

On a Degree of Visitors' Satisfaction With Entrance In Soraksan National Park

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Grasping aspects of using our representative soraksan national park and investigating factors affecting visitors' decision-making, this study aims to suggest rationally using of the national park and the positive development plan. The question contains those who have visited soraksan national park more than once. This research shows that most of the visitors wish 'entrance congestion' to be solved by introducing 'previous reservation' system and unpolluted shuttle bus, therefore chances are shown that they could be introduced for settlement of the existing problems.

Key Words : Soraksan National Park, Previous Reservation System, A Degree of Use Satisfaction

1. Introduction

Mt. Chirisan National Park designated in 1967, which was so designated one century after the first national park had been designated in the United States, may be the origin of our national park system of our country. When the national park system was introduced, however, the government treated the designation of the national park as part of the regional development and the competent ministry of national parks was the Ministry of Construction, which, then, delegated the management of the parks to the cities and the provinces. The cities and provinces, then, focused their efforts on development of the parks with an aim to revitalize the regional economy. However, as mentioned earlier, the development centered policies produced serious environmental problems such as destructions of the nature, scenery and the ecosystem, and damage to the paths to mountains and littered garbages brought by the surge in the number of the visitors became social problems. With an aim to resolve such problems, the National Park Authority of Korea was established under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Construction in 1987, as part of implementation

efforts of the policy balanced between its protection by specialized agencies and use by the general public.

At the present, the National Park Authority under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of environment directly manages 18 out of 20 national parks, while Gyeongju National Park, Mt. Hallasan National Park and Odong district of Hallyeo National Marine Park are managed by local autonomous entities.

Mt. Seoraksan National Park, which is the subject of this research, was designated as Natural Monument No. 171 (163.4 square meter natural reserved area) in 1965 and was again designated as National Park No. 5 in 1970. Afterward, the park was designated as the only Biosphere Reserve in this country under the Plan for Human Beings and Biological World of UNESCO in 1982 and has been designated as the Natural Reserved Area by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

As noted above, although the reservation aspects of Mt. Seoraksan National Park have been emphasized in various ways subject to the values of the resources, the surge in the number of visitors have damaged various elements of the resources and the visitors themselves have been dissatisfied with concentrated use of the area.

The purpose of this paper is to minimize destruction by the visitors of the environment and to ensure satisfactory use by the visitors of the park by grasping the modes of use of the National

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Park and through opinion polls. The goals to attain such purposes are as follows:

Firstly, I will attempt to establish theoretical systematization through research on modes of uses of the national parks and research on the relevant documents and utilize the systematization as the standards to be referred to.

Secondly, I will attempt to inquire into the correlation between the types of the visitors and Mt. Seoraksan National Park.

Thirdly, I will attempt to inquire for new means of transportation on account of the congestion at the entrance to Mt. Seoraksan National Park.

2. Method

2.1 Subject and an Outline

Soraksan National Park is located in Youngdong. It's administratively bounded by Sokcho-si on the East, Inje-gun on the west, yangyang-gun on the south, Gosung-gun on the north. We have set the entrance area, the subject of this study between the entrance to Sorak C region and the small park(3.8km).

On the other hand, there are the region Sorak B and C, shopping areas, hotels, camping grounds and four parking lots around the National Park entrance. Bottleneck phenomenon occurs in mokwooje where SorakRo and gwangwangro meet and become a narrow one-lane road.

2.2 method

(A field investigation was executed for 2 days from 10th of November to 11th of November in 2002, and the investigation region is designated to Soraksan National Park, and had a questionnaire written by an experience of visitors who have visited there more than once). We have chosen the questionnaire method, or Self-administered Questionnaire Survey method, which means the volunteer simply mark the sheet of a written list of questions according to the directions. This questionnaire is mainly divided into 3 parts:

First, we made the lists for evaluation of factors in visiting by entrance.

Secondly, we prepared the contents to evaluate visitors' satisfaction with the entrance.

Thirdly, lists about entrance improvements (new means of transportation), and other personal opinions about that issue are determined to be

taken. As for the data analysis, 100 are taken out of 124 parts of all, except 24 parts of the unfit questionnaires.

3. The Results and Consideration

3.1 Classification of visitors

In this survey of 100 visitors, 64% of them is male and 36% is female, which means men are relatively high. With regard to age, the twenties and thirties amounted to 35% and 36%, respectively, followed by the forties which formed 19% of the respondents.

According to jobs, professionals ranked first at 22%, followed by businessmen at 16%, workers at 15%, housewives at 14%, students at 13%, government officials at 11%. By educational level, high school graduation accounted for 34% and university graduation stood at 32%.

3.2 Modes of use

Regarding visitors' use frequency, most of the visitors have visited twice or more, which formed 45%. It showed that one-time visitors stood at 40%, two-time and three-time ones at 45% and 15%, respectively. No visitors have visited four times or more and visits are concentrated when the annual rush (autumnal tints season) starts.

With a visit mostly paid over the weekend, a weekday and a weekend visit formed 35% and 65%, respectively. Utilization frequency was high on the weekend. Especially, executing a five-day workweek seems to be an influential factor. Most of the visitors use their own cars as a means of transportation, and the purpose of their visits is mainly sightseeing. But they also visit for other various reasons to see cultural assets, visit temples, go hiking, and for a natural observation education. At this time they use personal transportation rather than public transportation, so we can understand a personal unit visit is relatively high.

3.3 Satisfaction

In terms of topography, width and satisfaction with use of facilities, 'entrance satisfaction' mostly comes to dissatisfaction or average level. Most people are not satisfied with the use of the entrance and expressed their dissatisfaction with the entrance which lacks consideration of the narrow width and topography. And they also said

the improvement plan is needed for the entrance problem caused by the narrow two-lane road into which visitors are crowded in a high-demand season (autumnal tints season).

Regarding the scale and location of parking lot and satisfaction with the use of the parking lot, people were mostly dissatisfied or considered it as average level. They were dissatisfied at the congestion due to the unsuited location and small scale of the parking lot, therefore the improvement policy is necessary since the parking lot is in an extreme state of accommodation capacity owing to use of visitor's own car or a large-sized bus.

3.4 An improvement plan

In view of personal opinion, most visitors complained about complication and crowdedness when asked why they were dissatisfied with use of the parking lot. There have not been many responses to the question about entrance inconveniences, but a minority opinion suggests to carry out advance reservation system to get rid of the confusion around the entrance. On a question of an entrance improvement plan, out of worry about another traffic congestion, most people were interested in new means of transportation which can deal with the congestion. Especially, they had a great interest in an unpolluted monorail and shuttle bus.

Concerning a forecast of new transportation usage, most people said that they would use the new one, but unexpectedly not a few respondents answered they have not yet decided whether or not to take, but the majority of them responded that they would use that new transportation if it is available.

Approach-by-new-transportation-preference indicates most people prefer to use the monorail and unpolluted shuttle bus, but there are quite a few people to choose to walk. Many of them were interested in new transportation which could make it less polluted and less crowded.

4. Conclusion

We have to make pleasant road environment as part of this Soraksan National Park entrance improvement plan. Therefore, we first need to control vehicles at the entrance, and establish new transportation. The installation section is 3.8km ranging from the region sorak C to the small park,

and some intermediate stations will be also established in the region sorak B and C.

According to vehicle control, we will also make a big-sized parking lot which can hold a sightseeing bus and any kind of car used as a means of transportation, in and around sorak C region to raise visitors' satisfaction level and will put the road environment in good condition to provide those who would like to walk with an atmosphere of comfort. So, unpleasantness by a traffic jam will disappear by controlling vehicles at the region sorak C and then visitors can move to the small park on foot and by a new traffic means.

The transport capacity of the shuttle bus and monorail is an average of 5000 people per hour. On the other hand the maximum number of visitors to sorakdong reaches 60,000~70,000 a day. they usually gather in the early morning, so the maximum is about 20,000 people per hour. The new system having 5000 of carrying capacity, may remind you of a rush hour in Seoul in that regard. Besides, since visitors are expected to increase potentially due to like the five-day workweek system, it will be necessary to make counterplan to extend the accommodation capacity of new transportation, parking lots, and the small park. The counterplan can be a visitor reservation system.

Currently, Soraksan National Park has been severely troubled by excessive complex district development and the establishment of all kinds of sports facilities or roads. Besides, the fact that ecosystem is destroyed by concentration in a specific season is recognized as a more serious problem. We have investigated the modes of visitors' use of Soraksan National Park, the most preferable resort of city-dwellers and understood those aspects of users, so we have presented an improvement plan of the entrance, which may cause the maximum level of visitors' satisfaction.

This study has dealt with an improvement plan and satisfaction degree of use of the entrance to Soraksan National Park. But we have some limits of not considering seasonal factors and not selecting volunteers by peak holiday season, off season, weekend, holiday or weekday, etc in the questionnaire survey process. we need to have our research divided into three parts next time. The categories are as follows: Firstly, Is it a weekday or a weekend? Secondly, What season is it?

Thirdly, Is it the peak holiday season or off season?

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