

Stimulating Rural Tourism in Chongzhou, Sichuan, China

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Abstract. The development of rural tourism industry not only brings an expanded revenue model in the Chinese tourism market, but also requires the improvement of rural infrastructure, the quality of tourism service, and establishment of local rural characteristics. Therefore, how could the governmental interventions supervise the entire rural tourism industry development, in order to promote rural tourism business, achieving sustainable development goal? Based on the current rural tourism situation in Chongzhou and certain investigation, this paper proposes the remarkable development concept of innovation, coordination, greening, opening, and sharing. The authors analyzed the local rural tourism and generalized some prospects. This will stimulate the further study in this field and benefit the prospective development of rural tourism in Chongzhou.

Introduction: rural tourism in Chongzhou

Generally, rural area, which opposites to the urban area, includes the natural environments, such as sea, mountains, and deserts. The rural tourism, as a new filed in service industry, has been developed since 1970s. The rural tourism usually refers to the tourism activities in the agriculture-based areas, which is consist of built environment created by farmers and their agricultural activities, at community, village, and region levels. In the context of China, the rural tourism was stimulated on three main pillars: the domestic and international market requirement, the influence from the west countries, and the central governmental policy of poverty reduction in the rural area. Based on the ecological development within the built environment, the further development of Chinese rural tourism illustrates a multi-level pattern. As one of the famous tourism provinces in China, Sichuan Province has unique social, cultural, ecological, and economic characteristics. Located in the rural area of Sichuan, the Changzhou's rural communities have various tourism resources.

According to the domestic and international context of rural tourism, this research focuses on the rural tourism in Chongzhou, which is based on the natural and built environments of rural villages, the local cultural and social heritage and tradition, and natural landscape around rural-urban area. This research aims to decipher the unique rural tourism characteristics that Chongzhou offered and discover the prospective development orientation.

The characteristics of the development of rural tourism in Chongzhou

Natural environment

The local climate, diverse topographic features, rich animal and plant resources, and excellent ecological environment have built a solid foundation for the development of Chongzhou's rural tourism. The forestry cover rate, including the total number of the large and medium-sized trees, is ranking as the first one in the Great Chengdu Region.



Fig. 1 Natural environment

Tourism resource

Chongzhou is famous for its various geographical features, consisting of mountains, small hills, rivers, and lakes. These have already created several famous tourism spots, such as the Ji Guan Mount Forest Park, the White Tower Lake, and Jie Zi Old Town (the National 4A Class), attracting a huge number of tourists every year. Meanwhile, the local social and cultural heritage, such as the Yan Painting Pool, the Confucian Temple, and the Lu You Temple enrich the social and cultural dimensions and increase the economic value.



Fig. 2 Tourism resource

Infrastructural system

The local government-oriented transportation network has integrated seventeen arterial roads crisscross the city, by waving the vertical and horizontal county-level corridors together. Chongzhou has a one hundred thousand acres of Rice Tourism Link and Bicycle Trip circuit. The convenient transportation network and beautiful road view establish the sound infrastructural system for the development of the local rural tourism.

Service factors

The implementation of the modern agricultural industrialization development strategies promote the process of the local agricultural industrialization and creating several agriculture based leading enterprises in the market. The tourism industry also has been gradually recovering, such as the traditional Flower Festival in Jie-Zi Old Town, the Wen-Jin River Town Green Tea Ecological Tourism Festival, Festival of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Chongzhou Venues, Chongzhou City Harvest Festival and so on.



Fig. 3 The tourism industry

Traditional culture

The farming culture heritage in Chongzhou is based on the tremendous of original forest and farming landscape. These resources are well preserved. Additionally, the new villages also have a good view and traditional cultural atmosphere. Indeed, the Jie-Zi cake, which the main ingredients are flour, sugar, and sesame, is the famous street snacks of Han Dynasty, and has been known as one of the four most famous snacks in Shu Dynasty. Moreover, the Huai Yuan Town gets a laudatory name, called as "Township of Canning" and the Daoming Bamboo Village has named as "the National Rural Tourism Innovation Base", both of them contribute to the innovative tourism county.

Rural entertainment programs

Chongzhou has already have various types of farmhouses, which provide the tourists with a variety of catering and entertainment choices, several local mature agricultural sights zones; the developing strawberry picking garden; and the well-preserved traditional forest courtyard within strong local unique cultural atmosphere.

Challenges of rural tourism development in Chongzhou

During recent years, the local government has paid highly attention to the rural tourism, in order to promote its local economic development at specific, diverse, and elegant levels. The General Office of the State Council issued the opinions on accelerating the transformation of the mode of agricultural development, which includes a series of policies and plans, formulating rural tourism towards an original and diverse direction. Spontaneously, the source of the rural tourism customers become more increasingly wide-ranging. Meanwhile, there are certain challenges during the developing process: construction land restrictions, the improvement of infrastructure, irrational industrial layout, and scattered rural tourism spots. The advanced environmental protection requirement also brings some limitations and pressure. They all combine together to dramatically inform the development of rural tourism.

The development of rural tourism, not only enables people to find new income resources, but also fulfills the travelers' increasing demands. This also raises up the tourists' expectation towards the tourism products with high quality. In order to attract increasing tourists domestically and internationally, the solid support and excellent service must be imbedded into the improvement of tourism prosperity. Furthermore, the website as a public media channel, reaching various people

worldwide, was designed to introduce the local rural tourism products, by offering multiple options and providing detailed information to assist the tourists' decision-making process.

Advantages and disadvantages of the rural tourism development

Macroscopic analysis

Internal and external competition

Chongzhou's rural tourism infrastructure requires urgent improvement in order to increase the marketing influence. According to keywords search in the mainstream search engines, the Chongzhou rural tourism is not so popular as other regions in the Great Chengdu Region, let alone in the provincial and even national and international levels

Internal competition comes from other regions within the Great Chengdu Region. For example, Longquanyi District, Dujiangyan and other areas have already established mature rural tourism. Other non-rural tourism projects have also become very strong competitors.

Ineffective professional planning and management support

Without enough professional planning and management support, the entire planning and organization and the brand development, which directly contribute to the quality of local tourism, require improvement. This also negatively influence the taking advantage of rich rural tourism resources. Professional designers have not given enough attention to the development of rural tourism.

Unproductive governmental support

The government related policies, plans, and regulation would advance the development of rural tourism. However, local and provincial government have not established holistic and effective policies to conduct the rural tourism. Although some policies and plans have already applied into the local context, these government guidelines still need further adaptation to better serve the local unique situation.

Underdeveloped intangible cultural resources

The traditional craft of canning reflects the local unique cultural characteristics. For example, The Jie Zi cake and Huai Yuan cake, which are made of local products, are very delicious and very famous. Although both of them are rated as one of the Sichuan intangible cultural heritage, they have not well-developed to contribute to the physical tourism resource.

Underfunded rural tourism programs

Different levels of government have invested certain amount of human, material, and financial resources to improvement of tourism facilities, such as hotels and resorts, rather than the tourism programs. Indeed, Jie Zi Ancient Town and Li Yan Lake Ecological Zone have well-developed built environment, however, both places do not have good travelling programs to keep the tourist.

Microscopic analysis

Through in-depth communication with the San Guan Village Committee, the authors discovered that the local tourism is based on three small flower ornaments and fruit picking agriculture. The village has been facing several issues, such as unable to attract the external investment, unable to receive enough technical supporting, the local traditional layout has very high density, tight external and internal competition, family-based business unit, incapable to establish the own characteristic. Questionnaires (72 in total) were collected from various tourists show that most of them are local-based. They have very limited knowledge regarding the rural tourism of Chongzhou. The authors also decipher that the most tourists' experience only stay in the moderate level. Most them only conducted daily trips with limited local consumption. See Table 1

Table 1: Toutists' travelling experience in San Guan Village

| Options | Good | Average | Poor | Unclear |
|---------------------|--------|---------|--------|---------|
| Characteristic | 25.00% | 62.50% | 2.78% | 9.72% |
| Traffic | 26.39% | 59.72% | 8.33% | 5.56% |
| Natural Environment | 37.50% | 54.71% | 2.78% | 9.72% |
| Scale | 15.28% | 72.22% | 2.78% | 9.72% |
| Service | 23.61% | 65.28% | 1.39% | 9.72% |
| Popularity | 11.11% | 52.78% | 22.22% | 13.89% |

Conclusion

The rapid development of economy and society urges the tourism demand. The national, provincial, and municipal governments employed the concept of "green development", the action of "green all Sichuan", building of "beautiful Chinese model city" strategic to stimulate the tourism development. The development of tourism industry, especially rural tourism, is facing a valuable opportunity. Therefore, how could the governmental interventions supervise the entire rural tourism industry development, in order to promote the rural tourism business to achieve sustainable development goal? Based on the current rural tourism situation in Chongzhou and certain investigation, this paper proposes the remarkable development concept of innovation, coordination, greening, opening, and sharing. The authors analyzed the local rural tourism and generalized some prospects. This will stimulate the further study in this field and benefit the prospective development of rural tourism in Chongzhou.

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