

# A Case Study on Local Cultural Sensibility and Healing Tourism in Korea

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study was to develop tourism resources that can create promising economic benefits for the future society and provide basic data for creative regional development by looking at examples of successful development of the tourism industry that fits the Korean local cultural sensibility image. For this purpose, it explores the meaning of local cultural sensibility, classifies the local cultural resources into the material, human, and sociocultural resources, and focuses on countries that show global success stories about the value of cultural resources that each resource has. In addition, the study investigates the healing tourism policies each local government has implemented for the local cultural sensibility differentiated by region focusing on Busan, Gangwon-do, and Jeju-do of Korea. As a result, Busan has implemented a global marine culture tourism industry policy as an international city based on ocean sensibility. In Gangwon-do, the local cultural characteristics formed by the mountain cultural sensibility developed abundant natural resources in the high mountain area and food resources in the clean area, providing various local cultural resources to tourists. Finally, the healing tourism industry in the Jeju Island, the pearl of Korea, has promoted an attractive global tourism industry associating with various trails formed around Mount Halla along with the harmonization of the marine resources surrounding the entire island and the unique indigenous local culture of Jeju.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Local culture is a sociocultural product formed through a long history and processes of social change in each region based on locality. Therefore, the local culture has region-specific cultural values and meanings that we cannot see in different areas. In the wake of the recent digital-based Fourth Industrial Revolution, people's emotions are becoming increasingly dry. People are wandering in search of new patterns of life within the harsh artificial intelligence system that are continuously changing the areas of human life beset by a wave of new technologies. The unique emotional realm that humans have is in danger of deteriorating and drying up. Thus, it is necessary to prepare a new life pattern for an emotional-cultural space where people can recover their tired bodies and minds. This study examines the sensibility images existing in each region, focusing on Busan, Gangwon-do, and Jeju-do regarding the local cultural tourism promotion associated with local sensibility in Korea. The study also intends to help design tourism products by

considering how each region has developed these images into a successful healing tourism resource. Furthermore, it seeks to restore the meaning of local cultural sensibility that meets the new era and provides basic data for healing tourism.

## 2 MEANING OF LOCAL CULTURAL SENSIBILITY

### 2.1 What is Local Cultural Sensibility?

Local culture is a specialized cultural product unique to the region formed over time based on locality, which represents the unique identity of the local community. On the other hand, we can consider local cultural sensibility from the perspective of how the local characteristics of each region can affect the emotional realm of human beings. For example, the locality of Busan is a local sensibility that reflects the sea sensibility well. Compared to other regions, Busan has a local sensibility code that gives freshness

and refreshment of an open blue image. As such, each region has a unique cultural sensibility image created by the natural environment and sociocultural conditions of the region. These local cultural sensibility images are the major clues that can characterize the local cultural tourism industry and differentiate it from other regions. Since these clues become a resource that induces attractive curiosity about tourism products when tourists visit tourist attractions, it requires special planning to develop local cultural tourism products. Even if regions have the same ocean sensibility, we can differentiate the local sensibility of each region in various ways according to diverse marine resources, natural environment other than the sea, and the sociocultural environment conditions. Additionally, each creative local cultural sensibility becomes a valuable local cultural asset, which we can transform into a tourism resource by inducing unusual curiosity for visiting tourists. Therefore, each local government can expect high added value by discovering and selecting unique sensibilities for each region and planning tourism cultural products with creative ideas. In other words, unique local cultural resources formed over a long time can create local cultural values different from other regions. As a result, it will enhance the positive image and status of the region, which will be a driving force stimulating the local economy by attracting many tourists.

## 2.2 Types and Values of Local Cultural Resources

Local cultural resources can be divided into three main categories: material resources, human resources, and sociocultural resources. Depending on the characteristics of each local culture, each resource will carry out tourism industry policies in each region by finding key clues for regional development within these three categories.

### 2.2.1 Material Resources

Material resources are local natural environmental resources and are local cultural resources created by geographical features, climate, and soil. It has economic value as a tourism resource that can create the best added value by building an infrastructure that manages and fosters the region's unique natural environment. For example, Switzerland is a representative country. Switzerland has developed its tourism industry as a major industry from the past to the present day, with its beautiful natural environment as its primary source of sustainable tourism resources.

The relaxed life of locals in Switzerland provides tourists with a nice and friendly character created by nature. Switzerland is attracting attention as a global tourist attraction by providing a national-level meticulous policy support to create a pollution-free tourist destination, accessible transportation system, clean air management, and the nature management which allows visitors to feel the natural beauty of the plain.

### 2.2.2 Human Resources

The human environment refers to the human cultural resources created as a result of social activities and the achievements of the great social leaders who have worked in the area, such as artists, politicians, as local characters created by the historical environment. The country representing this is the United Kingdom. British history is a tourist item that sets it apart from other countries with special tourism products created from the history of great politicians and royal cultures, great literature writers like Shakespeare, and the history of Oxford University. From pictures of faces of many people decorating the international airport to many storytelling spaces behind the British imperial history, Shakespeare's birthplace, and the various stories surrounding Oxford University have become attractive tourist resources in the United Kingdom.

### 2.2.3 Sociocultural Resources

Finally, sociocultural resources are historical and cultural products made over a long period, mainly referring to tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Tangible cultural heritage refers to a visible cultural heritage such as buildings, paintings, sculptures, and crafts with artistic value. An intangible cultural heritage is an invisible cultural heritage such as theatre, dance, and music that has technical values. Among these cultural heritage resources, countries designate world-valued cultural heritage resources as an important national cultural property. Each country establishes policies for cultural properties and preserves and manages it. Italy is a representative country that has succeeded in promoting tourism with sociocultural resources. Italy is a cultural heritage created by its ancestors and is popular with people who want to travel to Europe. Italy is putting a lot of effort into global tourism policies because of its high share of tourism revenue, and the administrative body is also run only by the central government. Every city is lined with tourists from all over the world to see the ancestors' architectural styles and the immortal masterpieces housed in museums. Truly remarkable

historical products are telling love and overflowing stories to future generations. The fact that countless artists and scholars continue to walk from all over the world carries a message that conveys something to our lives struggling with modern times. As a small Mediterranean flower, Italy delights tourists with its rich cultural heritage, beautiful natural scenery, and the image of an advanced country leading in design. As discussed above, the cultural heritage of each region creates a local cultural identity with the uniqueness and originality of each region based on material, human and sociocultural tourism resources, and uses this as a tourism resource.

### **3 LOCAL CULTURAL SENSIBILITY AND HEALING TOURISM IN KOREA**

#### **3.1 Busan, Marine Area Sensibility and Healing Tourism**

Busan is a port city in the southern part of Korea. Busan has the image of an international city with the development of commerce, marine cultural resources of the port city, and many foreign visitors. In particular, as Busan has a port close to the city center, we can expect a tourism industry that combines local industries with various contents. Thus, Busan is developing into a global tourist city. Around Songdo, Haeundae, and Taejongdae, centering on luxury hotels and restaurants where people can especially feel the ocean sensibility, there are various kinds of famous restaurants and sashimi restaurants along with the open blue sea. In addition, magnificent bridges across the middle of the sea are particularly noticeable. There are convention centers, art galleries, and museums in the city center to hold international events, providing various cultural contents. Marine culture-related festivals such as international film festivals are receiving favorable reviews from many tourists visiting Busan as well. Busan also has a well-established foundation as an international medical tourism city to induce optimal tourism for foreigners visiting Busan with the ocean sensibility as the primary image. To this end, Busan City is focusing on the medical tourism industry with a high-quality medical tourism infrastructure by constructing a nuclear hospital along the coastline of the East Sea, which has beautiful scenery. Large and small hotels and cafes full of culture and art decorate the coastline beautifully, providing a space for relaxation and healing to Busan citizens and tourists. Recently,

Busan City has been selected as a target destination for international tourism city and is pushing for a global marine city development project. As a result, the Busan Metropolitan Government is working on port policies to ease regulations such as the Restriction of Special Taxation Act and the Tariff Act for Free Trade. Jagalchi Market, International Market (Gukje Market), Taejongdae, Haeundae, Moulundae, and Songdo are some of the most representative tourist attractions in Busan.

#### **3.2 Mountain Local Cultural Sensibility and Healing Tourism, Gangwon-do**

The Gangwon-do region is promoting tourism culture policy by properly harmonizing two elements of the sea sensibility formed along the east coast and the cultural sensibility of the mountain region formed along the Taebaek Mountains. Here we look at the characteristics of the local culture created by the cultural sensibility of the deep mountain areas and the healing tourism policy of the region. First of all, the Gangwon-do region has a cultural sensibility created by the beautiful mountains and fertile soil. Gangwon-do has ski resorts and monorail, rail bikes, beach trains formed along the east coastline, and abundant food produced by the soil. Various herbs produced in this clean area, as well as potatoes and corn, a staple of Gangwon-do, are popular with tourists as local branded products. They have developed a variety of processing and cooking methods that can attract tourists to their famous food. Since the land is fertile and the altitude is high, eco-friendly vegetables in this clean area have been distributed nationwide through a chain network. As local indigenous products are in the limelight nationwide, there is a system of direct and indirect delivery to homes. The reason that the Gangwon-do region can supply food with abundant nutrients with clean local agricultural products is that alpine plants over 1,400m above sea level grow on fertile soil formed of broad-leaved trees in this region. Thus, Gangwon-do offers differentiated food from other localities. The mountain ratio is 91.76, and the average elevation is 468 meters. Most of which are deep mountains. With its clear and beautiful natural scenery encompassing mountains, lakes, seas, it provides shelter for tourists. Fresh spaces such as birch forest trails and cypress tree forests can give visitors a comfortable green sensibility, providing a space for natural healing of the body and mind. Meaningful artists from other regions are attracting foreign tourists by adding the local cultural sensibility to the global cultural sensibility. Typical examples

include beer tasting and strawberry farm experience tours. It also provides various cultural contents to many tourists seeking to heal in the mountains.

### 3.3 Island Local Cultural Sensibility and Healing Tourism, Jeju Island

Jeju Island is a small island located at the southernmost tip of Korea. Its size is almost the same as that of Samosir Island, Indonesia. It is an outstanding tourist destination that is receiving attention from many tourists visiting Korea with its unique sensibility image formed by volcanic outcroppings.

Jeju Island was designated as a biosphere reserve in December 2002, registered as a World Natural Heritage Site in June 2007, and given the title of Global Geopark in October 2010. As a result, Jeju's tourism industry became more active and developed into an international tourist city. Many people visit as a space for re-creation for work such as various international events and conferences, company training, and orientation for new employees. The airport is also open to the same level as international flights, so it is popular with domestic people as a special travel product. The characteristics of the local sensibility image of Jeju are the Forest of Reflection in various forms and the Olle trail that spreads in all directions around Mount Halla. Most of the roads harmonize with the fresh sea landscape and attract tourists as a special place of healing and relaxation. As many Olle trails, such as the Forest of Reflection, are built, many tourists visiting Jeju Island adjust to nature and recover their body and mind while walking the long and short forest trails. The Olleh trail is a harmonious blend of Jeju's diverse indigenous and modern cultures, providing exotic attractions for tourists.

In addition to the Olle trail, Jeju Island has recently been making storytelling based on the history and culture of Jeju people in various parts of the Jeju area and turning local culture into a resource. As modern society recognizes the importance of the emotional era in preparation for the age of artificial intelligence, many people became interested in planning tourism and cultural products through storytelling. In particular, Jeju Island is rapidly moving in response to this trend, creating various storytelling with local government budgets. They have created a suitable space in the middle of the Forest of Reflection, including theme parks, to display them or to offer tourists with local cultural attractions in the form of an experience center. They make such storytelling through the process of

business orders linked to the storytelling department at Jeju National University or through a national public offering project. By discovering invisible myths and stories that come down through oral traditions, it creates tangible assets that can serve as a model for modern people, encouraging tourists to experience an exotic culture. The themes of storytelling in Jeju include Jeju's myths and other geological formation processes, the history of Jeju people's joys and sorrows, and Jeju's unique lifestyle.

## 4 CONCLUSIONS

As described above, examples of cultural tourism were examined centering on Busan, Gangwon-do and Jeju-si in Korea as basic data for regional cultural sensitivity and healing tourism industry. This was studied because the natural environment and conditions surrounding the northern Sumatra region of Indonesia have similar environments to those of these three regions of Korea. And the results of this study are intended to help the development of the tourism industry in the Toba lake region in the future.

Toba lake It is a unique island created in a huge lake formed by volcanic eruptions and beautiful natural scenery from ancient times, and the region has the richest tourism and cultural resources in the northern Sumatra region. In each region, relative family communities have owned a family-oriented village culture for a long time. In addition, the unique cultural heritages that have not changed easily due to the environment of the island area are well preserved in oral or visible form. Therefore, in the future, these cultural assets can give tourists a sacred message that is not common in modern society.

Therefore, we need to find and study the invisible and intangible cultural heritage of this Toba Lake area. And from a new perspective, it is necessary to develop tourism resources through continuous research that can benefit the modern society. In other words, it is necessary to create useful values of the culture of the region through research. And it should provide tourists visiting the Toba Lake region with new and unique Toba Lake region tourism and cultural products. Therefore, policy support is needed to quickly lay the foundation for a sustainable global tourism culture.

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