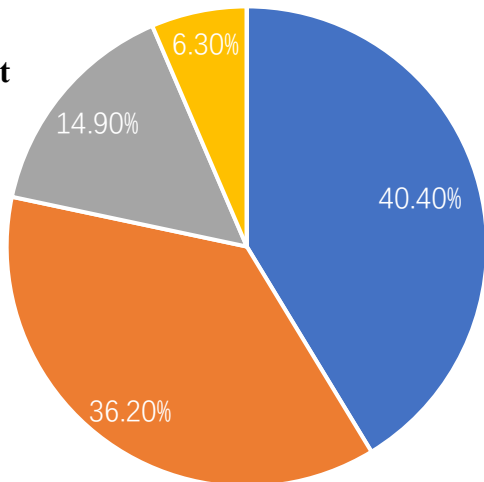
# Tourism and Economy | Economic Contribution of Tourism

Tourism has become **an important pillar industry and economic growth point of Kaifeng**, making great contributions to the overall economic development of Kaifeng and promoting the adjustment and optimization of industrial structure. Although the tourism industry was considerably impacted by the pandemic, the tourism industry would have great prospects.



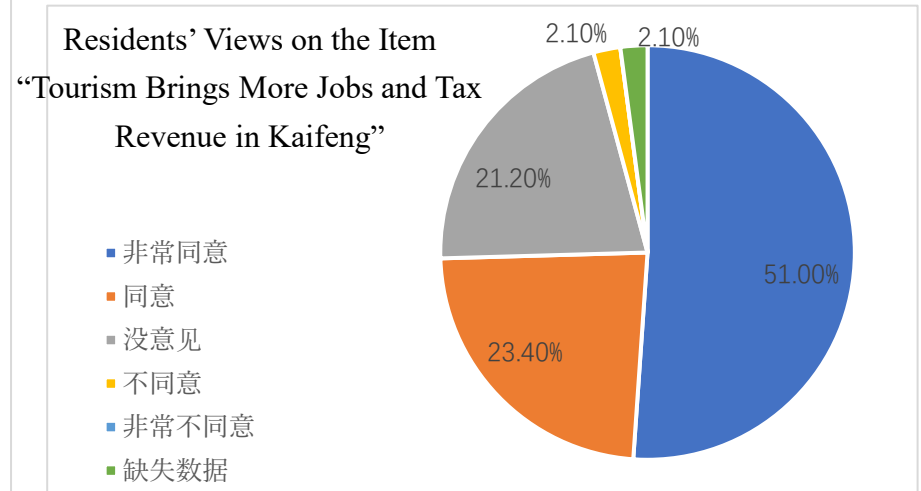
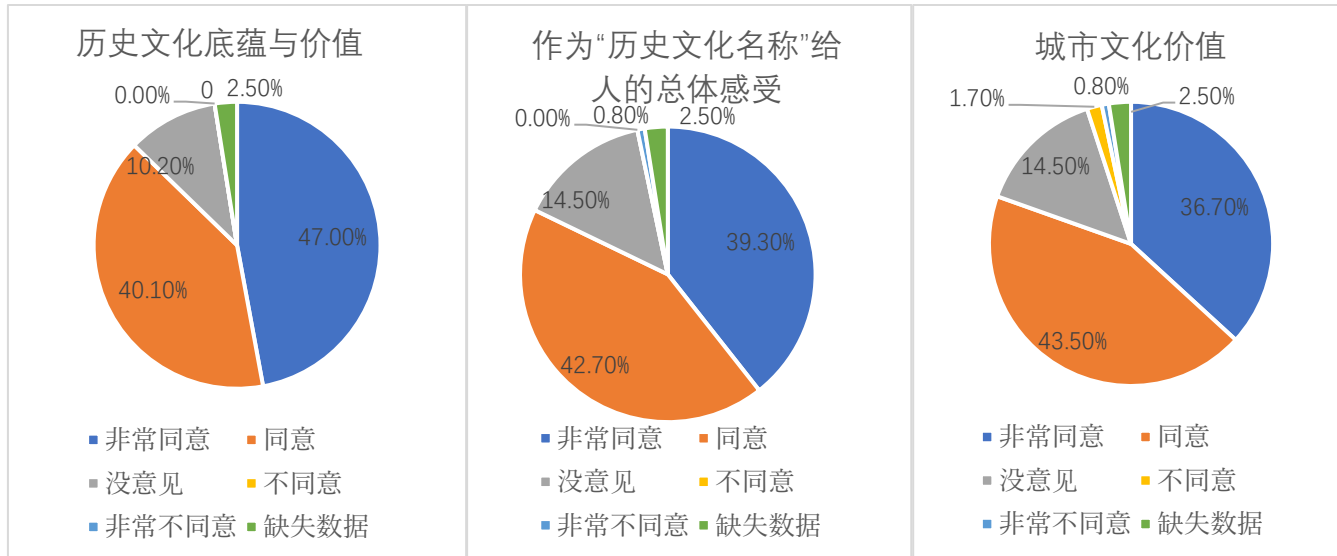
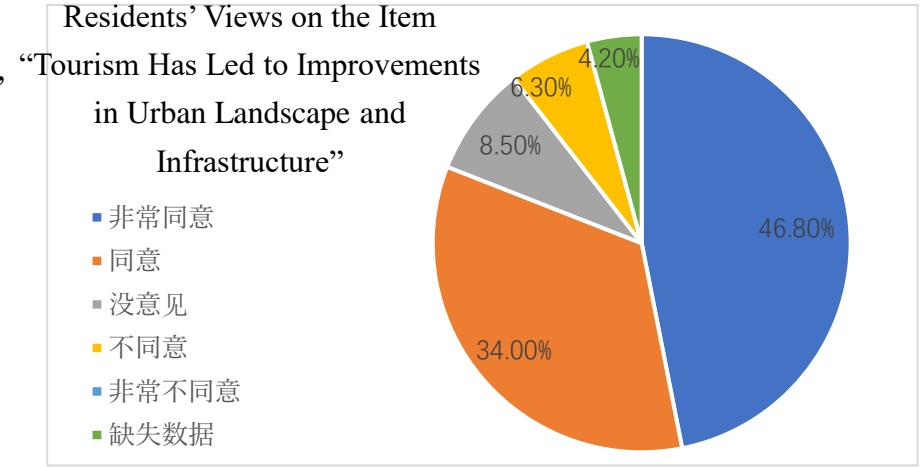
### Residents' Views on the Item "Tourism Brings More Investment and Consumption in Kaifeng"

- 非常同意
- 同意
- 没意见
- 不同意
- 非常不同意
- 缺失数据



# Tourism and Economy | Contribution of Tourism to the Society

- Tourism **brought employment opportunities** to a certain extent, driving the demand for jobs related to catering, accommodation, retail, transportation, residential services, and other relevant fields.
- Tourism **facilitated the development of the culture of Kaifeng**, showing the uniqueness of Kaifeng culture, promoting the unique social culture of Kaifeng, and enhancing cultural identity.
- Tourism led to **urban renewal and construction**, including the improvement of the city's image, the construction and improvement of infrastructure, more frequent urban construction, and the revitalization and enhancement of urban culture.



Visitors' Views on Kaifeng Culture

# Tourism and Economy | Summary

1

The number of tourists and revenue of Kaifeng dropped sharply due to the pandemic in 2020. However, in the long term, tourism in Kaifeng was growing steadily, both in terms of the number of visitors and tourism revenue.

2

As for the economic contribution, tourism has become an important pillar industry and economic growth point of Kaifeng, making great contributions to the development of the tertiary sector of the economy in Kaifeng and promoting the adjustment and optimization of industrial structure in Kaifeng.

3

As for the contribution of tourism to the society, tourism development provided a large number of employment opportunities in Kaifeng, being an important driving factor of employment. Tourism promoted the social culture and made satisfactory contributions to the social climate. Tourism facilitated the urban renewal in Kaifeng and improved the city's image, infrastructure, and urban construction.

# Resilience of the Tourism Industry in Kaifeng | 7.20 Henan Floods

## ► The influence of 7.20 Henan Floods on Kaifeng and responses:

- **Influence:** From 17:00 on July 21 to 14:00 on July 22, there were heavy rainfalls and locally heavy rainfalls in Kaifeng. From July 19 to July 24, waterlogging occurred on many roads in the urban area and Yushi County. On July 21, tourist attractions such as Dragon Pavilion Park, Millennium City Park, and Qifeng Old Garden were closed for one day. Meanwhile, since Zhengzhou and its surrounding cities and counties were the most affected areas, the number of tourists from the main tourist source regions of Kaifeng decreased directly.
- **Responses:** Through fax, SMS, email, public platforms such as Weibo, WeChat, and other multiple channels, relevant departments made arrangements ahead of time and kept people informed of the information about heavy rainstorms. Besides, to minimize the risk of waterlogging, relevant departments mobilized 12 emergency drainage vehicles to approach tasks in key urban areas.
- **Recovery:** At noon on July 22, normal traffic resumed on waterlogged roads. On July 29, the floodwaters in the affected villages in Yushi County gradually receded. Normal traffic resumed on some roads.



# Resilience of the Tourism Industry in Kaifeng | 7.20 Henan Floods

## ► The influence of 7.20 Henan Floods on Kaifeng and responses:

Kaifeng implemented effective flood protection in advance. Some regions were not core affected areas. The floods had a relatively slight influence on these regions except for waterlogging on some roads. The floods had a relatively considerable influence on some counties, such as Yushi County, due to the upstream flood, waterlogging, and other issues. Through flood relief and rescue efforts of all departments and joint efforts of the society and urban departments, factories in affected regions resumed production, and the general public resumed everyday life gradually.



# Resilience of the Tourism Industry in Kaifeng | COVID-19 Pandemic

## ► The influence of COVID-19 pandemic on Kaifeng and responses:

- Overall situation:** In 2020, the annual tourism revenue of Kaifeng was only 46.8% of that of 2019. In 2021, the city received 2.552 million visitors during the Spring Festival (87.5% of the number of tourists in 2019), earning tourism revenue of 1.465 billion yuan (87.2% of tourism revenue in 2019). On the May Day holiday, Kaifeng received 5.872.8 million visitors (154.1% of the number of tourists in the pre-pandemic era on a comparable basis) and earned tourism revenue of 3.94 billion yuan (133.1% of tourism revenue in the pre-pandemic era on a comparable basis). It reflected that **the tourism industry gradually achieved recovery and made significant progress** in the normalized pandemic prevention and control; however, due to the constant pandemic in many places, scenic areas in Kaifeng were closed in August and November 2021. **The tourism industry's recovery was hampered several times.**

- Tourism enterprises:** The number of tourists and revenue in scenic areas fell by more than 50% compared to the same period in 2019. Meanwhile, the operating costs of scenic areas did not decrease, and some scenic spots increased investment to update and upgrade tourism programs. Therefore, a number of scenic areas faced an imbalance between revenue and expenditure. These problems were particularly prominent in the travel agency industry and accommodation industry.

Operating Data of Major Scenic Areas  
(unit: million yuan, 10,000 people)

Scenic Areas/Data	Number of Visitors (2020)	Annual Revenue (2020)	Funding (2020)	Number of Visitors (2021.1-10)	Annual Revenue (2021.1-10)
Aisijia Agritourism	80	2000	1800		
Baogong Temple	24.8	595	50	27	650
Little Song City	145.1	1457			
Daxiangguo Temple	38	760	230	52.5843	746.9048
Huangsong Dagan	31.55	610.32	2333.4	30.38	
Jianye Qishengjiao Commercial Street	260				
Kaifeng House	90	3870	21000	100	4200
Dragon Pavilion Park	97	2120		67.94	1792.86
Qifeng Old Garden	105	2400	15000	10	
Millennium City Park	231	3110		300	35000
Tianbo Yang House	41	840			600
Tieta Park	19.8	254		19.1	156
Wansui Mountain	80			150	6200
China Hanyuan	20	231	1001	33	263

# Resilience of the Tourism Industry in Kaifeng | COVID-19 Pandemic

## ► The influence of COVID-19 pandemic on Kaifeng and responses:

- **Tourism enterprises** - Some tourism enterprises actively developed a number of experience tourism programs when scenic areas were closed. They launched special activities during the Kaifeng Chrysanthemum Cultural Festival, National Holiday, and other festivals. Besides, through live streaming, WeChat, Douyin, Weibo, and other new media channels, those enterprises promoted scenic areas, laying a good foundation for the recovery of tourism marketing after scenic areas were open again. Among those projects, night tourism and rural tourism were the most prominent.
  - Aisijia Agritourism: The scenic area developed rural tourism for the peri-urban market based on rural revitalization.



Scenery of Millennium City Park  
at Night



Gulou Night Market



Jianye Qishengjiao  
Commercial Street

# Resilience of the Tourism Industry in Kaifeng | COVID-19 Pandemic

## ► The influence of COVID-19 pandemic on Kaifeng and responses:

### • Tourism enterprises:

- Jianye Qishengjiao Commercial Street: On the basis of the original vintage neighborhood, new businesses such as designer concept stores, SEVEN BOX, areas with cultural and creative experiences, bars, and the ice and snow world. A cultural and creative neighborhood was developed for young consumers, and new forms of urban consumption were promoted.
- Millennium City Park: Through extending the operating hours, the scenic area attracted visitors coming to the scenic area in the daytime to stay and boost consumption. Meanwhile, through light effects, the scenic area provided nighttime visitors with new performances and experience programs (e.g., Eight New Scenes in Bianliang), building a brand of night tours in Kaifeng.



Scenery of Millennium City Park  
at Night



Gulou Night Market



Jianye Qishengjiao  
Commercial Street

## ► The influence of COVID-19 pandemic on Kaifeng and responses:

- **Support from Kaifeng Municipal People's Government:** The government issued 17 articles on the recovery of cultural tourism, supporting the development of cultural tourism enterprises in five aspects, namely, vigorously promoting the recovery of the tourism market, strengthening financial policy support, implementing preferential tax policies, reducing the burden of cultural tourism enterprises, and stabilizing the workforce. The government also determined the responsible units and provided clear guidance to help cultural and tourism enterprises in Kaifeng. The main measures can be concluded as follows:
  - **Allocating funds directly:** Relevant departments in the urban area and counties obtained a fund of 30 million yuan through various ways; temporarily returning the quality assurance fund to travel agencies; refunding part of the unemployment insurance premiums; providing subsidies for employment and vocational skills upgrading; planning special bond projects for the reconstruction of the cultural tourism industry in the post-pandemic era.

# Resilience of the Tourism Industry in Kaifeng | COVID-19 Pandemic

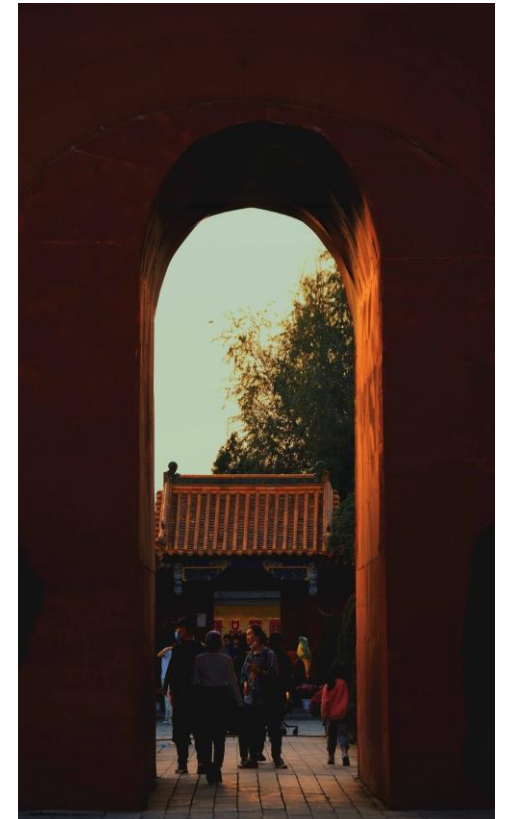
## ► The influence of COVID-19 pandemic on Kaifeng and responses:

- **Allocating funds indirectly through decreasing the expenditure of enterprises:** Financial departments provided interest subsidies for loans (up to 50%) granted to scenic areas (AAA, AAAA, AAAAA) for their tourism infrastructure construction and landscape enhancement. For cultural and tourism enterprises impacted by the pandemic, the interest rates of the renewed loans and rollover loans were decreased appropriately. During 2020, the loss carryover period of some enterprises was extended to eight years. The VAT exemption policy was applied to incomes of catering and accommodation, culture and sports, tourism and entertainment, and other living services. The rent of the state-owned houses used for business purposes was reduced. Supportive electricity price policies were implemented to reduce the cost of energy for cultural and tourism enterprises. For cultural and tourism enterprises facing difficulties in repaying the loan by the due date, paying taxes on time, and affording social insurance premiums and housing provident funds, they could apply for deferring the payment.
- **Convenient channels for financing to meet enterprises' financing needs:** The government guided banks and financial institutions to make full use of online platforms to reduce the time cost of financing. It also encouraged financial institutions to promote fast approval channels, simplify processes, and improve efficiency.
- **Encouraging scenic areas to update channels for promotion:** Through mainstream media, scenic areas launched promotion activities (e.g., visiting Kaifeng online, online live streaming) to generate favorable publicity, with a cumulative media exposure of 9.8 million times, enhancing the cultural influence and tourism attractiveness of Kaifeng.

# Resilience of the Tourism Industry in Kaifeng | COVID-19 Pandemic

## ► The influence of COVID-19 pandemic on Kaifeng and responses:

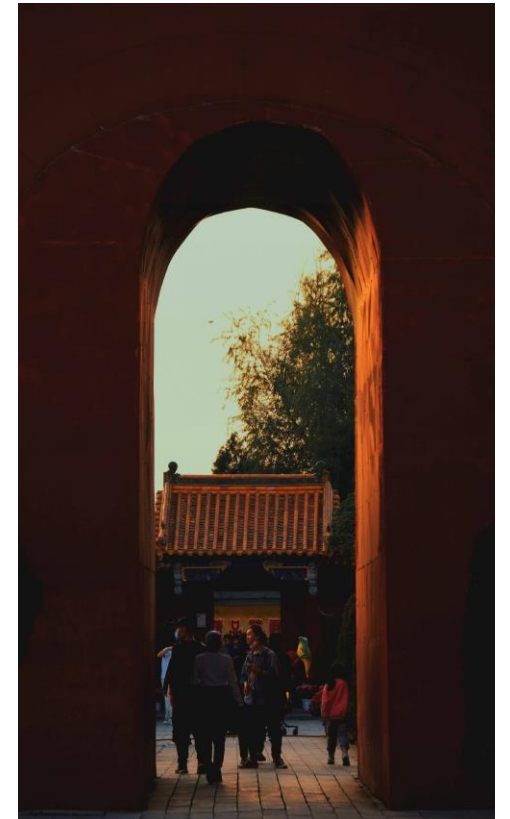
- **Support from Kaifeng Municipal People's Government:** It protected a number of market players of small and medium-sized enterprises in the face of difficulties. It facilitated the project of Millennium City Park (Phase III) and other key projects in an orderly manner. It also encouraged scenic areas to adopt the strategy of annual membership passes and promote scenic areas through live streaming and virtual tourism activities, **effectively activating the tourism market, promoting the stabilization of consumption, and accelerating the recovery of the cultural and tourism industry; however, although supportive measures (with funds as the core) played an important role in the survival of market players of small and medium-sized enterprises, these measures could not fully improve the ability of enterprises to operate independently and sustainably and to promote the high-quality development of the market.** Further improvements would be needed.



# Resilience of the Tourism Industry in Kaifeng | COVID-19 Pandemic

## ► The influence of COVID-19 pandemic on Kaifeng and responses:

- The unified planning of study tours should be more careful: Study tours in Kaifeng were unevenly distributed, and study tours in different places had varying degrees of development. Generally, there was a lack of talent. Besides, there was an urgent need for the government to do the planning, develop the relevant policies and supportive measures, and provide more funding.
- The supportive measures were not multiple: Tourism enterprises would still need more support in terms of creativity and talent in order to improve the quality of their products and services as well as make them outstanding. Only in this way can they achieve independent and sustainable operations, strive for new developments on the basis of a stable recovery, and improve the profitability and sustainability of their business models.
- The supportive measures did not have an intended target: Multiple kinds of incentives, subsidies, and deduction and exemption policies could make the policies more inclusive; however, with the limited resources in general, these measures might make the assistance not have an intended target and could not solve the problems faced by different enterprises.



## ► Typical case showing operator's active response to the pandemic: Millennium City Park

- **Strategies to deal with the pandemic: effective cost control measures**
  - **Property costs** (costs of equipment, exhibitions, maintenance, and other issues) accounted for the largest proportion of operating costs. Therefore, the scenic area tried to **be self-sufficient to the greatest extent and reduce costs**. For example, the scenic area planned festival activities by itself, looking for affordable props and clothes to save the high cost of purchasing services from professional event planning companies. To reduce the cost of amusement facilities, the scenic area looked for domestic equipment manufacturers and pointed out the scenic area's requirements for the equipment. The scenic area had a lower requirement for the effect of the equipment, significantly reducing costs and achieving the desired effect. To some extent, it was also conducive to promoting the localization of amusement equipment.



## ► Typical case showing operator's active response to the pandemic: Millennium City Park

- **Strategies to deal with the pandemic: effective cost control measures**
  - **Labor cost:** The labor cost can be divided into two parts: fixed (core staff) and variable (background actors). For the fixed cost, the scenic area recruited fewer staff members concerning new media promotion by increasing the proportion of interns and recruiting interdisciplinary talent. Besides, it tried to reduce the cost of talent acquisition through talent retainment. Millennium City Park is a **popular sightseeing scenic spot** for different types of tourists. **The performances of the scenic area were large in scale and variety; however, they were not that professional. Therefore, the performers were highly replaceable.** As for the variable cost of background actors, these acting staff could be park vendors during the day and participate in performances at night. When the scenic area was closed, the scenic area could theoretically bear only the fixed costs. But meanwhile, it could get access to actors directly. Therefore, the scenic area **could cut costs while improving crisis response resilience.**



## ► Typical case showing operator's active response to the pandemic: Millennium City Park

- **Strategies to deal with the pandemic: creating more sources of income and broadening promotion channels**
  - **Enriching the type and content of performing arts repertoire:** In the scenic area, the large-scale repertoire was fascinating. The medium-sized repertoire was high-quality, and the small-scale exhibition repertoire embodied the magnificent spectacle. In the past two years, the number of the repertoire created and developed by the scenic area increased by more than 20, gradually highlighting the differentiation of performances in the morning and afternoon and the differentiation of performances during the daytime and nighttime. For instance, in 2008, the live-action large-scale water show “Dasong - Dongjing Meng Hua” was launched. In 2014, the show of using horses in battle “Yue Fei Pointing His Spear at the Xiao Liang King” and the show of the water battle “Dasong – Guarding Dongjing” were launched. In 2017, the immersive light show “Dasong – Light and Shadow of Bian River” was launched as the core product of the night tours. In 2019, the interactive show “China Giant Horse” was launched. The scenic area established a strong brand in terms of performances. In addition, staff members were flexible. In this sense, tourism performances have become the **core competence of the scenic area**.



## ► Typical case showing operator's active response to the pandemic: Millennium City Park

- **Strategies to deal with the pandemic: creating more sources of income and broadening promotion channels**
  - **Piloting new products and exploring market potential:** The scenic area tried to create a broader market through multiple types of tourism products to enhance the comprehensive income. For instance, a large-scale performance “The Adventures of God’s Horse” was provided. It also invested 20 million yuan in building a “Flyover China Dome Theater” and VR program “Dasong – Fantasy Drift of Song Ci” to provide a differentiated immersion experience. Besides, it continued to build 3-4 large free indoor experience centers. Additionally, it developed murder mystery games, provided tourists with costumes of the Song Dynasty and make-up services in the style of the Song Dynasty, and offered travel photography services to attract young tourists and the niche market. **Now, these experience programs and services have become the new economic growth point of the scenic spot. In the future, the scenic area will pay attention to their continued growth and decide whether to increase investment to make them trending products.**



## ► Typical case showing operator's active response to the pandemic: Millennium City Park

- **Strategies to deal with the pandemic: creating more sources of income and broadening promotion channels**
  - **Opening up new promotion channels to energize the market:** Since it was difficult for tourists to choose long-distance tours due to the pandemic, the scenic area opened up new promotion channels to energize the local and the surrounding market.
    - **Event marketing:** The scenic area developed multiple activities associated with traditional festivals (e.g., “May Day” Puppet Carnival, Performing Arts Carnival on National Day, Chrysanthemum Cultural Festival). Through the exhibitions of traditional customs and performing arts, the scenic area promoted new performances and developed new activities in which tourists could be involved, making local tourists have the motive to visit the scenic area. It **successfully commercialized cultural festivals**. During “May Day” Puppet Carnival, the scenic area provided more than 150 performances per day and received 325,200 visitors, an increase of 31.2% compared to 2019 on a year-over-year basis. The secondary consumption (mainly consumption of catering and drinks, shopping, and accommodation) increased by 84.4% on a year-over-year basis.



Activities Related to Festivals

## ► Typical case showing operator's active response to the pandemic: Millennium City Park

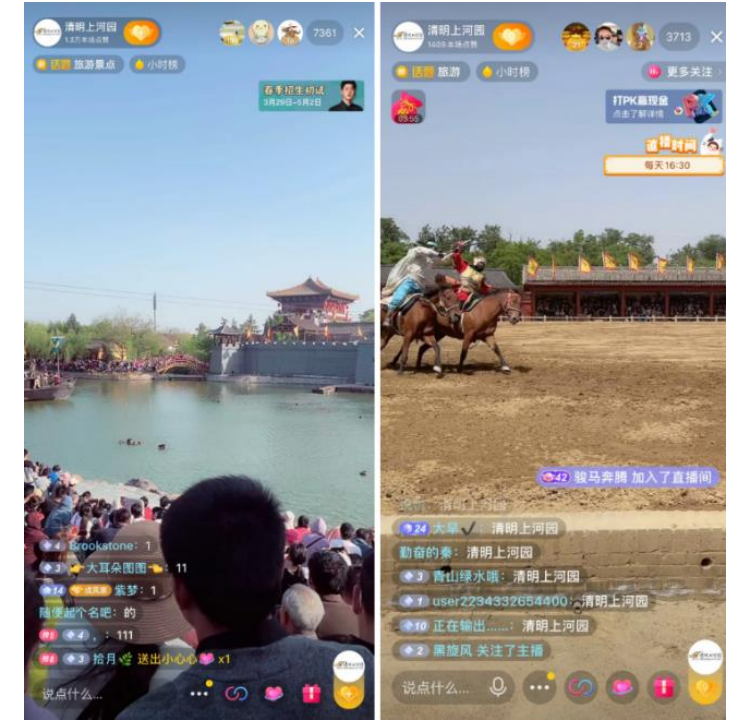
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  - **Sales promotion:** The scenic area provided annual membership passes (priced at 100 yuan) for the first time. It sold more than 120,000 passes, greatly stimulating the local market and enabling the scenic area to obtain large operating cash flows quickly.



Activities Related to Festivals

## ► Typical case showing operator's active response to the pandemic: Millennium City Park

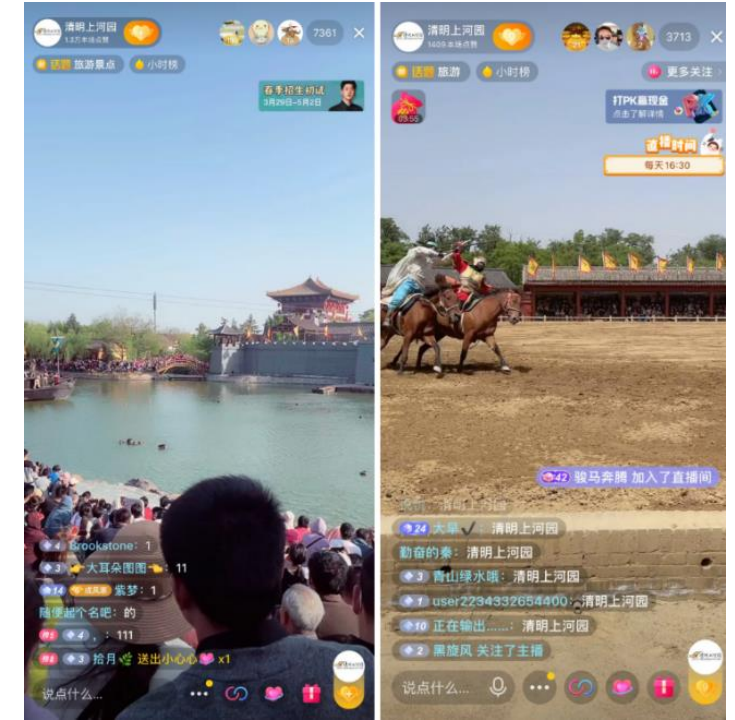
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    - **Promotion channels:** It focused on **new media** promotion channels (e.g., short-form videos) and promoted its Douyin account, Weibo account, and WeChat official account, promoting a live stream of the virtual tours of Millennium City Park. When the scenic area was closed, it created live streams on 14 online platforms more than 20 times. In 2020, its videos about night tours were played 170 million times. It was reported and promoted by China's CCTV more than 20 times. According to the National 5A Scenic Area New Media Communication Power Index Report in September 2021, Millennium City Park ranked top 6 among 5A scenic areas.



Live Streams

## ► Typical case showing operator's active response to the pandemic: Millennium City Park

Millennium City Park achieved the full operation recovery to the greatest extent. Its total operating revenue was 301 million yuan in 2020. It was one of the few scenic spots in China to achieve profitability. Although it was affected by the floods and the pandemic, the scenic area could earn total operating revenue of 350 million yuan in 2021 (data as of October 31). Its activities associated with festivals and new media marketing were highlights. Therefore, Millennium City Park can be considered a typical case of the tourism enterprise successfully coping with the pandemic. It can be a model for us to reconceptualize the vulnerability and resilience of tourism enterprises. Therefore, it is necessary for us to learn about the universality and specificity of its strategies to find out replicable modes.



Live Streams

# Resilience of the Tourism Industry in Kaifeng | Summary

1

Kaifeng's tourism industry had great resilience. It delivered a good performance in crisis response and recovery.

2

In 7.20 Henan Floods, the direct impact of the floods on Kaifeng was limited; however, the main tourist source regions of Kaifeng were significantly affected.

3

The tourism industry gradually achieved recovery and made significant progress in the normalized pandemic prevention and control; however, tourism industry's recovery was hampered several times.

4

Millennium City Park can be considered a typical case of the tourism enterprise actively and successfully coping with the pandemic. It can be a model for us to reconceptualize the vulnerability and resilience of tourism enterprises. Its strategies are replicable to deal with the pandemic.

## ► Introduction to Millennium City Park

Millennium City Park is a large-scale historical and cultural theme park of the Song Dynasty in accordance with “The Qingming Festival by the Riverside” done by Zhang Zeduan.

- Development guideline: exhibiting scenes in the famous history painting and developing a national high-quality scenic area
- Honors: China Tourism Well-Known Brand, National Cultural Industries Demonstration Base, National 5A Tourist Attraction, China Top 10 Cultural Tourism Attractions

## ► Key to the success of Millennium City Park

- Historic opportunities: built in the era of China's great tourism development
- Tourist source regions: located in the densely populated Central Plains region
- Government promotion: provincial and municipal governments' support of the development of the tourism industry
- Cost control: effective measures to reduce costs
- Development mode: the integration of culture and tourism



## ► Initial stage: growing with China's tourism

- The project of Millennium City Park was started in 1992, and Millennium City Park was opened on October 28, 1998, becoming the first joint-stock and commercially operated tourism enterprise in Kaifeng that attracted capital from other places.
- In the context of Kaifeng's strategy to promote a "greater and stronger cultural tourism industry", the project of Millennium City Park (Phase II) was started and completed in September 2005. In September 2005, it was opened for tourists. The completion of the second phase of the project made Millennium City Park have 600Mu total floor space, building a solid foundation for the development of Millennium City Park.
- The development of Millennium City Park reflected the development of China's tourism. The first Golden Week in China enabled China's tourism to develop quickly and dramatically and brought a unique historic opportunity for the development of Millennium City Park.
- At the initial stage of Millennium City Park, China's tourism was in the early stage of development. In this sense, tourists' needs were relatively basic. Therefore, Millennium City Park focused on the construction of landscapes and the presentation of landscapes in the style of the Song Dynasty.

## ► Development stage: high-quality cultural tourism development

- In April 2008, the live-action large-scale water show “Dasong - Dongjing Meng Hua” created by Mei Shuaiyuan and directed by Zhang Rensheng was launched.
- “Dasong - Dongjing Meng Hua” meant that Millennium City Park entered into a phase of rapid growth. It would turn to cultural experience tours instead of tours of static sightseeing of the garden landscape and facilitate the development of night tourism. In the next five years, the number of visitors to Millennium City Park had reached 2 million, and the show had led to a huge increase in demand for accommodation both inside and outside the scenic area.
- Millennium City Park was the first scenic spot in Henan Province to promote tourism performing arts. It was continuously exploring the design of the performing arts activities and the visitor market. Therefore, the development process of “Dasong - Dongjing Meng Hua” was relatively lengthy from 2008 to 2013.



## ► Maturity stage: continuous innovation and dramatic progress

- Since 2013, the revenue of “Dasong – Dongjing Meng Hua” has become steady and has been an important tourism highlight and one of the sources of profits. Since then, Millennium City Park has explored a development path with its characteristics.
- Since 2017, the scenic area has started to develop night tour projects, extending the business hours from the original eight hours to fifteen hours. Through the development of night tour products, Millennium City Park has been successfully transformed from a traditional daytime sightseeing scenic spot to a comprehensive leisure and holiday scenic spot.
- After more than a decade of development, Millennium City Park continued to maintain its leading position in Kaifeng's tourism industry by increasing investment and fostering innovation. Therefore, in 2018, based on the project of Millennium City Park (Phase I & II), the scenic area began to plan and invest in the construction of the third phase of the project.



## ► Direct influence: an important driving factor of Kaifeng's economic development

### ■ Direct influence on GDP

The total tourism revenue of Millennium City Park reached 480 million yuan, accounting for 0.20% and 0.67% of Kaifeng's GDP and total tourism revenue, respectively.

### ■ Providing development opportunities for related industries

It promoted the development of transportation, accommodation and catering industries in Kaifeng and provided a large number of orders for the clothing and toy industries.

### ■ Exploiting tourism consumption potential

After the development of the night tour project, Millennium City Park fulfilled Kaifeng's night tourism consumption potential. Through promoting cultural tourism, it stimulated tourists' consumption of the traditional and high-quality culture.

## ► Indirect influence: a large number of jobs

### ■ Directly providing jobs

The tourism industry is labor-intensive. Millennium City Park provided a number of jobs to Kaifeng during its operation, including core employees responsible for the operation and management of the scenic area, actors for various performing arts activities, as well as service personnel and merchants maintaining the regular operation of the scenic area.

### ■ Indirectly providing jobs

Millennium City Park created a large number of jobs by driving the development of related industries.

## ► Substantial fiscal revenue

- In 2019, the annual operating income of Millennium City Park reached 365 million yuan, with a net profit of 133 million yuan. It paid nearly 60 million yuan in tax.
- The various related industries driven by the development of Millennium City Park made the government's tax revenue increase.

## ► Driving force of the development of the tourism industry

- As a long-running scenic spot in Kaifeng, Millennium City Park has become a well-known cultural tourism highlight of Kaifeng, which has been important for the revival of Kaifeng culture and the development of Kaifeng's cultural tourism industry.

## ► The mode of “performance+” became an important factor of attracting tourists in other attractions.

- The operation mode of Millennium City Park with tourism performing arts as the core has been a great success, leading other scenic spots in Kaifeng to focus on the development path of tourism performing arts.



## ► Location analysis of Millennium City Park

### Location advantages of Millennium City Park from multiple perspectives:

- Kaifeng, where Millennium City Park is located, is conveniently located in the core area of China.
- Kaifeng is located in a densely populated plain area with many economically strong counties and a large surrounding market.
- Millennium City Park is located downtown, allowing the scenic area to benefit from the city's excellent urban infrastructure.

## ► Surrounding business forms of Millennium City Park

- Projects related to culture, business, and tourism: Qishengjiao Commercial Street, Bianliang Little Song City, Shanghe Town Snack Street, and Dongjing Meng Hua Half-Acre Garden
- The accommodation industry, represented by themed boutique hotels and special homestays, was also developing rapidly around Millennium City Park

## ► Positive influence of Millennium City Park on surrounding business forms

- The rising popularity of Millennium City Park attracted a large number of tourists and made it a major consumption area. Therefore, the positive influence of Millennium City Park on surrounding business forms was embodied in the amenities for tourists.
- The positive influence of Millennium City Park on surrounding business forms was mainly due to the development of the night tourism economy in recent years.

## ► A reflection of traditional Chinese culture

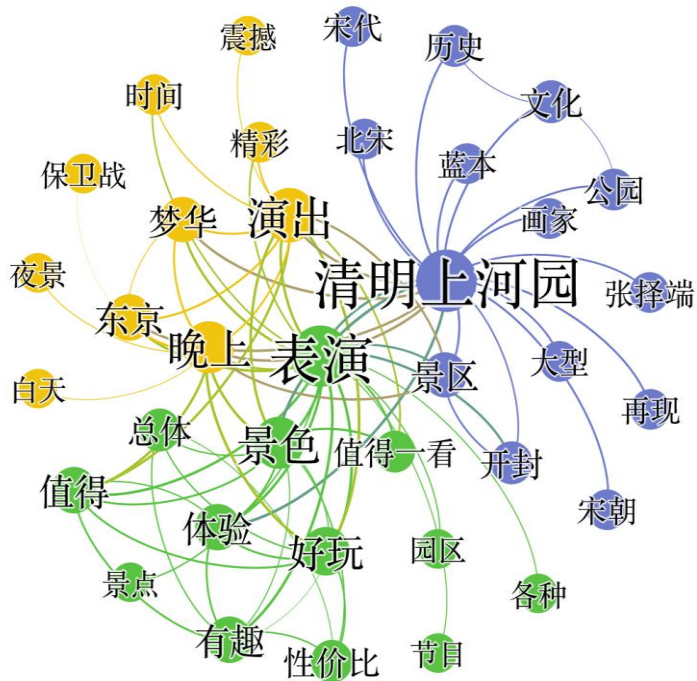
Culture is the foundation of Millennium City Park. The culture of the Song Dynasty is an important part of Millennium City Park. Based on the sense of responsibility and mission for the inheritance and innovation of China's excellent culture, Millennium City Park meets the different needs of different tourists for the cultural tourism experience through a series of cultural experience programs, making the scenic area an important reflection of China's excellent traditional culture and the Song culture in Kaifeng.

- ❑ introducing intangible cultural heritage exhibition programs
- ❑ setting up a folk museum
- ❑ launching events and activities based on the theme of “traditional festivals”
- ❑ conducting traditional culture study activities for primary and secondary school students



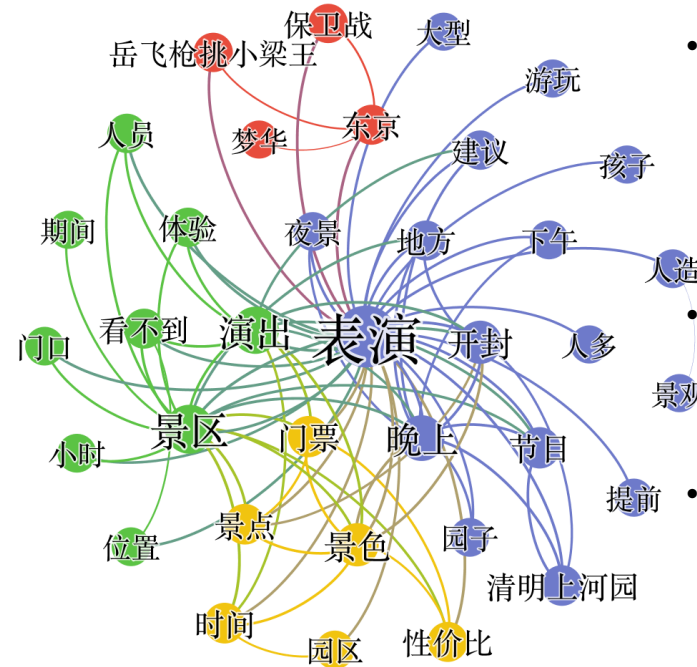


## Positive Destination Image



- Millennium City Park was an important attraction in Kaifeng and reflected the history and culture of the Song Dynasty.
- The overall perceived price-performance ratio of tourists was relatively high. Performances of the scenic area were various and impressive.
- The show “Guarding Dongjing” in the daytime and the show “Dongjing Meng Hua” were particularly fascinating.

## Negative Destination Image



- There were too many people while watching performances.
- Some tourists failed to watch performances due to the chosen seats. The overall experience was relatively terrible.
- The ticket price paid did not match the quality of the scenery in the attraction.
- Most negative comments were related to “Dongjing Meng Hua”, “Guarding Dongjing”, and “Yue Fei Pointing His Spear at the Xiao Liang King”.

# Influence of Millennium City Park on Kaifeng's Economy | Summary

1

## Multiplier effect:

In terms of Kaifeng's economy, Millennium City Park not only promoted the tourism industry but also promoted the overall economic development by influencing related industries, having a multiplier effect on Kaifeng's economic operation as a crucial factor.

2

## Diffusion effect:

The expansion of the tourism economy centered on Millennium City Park attracted many visitors, stimulating the development of surrounding business forms and attracting an increasing number of consumers.

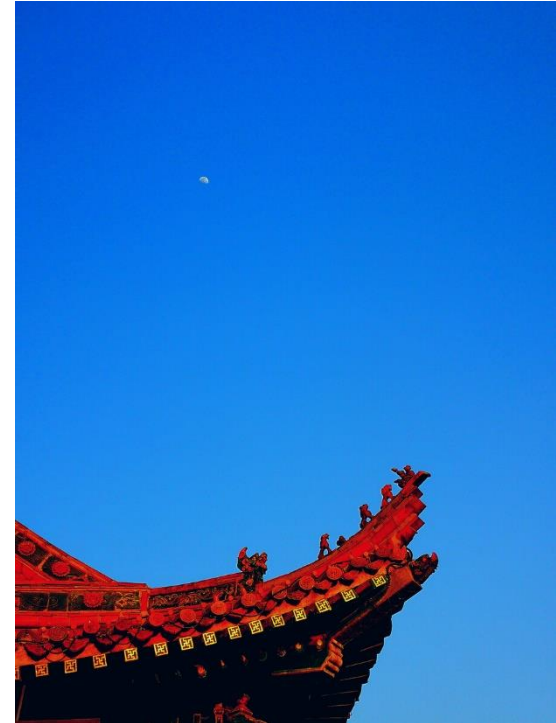
3

## Spillover effect:

When Millennium City Park was becoming more influential, it also had an influence on Kaifeng's destination image.

# Conclusion

- In terms of **sustainable tourism development**, Kaifeng was relatively successful in cultural heritage protection and made progress. The number of tourists received in most attractions did not exceed the capacity of the tourism environment. The overall psychosocial capacity was large. Multiple measures were taken for the quality enhancement of tourist destinations, achieving good results.
- In terms of **tourism and community**, residents reduced their time spent on leisure activities and expressed some concern about the impact of the pandemic on tourism. However, in general, residents still had a positive attitude towards the future tourism development in Kaifeng. Their overall satisfaction with the city's tourism development was improved compared to last year.
- As for **tourists' perceptions and satisfaction**, tourists were predominantly from Henan Province. Most tourists came to Kaifeng to experience history and culture and participate in leisure activities. They mainly obtained tourist information from their friends and relatives as well as the Internet. Their length of stay was less than two days. Their consuming capacity was low-medium level. In terms of the overall perception, Kaifeng's cultural relics and monuments impressed tourists. The most popular attractions were Millennium City Park and Kaifeng House. Tourists were generally satisfied.



# Conclusion

- In terms of **tourism and economy**, the number of tourists and revenue of Kaifeng dropped sharply due to the pandemic in 2020; however, it was still an important driving factor of Kaifeng's economy. Tourism provided more employment opportunities, accelerated urban renewal, and promoted Kaifeng culture.
- As for **the resilience of the tourism industry in Kaifeng**, Kaifeng was affected by the floods and the pandemic from 2020 to 2021; however, Kaifeng's tourism industry showed great resilience. It delivered a good performance in crisis response and recovery. Millennium City Park can be considered a typical case of the tourism enterprise successfully coping with the pandemic. Through effective cost control measures, the improvement of the quality and quantity of performances and products, multiple marketing channels (e.g., new media, annual membership passes), it energized the market and achieved growth. It can be a model for tourism enterprises to improve their crisis response capabilities.
- As for **the influence of Millennium City Park on Kaifeng's economy**, in the past two decades, with the insightful guideline, Millennium City Park has been a center for Kaifeng's economic development, having a multiplier effect, diffusion effect, and spillover effect on Kaifeng's economy.

