

# The Impact of China's Rural Tourism on China's Rural Economy

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## Abstract

The paper is study the influence of rural tourism on the rural economy, rural tourism in China were introduced at first, and the development of rural tourism on economic effect, then using Huang Pi village as an example, introduced the relation between rural tourism and economic, finally summarized the influence of rural tourism on the rural economy, including the good and bad aspects, puts forward how to develop rural tourism, put forward to how to strengthen rural collective economy, such as strengthen the characteristic and ecological protection, develop characteristic culture and absorb the excellent talents, thus effectively promote the rural economy.

## Keywords

China's rural tourism, rural economy, impact economy.

## 1. Introduction to China's Rural Tourism

Rural tourism is a new type of tourism that emerged in the 1980s. The rise of rural tourism shows people's yearning for nature and return to ecology. With the acceleration of the pace of city life, people are more and more attracted to the peaceful and beautiful rural life. Therefore, the emergence of rural tourism has been pursued by urban residents. At present, rural tourism has become one of the main forms of leisure vacation. By 2018, China had achieved 3 billion rural tourists, and its revenue from this economic branch had reached 800 billion yuan. On the background of the continuous improvement of China's economic development and the rapid development of its tourism, more and more tourists choose rural tourism. According to statistics, China's rural tourism revenue reached 740 billion yuan in 2017, more than three times the 240 billion yuan it had in 2012. In 2017, the number of rural tourists in China reached 2.8 billion, roughly four times that of 2012. From 2012 to 2017, the compound growth rate of the number of rural tourists in China reached 31.2%. Especially since 2015, the number of such tourists has increased significantly. In 2016, rural tourism activities were carried out in 100,000 villages across the country, with 2.9 million rural tourism camps, including more than 2 million farmhouses. By 2017, preliminary statistics showed that the number of farmhouses in China had reached 2.2 million, an increase of about 50 percent compared with the data from 2012. By 2018, there were 388 demonstration counties (cities/districts) and 560 beautiful villages in China. In 2017, China's rural tourism welcomed 2.8 billion tourists, accounting for 56% of domestic tourists. The total revenue exceeded 740 billion yuan, accounting for 16.2% of the total revenue from domestic tourism. Data showed that the number of rural tourists in China maintained a steady growth from 2016 to 2017 after the rapid progress from 2012 to 2015. The proportion of rural tourism income is used to finance a stable growth trend. [1]

## 2. The Development Status of Rural Tourism in China and Analysis of An Example 'Huangpi District in Wuhan.'

Huangpi district in Wuhan used to be a remote rural area with backward transportation infrastructure and low living material standards. However, Huangpi district persisted in

developing characteristic rural tourism and made remarkable achievements, receiving more than 20 million tourists in 2017, bringing Huangpi district more than 10 billion yuan (\$1.6 billion) in revenue. Today, more than a quarter of Huangpi's population works in tourism and earns an average of 30,000 yuan a year, up from less than 2,000 yuan a decade ago. With the development of tourism, more than 100,000 rural residents of Huangpi district were lifted out of poverty, and employment opportunities were created for more than 250,000 people. Huangpi district of Lijiazhai village built a tourism centre. Many infrastructure improvements have been made, such as cement on muddy roads, and traffic jams are common even during peak seasons. As more and more villagers choose to transfer their land to rural cooperatives and become shareholders, they no longer need to do heavy agricultural work, and they build as well as develop tourism. [2]

### **3. The Impact of Rural Tourism on the Rural Economy**

#### **3.1. Positive Impact**

##### **3.1.1. Narrowing the Urban-Rural Gap**

Ye Xiu-Shuang in *Exploration on the Ways of Training Rural Tourism Talents Under the Situation of Economic Transition* explains that the development of rural tourism can effectively increase farmers' income, improve rural economic strength, and reduce the number of unemployed and poor people. The development of tourism can provide new directions and technologies for rural areas, lay a foundation for real-time communication, enable rural areas to obtain timely scientific information, and narrow the urban-rural gap. [3,7] Although rural tourism is a new form of tourism, compared with other forms of tourism, rural tourism has effects on the rural economy including food, life, travel, shopping, entertainment, etc., in the core industry, tourism, promoting local transportation, information services, entertainment, real estate industry, and the rapid development of the environmental protection industry. The development of rural tourism is based on agricultural resources. Integrating agriculture into rural tourism can not only greatly improve productivity, but also greatly increase the added value of agriculture by paying more attention to innovation compared with traditional agriculture. Rural tourism is conducive to the cultivation of agricultural products' brands, to create iconic agricultural products. Under the rural revitalization strategy, the development direction of rural tourism realizes the comprehensive innovation, transformation, and upgrading of rural primary, secondary, and tertiary industries.

##### **3.1.2. Conducive to Improving Rural Infrastructure**

Many country roads are not paved or are too narrow to pass two cars at once. Other rural areas have poor communication facilities, but given the heavy reliance on the Internet, if rural tourism is to be developed, it will be much less likely for tourists to choose from these poor rural areas. Whether other supporting facilities in rural areas (such as rural accommodation, shopping, commercial supporting facilities, and catering supporting facilities) are complete and perfect is another very important factor that affects whether tourists choose to travel. The supporting construction that involves roads, electricity, the Internet, accommodation, catering, and other infrastructure needs a large amount of financial support. Farmers will cherish these more and will also pay more attention to local rural tourism projects. The development of a rural tourism page can drive the construction of these infrastructures.

##### **3.1.3. Promote the Sustainable Development of the Rural Economy**

Sharpley studied the impact of rural tourism on community economic development, population employment, and community infrastructure improvement and pointed out that rural tourism can provide reemployment opportunities for the unemployed in the community, increase personal and family income, improve people's living standards, and promote the rapid

development of a community's economy. In traditional agriculture, farmers' incomes are low, which leads to low enthusiasm for work and a large number of farmers going out to work to increase their incomes. However, the development of rural tourism has greatly alleviated this dilemma. On the one hand, it can directly increase farmers' incomes. On the other hand, it can sustain the local rural economic form and mode. Generally speaking, rural tourism relies on sustainable resources, such as local natural scenery or folk culture. This model is beneficial to the development of the rural economy, and its sustainability plays an important role in its maintenance. Rural tourism pursues harmony between man and nature; promotes economic development and the ecological environment; advocates for green ecology, green consumption, and green tourism; and encourages the harmonious development of rural tourism resources. At present, with the improvement of the urbanization rate in China, a large number of the rural population is moving to cities, and the rural population is substantially aging, which leads to the abandonment of rural resources. Through rural tourism projects, more young people will stay in the countryside, rural resources will be more likely to be protected, and resources will be utilized more frequently. The primitive mode of planting also began to progress towards refinement and specialization. On the one hand, tourists are more willing to experience related projects in the countryside. On the other hand, tourists can take some refined agricultural products home after the tour, which directly boosts the economic incomes of farmers. In general, rural tourism is a green and sustainable economic project. Differing from other industrial projects, it produces less pollution, while more tourists can affect more consumers and thereby bring home more income. It will also promote the development of tourism projects, which will better promote the development of rural tourism projects and the sustainable development of the local economic model. [4,7]

### **3.2. Negative Impact**

However, in the long-term, rural tourism development practices seem to be limited due to the lack of correct concept guidance, blindness, and disorder. With the increase in the number of rural tourists, the quantity of household garbage will also increase, which will pollute the rural environment and reduce the living environment quality of rural residents. In addition, with the continuous development of rural tourism, the number of vehicles entering rural areas will continue to increase, and the emission of vehicles will affect the good air quality of the countryside. What's more, with the increase of rural consumer groups, prices in rural areas generally rise, bringing new life pressure to the poor local farmers. The positive impact of rural tourism does not improve the lives of rural residents. Finally, in the process of developing rural tourism, replanning is inevitable, so it is easy to destroy the original rural environment. Fleischer believes that rural tourism is more seasonal and has a limited contribution to the growth of the rural economy, but rural tourism brings an extremely negative impact on rural life, especially since the privacy of farmers' lives cannot be protected, destroying the independence of rural life. [5]

## **4. Countermeasures and Suggestions for Rural Tourism to Promote Rural Economic Growth**

In the design of rural tourism projects, the tendency to imitate should be avoided. It is necessary to combine local geographical advantages, ecological agriculture, customs and culture, local characteristics, and other rural resources to create a unique rural tourism brand and attract domestic and foreign tourists to visit through brand awareness. With reasonable positioning and outstanding features, the development of rural tourism projects should focus on the development of various modes such as leisure farms, folk culture, sightseeing and shopping, forest parks, etc. so that customers can fully stay close to nature, feel the idyllic rural scenery, and experience the peaceful life in rural areas. Strengthening rural tourism's economic

development can be done through publicity and marketing. In terms of rural tourism development, publicity and marketing should be strengthened to further enhance the market attractiveness of rural tourism projects. In terms of publicity, we can make full use of many publicity channels and platforms to strengthen the publicity of rural tourism projects: radio and television stations, Internet and mobile Internet, hotels and other passenger stream collection and distribution centers, and travel agencies. In terms of marketing, according to the actual situation of rural tourism projects, we can adopt a variety of means to continuously improve the marketing effect of rural tourism projects: price marketing, encouraging and promoting policies, and comprehensively reducing marketing costs through online sales.

The sustainable development of rural tourism lies in its good tourism resources. In the process of rural tourism development, we should adhere to the concept of sustainable development, follow high-end development and adhere to moderate development.

To avoid excessive exploitation and utilisation of rural tourism resources for immediate interests, rural tourism should move towards scientific, long-term and sustainable development. It is necessary to make the predevelopment assessment and overall planning before the development of rural tourism in conditional areas; conduct special investigation and statistics on ancient buildings, residences and cultural relics in the area; and formulate perfect protection measures.

Rural traditional culture and historical heritage are an important source of the charm of rural tourism. Some scholars believe that the development of the countryside itself cannot constitute tourism resources, and the reason why rural tourism is rising and becoming an important branch of tourism development is that the unique charm of rural culture can meet tourist needs that urban life cannot meet. [6] Although this view is one-sided, its emphasis on rural culture represents an important view of the academic community and the practical experience of developed countries. Consider water towns in Japan, for example. At first, the local villagers are mainly composed of agricultural economic crops, water town through the protection of the local government, discover and 'reengineering' local traditional culture resources to build rural tourism resources, from a predominantly agricultural development pattern gradually took to the township village tourism development way, and this development make a huge success in China's rural area.

## 5. Conclusion

The relationship between rural tourism and the rural economy is one of mutual promotion and restriction, and it involves multi-level economic development. Rural tourism can promote the development of a rural economy, and the rural economy is the foundation of the development of rural tourism. If rural economic development is not ideal, then this will also restrict the development of rural tourism. The industrialization of rural tourism is the foundation from which to promote the development of the tourism economy. The development of rural tourism is not only conducive to increasing the incomes of farmers but also to the construction of a new type of countryside. The development of the rural economy is beneficial to the protection of the rural environment, the rational utilisation of rural resources, the scientific construction of a new socialist countryside, and the protection of the rural ecological environment. Rural tourism resources are the key to rural development and can promote the development and progress of rural society. We will gradually develop rural tourism, enrich rural operations, change the single industrial structure of the past, promote the development of other industries, and achieve rapid and comprehensive development of agriculture.

At the same time, we should pay attention to some limitations and disadvantages of rural tourism development and make continuous improvements so as to promote rural economic development through the better development of rural tourism.

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