

# Analysis of Challenges and Strategies of Rural Tourism for Targeted Poverty Alleviation

Jian Lin

Hubei Three Gorges Polytechnic, Yichang, Hubei, 443000, China

**Keywords:** Rural tourism, Targeted poverty alleviation, Difficulties, Strategies

**Abstract:** China, a large developing country in the world, has witnessed the poverty restricting the socioeconomic development. The rural tourism, as one of the strategies for targeted poverty alleviation, is a key project implemented by our nation to facilitate a more harmonious social and economic society. With rural areas being abundant tourism resources and treated as its development object, rural tourism is the crucial part of the whole targeted poverty alleviation program. This paper illustrates the current situation of poverty alleviation nowadays, and then demonstrates the difficulties, drawbacks and reasons during this process by analyzing the status quo and challenges of the combination of rural tourism and targeted poverty alleviation. Finally, some effective strategies shall be provided in this paper to cope with these difficulties and challenges and to change the poor face of Chinese villages so as to lift people there out of poverty and advance the social development.

## 1. Introduction

As the social economy rapidly grows after reform and opening-up, the overall socioeconomic development is unbalanced due to the uneven development in urban and rural areas. Therefore, fighting rural poverty through development plays a vital part in improving economy. The new type of poverty eradication combining rural tourism and targeted poverty alleviation has been put forward, featuring wide coverage, low investment, obvious effect and low rate of return-to-poverty amid the dramatic development of tourism. Compared to the extensive poverty eradication conducted previously, it encourages more targeted strategy<sup>[1]</sup>. At present, many villages have implemented the poverty-relief work of combining rural tourism with targeted poverty alleviation. As a great project beneficial to the nation as well as people, some achievements have been achieved. However, various problems and drawbacks appear during this process, resulting in some unsatisfactory outcomes and a huge gap between the outcomes and our expectations. Therefore, it is important for departments and all communities to find and resolve these challenges and difficulties so as to ensure an effective poverty relief work and facilitate the economic growth in these poor areas.

## 2. The Overview of Rural Tourism for Targeted Poverty Alleviation

### 2.1 A Proposal of Rural Tourism for Poverty Alleviation

One of our nation key projects is to carry out rural tourism for targeted poverty alleviation and to improve the progress of tourist industry in distressed areas and targeted poverty alleviation so as to make rural people rich by getting rid of poverty. At the beginning of 2014, China National Tourism Administration introduced incentive policies and a small amount of bank credit loans through the implementation of rural tourism enrichment project, allowing rural tourism for poverty relief to enter the stage of targeted poverty alleviation. As the work goes on, the trial villages are getting more and more. The number of people out of poverty through rural tourism increases gradually according to the data determined by these trial sites. Therefore, it has been put forward clearly in the document of rural alleviation through development that the advantages and conditions should be made full use of in these poor areas to carry out the tourism poverty eradication projects.

## **2.2 Determinants of Rural Tourism for Targeted Poverty Alleviation**

First, the fundamental factor for the implementation of rural tourism for targeted poverty alleviation is the ample tourism resources in these areas. Without these resources or considering the development of rural tourism, some other types of poverty relief shall be chosen to help these villages get rid of poverty. Developing rural tourism is just one of the various methods, so what kind of poverty relief method matters the implementation of rural tourism for targeted poverty alleviation.

Second, the market for rural tourism is the key for targeted poverty alleviation. Where there is a market, there is consumption, which means that the market and consumer groups can reinforce each other. So rural tourism cannot help poverty eradication without consumers. As people enjoy a better life and pursue high requirements increasingly, rural tourism, as a new high-quality travel mode, is more attractive than others. Statistics show that the rural tourism prevailing now cannot just increase the income of poverty-stricken families, but also facilitate economic growth in distressed areas.

Third, poverty alleviation calls for the introduction of numerous talents to ensure rural tourism for targeted poverty alleviation. Making full use of the two external advantages of abundant tourist resources and the market in these areas, these talents can put the poverty relief policies into effect precisely. With their ability, diligence and courage, they can give all the feedback in time to the superior department and assist in making related solution when some problems face them during this process. Therefore, the professional poverty alleviation talents guarantee the work.

## **2.3 Significance of Implementing Rural Tourism for Targeted Poverty Alleviation**

First of all, it plays a vital role in adjusting industrial structures and furthering tourism system reform. Besides focusing on its own performance, the tourism development in poor areas is required to make full use of its advantages in line with the local conditions to make more areas and people get rid of poverty and become rich. So the industrial structures in these areas should be re-planned and readjusted to coordinate with the development of tourism. Moreover, structural reform should be conducted in order to achieve breakthroughs and satisfy the current development requirements.

Second, it is conducive to lift these poor areas out of poverty. China now still has vast areas in poor condition. With severe natural condition, slow socioeconomic development, these areas still own a low economy. But some advantages matters also. With its rich rural tourism resources and natural conditions, they are the right destinations to develop this industry. It is the most effective supplement to poverty eradication measures for its obvious merits of clear targets, fast poverty alleviation rate, wide profit range for targeted group and long beneficial period.

Third, it helps the optimization of regional economic structure. China has seen a rapid growth in tourism after reform and opening-up, and there will be a brighter future in this field. The poverty eradication through tourism development is a way of allowing rural people to get rid of poverty and become rich by developing the rural tourism in these poor areas, which meets our nation's requirements of the development of the tourism and regional economy. Besides, as our country's economy grows, it is a must to optimize their local economic structure, especially in some areas with sluggish economy. The rural economic growth will be hindered by these extensive poverty relief methods. Therefore, with qualified conditions, developing tourism in poor areas conforms to the requirement of the optimization of regional economic structure, and is the new path of the economic development and transformation in poor areas.

## **3. Difficulties Facing Rural Tourism for Targeted Poverty Alleviation and Its Reasons**

### **3.1 No Sustainable Poverty Alleviation Idea and Unreasonable Development Plan**

The only factor they considered in developing rural tourism for targeted poverty alleviation is whether there would be numerous customers in local, resulting in many people flocking to these scenic areas, exceeding the environment capacity and lowering the quality of tourism. A large number of debris and rubbish are left in these areas, which causes a serious threat to the ecological environment of these scenic spots. All above reflect that the model of sustainable development does

not play its part very well, and the coordination between economic development and environmental conservation does not go well. The main reason for that is tourists, the main consumer group of rural tourism market, are key to drive the economic growth in poor areas.

### **3.2 False Data Resulting in Apparent Poverty in Poor Areas**

Poverty alleviation is an economic development project carrying out by Chinese government. Some areas provide false data and misinformation for enjoying the advantages brought by poverty relief policies in the long run. The falsification mainly is the exaggeration of population and economic income in these poor villages to obtain the qualification of poverty relief. The way to confirm the population size is just through the estimation of the local officials or poverty alleviation organizations instead of an effective standard. That is the reason why there is a gap between the indicator distribution of poverty alleviation by superiors and the reality. In addition, some areas with qualified rural resources misreport data for poverty alleviation quota to fight for more beneficial policies, and develop without consent, taking the local economy into consideration, which violates the principle and original intention of poverty alleviation.

### **3.3 Unscientific Condition Assessment and Imperfect Infrastructure**

The intention of developing rural tourism is to drive the rural economy through its natural resources. However, the rural infrastructure is far behind the urban construction. Rural areas are weak in geography, roads, transportation, Internet and health, and the development of these conditions are the prerequisites for poverty alleviation. With poor understanding and implementation of poverty alleviation policies by relevant departments, these assessment of development conditions cannot be well supported and other development indicators are easy to be neglected, which may lead to a very high investment cost of poverty alleviation.

### **3.4 Low Degree of Cultural and Ideological and Negative Poverty Alleviation**

A large population in rural areas, most people here just finish their primary or secondary education, having relatively low degree of education. Influenced by traditional culture, they all are conservative, backward both in their thought and concept so that they may misunderstand many policies and things. Meanwhile, they are reluctant to take the initiative to accept new things, which means it's difficult for them to join in the targeted poverty alleviation service and construction of rural tourism. So this is the reason for negative poverty alleviation. In addition, with a large amount of external investment, poverty alleviation lacks internal motivation.

### **3.5 Non-Standard Poverty Alleviation Policies and Procedures Disclosure System**

Nowadays, loose, non-standard public poverty alleviation policies and working procedures in many rural areas lead to the failure of some poverty alleviation work to abide by the principles and timely disclosure in accordance with regulations. This behavior reduces the villagers' trust in poverty alleviation work and personnel, and even seriously affected the credibility of government departments and public opinion. Especially when it comes to the rural funds, it is easy for people to treat it as corruption, which calls for a strict regulation to prevent such problems.

## **4. Strategies for Resolving the Difficulties Facing Rural Tourism for Targeted Poverty Alleviation**

### **4.1 Keeping the Principle of Sustainable Development on Poverty Alleviation**

The country should combine sustainable development into rural tourism for targeted poverty alleviation in policy aspect and adhere to the principle of sustainable development in rural tourism, changing the previous way of poverty eradication of focusing on economic growth and neglecting the rural environmental protection. It is very essential to reasonably develop the rural tourism in line with the principle of sustainable development amid the environment conservation. In addition, the

township and county officials should formulate corresponding protection measures for scenic spots and carry out real-time inspection to avoid adverse influence, affecting poverty alleviation.

#### **4.2 Strengthening the Governments' Ability to Identify Poverty**

In order to avoid false data on poverty in some rural areas, the government needs to strengthen its ability to identify poverty, conduct real-time on-site investigation and real statistics, which can help to implement rural tourism for targeted poverty alleviation there. A copy of specific statistical report in line with the local industrial development and poverty changes should be included, other than the population of poor people, family conditions and geographical distribution. Relevant departments should strengthen the supervision of local government departments, establish a perfect supervision mechanism for poverty data, preventing the local government from making poverty data.

#### **4.3 Perfecting the Mechanism for the Assessment of Development Conditions and Improving Infrastructure Construction**

The assessment of rural tourism development conditions is mainly about two major resources, i.e. tourism resources and social resources. It is necessary to know whether the existing resources in the village belong to natural landscape or cultural landscape for assessing the tourism resources, and choose the appropriate tourism standards by judging the categories. Geographical location, transportation, talents, market and etc. are social resources, and the evaluation should go to whether there is a market first, and then the saturation of the market. Besides, it is essential to facilitate the existing infrastructure construction in the countryside. The countryside close to the city will have greater advantages to develop its rural tourism.

#### **4.4 Introducing Reliable Talents and Changing the Negative Situation**

People in many villages, with low cultural and ideological values, reject and resist the poverty alleviation policies, making it difficult for our poverty alleviation work. A large number of ambitious young talents with high cultural education and ideological awareness are needed in the countryside. They are needed to popularize knowledge and bring benefits to the people, and build mutual trust with each other. Then, they can let people actively participate in the targeted poverty alleviation work, and gradually change the passive poverty alleviation.

#### **4.5 Conducting Sunshine Management of Poverty Alleviation in Poor Areas**

For the sake of preventing private misappropriation of poverty alleviation funds and affecting the targeted poverty alleviation achievements, It is very vital to establish a sound, transparent management mechanism to avoid corruption by ensuring a public usage and management of alleviation funds. In particular, the distribution of state poverty alleviation funds needs to be strictly managed to prevent malicious deduction. In addition, specialized inspection departments should be set up to oversee the alleviation work so as to make sure the better results when poverty alleviation cooperates with other industries.

### **5. Summary**

It is widely known that rural tourism, the main part of targeted poverty alleviation, is the vital way and decisive factor for poverty eradication in poor areas. We already had a clear understanding of the original intention of the targeted poverty alleviation policy and the important factors effecting the success of poverty alleviation projects, and paid more attention to the influencing factors in the implementation process. Rural tourism and targeted poverty alleviation are faced with various difficulties in different areas, and this paper classifies the above difficulties so as to assist the whole work. Finally, some strategies are put forward in line with these difficulties, making a better development of tourism, economy and even the whole socioeconomic society.

## References

- [1] Shi Meishan. Rural Tourism and Targeted Poverty Alleviation Operating Mechanism, Predicaments and Solutions, *Agricultural Economy*, 2019(05):59-60.
- [2] Zhu Xiaojie, Yang Zhuquan. Research on Rural Tourism Revitalization Amid Targeted Poverty Alleviation-Taking Fuchuan County as an Example, *Labor Security World*, 2019(12):69-70+72.
- [3] Liu Shengping, He Hongli. Research on Rural Tourism Development Amid Targeted Poverty Alleviation, *Vocation Tour*, 2019(04):29.
- [4] Gao Hongqi. Research on The Integrated Development Model of Rural Tourism and Targeted Poverty Alleviation, *Vocation Tour*, 2019(04):60-61.