

The Current Situation, Problems and Countermeasures of Barrier-Free Tourism for the Disabled in China

Tianxu Jiang*, Kexin Chen, Wenli Han, Meijia Luo, Lingling Xie, Durong Wang

School of Hospitality and Business Management, Sichuan Tourism University, #459, Hongling Road, Longquanyi District, Chengdu, 610100, China

***Corresponding Author:** Tianxu Jiang, School of Hospitality and Business Management, Sichuan Tourism University, #459, Hongling Road, Longquanyi District, Chengdu, 610100, China

Abstract: This paper addresses the practical contradiction between the robust tourism demand of the disabled population and the underdeveloped state of barrier-free tourism. Taking Sichuan province in China as an example, through literature research, market research and case analysis, systematically sorts out the core problems of Sichuan's barrier-free tourism in terms of facility construction, policy implementation and service supply, and clarifies the core demands of disabled tourists for safety guarantee, facility adaptation and service quality. Based on this, we construct a trinity solution of "facility upgrading + policy implementation + service innovation", which includes practical measures such as differentiated transformation of barrier-free facilities in scenic spots, refinement of policy implementation standards, establishment of an inter-departmental supervision mechanism, and development of disability-adapted tourism routes. Offering effective channels to enhancing the tourism rights and interests of the disabled, providing practical guidance for social welfare-oriented innovation and entrepreneurship projects.

Keywords: Barrier-free tourism; Tourism for the disabled in China; Current situation, Problems and countermeasures

1. INTRODUCTION

As an important carrier of the yearning for a better life, tourism is a key criterion for measuring social equity and civilization. Boasting the magical landscapes of Jiuzhaigou, the millennial cultural heritage of Dujiangyan, and the ancient Shu mysteries of Sanxingdui, Sichuan province in China is endowed with unique and advantageous cultural and tourism resources, which should be open to every group. However, for the disabled population, the allure of this fertile land often remains inaccessible due to numerous barriers. Poorly designed barrier-free facilities in tourist attractions, policy implementation bottlenecks, a lack of tailored tourism routes, absence of professional services, and asymmetric tourism information collectively contribute to their practical dilemma of "being unable to travel, experiencing an unsmooth journey, and not enjoying the tour".

Existing studies mostly focus on the practice of barrier-free tourism in economically developed regions, and there is a clear lack of attention to provinces with vast territories and unbalanced urban-rural and regional development such as Sichuan (Leiras and Caamaño-Franco, 2024; Altinay et al. 2020). In addition, there are obvious deficiencies in quantitative analysis and in-depth demand exploration (Singh et al., 2023; Darcy et al., 2020). Based on this, this study conduct a combination of questionnaire survey and in-depth interview, systematically analyzes the core problems of tourism for the disabled in Sichuan, accurately captures the differentiated demands of groups with different types of disabilities and different travel forms. It aims to propose a targeted and feasible optimization plan, foster the coordinated development of barrier-free tourism and age-friendly tourism, ensure that individuals with disabilities can equally benefit from the cultural and tourism advancements in Sichuan, and promote the integrated development of culture and tourism in China.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Research in this field has long been focused on the practical challenges of barrier-free tourism for individuals with disabilities and the exploration of regional practices, with its developmental context demonstrating a deepening trajectory from "rights awareness" to "practical implementation". Early studies carried out systematic discussions on the development potential of the disabled tourism market and the basic construction standards of barrier-free facilities. They not only elucidated the core value

of safeguarding the tourism rights and interests of individuals with disabilities from the perspective of social equity but also initially established a fundamental analytical framework of "market demand-facility supply" (Zajadacz, 2015; Blichfeldt and Nicolaisen, 2011). Subsequently, Altinay et al. (2020) integrated the distribution characteristics of local cultural and tourism resources to analyze the hierarchical differences in demand for barrier-free tourism at the local level (e.g., the reliance of physically disabled individuals on transportation facilities and the need for guide services among visually impaired individuals), and highlighted the implementation dilemma of "excessive top-level design and insufficient grassroots implementation rules" in policy promotion. Ahmed and Åkesson (2022) sorted out the problem of the lack of service chain in urban barrier-free tourism through a combination of questionnaires and interviews. These studies concentrated on economically developed regional central cities, paying minimal attention to remote ethnic regions.

Researchers places greater emphasis on the inclusive development logic of barrier-free tourism and the coordination of policy systems, adopting a more global and refined research perspective. Reindrawati et al. (2022) took the disabled tourism project in Bali, Indonesia as a case, and verified the positive effect of "barrier-free transformation of public transport + localized service adaptation" on improving tourism satisfaction through long-term tracking of tourist experience data. Gillovic and McIntosh (2020) focused on the utilization of post-event tourism resources in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and analyzed the feasibility and long-term operation mechanism of transforming supporting facilities of large-scale events into tourism scenarios for the disabled. Frechtling (2025) further integrated multi-country cases and extracted a three-dimensional constraint analysis framework of "facility hardware - service software - policy guarantee", providing a quantifiable evaluation tool for the barrier-free construction of tourist destinations. Foreign experiences are mostly based on their mature social welfare systems and cultural environments, which have obvious adaptation gaps with China's actual conditions such as regional cultural differences, grass-roots governance models and the social participation of the disabled.

Existing literature provides a theoretical foundation and practical reference for the research; however, there remain three deficiencies. First, the research methodologies are relatively monolithic. Mostly based on qualitative description, and quantitative analysis (such as data comparison of demand differences among different types of disabilities) is insufficient. Although foreign quantitative research is abundant, it has poor adaptability to China's disabled tourism scenarios. Second, the research scope is limited. In a vast province such as Sichuan in China, the tourism needs of individuals with disabilities in remote areas are not adequately addressed, thereby complicating the reflection of issues related to uneven regional development. Third, the research depth needs to be improved. Existing research predominantly focuses on superficial issues, such as "inadequate facilities" and "deficient services," with limited exploration of in-depth problems, including "differentiated demands among groups of varying ages and disability types" and "the correlation mechanism between social support and tourism willingness." These deficiencies provide an innovative space for this research and also highlight the necessity and value of carrying out a study on barrier-free tourism for the disabled in Sichuan province.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study used the online platform "Questionnaire Star" to distribute questionnaires to the disabled and their family members in Sichuan Province, and a total of 127 valid questionnaires were recovered, covering multiple disability types such as physical, visual and hearing disabilities, focusing on travel frequency, hindering factors and service demands. The questionnaire was combined with open-ended questions to both quantify the pain points and collect detailed suggestions. Then, in accordance with the "maximum difference" principle, 5 representative disabled persons were selected from the samples for semi-structured in-depth interviews, which were carried out around the "most recent tourism experience in Sichuan" to review events, with a focus on key nodes such as facility use, policy fulfillment and emotional experience. With the consent of the interviewees throughout the process, the thematic analysis method was subsequently adopted to cross-verify the quantitative data and qualitative materials, ensuring that the countermeasures and suggestions precisely align with the actual needs. The questionnaire as shown in table 1.

Table 1. *Questionnaire of barrier-free tourism*

Perceived identity dimension	Questions
Tourism Social Support	My family will provide practical help for my travel in Sichuan.
	My family will provide emotional support for my travel in Sichuan.

Tourism Hindering Factors	My friends will provide practical help for my travel in Sichuan.
	I can rely on my friends when I encounter difficulties during travel in Sichuan.
	People's attitude towards me is friendly and inclusive when traveling in Sichuan.
	Dare not participate in tourism in Sichuan due to insufficient personal mobility
	Lack of tourism information suitable for the disabled in Sichuan
	Inconvenient transportation at tourist destinations in Sichuan
	Imperfect barrier-free facilities in scenic spots affecting tourism choices in Sichuan
Worry about causing trouble to others when traveling in Sichuan	
Dissatisfaction with past tourism experience in Sichuan	

4. RESULTS

After sorting out, a total of 127 valid questionnaires were collected in this survey. The research samples mainly came from groups with different types of disabilities such as hearing, visual and physical disabilities, among which hearing disability accounted for the highest proportion (as shown in Figure 1). This is highly consistent with the theme of this survey focusing on "the adaptive tourism needs of the disabled group", and also provides sufficient samples for the targeted analysis of the research.

Through the analysis of the questionnaire data, this study identified that the hearing-impaired group primarily encounters five challenges in tourism travel: outdated construction and maintenance of tourism facilities, insufficient policy implementation, irrational tourism route planning, inadequate social support systems, significant psychological barriers, and a lack of professionalism in tourism services.

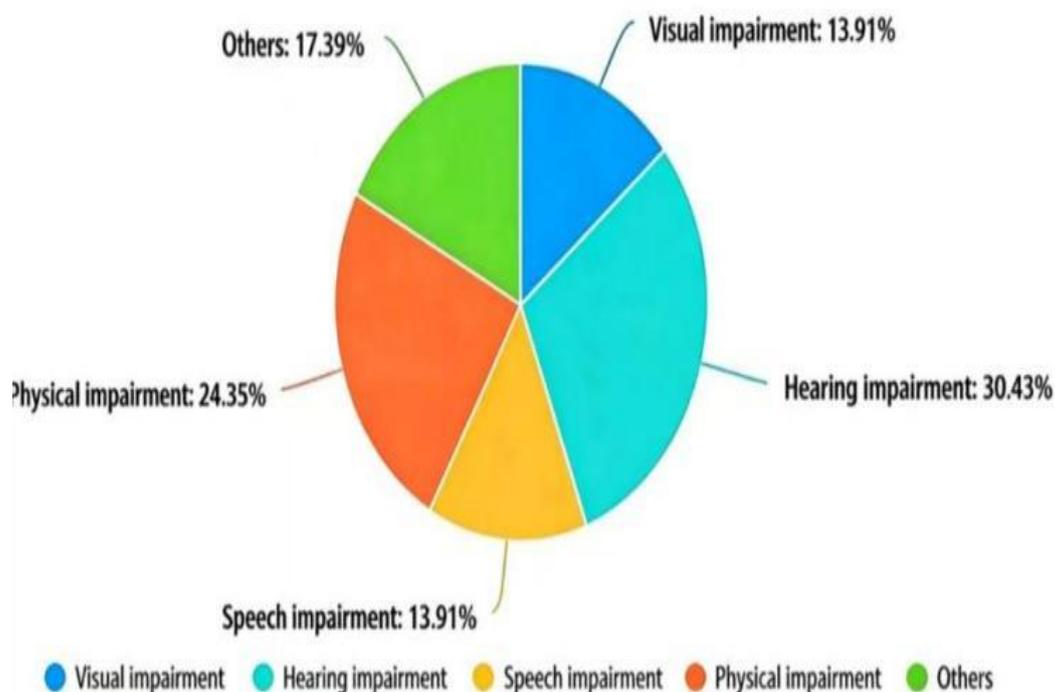


Figure 1. Distribution of disability types

4.1. Lagging Construction and Maintenance of Tourism Facilities

The survey asked: "Do the accessibility facilities in tourist attractions significantly influence your decision to visit Sichuan?" As shown in Figure 2, 28.7% of respondents marked "highly important," 26.96% considered it "moderately important," and 15.65% deemed it "very important." Collectively, accessibility is prioritized by over 70% of individuals with disabilities when selecting travel destinations. They believe the adequacy of facilities directly determines whether they can travel with confidence and truly enjoy their trips.

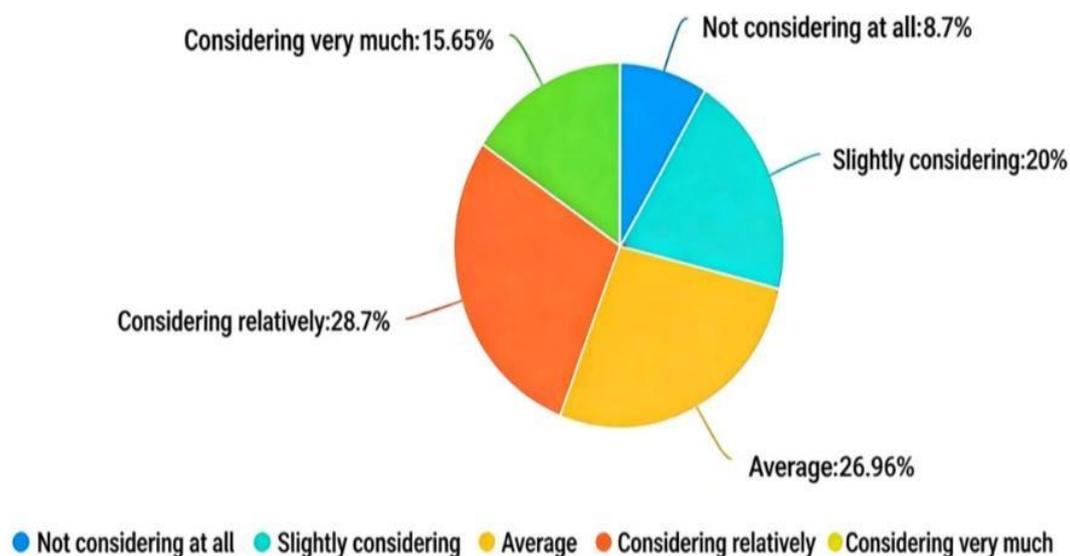


Figure 2. *Impact of accessibility improvements on persons with disabilities*

The survey asked: "What factors hinder your travel experience in Sichuan?" As shown in Figure 3, "inadequate accessibility facilities at tourist sites" received the highest average score of 3.79, followed by "inconvenient accessible transportation in Sichuan" (3.59) and "lack of accessible tourism information" (3.55). In contrast, concerns like "limited mobility making travel unattractive" (3.52), "worrying about inconveniencing others" (3.34), and "dissatisfied past experiences" (2.8) were rated lower. Most respondents identified inadequate infrastructure as the primary deterrent to visiting Sichuan.

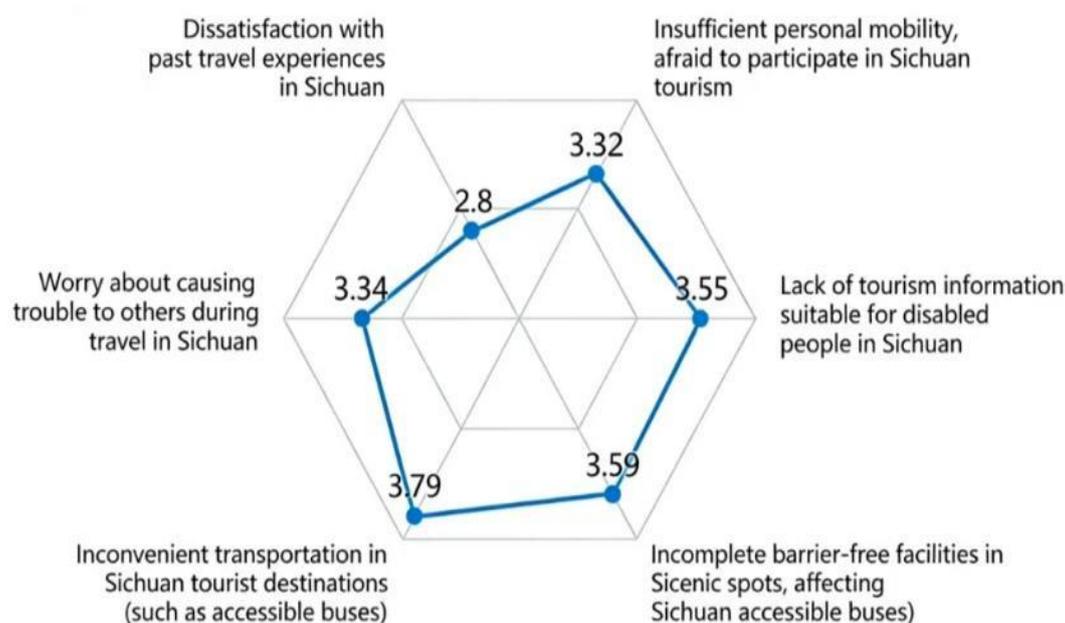


Figure 3. *Factors of tourism barriers*

This underscores substantial deficiencies in the planning and execution of essential accessibility infrastructure throughout Sichuan's tourist attractions. Many older sites lack basic facilities, while newly developed ones often feature poorly designed or impractical accessibility systems. Furthermore, maintenance of existing facilities is severely neglected. Numerous structures have deteriorated or been misused due to prolonged neglect, including damaged wheelchair ramps, obstructed tactile paving, and out-of-service accessible elevators. These issues prevent effective mobility support for people with disabilities, directly undermining their travel experiences and participation in tourism activities.

4.2. Inadequate Policy Implementation

In Sichuan, there exists a notable disparity between the "top-level design" and "grass-roots implementation" of tourism policies for the disabled, resulting in the policy efficiency not being fully translated into tourism welfare for this demographic. Although the national and provincial levels have issued a number of supportive policies (such as the Regulations on the Construction of Barrier-free Environment in Sichuan Province and the Implementation Opinions on Promoting the Development of the Cause of the Disabled), which clearly require scenic spots to implement ticket reduction and exemption for the disabled and public transport to provide barrier-free services, the prominent problem of "blockages in implementation" exists in the actual execution.

At the policy implementation stage, two primary issues arise: "vague standards" and "implementation deviations". Regarding the ticket reduction and exemption policy, certain scenic spots have failed to specify the "identification criteria for the disabled", leading to instances where tourists with disabled certificates from other regions or electronic disabled certificates are "denied recognition". Some scenic spots only reduce or exempt the first entrance ticket, and the secondary consumption projects such as internal sightseeing cars and cableways do not enjoy preferential treatment, which is inconsistent with the requirement of "whole-chain assistance". In terms of barrier-free public transport services, the coverage rate of barrier-free public transport is less than 30%, and the wheelchair fixing devices of some vehicles are not repaired after being damaged. Scenic spot through trains and tourism special lines generally are not equipped with barrier-free boarding equipment, and the disabled need to rely on the assistance of family members or staff to take the bus, resulting in a serious lack of service convenience.

At the policy supervision and supporting level, the "lack of assessment" and "insufficient supply" coexist. On one hand, there exists a gap in the policy implementation supervision mechanism; currently, no specific department is tasked with inspecting the implementation of barrier-free services by scenic spots and transportation enterprises, and there are no restrictive measures such as "public criticism, rectification within a specified timeframe, and credit penalties" for entities that fail to comply with regulations, resulting in policies remaining "merely on paper". On the other hand, the supply of special supportive policies is insufficient. For example, special tourism subsidies for the disabled (such as transportation subsidies and reduction or exemption of accompanying personnel's accompanying expenses) have not been implemented. The financial support funds allocated for barrier-free tourism projects, such as the development of exclusive tourism routes for individuals with disabilities, are currently being piloted solely in cities like Chengdu and Mianyang, rather than being implemented province-wide. Furthermore, the scale of these funds is limited, with the maximum subsidy for a single project falling below 100,000 yuan, thereby struggling to meet the actual demand.

4.3. Unreasonable Tourism Route Planning

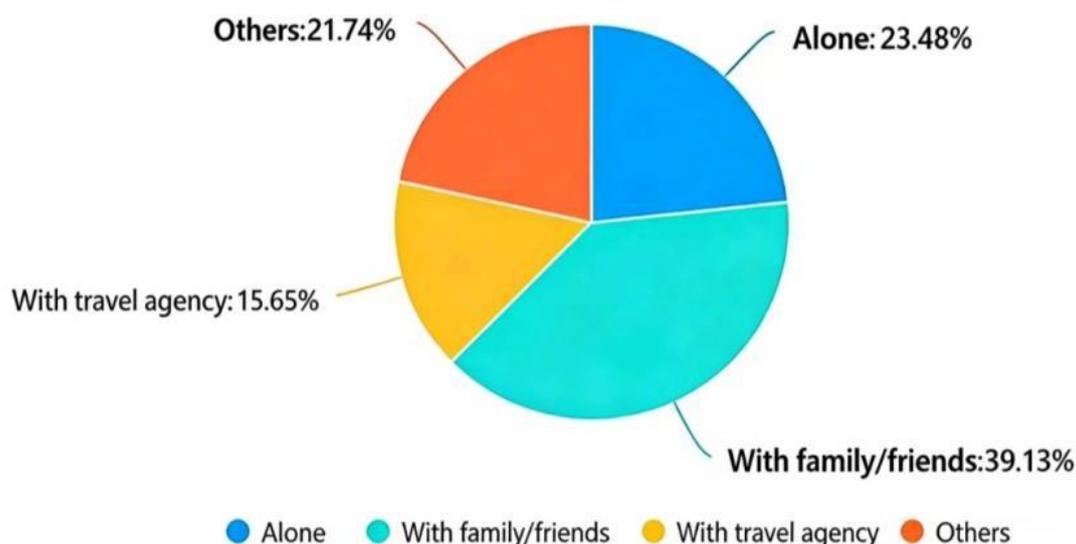


Figure 4. Common forms of travel for persons with disabilities in Sichuan

The current design of tourism routes in Sichuan mainly focuses on the needs of able-bodied people, and lacks personalized and barrier-free planning for the disabled group. As shown in Figure 4, 39.13% of the disabled choose to travel with family and friends, and 23.48% choose to travel alone. Such independently traveling disabled people often face problems such as "poor traffic connection between scenic spots" and "no barrier-free guidance for tourist routes" in route selection. As depicted in Figure 4, the survey revealed that the average score for the hindrance posed by inconvenient transportation, specifically barrier-free public transport, at tourist destinations in Sichuan reached 3.59, underscoring the deficiency in barrier-free accessibility within the transportation segment of tourism routes.

At the same time, most tourism routes do not consider the differentiated needs of people with different types of disabilities. For example, the supply of voice guide routes for the visually impaired and low-intensity tourist routes for the physically impaired is scarce. The travel rhythm and scenic spot layout of the routes are also not adapted to the physical conditions of the disabled, resulting in the disabled being difficult to find tourism routes that meet their own needs.

4.4. Imperfect Social Support System and Significant Psychological Barriers

As shown in Figure 5, the overall social support perceived by the respondents when traveling in Sichuan is at a medium to low level with an average score of 3.48. Among them, "My family will provide emotional support for my travel in Sichuan" has the highest score of 3.63, while "My family will provide practical help for my travel in Sichuan" has the lowest score of only 3.0. At the same time, "I can rely on my friends when I encounter difficulties during travel in Sichuan" also has a low score of 3.2. This highlights a conspicuous issue with the current social support system: despite having a certain foundation for emotional support, the substantive assistance provided by families is severely lacking, and the reliability and practical support from friends are also relatively constrained. This unbalanced support structure, especially the lack of practical assistance resources, aggravates the sense of isolation and helplessness of disabled tourists when facing difficulties, which is likely to lead to significant psychological barriers, such as reduced sense of security and increased anxiety, further affecting their tourism experience and participation confidence.

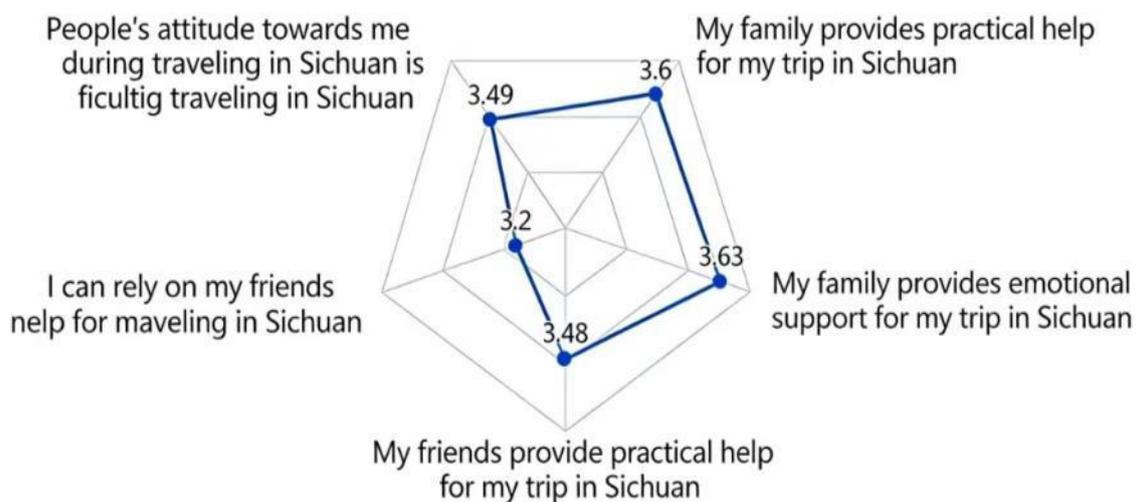


Figure 5. Tourism social support

4.5. Lack of Professionalism in Tourism Services

The professional service capacity within Sichuan's tourism industry for individuals with disabilities is notably inadequate, constituting a significant impediment to the advancement of accessible tourism. Primarily, there is a deficiency in professional training for tourism practitioners. Staff at scenic spots, tour guides, and hotel service personnel generally lack knowledge and skills in barrier-free services, including the inability to operate accessible equipment, comprehend communication methods for individuals with disabilities, and offer tailored travel assistance. Secondly, the level of personalization

in tourism services is low, with an inability to provide customized services based on disability types (e.g., visual, hearing, and physical disabilities), such as the absence of sign language tour guides, braille brochures, and exclusive service processes for wheelchair rentals. Furthermore, the emergency service system for accessible tourism is inadequate, lacking medical aid stations for sudden physical conditions of individuals with disabilities and barrier-free evacuation routes in scenic spots. Additionally, no specialized complaint and feedback channels for accessible tourism services have been established, making it challenging for individuals with disabilities to obtain timely and effective solutions when encountering issues during travel, thereby significantly diminishing the service experience.

5. SUGGESTIONS

5.1. Simultaneous Upgrading of Facilities and Improvement of Services

Given the practical challenges of delayed construction and maintenance of barrier-free tourism facilities for individuals with disabilities in Sichuan's scenic spots, it is imperative to establish an operable optimization system based on the actual operation of scenic spots, financial capacity, and implementation feasibility. This system should encompass three dimensions: facility construction, maintenance management, and resource integration, aiming to address the shortcomings in facility supply through a gradual approach.

In terms of facility construction, a core transformation list for barrier-free passages, toilets and other facilities should be formulated for old scenic spots, and the cultural and tourism departments and disabled persons' federations should provide subsidies of 30%-50% of the transformation costs. For newly built scenic spots, barrier-free design should be included in the pre-approval link, implemented after evaluation by experts from the disabled persons' federations, and transformed in a differentiated manner according to the characteristics of natural landscape, ancient cultural town and urban leisure scenic spots to avoid resource waste. In terms of maintenance management, the main responsibility of scenic spots should be clarified, requiring the establishment of a maintenance special team and the establishment of an account of "daily inspection, weekly summary and monthly maintenance", and the intact rate of facilities should be included in the scenic spot rating assessment. A feedback QR code should be set up to realize 24-hour response to tourists' demands. Small and medium-sized scenic spots can cooperate with public welfare organizations, maintenance enterprises or outsource property management to solve the management and protection problems caused by insufficient human resources and funds. In terms of resource integration, in addition to government subsidies, cultural and tourism enterprises should be guided to set up a development fund for barrier-free tourism, and tax and publicity incentives should be given to enterprises engaged in public welfare transformation. The disabled persons' federations and cultural and tourism departments should set up expert groups to provide free technical guidance, carry out professional training for scenic spot personnel, and establish a closed loop of experience feedback from disabled tourists to ensure that facility supply matches actual needs.

This strategy, through phased promotion, differentiated implementation and social cooperation, can not only make up for the short board of facilities in the short term, but also realize long-term management and protection relying on system and resource integration, avoid the risk of large-scale radical transformation, and effectively improve the tourism experience and participation willingness of the disabled.

5.2. Effective Policy Implementation

To solve the core problems of "vague standards, implementation deviations, lack of supervision and insufficient support" in Sichuan's tourism policies for the disabled, it is necessary to make precise efforts in four aspects: standardizing implementation, improving supporting measures, strengthening supervision and increasing support to ensure the effective implementation of policies. In unifying the implementation standards, it is clear that electronic disabled certificates and disabled certificates from other places have the same entry validity, putting an end to the phenomenon of "refusing to recognize" in scenic spots. The rules for free tickets for accompanying personnel should be refined according to disability levels: severely disabled persons of Grade I and Grade II can bring 1-2 accompanying personnel for free admission, and disabled persons of Grade III and Grade IV can bring 1 accompanying person for free admission. At the same time, scenic spots are required to give a discount of not less than 30% for secondary consumption projects such as sightseeing cars and cableways, avoiding the implementation deviation of only reducing or exempting the first entrance ticket, and truly implementing the requirement of "whole-chain assistance".

In terms of improving supporting services, in view of the problems such as the coverage rate of barrier-free public transport being less than 30% and the damage of wheelchair fixing devices, regular maintenance and overhaul of Barrier-free public transportation should be implemented, and tourism special line buses should be equipped with barrier-free pedals to facilitate independent boarding for individuals with disabilities. Level-5A scenic spots are mandated to provide electric wheelchair rental services, newly constructed scenic spots must incorporate barrier-free facilities in their planning and design, and existing scenic spots should progressively upgrade core facilities, including barrier-free pathways and restrooms, to enhance travel convenience. In terms of strengthening supervision and assessment, a joint supervision mechanism of "cultural and tourism departments + disabled persons' federations" should be established to conduct unannounced inspections and spot checks every quarter, focusing on verifying the implementation of policies and the maintenance of facilities. The implementation effectiveness is directly tied to the scenic spot rating and assessment, with graduated penalties such as "yellow card warning, rectification within a specified timeframe, and demotion" imposed on non-compliant scenic spots. Online and offline reporting channels, including the "12301" cultural and tourism hotline and scenic spot complaint QR codes, should be established to ensure that tourist-reported issues are addressed within seven working days, creating a closed-loop system of "administrative supervision + social supervision".

In terms of enhancing support, the special barrier-free tourism subsidy should be extended to the entire province, with the subsidy quota for individual projects increased to 200,000 yuan, covering aspects such as the development of barrier-free routes and subsidies for accompanying expenses. Scenic spots are mandated to allocate 2% of their annual operating income towards the maintenance of barrier-free facilities and staff training. Simultaneously, social donations and corporate sponsorships are encouraged to bridge the funding gap. Through a fund guarantee system of "financial leading + social participation", the operational pressure of scenic spots is reduced, and the policy dividends truly reach the disabled group and are effectively transformed into perceivable tourism welfare.

5.3. Optimizing Routes and Supplementing Support

To address the issue of suboptimal tourism route planning for individuals with disabilities in Sichuan, it is essential to optimize routes in alignment with the travel characteristics and actual needs of this demographic. Firstly, for the 39.13% of individuals with disabilities who travel with companions and the 23.48% who travel independently, the transportation department should enhance barrier-free connectivity from high-speed railway stations and bus terminals to scenic spots, introduce special line buses equipped with wheelchair lifting platforms and voice-announced station information between scenic spots, and facilitate seamless transfers between urban public transportation, subways, and scenic spot entrances, thereby implementing barrier-free transformations. Introduce battery cars and cable cars in scenic spots, establish exclusive waiting areas, and provide clear guide signs to address the issue of inadequate traffic connectivity between scenic spots. Secondly, tourism enterprises should cooperate with disabled persons' federations to design exclusive routes for different types: prepare full voice guide content for the visually impaired and lay tactile guide belts on footpaths; plan low-intensity tourist routes for the physically impaired, add low viewing platforms and sufficient barrier-free toilets, and provide rentable auxiliary equipment such as wheelchairs and stair climbers at the same time. In addition, the differentiated needs of different disabled groups should be considered, such as providing subtitle explanations and sign language guide signs for the hearing-impaired. Finally, a long-term guarantee mechanism should be established, the construction of barrier-free routes should be included in the local cultural and tourism assessment, scenic spots should be encouraged to apply for barrier-free tourism demonstration zones to obtain financial support, and the disabled persons' federations and relevant experts should be jointly organized to regularly inspect the maintenance of route facilities and the training of service personnel to ensure that the optimized routes are truly practical and easy to use, enabling the disabled to travel smoothly.

5.4. Restructuring the Social Support System

At present, disabled tourists in Sichuan mainly rely on "family" and "friends" for emotional support, while the score of practical help is extremely low, which reflects the structural defects of the social support system. This not only aggravates their sense of isolation in distress, but also easily leads to psychological barriers. At the family support level: popularize the significance of tourism for the disabled and the importance of family support through community publicity and public welfare lectures,

and encourage families to provide practical help such as funds and travel assistance for the disabled's tourism; cooperate with civil affairs departments to provide tourism subsidies or travel assistance services for needy disabled families.

At the social support level: build a social and mutual assistance platform for the disabled's tourism, set up volunteer service teams to provide accompanying and emergency assistance services for the disabled's tourism; promote enterprises and social organizations to set up assistance funds for the disabled's tourism to supplement practical assistance resources. At the psychological support level: cooperate with psychological institutions to provide pre-tour psychological counseling and in-tour emotional support services for the disabled, alleviate their anxiety and loneliness, and enhance their confidence in tourism participation.

5.5. Improving Service Professionalism

Tourism industry practitioners generally lack knowledge and skills in barrier-free services, rendering them unable to offer tailored travel assistance. This is evident not only in the deficiency of hardware facilities but also in the standardized service process, which does not cater to the individualized requirements of tourists with various disabilities.

Professional Training: Implement barrier-free service skill training for staff at scenic spots, tour guides, and hotel service personnel, encompassing the operation of barrier-free equipment, communication techniques with individuals with disabilities, travel assistance methods tailored to different types of disabilities, and other relevant topics, while establishing an assessment mechanism to ensure the efficacy of the training. **Personalized services:** build a customized service system according to different disability types such as visual, hearing and physical disabilities, such as equipping with sign language tour guides, making braille brochures, optimizing the exclusive process of wheelchair rental, setting up barrier-free tourist routes in scenic spots and assigning exclusive commentators.

Emergency and feedback system: add medical aid points for the disabled in scenic spots and improve barrier-free passages for emergency evacuation; establish a special complaint and feedback channel for the disabled's tourism services, clarify the time limit for problem handling, and ensure that problems are solved in a timely manner.

6. CONCLUSION

This study delineates the current development status and primary challenges of barrier-free tourism for individuals with disabilities of Sichuan in China: the delayed construction and maintenance of facilities pose the most immediate travel impediment; the gap in policy implementation hinders the translation of welfare into tangible experiences; the structural imbalance in social support exacerbates psychological apprehensions; and the deficiency in service professionalism and information accessibility further restricts the tourism space. These problems not only restrict the tourism rights and interests of the disabled group, but also reflect the urgent short boards to be made up in the high-quality development of China's cultural and tourism industry.

Addressing the aforementioned issues necessitates the government to enhance policy guidance and supervisory evaluation, facilitate the transition of barrier-free facilities from mere "construction" to "effective utilization" through standardized norms, diversified support, and regular supervision, ensuring that policy benefits genuinely reach the demand side; it also requires market participants to proactively innovate, develop tourism products tailored to various disabilities with meticulous route planning, professional service provision, and transparent information dissemination; more critically, all societal sectors must unite to reconstruct a holistic support system encompassing family, society, and psychology, fostering inclusion and care as a shared consensus in tourism development.

Barrier-free tourism is not an additional burden, but an important direction for the quality improvement of the cultural and tourism industry, caring for special groups is not an optional embellishment but an inevitable requirement of social civilization. When every ramp is accessible, every policy is thoroughly implemented, and every service is precise and welcoming, the cultural and tourism appeal of China will become more multidimensional and vivid.

REFERENCES

- Ahmed, T., & Åkesson, L. D. S. (2022). The value of experience: Virtual reality as a form of barrier-free tourism. *Altinay, F., Altinay, Z., Altinay, M., & Dagli, G. (2020). Evaluation of the barrier-free tourism and sustainability of the barrier-free society in Cyprus. European journal of sustainable development, 9(4), 137-137.*

- Altinay, F., Altinay, Z., Altinay, M., & Dagli, G. (2020). Evaluation of the barrier-free tourism and sustainability of the barrier-free society in Cyprus. *European journal of sustainable development*, 9(4), 137-137.
- Blichfeldt, B. S., & Nicolaisen, J. (2011). Disabled travel: not easy, but doable. *Current issues in tourism*, 14(1), 79-102.
- Darcy, S., McKercher, B., & Schweinsberg, S. (2020). From tourism and disability to accessible tourism: A perspective article. *Tourism review*, 75(1), 140-144.
- Frechtling, D. C. (2025). Tourism satellite account. In *Encyclopedia of Tourism* (pp. 1060-1063). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland.
- Gillovic, B., & McIntosh, A. (2020). Accessibility and inclusive tourism development: Current state and future agenda. *Sustainability*, 12(22), 9722.
- Leiras, A., & Caamaño-Franco, I. (2024). Search strategies in accessible tourism, barrier-free tourism, disabled tourism and easy access tourism literature. *Tourism Review*, 79(4), 981-999.
- Reindrawati, D. Y., Noviyanti, U. D., & Young, T. (2022). Tourism experiences of people with disabilities: Voices from Indonesia. *Sustainability*, 14(20), 13310.
- Singh, R., Sibi, P. S., Yost, E., & Mann, D. S. (2023). Tourism and disability: A bibliometric review. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 48(5), 749-765.
- Zajadacz, A. (2015). Evolution of models of disability as a basis for further policy changes in accessible tourism. *Journal of Tourism Futures*, 1(3), 189-202.

COMPLIANCE WITH ETHICAL STANDARDS

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

FUNDING

This study was funded by college student innovation and entrepreneurship training program project of Sichuan tourism university (No. S202511552078).

AUTHORS' BIOGRAPHY



Dr. Tianxu Jiang, is a Lecturer at Sichuan Tourism University in Chengdu, China, with over one decade of academic and teaching experience. His main research areas are corporate strategic management and technological innovation management. Beyond academia, he also collaborates with grassroots communities and businesses to promote the development of industry education integration projects.

Citation: *Tianxu Jiang. "The Transformative Potential of Artificial Intelligence in Interdisciplinary Studies Curriculum and Programs" International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education (IJHSSE), vol 13, no. 3, 2026, pp. 48-57. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.20431/2349-0381.1303005>.*

Copyright: © 2026 Author. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.