

Research on the Tourist Expectation in Rural Tourism

a Case of Tuanjie Township in Yunan Province

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¹**Abstract**—The development of rural tourism has been rapidly developed in China in recent years. But rural tourism is insufficient in many aspects. Based on a systematic review of rural tourism, this paper is focused on tourists' experience. Questionnaires are used in research. Statistic analyses with SPSS tools, such like T-test, correlation, average number are applied to get the results. I.P.A methods shows the factors which need to be improved. At last, suggestions are proposed.

Keywords—rural tourism; tourist expectation; Tuanjie Township.

I. INTRODUCTION

With the rapid economic and rural development, China has witnessed its springing up in rural tourism in the 1990s. The beautiful sceneries, idyllic sight and agricultural resources have met urban citizens' psychological needs in getting far away from cities to enjoy peace and serenity. Therefore, the rural tourism has entered a stage of vigorous development. However, the development of existing rural tourism in China is still immature, in which tourism market has been flooded with primary products. As a result, on the one hand, tourists in the demand of high-end products can not be satisfied; on the other hand, the image of rural tourism has always been trapped in medium and low levels.

This paper aims to share its findings in this regard. But due to the limitation of objective conditions, we can only select Tuanjie Township, in Kunming jurisdiction in Yunnan Province, which is of high accessible as the study target, hoping to put forward some opinions for the development of Tuanjie Township as well as set up a model for other similar rural tourism destinations.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

So far, there has been no uniform definition of rural tourism in the world. Generally speaking, the rural tourism mainly appears in the form of vacation in the developed areas such as Europe and America, which bestows it as green vacation [1], while it is mainly in the form of sighting in

Southeast Asia and East Asia, then it is regarded as agricultural sightseeing [2].

Rural tourism can be dated back to the mid-19th century. At that time, people suffered from high intensity and pressure of work caused by industrialization and urbanization. They want to get relaxed through outdoor activities, thereby; rural areas come to be their first choice [3].

Rural tourism affects the economic situation in countryside. Noel thought that rural tourism could be considered as the principal route for increasing employment of rural labors, while studying French rural tourism development [4]. Martin thought that the main customers of German rural tourism are families with children and the elder, whose traveling purpose is just for sightseeing and trip in a short distance, which is not favorable for the local economy [5]. Hussey summarized the influence of rural tourism on a fishing village in Bali Island, which brought both positive impact to local economic development and negative impact such as environmental pollution [6]. Therefore, scholars generally believed that the development of rural tourism will accelerate the development of relative industries and raise farmers' income as well. In the cultural aspect, Hohnhlz pointed out in his study on Malaysia and Germany that those who keep their rural environment, culture and social economic structure in original pattern will definitely attract more and more visitors. The main issue is how to protect the original rural resources while undertaking new development [7]. Reinhard built a model to analyze the status of cultural tourism in rural tourism and local people's opinion on tourism [8]. MacDonald and Roberta took eastern Canada as an example, and put forward that it would be more effective if closely combining rural tourism development with local ethnic culture [9].

In the aspect of management, governments should attach more importance to the development of rural tourism. Its main functions are to formulate development policies, provide manpower and financial support, carry out special institutional management and organize market exploration. Bachleitner illustrated the organizational management of Austrian agricultural tourism [10] in detail. In the study, he took Cyprus as an example and put forward that long-term investment and technical support are effective ways for developing rural tourism [11]. In general, as the development pattern of rural tourism is different from one place to another,

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there are great differences in management modes for each other.

III. BACKGROUND

Tuanjie Yi and Bai Township in Xishan District (short for Tuanjie Township) is located in west suburb of Kunming City, which is 17 km away from the downtown of Kunming. It covers an area of 254.8 square meters, with an average altitude of 2100 meters. A second-class express way connects it to downtown Kunming, and the traffic among villages within the township is also very convenient. Tuanjie Township is bestowed with distinct tourism resources, outstanding ecological character, exotic ethnic customs, and unique local flavor.

In the mid and late 1990s, Tuanjie Township put forward the blueprint of “initiating tourism industry to stimulate the development of the third industry”. In 1998, responding to the overall adjustment of agricultural structural optimization, Tuanjie Township opened many tourism agencies and launched rural tourism program, with eight farm households originally involved. In the late of 1999, the operation pattern of “rural home stay tourism” spread to the other tourism agencies. Meanwhile, Tuanjie Township constructed some ecological scenery spots one after another such as Qipan Mountain, Baozi Valley, Guihuang Tower, Huanxi grass skiing court and Dahe orchard. Besides, it developed and cultivated four tourism products including plateau Fuji apple, sunflower seed oil, Tuanjie ham and Longtan source. In April 2004, Tuanjie Township was conferred as one of the first nationwide agricultural tourism demonstration sites.

However, on the whole, Tuanjie Township still stays in the primary developing stage. The crucial factors for attracting visitors, including natural ecological environment, community ecological environment, agricultural ecological environment, and elements of ecological tourism (facilities and services such as ecological accommodation, dining, shopping and transportation) have not been fully acknowledged. As a result, it fails to meet the demands of tourists in purified and beautified ecological environment, in “countryside taste”, “local character” and “ethnic features” of cultural ecological environment, as well as in the true ecology of agricultural producing system and security of foods [1]. The vital issue for the healthy development of rural tourism in Tuanjie Township is to improve ecological quality of rural tourism.

IV. RESEARCH DESIGN

Applying five-grade SERVQUAL method of PZB, a two-column questionnaire composed of 17 important factors considering rural tourism has been formulated according to expectation of tourists and actual situation. 100 copies of the questionnaire have been given out, 81 of which have been returned, with a return rate of 81%.

A. Descriptive analysis of the samples

From the tourists’ gender, the proportion of male and female is moderate, which shows that there is no great gender difference regarding the customers of “rural home inns”.

Most tourists fall in the age group of 40-59, who are the principal consumers in the rural tourism of this place. This result corresponds to the developing programs of orchard and fishing. Another major age group lies between 18 and 29, as those in this group prefer activities with large amount of exercise such as grass-skiing.

As to the education background, a normal distribution is found. Most consumers’ education is from high school to undergraduate level, which primarily matches the percentage of residents’ educational structure of Kunming, the largest tourist source market of Tuanjie Township. So, there is no evident partial difference in tourists’ educational level, that is, a typical market characteristic of rural tourism to attract tourists in a wide range.

Judging from income, tourists who come to Tuanjie Township have relatively less income. Those with a monthly income less than 1000 yuan and those with a monthly income within 1001-2500 yuan occupy a large proportion of tourists. The residents’ income level of Kunming, the biggest tourist source market of Tuanjie Township, is relatively lower, which reflects that the rural tourism of Tuanjie Township still stays at a relatively lower consumption level, generally identical to the overall development level of China’s existing rural tourism.

TABLE I. PROFILE OF SAMPLE

	Numbers	Percentage
Gender		
Male	38	47
Female	43	53
Age		
< 18	6	7
18-29	23	28
30-39	14	17
40-59	27	34
> 60	11	14
education		
Primary or below	18	22
secondary	40	49.4
Post-secondary	23	28.7
Household income		
< 1000	31	38
1001-2500	29	36
2500-4000	18	22
4000 or above	3	4

B. Relative analysis of the sample

Following two-tailed test, take 17 expectation factors as dependent variables, and respectively take the gender group, age group, educational level group and monthly income group as independent variables; afterwards, apply the paired comparison method so as to find out the relationship between the four groups and the 17 factors. The aim is to study different expectations on rural tourism generated from different genders, ages, educational levels and income levels.

The significance probability values of statistic (Sig.(2-tailed)) obtained through testing the correlation coefficient between corresponding genders and 17 expectation factors remarkably exceed 0.05. So there is no remarkable correlativity between them (the smaller Pearson correlation

coefficient, the less the correlativity). It can be concluded that there is no direct relationship between genders of tourists and their preference for Tuanjie Township's tourism. It can be seen from table 2.

TABLE II. PEARSONS CORRELATION ANALYSIS ON GENDER

factors	Pearson Correlation	factors	Pearson Correlation
	Sig. (2-tailed)		Sig. (2-tailed)
overall rural environment	-.066	scenic narration	.026
	.557		.816
rural life style	-.104	service level	-.108
	.356		.338
traditional folk	-.158	traffic convenience	.004
	.158		.969
unique rural sightseeing	-.108	catering price	.019
	.336		.867
natural and fresh air	-.186	accommodation price	.017
	.096		.881
distinctive folk cuisine	-.057	price of amusement activities	.056
	.611		.620
local crafts and commodities	-.131	sanitary condition of board and lodging	-.053
	.243		.637
abundant rural experience activities	.002	local social security	-.044
	.984		.696
local residents' attitude	.137		
	.223		

As shown in the below table, the significance probability value of "Expectation on abundant rural experience activities" and "Expectation on the price of amusement activities" is 0.011, lying between 0.01 and 0.05. So there exists negative correlation between these two items and age, but there is no correlation between other factors and age, which is the same as the expected results.

TABLE III. PEARSONS CORRELATION ANALYSIS ON AGE

factors	Pearson Correlation	factors	Pearson Correlation
	Sig. (2-tailed)		Sig. (2-tailed)
overall rural environment	-.142	scenic narration	-.145
	.205		.198
rural life style	-.122	service level	-.055
	.277		.625
traditional folk	-.067	traffic convenience	-.173
	.551		.124
unique rural sightseeing	-.118	catering price	-.002
	.292		.988
natural and fresh air	.032	accommodation price	-.068
	.779		.546
distinctive folk cuisine	-.027	price of amusement activities	-.282*
	.813		.011
local crafts and commodities	-.050	sanitary condition of board and lodging	-.144
	.656		.198
abundant rural experience activities	-.281*	local social security	-.119
	.011		.291

local residents' attitude	.066		
	.559		

It can be seen from below table 4 and 5, that the tested result is inconsistent with the assumption that "different educational levels will affect the expectations on rural life style, folk custom, rural unique products, and experience and so on. That is, educational level is in direct proportion to these expectations". It can be concluded that the price of tourist items in Tuanjie Township is relatively lower. No matter what kind of income the tourists have, their price sensibility to this area is lower, while the tourists' educational levels still fails to positively affect their expectations on rural tourism here.

TABLE IV. PEARSONS CORRELATION ANALYSIS ON HOUSEHOLD

factors	Pearson Correlation	factors	Pearson Correlation
	Sig. (2-tailed)		Sig. (2-tailed)
overall rural environment	.057	scenic narration	.260*
	.616		.020
rural life style	.075	service level	.150
	.511		.185
traditional folk	.143	traffic convenience	.047
	.205		.680
unique rural sightseeing	.067	catering price	-.014
	.556		.902
natural and fresh air	-.037	accommodation price	.022
	.744		.844
distinctive folk cuisine	.169	price of amusement activities	.083
	.133		.464
local crafts and commodities	.154	sanitary condition of board and lodging	.033
	.172		.774
abundant rural experience activities	.180	local social security	-.007
	.110		.948
local residents' attitude	.329**		

TABLE V. PEARSONS CORRELATION ANALYSIS ON EDUCATION

factors	Pearson Correlation	factors	Pearson Correlation
	Sig. (2-tailed)		Sig. (2-tailed)
overall rural environment	.058	scenic narration	.220*
	.605		.049
rural life style	.113	service level	-.043
	.317		.702
traditional folk	.195	traffic convenience	-.043
	.080		.704
unique rural sightseeing	.087	catering price	-.282*
	.439		.011
natural and fresh air	.045	accommodation price	-.188
	.693		.093
distinctive folk cuisine	-.006	price of amusement activities	.071
	.961		.529
local crafts and commodities	.004	sanitary condition of board and lodging	.035
	.971		.755
abundant	.162	local social	.058

rural experience activities	.148	security	.608
local residents' attitude	.008		

C. Analysis on difference significance of sample average

Seen from the table 7, most of the T-test significance probabilities are $\text{sig}=0.000<0.05$, which shows that most of the factors have significant difference between tourists expectation and actual state. That is to say, most of the tourism situation in this area cannot reach tourists' expectation and meet the demands of them.

D. Analysis on sample average and variance

Seen from table 7, all of the 17 average expectation values of sampling tourists regarding the destination are higher than the average actual level. Except that the item of "sanitary condition for and board and lodging" reaches the differential of above one, differentials of other items are relatively small. Thus, judging from the whole situation, although the tourism level of Tuanjie Township does not reach tourists' satisfactory degree, it is just so-so. Variance is a measure of sample fluctuation obtained by taking the mean of the squared deviations of the sample data from their mean. The larger the variance, the greater fluctuation rate of sample data is. Judging from the value of variance in the table, the fluctuation rate of samples sits around one, bearing a relatively smaller fluctuation rate. Through such a method of calculation, the obtained average value is of typical representativeness.

V. RESULTS OF DATA ANALYSIS

Referencing I.P.A. (importance performance analysis) figure here, the following explanations can be got:

Put those factors of good tourists' expectations and actual situation as indexes in the first quadrant. These factors include overall rural environment (1), rural life style (2), unique rural sightseeing (4), natural and fresh air (5), distinctive folk cuisine (6) and local social security (17), among which rural air receives the highest degree of expectation and satisfaction from tourists.

Put those factors of lower degree of tourists' expectation but having better actual state as indexes in the second quadrant. These factors include traditional folk (3), local residents' attitude (9), catering price (13) and accommodation price (14), which shows that rural tourism is closer to daily life, so tourists do not have higher expectations on folk characteristics; and that tourists have no strong price sensibility, so there is some space for actual price to escalate.

Put those factors of both low expectation and poor actual experience as indexes in the third quadrant. These factors include unique local crafts and commodities (7), abundant rural experience activities (8), scenic narration (10), service level (11) and price of amusement activities (15).

Put those factors of higher expectation value but lower actual experience as indexes in the fourth quadrant. These factors include degree of traffic convenience (12) and

sanitary condition of board and lodging (16). The responsible managers shall attach great attention to these factors and make corresponding improvement, because these factors are crucial for enhancing higher degree of satisfaction and revisiting rate. Tuanjie Township is far from Kunming, so many families in Kunming City have to drive there during holidays due to the inconvenient public traffic. In light of this, there should be nonstop buses for families with no cars in such big scenic zones. Furthermore, there is no uniform management standard for rural tourism, board and lodging is provided by local farm households. Similarly, board and lodging as well as cuisine of rural tourism in Tuanjie Township are folk houses and home-cooked meals provided by local residents, the sanitary condition of which can not be guaranteed.

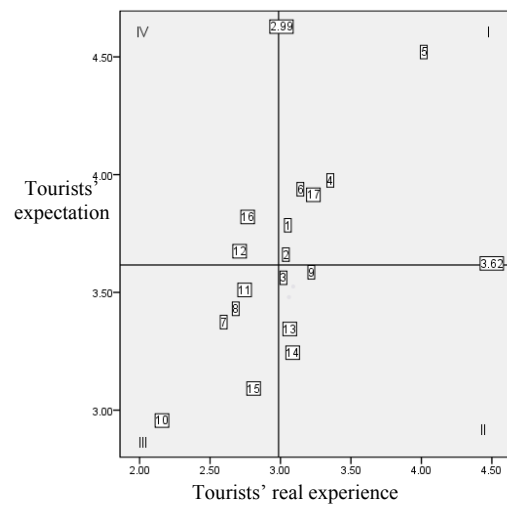


Figure 1. Example of a ONE-COLUMN figure caption.

VI. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

From the analysis of the questionnaires, some conclusions can be reached:

First, to transform from household owned business to specialized management: for lack of regulated management, many facilities cannot meet the tourists' demands, such as sanitary condition and public security, etc.

Second, to develop unique commodities of their own and pay much attention to brand effect: although Tuanjie Township is abundant in rural tourism resources, there is still no representative project; in the future it should develop one or two representative projects.

Third, to pay attention to marketing and expand tourist source markets as much as possible: marketing cannot be only limited to the original methods of public praise and passive communication, it should adopt various media to enlarge its positive impact and attract more and more tourists from inside and outside of the province.

Fourth, it cannot only rely on lower price for marketing; it should pay more attention to the quality and unique features of tourism commodities. Proper increase in the existing prices is feasible after upgrading the levels of

commodities, as the consumers are not sensitive to current lower price.

Fifth, the government should strengthen the construction of infrastructural facilities: though the roads are unblocked, there is no nonstop bus to the scenic spot. It is suggested to open such kind of buses connecting the downtown with the scenic spot.

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TABLE VI. T-TEST

		Paired difference			t	Sig
		Mean	Std.deviation	Std.error mean		
Pair 1	overall rural environment	.69136	1.16878	.12986	5.324	.000
Pair 2	rural life style	.58025	1.09389	.12154	4.774	.000
Pair 3	traditional folk	.54321	1.28500	.14278	3.805	.000
Pair 4	unique rural sightseeing	.64198	1.09896	.12211	5.257	.000
Pair 5	natural and fresh air	.51852	.89598	.09955	5.208	.000
Pair 6	distinctive folk cuisine	.81481	.98883	.10987	7.416	.000
Pair 7	local crafts and commodities	.77778	1.19373	.13264	5.864	.000
Pair 8	abundant rural experience activities	.75309	1.23015	.13668	5.510	.000
Pair 9	local residents' attitude	.37037	1.03010	.11446	3.236	.002
Pair 10	scenic narration	.79012	1.39388	.15488	5.102	.000
Pair 11	service level	.76543	1.23766	.13752	5.566	.000
Pair 12	traffic convenience	.96296	1.15590	.12843	7.498	.000
Pair 13	catering price	.25926	1.28236	.14248	1.820	.073
Pair 14	accommodation price	.18519	1.34268	.14919	1.241	.218
Pair 15	price of amusement activities	.29630	1.44434	.16048	1.846	.069
Pair 16	sanitary condition of board and lodging	1.06173	1.42606	.15845	6.701	.000

TABLE VII. AVERAGE AND VARIANCE

factors			mean	variance	Mean deviation
Pair 1	overall rural environment	Exp.	3.78	.925	0.69
		actual	3.09	.805	
Pair 2	rural life style	Exp.	3.64	1.108	0.58
		actual	3.06	.859	
Pair 3	traditional folk	Exp.	3.56	1.625	0.54
		actual	3.01	1.237	
Pair 4	unique rural sightseeing	Exp.	3.99	1.087	0.64
		actual	3.35	1.229	
Pair 5	natural and fresh air	Exp.	4.53	.477	0.52
		actual	4.01	.962	
Pair 6	distinctive folk cuisine	Exp.	3.95	.848	0.81
		actual	3.14	.994	
Pair 7	local crafts and commodities	Exp.	3.38	1.539	0.78
		actual	2.60	1.117	
Pair 8	abundant rural experience activities	Exp.	3.44	1.575	0.75
		actual	2.69	1.341	
Pair 9	local residents' attitude	Exp.	3.59	.994	0.37
		actual	3.22	.750	
Pair 10	scenic narration	Exp.	2.96	1.786	0.79
		actual	2.17	1.120	
Pair 11	service level	Exp.	3.52	1.178	0.77

		actual	2.75	1.088	
Pair 12	traffic convenience	Exp.	3.68	1.296	0.96
		actual	2.72	1.381	
Pair 13	catering price	Exp.	3.32	1.121	0.26
		actual	3.06	.934	
Pair 14	accommodation price	Exp.	3.27	1.000	0.19
		actual	3.09	.955	
Pair 15	price of amusement activities	Exp.	3.11	1.525	0.30
		actual	2.81	1.378	
Pair 16	sanitary condition of board and lodging	Exp.	3.83	1.295	1.06
		actual	2.77	1.407	
Pair 17	local social security	Exp.	3.93	1.519	0.69
		actual	3.23	1.132	
Total		Exp.	3.62		0.63
		actual	2.99		