

# Assessment Research on the Economic Impact of Xi 'an Rural Tourism

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**Abstract:** The rural tourism has become an important step of developing local economy. The reasonable management, exploitation, utilization and protection of rural tourist resources can not only promote effectively the local economic growth, but also further protect the local ecological environment and folk cultures. Xi'an is a city with long-standing history and profound culture, and the countryside surrounding which also embraces diversified cultures. Hence, it is abound with rural tourist resources. Accelerating the exploitation of rural tourist resource plays an increasingly crucial role in upgrading the local economy. This paper substantially expounds the impacts of Xi'an tourism on local economy and discusses the approaches that can promote its economy.

## 1. Introduction

Rural tourism in our country is still in its initial stage, and enduring market appeal has not yet been taken shape. By virtue of relevant investigations, there are some features about the Xi'an rural tourist market. First of all, the potential market is large which demonstrates high training capacity. Secondly, the major customer groups are self-driving travellers or backpackers, and they are mostly recommended by friends and then to improve its publicity. Thirdly, the age and occupation disparity determines that their needs for rural tourism are diversified. Fourthly, the rural consumers' consumption power is higher than expected; Fifthly, Xi'an is not yet equipped with enough reception capacity as a rural tourist destination.

## 2. The Influence of Rural Tourism on the Local Economy

Rural tourism can transfer the consumption of urban residents to the countryside, and meet their psychological needs of going "back to the countryside". Meanwhile, rural tourism can vigorously boost local service sector and establish high value-added economic industry, which can effectively adjust its industrial structure, mainly primary and secondary industry being dominant. Rural tourism should meet the following requirements, including catering, accommodation, transportation, shopping, entertainment and etc. Hence, this will result in the rising of related industries (such as transportation, accommodation, agricultural and its sideline industry and etc). Ultimately, it can contribute to adjusting and optimizing rural industrial structures and promoting its economic growth.

The development of rural tourism is bound to drive related industries, such as handcraft industry, agricultural and sideline products industry. As a result, the approaches for villagers to get incomes are diversified, no longer singular [2]. In the past, the income of villagers is mainly from the selling of agricultural products or working in nearby factories. Apart from improving rural industrial structures, it also offers more employment opportunities. Villager can choose either to participate in the management of tourist industry or to be employed in related service sector in accordance with self condition. To further promote the development of rural tourism, the government also introduced a series of effective supporting policies and funding investments that can furnish strong support for villagers "to start up their own business".

Rural tourism is in the service sector which requires the participator to be armed with upgraded service awareness, skills and qualities. Villagers begin to contact urban tourists frequently and understand their needs so as to provide better service. In a long term, villagers will be unconsciously influenced and start to get a hint of and accept their civilized behaviors. In order to better communicate and exchange views with urban tourists, villagers will take the initiative to

learn mandarin and new knowledge.

### **3. The Advantages of Rural Tourism in Xi'an**

Xi'an, located in Guanzhong basin, middle part of Yellow River, can be regarded as a central area of our country's geography. Xi'an is bounded on the south by Qinling Mountains, north by Weihe plain, east by famous Huashan scenic area and west by Taibai nature reserve. Such abundant tourism resources have laid a solid foundation for growth of rural tourism. Xi'an belongs to warm temperature zone and monsoon climate featured by semi-humidity, four distinct seasons, warm climate, fresh air. All of this is suitable for urban tourists to come here for leisure.

Xi'an, the biggest city in north-western inland of China, plays a pivotal role for West Development because of its linking of south to north, and east to west. As a renowned ancient city with rich history and culture, Xi'an contains profound culture and history and boasts large numbers of tourist resources. Xi'an has served as industry base of higher education, scientific research, national defence and advanced technology. In the end, comprehensive scientific and technological advantages rank top. Nowadays, Xi'an has become an exchange centre of eastern and western cultures and also a famous tourist city. Statistics show that only in 2013 Xi'an GDP exceeded 312.174 billion Yuan, increased by 15.23% than last year. The first industry increased by 6.24% year-on-year, the second industry by 15.27%, and the third industry by 16.29% [4].

### **4. The Problems Arising from Rural Tourism in Xi'an**

The model of rural tourism in Xi'an is mainly for leisure which just focuses on home stay, farm food, rural scenery appreciation and etc. Many tourists hold that, they do not deepen their understanding for Xi'an countryside by this model as it is the same style with rural tourism in other parts and does not form its own characteristics. Therefore, many tourists who have been here will not come back again, let alone to recommend to other friends and relatives. The exploitation of rural tourist resources in Xi'an just rests on the surface and does not deepen it in aspects of local folk culture activities and history. Most city visitors said, they actually are more eager to experience the real rural living style, such as taking part in farm work or learning local cuisines.

In rural tourism, scenic spots and receptionist farm families do not forge a strictly hierarchical relationship, which results in the reception farmer making their decisions at will and decentralizing operation. Most of receptionist farmers are a family as a unit. Such organization is unable to fit the market competition and tourist reception capacity and as a result triggers tourist resources waste and vicious competitions. Besides, most city visitor takes leisure as priority, and then it is novelty. Simple catering and accommodation cannot satisfy urban tourists. If it is unable to innovate and forge unique tourist brand, the existing rural tourist market will be shrank.

The low reception capacity can be demonstrated in the following three aspects: defective infrastructure, lack of management ability, and low service standards. Due to the lack of funding investments, most countryside does not form effective tourist network between tourist-guest source and tourist destination. Whether in the tourist destination, or scenic areas, sophisticated infrastructure has not yet established. It has caused inconvenience to tourist and left bad impression upon them. In terms of catering and accommodation, villagers pay too much attention to the cost. Besides, lack of human resources and extensive operation make the catering and accommodation unsatisfactory. Moreover, attitudes and service quality of the receptionists also have deficiencies. In peak season, if some visitors complain about the catering and accommodation, the personnel on duty does not negotiate with them to accomplish an effective solution, and instead put on the numb face indicating "love to eat or not, love to live or not". Visitors feel angry, and helpless.

### **5. Strategies to Deepen Growth of Rural Tourism in Xi'an**

There are disparities in countryside situations and tourist resources, so the rural tourist models are also various. Rural tourist types mainly can be divided into catering oriented, breeding oriented,

garden sightseeing oriented, and leisure oriented. Catering oriented type pays much attention to use of local ingredients, at the same time to the plating and nutrition, and also to building up favourable catering atmosphere. While breeding oriented type can launch the activity called "Agricola", such as countryside living by fishing can attract visitors by it. Sightseeing oriented type should center on planning and ecological protection. Urban tourists just intend to appreciate the countryside natural scenery if they come to this type of destination. The leisure oriented type lays emphasis on comfort, cost-effectiveness, and tidiness. Most seniors will choose this type. The demonstrators of rural tourism should choose suitable types according to the real situations of their countryside. However, it is unwise to be bound by just one type. A complex pattern of tourist model should be built up in line with situations in different regions of countryside.

Villagers mostly act as the receptionists in the rural tourism. The overall planning and publicity for the tourism still needs the government to complete. Xi'an tourist center and countryside tourist portal should construct effective information network exchange center, well complete the previous publicity and provide basic tourist information for visitors. It is necessary to inform the visitors that there indeed exists such a place, what this place possesses, and how to get there. Meanwhile, countryside tourist portal should obtain a preliminary assessment of visitor volumes through information exchange centers and prepare for reception. Apart from that, traffic congestion and reception chaos should be effectively avoided in the peak season.

Township government should arrange necessary training for those involving in the reception service. The training program includes: basic skills of tourist service, the improvement of service awareness and service quality. At the same time, the township government should pay attention to training of four types of talents: family involved in rural tourism, foregoer, inheritor of folk culture handcraft and cadre of township tourism. Based on think tanks constituted by those four types of talents, a highly-qualified and highly-capable management team is built up and strengthens the exploitation of countryside folk culture.

Rural tourist infrastructure is divided into two main parts: firstly, the rural internal infrastructure should be improved, such as sewage discharge setting and natural gas pipeline laying; secondly, transportation system should be upgraded. The modernization of construction inside of countryside can not only meet the needs of urban visitors, but also improve the quality of rural tourism. The scope of the countryside is large, which determines that tourists mainly take cars and buses as transportation. Transportation system is related to customer flows and affects indirectly the reception capacity in countryside. Good transportation system can attract more tourists, and as will as be convenient for tourists to understand local history and culture, and go sightseeing.

## **6. Conclusion**

As a whole, the tourist industry in Xi 'an is relatively complete and standardized. Although the rural tourism is still in initial stage, it has laid good foundation. Xi 'an rural tourism has a very positive influence on the local economy, and therefore, the township government and relevant departments should actively promote and guide the development of rural tourism. All above measures are important to promote rural tourism in Xi'an, that is, to formulate appropriate development program, to improve the qualities of those engaged in rural tourism, and to build up infrastructure.

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