

Level of competitiveness and attitude toward sustainable rural tourism in Zhejiang province: Inputs for tourism development

Feng, Zunwu

Lyceum of the Philippines University Batangas, Philippines

Borbon, Noelah Mae D. 

Lyceum of the Philippines University Batangas, Philippines (nmdborbon@gmail.com)



ISSN: 2243-7770
Online ISSN: 2243-7789

OPEN ACCESS

Received: 25 July 2022

Revised: 27 August 2022

Accepted: 29 August 2022

Available Online: 9 September 2022

DOI: 10.5861/ijrsm.2022.51

Abstract

This study aimed to measure level of competitiveness and the attitude toward sustainable rural tourism development. Moreover, the paper investigated different rural tourism places' advantages and characteristics which were their competitiveness to others. The characteristics were the special natural or local cultural attractiveness. This study considered five different types of participants to collect the related data: the local officials, institutes or major related students and teachers, tourism agents, residents, and tourists. 405 participants were involved considering the used of an adapted instrument. Based on the result, in terms of supporting factors and resources, we can see that the level of competitiveness of the tourism destination is above the average. As to the infrastructure, its convenience and accessibility of transportation are good enough, and the signage is proper arranged. They are also considerate for the disabled on the facilities. Some infrastructure needs to be decorated to be appealing enough. About facilitating, there are no issues both on the destination accessibility and information service. But they need to facilitate on bank service and souvenir products. According to the result, as to the environment, economic, and social-cultural, the local resident's attitude toward the sustainable rural tourism development is positive, to some extent, Result implies that if the higher the competitiveness is, the better attitude the local will hold. The researcher was able to propose an action plan for tourism development.

Keywords: competitiveness, rural tourism, tourism development, Zhejiang

Level of competitiveness and attitude toward sustainable rural tourism in Zhejiang province: Inputs for tourism development

1. Introduction

Rural tourism, as a local economic booster has been written into national development plan and strategy about rural revitalization and poverty alleviation. The Chinese central government has created enormous support around policy, finance, and talent to the local and provincial governments. Local governments also actively respond to the call of central government. They carry out detailed and careful plans based on their own characteristics. Batches of tourism development projects with local characteristics have been developed in all provinces, which greatly benefits the local resident's income and their daily life.

The value of rural tourism, on one hand, is to give full play to the advantages of rural natural resources and local culture. On the other hand, it aims to attract tourists with different characteristics and promotes local economic development. Rural tourism promotes interaction between nature and culture, between man and nature, and between people. It improves the economic income of local people. With the increase of economic income, local people will actively pursue and enhance the protection of natural resources, attach importance to the improvement and inheritance of local culture, and improve the overall quality of life for local people. Local rural tourism policies will spontaneously support the development of tourism resources with a more cooperative attitude and treat tourists with a friendlier and welcoming attitude. Theoretically and practically, it forms a circular relationship that benefits all stakeholders and the natural and local environment.

China has achieved its planned goal of poverty alleviation and lifted nearly 100 million people out of poverty in the past eight years. Promotion of rural tourism has played a significant role in meeting these goals. In recent years, how to ensure the sustainable development of rural areas has become an important consideration for local governments and residents (Mo & Borbon, 2022). There is much more research required to assess the ongoing economic, cultural, and environmental impact of rural tourism promotion.

This paper studies the elements that affect the competitiveness of different areas and studies residents' attitude towards tourism, as well as its effect on sustainable development. Since the development of rural tourism, homogenization has become a near universal phenomenon. People like to copy the experience, from the design through to the specific operation. Economic benefit is always set as the primary gain in the early stages of any new scheme. Surely, at the beginning, the rural tourism brings big changes. both to local incomes and lifestyles. Unfortunately, environmental protection is all too often neglected. The unique pursuit of sustainable development is ignored. Tourist numbers fall, with many people planning never to visit some areas due to the bad experiences of others, homogenization, or poor transport and infrastructure conditions. Rural tourism is not a one-time activity. It is a long-term national strategy to benefit local people for the future, not just the short-term. Therefore, the resources, including natural and historical sites; the developed infrastructure, such as accommodation, food, recreation, and transport; the social responsibility for nature and society etc.; all should be carefully considered and clearly demonstrated in the long-term development vision. They are the key elements concerning the level of competitiveness, and therefore, the key to the success of any plan to enhance rural tourism.

Different people have different views on the development of rural tourism. According to the recent study by Xing et al (2021), people find that rural tourism brings good opportunities but not equally, not for everybody. Older people very often prefer a peaceful and silent life; crowds of tourists interfere with their normal life, often leading to conflict within communities. Gender, age, educational level, and the participants in rural tourism have significant influence on residents' perceptions and attitudes (Xing et al, 2021). This paper will distribute the questionnaire to diverse groups of people and analyze findings from aspects of age, sex, education, civil status,

and so on to try and discern the effect to sustainable development.

Typical examples are analyzed in this paper. Taking Zhejiang Province as an example, it is in the top 3 provinces of China according to economic and cultural markers, and ranks in the top of the country in tourism. Natural resources and historical sites are abundant in the province. The infrastructure is well developed, and constantly improving. In December 2021, the 24th General Assembly of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) announced the first batch of inclusions into its "World's Best Tourism Villages" list, and Yu Village (Anji County, Zhejiang Province) was selected. Using Zhejiang province as an example is very valuable, because of its current and historical significance as a popular tourist destination. Studying the conditions, successes, and problems of one of the most popular provinces for tourism in China can provide valuable insights that will benefit not only Zhejiang, but also other provinces that are looking to improve their tourist industries. This research will be of value to local, provincial, and central governments.

In essence, the goal of this paper is to find out the best way to establish a sustainable Eco-tourism program. The original purpose of rural tourism was to help the agricultural traditions of the past transition into a more effective way to improve the economic situation of residents, which the Government then makes a policy for local poverty alleviation. It works in China and proves that rural tourism is a very effective way for developing the local area, and not only economically. Now, as rural tourism develops rapidly, there are several issues that need to be solved or improved before it can become a workable sustainable development project.

To sum up, with recent studies, it has been confirmed that the level of competitiveness is the foundation for the longtime survival of local tourism. The more special characteristics an area has, the more competitive it is. The better that unique nature develops, the longer it will possess those characteristics that promote tourism. The attitude of the residents also greatly influences the long-term development of rural tourism. Their support makes the development successful. Their indifference could lead to an end to further development. However, there is still a problem. Most research only focuses on either the elements of competitiveness, or on the attitude of the residents. There are few studies that combine both factors for analysis. Most studies to date have not focused on eco-tourism, which is becoming increasingly important in ensuring ongoing benefits for generations to come. The importance of this paper lies in the fact that the research provides suitable suggestions for sustainable rural tourism development based on the series analysis. This paper gives recommendations for how to change ordinary rural tourism into sustainable and achievable eco-tourism development.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to measure level of competitiveness and the attitude toward sustainable rural tourism development in Zhejiang province, China. More specifically, the study assessed the level of competitiveness of the tourist destination in terms of supporting factors and resources relating to the infrastructure, facilitating resources and spirit of hospitality, assessed residents' attitude toward sustainable rural tourism development regarding the environment, economic and social-cultural aspects, tested the significant relationship between attitudes towards competitiveness and sustainability in tourism. Lastly, it proposed an action plan for tourism development.

2. Method

Research Design - The research method used was quantitative. Other methods used for this study were literature review, case study, and qualitative study. Quantitative study involved collecting and analyzing data to try and identify patterns and trends, with a view to making predictions that could be extrapolated to wider populations. The paper investigated different rural tourism places' advantages and characteristics which were their competitiveness to others. The characteristics were the special natural or local cultural attractiveness. The paper also investigated the people's housing changes, dietary changes, people's mental outlook, the infrastructure, and improvements in public health, which could change or influence their attitude towards the development of

the rural tourism. The residents' attitude has great influence on the future of the rural tourism. Their support and attendance can actively sustain the rural tourism development. And their indifference and disorder stop the investment and the improvement. From the questionnaire survey, infrastructure, destination availability, residents' spirit, environment, income, and social influence were involved.

Participants of the Study - This paper considered five different types of participants to collect the related data: local officials, institutes or major related students and teachers, tourism agents, residents, and tourists, with a total of 405 respondents. This sample was computed based on the total population using the Rao soft sample size calculator considering the 5 percent marginal error and 95 percent confidence level. All the respondents mentioned above were randomly selected to conduct the interview and the questionnaire.

Data Collection Instrument - The first part is refers to the competitiveness of the tourist destination in terms of supporting factors and resources which is adapted from Ylagan, (2018). The respondents assessed the indicators using the scale: 5 as Very Much Competitive; 4 as Much Competitive; 3 as Moderately less competitive 2 as Less Competitive; 1 as Not Competitive. Lastly, the second part of the instrument refers to the residents' attitude toward sustainable rural tourism, which is adapted from Muresan, et al (2016). Since the instrument was used directly from the previous study with no alteration, the content validation was conducted by an expert. The result of reliability statistics showed that the computed Cronbach's alpha value of 0.920 signifies that the instrument for Competitiveness has strong or excellent internal consistency, as well as the questionnaire for Residents' attitude with excellent value of 0.915. Thus, this set of questionnaires is considered valid for use.

Data Gathering Procedure - Due to the strict Covid-19 prevention policy, the questionnaire and the data were done or collected online. The questionnaire and research were done within a month and the results of the research were used in the thesis. It was carried out into four stages: The first stage (1 week), was designed to work distribution for the participants and the framework for the study. Sharing online questionnaire to the related participants such as tourists, students, residents, etc., the answers of questionnaire were collected automatically at the same time were finished online. The second stage (1 week), the literature study on the related works on scholars' study, official reports, and other authorized channels. The third stage (2 weeks), the case study, searched and studied the cases of modeling villages, data collection, and data analysis. Weighted mean, standard deviation and ranking was used to determine and analyze the competitiveness of the tourist destination as well as residents' attitude toward sustainable rural tourism. All data were treated using a statistical software package known as PASW version 26 to further interpret the result of the study using an alpha level of 0.05.

Ethical Consideration - The researcher was able to explain to the participants of the study clearly that the purpose of this study is to evaluate the effect of competitiveness and attitude toward sustainable rural tourism. It is also to provide operational ideas for the stability of rural tourism development. They were asked to answer the questions in the questionnaire online. Participants were promised that all research protocols in data collection would be properly observed. All respondents participated in the questionnaire voluntarily. All the data were filed fully confidentiality and were used only for research purposes. The participants had the consent letter to ensure that all participants voluntarily have their consent to be included. There were no harmful activities to the environment, to people, or to any animals. And all the data and analysis are assured to be original. There is no plagiarizing.

3. Results and Discussion

Table 1 shows the competitiveness in terms of infrastructure" with the composite mean is 3.65 interpreted as much competitive. The top result, convenience and accessibility etc. scored 3.84 The higher the score, the more competitive it is. Meanwhile, the least rank is "Old/historic or modern but visually appealing" (3.47). The weighted mean is 3.68 and the "much competitive" is from 3.5-3.49. In this aspect people "agree" and "accept" the present situation. But there must have much space to improve. The results show that people agree that both the hard and soft infrastructures have much competitive in the local tourism places. But all the scores are not

high enough. On the other hand, it means though people accept the local government's basic work, there is still a big space to improve. At least we can conclude that the roads are well-maintained. The local is also considerate for different needs in terms of accessibility. Therefore, they must need scientific development and utilization. Second, the shelters or buildings in rural areas are more native, and the appearance is not as grand as that of cities. However, from the perspective of tourism development, rural shelters or buildings also need being visually attractive through renovation, art-painting and other modifications after scientific and reasonable planning.

Table 1

Competitiveness of the tourist destination in terms of supporting factors and resources

infrastructure	Mean	SD	Rank	I
1. Old / historic or modern but visually appealing	3.47	1	6	MLC
2. Maintained sidewalks, pathways, and hallways	3.6	0.91	4	MC
3. Provision of more amenities with campgrounds	3.49	1	5	MC
4. With accessible / hi-speed communication system	3.8	0.89	2	MC
5. Convenience and accessibility of local transportation and facilities and with proper signage	3.84	0.89	1	MC
6. Accessibility facilities for disabled persons	3.68	0.96	3	MC
Composite Mean	3.65	0.81	3	MC
Facilitating Resources	Mean	SD	Rank	I
1. Availability of visitor / tourist information center	3.75	0.95	2	MC
2. Availability of money changer and banking services	3.67	1	4	MC
3. Pasalubong center and souvenir shop	3.73	1.01	3	MC
4. Destination links with major origin markets	3.6	1.03	5	MC
5. Accessibility of destination	3.79	0.93	1	MC
Mean	3.71	0.89	2	MC
Spirit of Hospitality	Mean	SD	Rank	I
1. Friendly, high-spirited and hospitable local people	3.9	0.9	1.5	MC
2. Can communicate well with the tourist	3.88	0.89	3	MC
3. Getting people to stay longer	3.9	0.92	1.5	MC
4. Tourist oriented local people	3.64	0.95	5	MC
5. Delivers quality guest service	3.79	0.94	4	MC
Mean	3.9	0.9	1	MC

Legend: 5.0 to 4.5- Very Much Competitive (VMC); 4.49 to 3.5- Much Competitive (MC); 3.49 to 2.5- Moderately less Competitive (MLC); 2.49 to 1.5- Less Competitive (LC); 1.49 to 1.0 – Not Competitive (NC)

Facilitating resources is another supporting factor to competitiveness of the tourist destination. The weighted mean 3.71 expresses that people agree with the local facilitating work. The highest are “Accessibility of destination” with 3.79, The lowest rank is “Destination links with major origin markets” followed by 3.6, which is below the weighted mean but above 3.5. People agree that the tourism destination have basic links with the major markets.

Based on the root of the issues, the local could enhance and improve the links with the origin markets. Strengthening the communication with the origin markets of products, products can be timely adjusted, improved or researched and developed. At the same time, it can also identify which markets have better products. The quality of the image of origin will directly or indirectly affect the processing of local agricultural and sideline products and the results of transactions in the sales market. Strengthening the connection with the origin tourist markets and doing a good job in advertising can attract more tourists. Market is the very significant part in the business activities. It's the test standard by which the tourism and tourism products are judged. The local can do much better. Marketing ability is the comprehensive embodiment of the above activities. The marketing ability of tourism products determines the position and share of tourism products in the market, which directly reflects the size of the market competitiveness of tourism products. They should make detailed analysis and find out the major places where the most tourists come from, where the tourist products suppliers come from, and what kinds of products are the most popular.

Competitiveness of the Tourist Destination in terms of Supporting Factors and Resources as to the Spirit of Hospitality has the composite mean of 3.9 depicts that people agree that the local people have good attitude

towards the tourists; they are hospitable. All the items score from the 3.64 to 3.9, which is above 3.5 - 3.49 meaning "Much Competitive". The lowest rank is "Tourist oriented local people" (3.64), which can be interpreted the same degree as "Much Competitive", while it's only a little lower below the weighted mean 3.90 but higher than 3.5.

From the perspective of the tourists, they are willing to stay here longer for relaxing and enjoying life due to the local hospitable atmosphere. In fact, the hospitality of residents is not only an important factor affecting the quality of destination tourism products. On the other hand, as a kind of intangible tourism resources, it also constitutes a source of comparative advantage of tourist destinations. While travelling, tourists not only want to enjoy the visual scenery, but also want to get spiritual sublimation. Tourists can be relaxing when they are treated seriously, warmly, respectfully and communicate with the local in a friendly way. Hospitality is not only a slogan, but also a "brand culture", a "customer-oriented" concept. In a sense, the scenic spot is more like a carrier, and the "hospitality spirit" is the external expression of the local spiritual outlook and civilized norms, it's also the extension sublimation of rural scenic spots and local culture. "Local attitude" is the first impression that is captured by the tourists at one place. When the local serve the customers, attitude is not only the face or gesture expression, but it's also the brand of the local civilization culture paved on tourists' hearts. It can make customers stay longer and attract more people. And it would give customer pleasant experience.

Table 2*Residents' attitude toward sustainable rural tourism development*

Environment Aspect	Mean	SD	Rank	I
1. Damage natural environment and landscape.	3.04	1.09	3.5	MA
2. Tourism causes overcrowding problems for residents.	3.13	1.09	2	MA
3. Tourism increases the air pollution.	3.04	1.09	3.5	MA
4. Tourists use too much water.	2.98	1.09	5.5	MA
5. Tourism results in more litter in an area.	3.31	1.05	1	MA
6. Tourism development negatively affects the facilities and entertainment.	2.91	1.13	7	MA
7. The construction of tourist facilities destroys the environment.	2.98	1.11	5.5	MA
Mean	3.06	0.98	3	MA
Economic	Mean	SD	Rank	I
1. Tourism plays an important role in the economic development of the area.	3.83	0.9	3.5	A
2. Tourism improves locals standard of living.	3.76	0.93	6	A
3. Tourism increases a community's tax revenue.	3.73	0.9	7	A
4. Tourism creates new jobs for locals.	3.84	0.9	2	A
5. Tourism diversifies the rural economy.	3.87	0.88	1	A
6. Tourism improves traffic network.	3.83	0.89	3.5	A
7. Tourism improves the quality of public services and infrastructure	3.8	0.88	5	A
Mean	3.81	0.83	2	A
Social and Cultural	Mean	SD	Rank	I
1. Tourism provides incentives for restoration of traditional houses.	3.86	0.88	3	A
2. Interaction with tourists is a positive experience.	3.83	0.86	5.5	A
3. Shopping option is better because of tourism.	3.85	0.86	4	A
4. Restaurants option is better because of tourism.	3.83	0.86	5.5	A
5. Tourism development enhances more recreational opportunities for locals.	3.91	0.85	1	A
6. Tourism improves the level of education background of the residents.	3.73	0.93	7	A
7. Tourism preserves the cultural practices and traditions.	3.89	0.88	2	A
Mean	3.84	0.8	1	A

Legend: 5.0 to 4.5- Strongly Agree (SA); 4.49 to 3.5- Agree (A); 3.49 to 2.5- Moderately Agree (MA); 2.49 to 1.5- Disagree (D); 1.49 to 1.0 - Strongly Disagree (SD)

Table 3 represents the local attitude toward the rural tourism development in relation to the environment (3.06), economic (3.81) and social and cultural (3.84). The "Tourism results in more litter in an area" (3.31) and "Tourism causes overcrowding problems for residents" (3.13) rank the top verbally interpreted as moderately agree. The lowest rank is "Tourism development negatively affects the recreational facilities and entertainment" (2.91) interpreted as moderately agree.

The more tourists come, the more crowded the local becomes. The installation of public resources is fixed.

Then when tourists come to visit, resources must be occupied. This may cause traffic jam, un-sufficient public transportation. Some low-quality tourists may throw the litter anywhere that the peaceful life is also disturbed. Specially to aged people, they like light, peaceful, and silent life. However, all the description mentioned here is universal. The question is how we can handle it correctly. Firstly, the local government can advocate the residents "Green travel" by less private cars and more public transportation. Second, penalty measures for improper behavior, such as litter, wastewater, and damage environment, etc. Third, it enhances and strengthens the supervising work. The tourism employees should undertake their responsibility to handle every single improper behavior. The scenic spot management should constantly improve the relevant monitoring and other electronic equipment to increase supervision, control the situation of the tourist spot, timely find, and stop the uncivilized behavior of tourists, and then create civilized scenic spot. Guan, et al. (2018) suggested that relevant government departments should strengthen correct guidance and management; scenic spots should take effective measures to regulate tourist behavior; and tourism guides should actively play a supervisory role.

This at least reflects that people, to some extent, do not think tourists bring such troubles to the local areas according to these results. This is mainly due to good local systems management and the popularization of public services and recreational facilities. For example, the state-sponsored "National Sports Program" has prompted local governments to step up inputs in sports, recreation, and infrastructure. There is no horrible damage to the local environment or pollution. And there is also no big, overcrowded situation. The rural tourism brings the local good fortune and job opportunities, thus the living standard. In support, the study of Cheng (2019) investigates the determinants of nonprofits' involvement in governance, or the planning and design of public services, using a unique data set of park-supporting nonprofit organizations. As public managers face extensive challenges in sustaining the desired level of public services towards solutions to complex social problems.

In relation to the economic aspect, op on the rank is for Tourism diversifies the rural economy (3.87) followed by Tourism creates new jobs for locals (3.84). Tied on the third rank is for Tourism plays an important role in the economic development of the area and Tourism improves traffic network (3.83). All items are interpreted as agree. Meanwhile, "tourism increases a community's tax revenue" (3.73) is on the least ranking followed by "tourism improves local's standard of living" (3.76) which is interpreted as agree.

People have high comment on "Economic Function" of the tourism to the local. First, the most obvious contribution of tourism is reflected in the economic income. Rural tourism has changed the single income mode of residents. In the past, rural residents mainly relied on agricultural cultivation as their main or only source of income. The increase in tourists has also put pressure on local road transportation and infrastructure, and the local government is bound to increase investment and construction. Development of rural tourism is an important approach to improve economic income of farmers. Rural tourism plays an important role in promoting regional economy, increasing employment, and promoting the development of other industries. Huang and Wang (2021) pointed out that rural tourism economy is the product of the combination of traditional agriculture and tourism services. It plays an increasingly important role in developing modern agriculture in our country, boosting the rural economy, and build a well-off society in an all-round way, especially in the areas of relatively scarce agricultural development conditions.

With regards to the local attitude toward rural tourism on "Social and Cultural" the composite means of 3.84 depicts that the respondents agree on the social and cultural aspect of the Sustainable Rural Tourism Development Tourism development enhances more recreational opportunities for locals (3.91) ranked the highest followed by Tourism preserves the cultural practices and traditions (3.89) and Tourism provides incentives for restoration of traditional house (3.86). Meanwhile, item on the last rank is that "Tourism improves the level of qualifications and the level of education background of the residents" (3.73) interpreted as agree.

People agree that tourism has very positive affect on the social and cultural protection and development. Tourism promotes local respect for and protection of traditional culture. Cultural protection and inheritance are based on the perspective of realizing economic development in the process of rural tourism development, so that

the traditional culture is presented dynamically in front of tourists and interacts with visitors. Sometimes, due to commercial interests, there will be excessive packaging of traditional culture, lose its characteristics, and even be destroyed. But in general, if the management is standardized, and the vision is long-term, traditional culture can be restored well. It is necessary to retain and create the diversity of traditional culture, but more importantly, to fully retain its differences, to better attract tourists. In a sense, rural tourism is the driving force to protect traditional culture, because traditional culture is an important carrier and support of tourism. Cao (2021) pointed out that the foundation of villages lies in culture. Traditional villages are not only a production and living space, but also a cultural space bearing cultural context, playing an important role in the inheritance and display of culture. Traditional folk culture is an important part of the excellent culture of the Chinese nation and is also the art and culture form closest to the people.

As far as the local government and residents realize that the rural tourism can bring such good life. They try to preserve the ancient and historical houses; they integrate the tourism activities with the traditions based on the unique local culture. To be professionally and sustainably develop the rural tourism, the local also invest much on the qualifications training and education. In the process of cultural protection and inheritance, local people will inevitably pay attention to the qualification training of performers, put forward rigid requirements on the educational background or level of management personnel, and pay attention to the introduction of professional talents. From the perspective of rigid demand, they increase the investment in qualification training and education. Furthermore, in the study of Liu (2021), it was also pointed out that the highlight of rural tourism lies in its unique rural culture and ethnic culture. To develop rural tourism, the key is to excavate the unique characteristics of rural culture and national culture, integrate the development concept of modern service industry and cultural industry creativity, and comprehensively improve the quality of tourism products, park management and the quality of relevant employees. Providing corresponding education and training for local practitioners and improving their professional literacy can fundamentally enhance their competitiveness and boost the upgrading of national cultural tourism industry.

Table 3

Relationship between competitiveness and residents' attitude toward sustainable rural tourism development

Variable(X)	Variable(Y)	Pearson-r value	p-value	Interpretation
Competitiveness Infrastructure	Local Resident's Attitude			
	Environment	0.334	0.000	Significant
	Economic	0.653	0.000	Significant
Facilitating Resources	Social and Cultural	0.704	0.000	Significant
	Local Resident's Attitude			
	Environment	0.332	0.000	Significant
Spirit of Hospitality	Economic	0.661	0.000	Significant
	Social and Cultural	0.702	0.000	Significant
	Local Resident's Attitude			
	Environment	0.307	0.000	Significant
	Economic	0.686	0.000	Significant
	Social and Cultural	0.711	0.000	Significant

Table 4 displays the relationship between competitiveness of the tourist destination and residents' attitude toward sustainable rural tourism development. Looking at the format above, the resulted p-values were all less than the alpha level of 0.05, thus a significant relationship exists. Result implies that if the higher the competitiveness is, the better attitude the local will hold.

The relationship between infrastructure and local attitude is significant. The better the infrastructure is built, the better the local attitude is. Infrastructure, such as transportation, is the basic requirement for developing the rural tourism. Whatever people do in the local, basic infrastructure gives it more convenience and chances. Thanks to the national construction polices, every single village has its own highway. There is big difference from 1980s and 1990s, in which the rural roads are full of mud and narrow; nobody is willing to come for visiting. During last ten years, the bullet train has gotten vast development in China. And the mobile base stations are also installed every village. You can enjoy the live show with any jam in a remote rural area. The

“China speed” on construction is even well-known in the world. As far as the infrastructure, facilitating, and hospitality spirit of rural tourism raise up, the economy and social culture of the local must be developed and preserved. Further, the local environment would be accounted of and protected. Lai, et al (2021) studied that the construction of rural tourism infrastructure is the premise of long-term development of rural tourism, which is of great significance to promote tourism product innovation and service upgrading. In rural tourism development, therefore, people should pay attention to infrastructure construction during the process of rural tourism. From the perspective of the actual local tourist attractions, fully considering the tourists travel experience, designing and improving the corresponding tourism infrastructure and promoting the grade of rural tourism will help taking rural tourism as the breakthrough point, implement the strategy of rejuvenating rural.

The relationship between facilitating resources and local attitude is significant. The more convenient and richer the facilitating resources are, the more satisfied the local attitude is. Facilitating resources commonly refers to the location's hardware requirements, such as a restaurant, bar, swimming pool, or other entertainment facilities. It also includes toilets, trash can, bus, medical aid, or public rest area, etc. Facilities are designed to meet the needs of tourists and enhance the comfort or pleasure of the tourists. At present, WIFI is a necessary element to attract more tourists. Take toilets as an example, women are queuing long in tourism places because of different physical needs from men. Therefore, if there are enough toilets for female, that tourism place must get good comment from tourists. There would be no complaint. And the local attitude towards it must be high.

Wang and Zhu (2021) pointed out that public facilities in rural tourism villages are the main places for people to gather and communicate, which are mainly reflected in health, environment, transportation and information. The construction of public facilities in tourism villages is beneficial to meet the needs of villagers for entertainment and fitness. Public facilities in rural tourism villages are also a kind of communication media, which can promote the mutual communication among villagers and thus enhance the vitality of rural tourism villages. Yuan (2014) suggested that reasonable public facilities in scenic spots can not only meet a series of needs of tourists in scenic spots, but also to some extent help scenic spots to establish a good image, at the same time can play a certain role in advertising (Li & Borbon, 2021). The relationship between spirit of hospitality and local attitude is significant. The more spirit of hospitality they hold, the better the attitude is. To some extent, spirit of hospitality is equal to the attitude. For a tourist destination, the subject of "hospitality" involves both the residents as individuals and the local as a group (Marasigan & Borbon, 2021).

Table 4

Proposed action plan for tourism development

Key Result Area/Objective	Strategies	Desired Outcome
Competitiveness		
Infrastructure Old / historic or modern but visually appealing	Invite professionals to design the unique style. Basic function integrates with the local culture. And use different colors to decorate the appearance. Invite artists to draw some fashion elements on the appearance.	It should have its own characteristics with local culture elements. Will attract more tourists as a word-of-mouth brand.
Facilitating Resources Destination links with major origin markets	Hold a fixed festival or parties with the major markets. Frequent communication with the management of the major origin market. Establish the professional research & development department for the new products from the origin markets. Attractive online or TV advertising.	Will always get the most fashionable products or elements for enhancing the attraction to the tourists. Build deep & good relationship with markets Always get good development suggestion or market tendency information from the origin market.
Spirit of Hospitality Tourist oriented local people	Organize and cultivate the local consciousness's of hospitality. By the basic "hospitality" knowledge competition activity and provide rich award to attract more local people to learn the "spirit of hospitality" To build good examples of hospitality through different popular online APP (such as TikTok) to make them well-know and more people follow and imitate them.	The locals have rich knowledge of the "hospitality" The local have very good behavior and act as hospitable hosts to the tourists. The tourists give positive comments or reviews online. And lots of tourists say they come for visiting because they hear a lot about the local spirit of hospitality.

Local Resident's Attitude		
Environment Tourism development negatively affects the recreational facilities and entertainment	Attract more investment to build more entertainment and recreational facilities. Create fresh style facilities or entertainment activities for fun. Provide more promotion activities.	Complaints about the negative effects disappear or decline. Be a learning model for other parties. Attract other rural tourism come for learning the experiences.
Economic Tourism increases a community's tax revenue	Improve the local hard and soft conditions to attract more investment and tourists. Government actively "goes out" to introduce more big enterprises Attract and cooperate with big companies or organizations to be a fixed health & wellness center for their employees; thus, there would be fixed number of consumers in the local. Fully use the online APP for the sales marketing. First, get profit though online live show; second, attract more tourists by online show of the beauty of the local.	More investors come for visiting and study the possibility of their investment. And most of them choose to invest to the local. The basic consumers to the local are getting more and more. The locals have more revenue to build and improve the local infrastructure.
Social and Cultural Tourism improves the level of qualifications and the level of education background of the residents	Rely on the local higher education resources, cooperate with them, and select the good behavior residents to attend the education of tourism. Hold tourism, catering service, food, or different cultures lectures or training. Provide good working conditions, benefits to introduce and employ more and more related talents.	The percentage of residents who have higher education or qualifications is getting higher than before. The comprehensive quality of residents is recognized as good.

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the result, in terms of supporting factors and resources, the level of competitiveness of the tourism destination is above the average. As to the infrastructure, its convenience and accessibility of transportation are good enough, and the signage is proper arranged. There is a positive attitude towards the environment, economic, and social-cultural among the residents' and to some extent, they are satisfied very much. There is relationship between level of competitiveness and attitude; the higher the competitiveness is, the better attitude the local will hold; the better the infrastructure is built, the better the local attitude is. An Action Plan was proposed based on the result of the study.

For the tourism business, participants in the sector must be creative. Firstly, based on the local unique natural or cultural resources, they need to build or establish special tourism visiting projects, such as the Ming-dynasty Royal Tombs and mansions project; the peach-picking activity; the special village food tasting activity; the rice harvest participation activity; etc. Second, people with an economic or cultural interest in the local tourist areas need to truly value and cherish their unique local resources. Everyone should be actively involved in protecting the environment and ensuring that tourists do not damage to the area or pollute the local environment. Third, it is vital that the tourist industry does everything it can to maintain good relationships with residents. Tourist organizations should share some of their profits every year, to benefit the local population and promote harmony. Investment in more protective projects is vital. Helping local poor families to pay for their children's education will enable better long-term prospects for the local community and by extension, the tourist industry. Healthy relationships and a sharing of benefits across all parties involved in local tourism will promote sustainability, competitiveness, and environmental/cultural/tourism harmony. Fourth, In the process of participation in infrastructure construction, organizations should make use of their capital advantages, management advantages and technical advantages to make sure that planning decisions are reasonable and appropriate and integrate rural tourism resources with local needs.

For local government, their focus may be on the guidance of the rural tourism, the development of resources, and the building of the basic infrastructure. The local government should give full play to government functions and promote the transformation and upgrading of rural tourism infrastructure. Rural tourism is an important way to implement the rural revitalization strategy. They must create and provide more incentive policies, to attract social capital and investment in the basic infrastructure of rural tourism. During the development and integration phases of the rural tourism resources, the government must train the enterprises to give scientific and reasonable

layout and planning.

Rural Tourism business may consider having facilities for persons with disabled or special needs and several infrastructures needs to be decorated to be appealing enough. About facilitating, there are no issues both on the destination accessibility and information service. But they need to facilitate on bank service and souvenir products. They also need to strengthen the close relationship with the origin markets. Spirit of hospitality is well accepted and acknowledged. They are hospitable to have good communication with the tourists and the local good quality service gets them to stay longer.

For residents, giving full support to rural tourism development, developing, and maintaining good attitude towards tourists, and actively participating in business activities will pay dividends. From long-term perspective for the benefit the future generations, as residents, people should give full support to rural tourism development, which will upgrade all local infrastructure and facilities. To make the tourists have a good feeling about the local tourism, residents should also show their hospitality. Under the permission of the government, residents can also take part in relevant tourism business, particularly in the areas of food, accommodation, and other aspects of the hospitality sector. More and more people favor homestays and B&B accommodation over large hotels; this can benefit residents economically and lead to better standards of living.

For tourists, they may consider protecting the local natural scenic spots and environment, respect the local culture and residents, and give workable suggestions on the tourism development. It's the obligation for people to protect the natural and cultural environment. Our next generations will enjoy the same or better experiences or feelings based on our ongoing protection work. The good behavior of tourists is also appreciated by the locals, because it shows respect for the local living conditions. This will be most keenly felt among older members of the local population, for whom respect, and tradition hold a more important place than for many younger people. In areas rich in traditional culture, this is vitally important. Tourists must show respect while they are enjoying what local rural tourism has to offer.

Lastly, future researchers may take time to visit and live in some rural tourism sites extended periods of time, months if possible. Staying in a community for a longer period gives researchers a better chance to have face to face communication with the residents, the tourism enterprises, the local government, and the tourists. More visits to grass-roots rural tourism residents are encouraged, a more comprehensive understanding of the situation will help to focus research and identify gaps in the knowledge base which can be filled.

5. Reference

- Cao, X. (2021). Innovative transformation of traditional folk culture elements in the beautiful village tourism.
- Cheng, Y. (2019). Exploring the role of nonprofits in public service provision: Moving from coproduction to cogovernance. *Public Administration Review*, 79(2), 203-214.
- Guan, M. M., Bai, Y. M., & Liu, L. X. (2018). *Investigation and Reflection on uncivilized phenomena in Scenic spots -- Taking some scenic spots in Shandong, Tianjin and Jiangsu as examples*. New West.
- Lai, Y. F., Zhao, X. Q., Xie, P. J., & Shi, G. H. (2021). Tourism infrastructure construction from the perspective of rural revitalization — Take the Town of Dachang in Wushan County as an Example. *Management Science and Research*, 10, 42-46.
- Li, C., & Borbon, N. M. D. (2021). Tourists' motives, expectation and experience to historical sites in Hunan province. *International Journal of Research Studies in Management*, 9(3), 15-24.
- Liu, K. (2021). Research on poverty alleviation education and training of ethnic cultural tourism under the background of rural revitalization. *Global Charity*.
- Marasigan, M. A. Y., & Borbon, N. M. D. (2021). Destination competitiveness in the view of resort managers. *International Journal of Research Studies in Education*, 10(1), 23-35.
- Mo, Y., & Borbon, N. M. D. (2022). Interrelationship of Total Quality Management (TQM), job satisfaction and organizational commitment among hotel employees in Zhejiang and Hainan provinces in China towards

- a sustainable development framework. *International Journal of Research Studies in Management*, 10(3).
- Muresan, I. C., Oroian, C. F., Harun, R., Arion, F. H., Porutiu, A., Chiciudean, G. O., ... & Lile, R. (2016). Residents' attitude toward sustainable rural tourism development. *Sustainability*, 8(1), 100. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su8010100>
- Wang, X. Y., & Zhu, W. L. (2019). Analysis of rural tourism competitiveness and obstacle factors in Shandong Province. *Scientia Geographica Sinica*, 39(1), 147-155.
- Xing, J., Chang, C. M., & Gao, X. Q. (2021). A study on the perception and attitude of residents to the social impact of rural tourism: A Case Study of Key Rural Tourism Villages in Lanzhou City. *Journal of Lanzhou University of Arts and Science(Social Sciences)*, 37(4).
- Ylagan, M. A. C. (2018). Measuring the resort business competitiveness in Batangas Province. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education, Arts and Sciences*, 5(2), 99-109.
- Yuan, Y. (2014). Analysis and exploration of the current situation of public facilities in tourist attractions. *Beauty & Times*.