Public Participation in Tourism Development: An Analysis of Community Development in Underdevelopment Areas

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ABSTRACT: This article analysis obstacle of political participation, which including: residents basically have no democratic consciousness and law is on the low level. Meanwhile the economic participation is limited in small range and some basic labor-work. In general, willingness of participation is not firm, and locals lack of ability. Since then, it is unrealistic to stimulate economy participation through political empowerment, because politics and laws cannot be changed in a short time, and people's democracy consciousness cannot be improved in a period of time either. This research indicates that it does not need to imposed a kind of external forces on local residents through empowerment, then make them engage in tourism. Self-empowerment means consciousness aware and promotion of participation ability. This is the fundamental and critical point for community residents taking participate in tourism. Regional sustainable economic development and residents' self-empowerment can only come true through labor, which is to create more available tourism jobs for the residents who have ability and willingness to work.

1 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

It is generally believed that tourism development can promote economic development of destination [1], and to participate in tourism is effective strategy for enriching people in underdeveloped areas. But in real practice, because of political, legal, social, and complexity of the rights and interests, and many other reasons, the local residents have been isolated from the tourism development process, may not share interests [2, 3].

Foreign scholars began to pay attention to this problem in 1980s. The main research focused on the less developed countries or regions which with the orientation of tourism development showed problems of "enclave tourism", "tourism leakage" in developing process. Such as Britton depicts local residents in underdeveloped countries of Caribbean resort benefit little or have no access for sharing interests due to the powerful international capital [4]. Areas with similar development pattern such as Pattaya in Thailand, Kenya [5] and Botswana [6], Indonesia in Southeast Asia [7]. Isolates the locals in tourism development process will bring negative impact to social and cultural and it will restrict sustainable development of tourism destination [8], for instance, it may cause problems as imbalance of economic structure, social differentiation and alienation of local residents to the destination. To achieve sustainable development, the local community should take participate in tourism [9].

In 21st century, the domestic studies generally agree that local residents seldom can benefit from tourism development [10], their participation is occasional and likely to be abandoned by strong capital. For a period of time, Zuo Bing, Bao Jigang, Guo wen, Chen Zhiyong had successively proposed tourism empowerment theory [11,12], through the angle of system and institution, they try to explore reasons of "disempowerment", and find a way to solve the problem of "empowerment". Recent years, public participation has been incorporated in the community and regional economy development, studies focus more on community and tourism sustainable and sustainable livelihood development of residents [13].This approach leads research in two directions, one is from the legal and institutional angle, trying to find obstacle factors for community residents to participate in and share interests, in order to find a legal basis to let them engage in [14]. Another is from the direction of stakeholders and their relations [15], community residents' mental rights, residents' perception and attitude towards tourism development [16, 17], discussing reasons for restricting local community participation. In summary, previous research refers to analyze from community stakeholders’ perspective, they used to pay more attention to interest or multiple stakeholders, treat community as a whole. This thinking pattern can analyze problems and obstacles
in the process of participation more deeply and thorough, but economic and political factors influence each other, the problem becomes more complicated. Therefore, under the circumstance of limited law effectiveness, complex relationships between the stakeholders, community resident lack of participation ability, what is the feasible way to make community resident engage in tourism and benefit from it, previous research rarely mentioned.

2  PARTICIPATION OBSTACLES IN POLITICS AND ECONOMY

2.1 Obstacles in political participation

In rural community in China, residents participate in tourism featured by disorder, scattered and passivity. Commonly, local residents have no democratic consciousness, they don't know how to protect their own rights and interests. It shares a "lean" democratic in the community. Minority elites who have more power and information dominate the whole community, the vulgar herd basically has no right for decision making. Since local residents’ education level is not high, added they are influenced by traditional thinking mode, most of the residents would not like or they don’t have ability to take part in tourism decision making. But if they are not satisfied with any issue, they will resist in their own way, commonly it’s negative bad way.

In most of community of less-developed area in China, people’s old traditional thought, and bureaucrat oriented consciousness of government manager are fundamental obstacles of political participation.

2.2 Participation in economy

Local residents cannot participate in tourism development leading to unemployment or semi-unemployment, and also inadequate utilization of resources. In general, the path of the economic development of tourism in less developed areas tends to be resource oriented. Let resources comparative advantage guide industry is more economic and rational. The government should lead residents taking part in industries which have comparative economic advantage, this can solve problem of unemployment and social contradictions and can also make full use of resource[18]. Subject to residents’ psychological dependence on traditional production mode, lack of education and content to remain where they are, the economy participation shows in a small range and low level. Locals can only get a few interests or can't get any. This has direct relation with the consciousness of participation and residents’ willingness. For now, participation is not firm, passive, and even reluctant, for some reason, that’s because the locals lack of capital, but radically it’s a past life custom which dominate mode of thinking. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, community demand is still at a security protection level, all they need is stability, labor security, and basic protection. Behavioral psychology also pointed that, needs hierarchy of a country or a region has direct relation with local economic development level, development level of science and technology and level of education of the people. When a certain need relatively satisfied, the pursuit of higher level needs will become the driving force of the behavior. For the sake of development of local economy and society, let the residents involved in the tourism development, the key and fundamental problems are willingness and ability of locals to engage in tourism.

3 CONSTRUCTION OF PARTICIPATION MODEL

Public participation has two paths, one is political participation another is economic participation, two paths both restrict and mutually reinforcing each other. Economic participation is on the basis of political participation, political participation is for the purpose of economic participation. The realization of political participation based on empowerment, at the same time it needs self-empowerment as assistance. Economic participation depends mainly on self-empowerment; on this basis, the empowerment and support from the government are promotion. Empowerment needed government transformation to share rights, all in all it lies in guarantee from legislation and institution; self-empowerment relies on promotion of participation willingness and ability, it is driven by economic development, technological innovation and income increase. (see Fig. 1)

As Karl Marx pointed in Political Economy, productivity defined production relations, the economic base determines superstructure. Economic development condition in rural area in China determines that empowerment is like a pulling force from external, it cannot solve the fundamental obstacle of participation. The key is residents’ willingness and ability, that's the driver from internal. Political empowerment requires the legal mandatory as guarantee, many countries in the world through formal legislation to protect interests of locals, such as Canada and the United Arab Emirates, and the Washington Charter and the International Cultural Tourism Charter have stressed the importance of economic and cultural development of the host community[14], but China's current relevant legislations shows low level and weak enforcement, this does not have the same research context with western democracy. So it’s not
realistic to change legal system in a period of time, not to mention asking public managers to share their powers.

Participation attitude and ability are more important, but it cannot be improved only through education. According to E.F. Schumacher, providing enough jobs for the poor is an effective way to eliminate regional productivity decrease, and it is also the only way to create a new mode of thinking. For the whole society, it is more important that everybody should produce something than that a few people should each produce a great deal, the former is a dynamic situation capable of generating growth [19], while the poor only through they gain value from their own labor work, they will try to use labor to create more value. In the whole process of labor evolution, with income increase, technological progress, organized in their thoughts and actions, their ideas and thinking modes will change radically. Therefore, nowadays, in an era of popular entrepreneurship and innovation, with advocating Internet as the engine of economic development, how to innovate participation way is key to sustainable economic development. Main work that requires public managers to do is not sharing power, but standardizing the organization and management, help and auxiliary, employment guidance and innovation. With residents fully employed, income increased, social and economic developed, people’s concept will change, the legal system will be pushed to evolve, or be constructed, this follows the economist Hayek's Spontaneous Social Order Theory and North's Institution Change Theory [20, 21].

4 DISCUSSION OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

4.1 The expansion of participation path in the age of Internet

With the advent of the era of Internet, New Normal, grand tour are the trend of future tourism, convergence between tourism and other industries will be strengthened [22]. Traditional "scenic spot guide sightseeing" will become the past, replaced by intelligent tourism, We-Chat platform, public comments, sharing community, tailor-made travels and consulting services [23]. These all can be new paths for residents’ participation. Tourism platform strategy promotes development of B2B and B2C, under new consumer demand wave of "personalized", "localization" and "intelligent", O2O (online to offline, online and offline to consumption) model enjoys prevalence, in coordination with LBS (Location -based Services), APP (Application) and consumer data base, global intelligent tourism can be achieved. Then, life service of destination will become major market, and it will accommodate more local persons to engage in.

"Internet + industry" is another innovation engine of economic growth, and the popularization of data-based mobile devices reduces the threshold of mass entrepreneurship and grassroots entrepreneurship, small startup [24] and informal employment [25] are special participation ways in these period of time, they are helpful in enriching economic forms, innovation participation paths and
solving structural unemployment in rural areas. Through mass production and public support, reorientation general community productivity, rejuvenation of rural life, we should believe "poor people can be helped to help themselves" [19].

4.2 Weakening administrative function and strengthen helping and guiding functions of grass-roots manager

Common phenomena existing in underdeveloped areas in China including: lack of law consciousness, low education level, no strong will in participation. Such a situation determines only through administrative management cannot achieve community and economic development, help and guidance is more important.

Grass-roots government requires taking "hematopoietic" help to develop residents’ own ability and sustainable livelihood. They should guide local people participation in tourism service in order and promote the traditional industry structure optimization and upgrading, encourage development of alternative industries, provide opportunity to residents who have a willingness and ability to start small business, share business information and guide the direction of entrepreneurship. The work target and direction of government is practice of local development, as suggested by North in his Government Paradox: "Government is the key to economic growth and also the source of recession, it is due to the difference between objective function of the government". Linking achievements to their helping effect seems can fit gaps between objective goal and the actual operation [20].

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