

A Study of Community Participation in The Development of Study Tourism in Shaoxing City

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Abstract: This study employs secondary data analysis to investigate the involvement of local communities in the development of study tours in Shaoxing, a city steeped in historical and cultural significance. Focusing on the methodological approach and research outcomes, the paper reveals the extent and nature of community participation in leveraging Shaoxing's rich cultural heritage for study tour initiatives. By analyzing secondary textual data, seven distinct themes of community engagement in study tour development were identified, providing insights into how these communities contribute to and benefit from the growth of this educational tourism sector. The findings underscore the importance of aligning community tourism development with broader community development goals, ensuring that local communities reap the maximum benefits from the study tour industry.

Keywords: Study Tourism; Local Community; Community Participation; Development; Shaoxing

1. Introduction

Shaoxing is one of China's famous historical and cultural cities, and is also the centre of East Asian culture. Thanks to its rich cultural heritage, beautiful landscapes and classic stories and legends, Shaoxing has become an important place for study tours, and in 2003, Shaoxing was one of the first cities in China to launch the study brand of 'Shaoxing with textbooks', and in 2016, Shaoxing was named one of the first 'Destination Cities of China Study Tourism' in China. In 2016, Shaoxing was named one of the first 'Chinese destination cities for study tours'. In addition to a solid economic foundation, Shaoxing's deep historical and cultural heritage provides valuable cultural resources for the cultural

tourism industry. These resources are widely distributed throughout the six districts and counties of Shaoxing, and each place and even community has its own unique study resources, covering a wide range of areas.

In the context of the Shaoxing Study Tourism Industry Special Plan (2021-2025), the academic proposition of community participation in study tourism development deserves further exploration. This stems from the fact that community participation in tourism development is a concrete presentation of the combination of 'people-oriented' thinking and tourism development, which answers questions about 'what is the purpose of developing tourism' and 'what does the development of tourism depend on? It answers questions of 'what to develop tourism for' and 'what to rely on to develop tourism'. In order to promote the overall revitalisation of the local community, the concept that community tourism development is for the sake of community development should be strengthened, so that the community can become the biggest beneficiary. Shaoxing's study tour resources that are widely dispersed throughout the region in various districts and counties, so why and how the local community has participated in the development of local study tours is a question worth exploring.

However, community participation is a process of continuous construction in multiple interactions, which means that it has limitations and uncertainties: horizontally, when Shaoxing is rich in research and study tourism resources and has sufficient sources of tourists, it will simultaneously constitute a tension between multiple subjects, such as the push and pull between the subject of tourism and the object of tourism, and the community, as a kind of tourism intermediary, is often neglected; vertically, it is a failure to clarify the relationship between community participation in tourism and the dynamic

relationship between community social development. In view of this, the core questions this paper aims to answer are: in the context of building a spatial layout for municipal study tour development in Shaoxing, why is community participation involved in the development of study tours? And how is the community involved? What are the motivations for community involvement in the development of study tours?

Therefore, the research questions of this paper are:

- (1) What generates community participation in the development of study tourism in Shaoxing City?
- (2) Who participates and leads community participation in research and study tourism development in Shaoxing City?
- (3) What is community participation in research and study tourism development in Shaoxing City?
- (4) How does the community participate in the development of research and study tourism in Shaoxing City?
- (5) What are the dynamics of the community participation process in the development of study tourism in Shaoxing City?

2. Literature Review

Academic research on community participatory tourism first began in the 1970s, but Chinese and Western academics have produced different research histories and results. This project will summarise the research progress and frontiers of community participation tourism research at home and abroad, focusing on its origin and progress, main contents, theoretical paradigms of research, and empirical studies. In addition, relevant studies on research and study tourism in Shaoxing City are also compiled.

The research on community participation in tourism development has its profound background of the times, and it is necessary to elaborate on the origin and process of its emergence. Foreign research on community participation in tourism focuses on five aspects: types, influencing factors, evaluation, benefit distribution and empowerment.

2.1 The Origin and Progress of Community Participation in Tourism Research

The study of community participation in tourism originated in the 1950s and 1960s, when the concept of 'participatory' was introduced in the West to the field of tourism. Tourism often involves the development of underdeveloped communities, so community participation was seen as a planning method. In 1985, Murphy P. E. formally introduced the concept of community participatory tourism, which led to a wide-ranging academic debate on the subject, and in 1960, Warren Smith V.L. laid the foundation for the emergence of community participatory tourism research when he revealed the negative potential impacts of tourism on destination communities. Since the 1970s, research on the impacts of tourism destinations has deepened, emphasising that communities and residents are factors that cannot be ignored, regardless of the positive or negative impacts of tourism activities^[1].

Into the 1990s, the focus of research gradually evolved from community engagement to exploring sustainable tourism development. Residents will be more actively involved in tourism development if the destination meets their needs and benefits them^[2]. In 1996, the World Tourism Organisation (WTO), the World Tourism Council (WTTC) and the Earth Council (EC). In 1996, the World Tourism Organisation (WTO), the World Tourism Council (WTTC) and the Earth Council (EC) jointly issued Agenda 21 on Tourism, which placed special emphasis on the involvement of host communities as one of the priority areas, elevating community participation in tourism development to the centre of sustainable tourism research^[3].

2.2 Community Participation in Tourism Research

Foreign research on community participatory tourism focuses on two main areas, namely, theory construction and empirical research, the deepening of which contributes to a better understanding of the complexity of community participatory tourism.

On the one hand, the theoretical construction of community participatory tourism firstly involves the issue of classification, aiming to explore different types of community participatory tourism. These categorisations are usually based on the degree of depth of community involvement in tourism

development. On the other hand, research on community participation in tourism also focuses on the influencing factors, which affect whether and how communities participate. Communities are often vulnerable groups in tourism development and are constrained by internal and external factors. These factors can include residents' lack of awareness of the tourism business, lack of tourism experience and expertise, limited local government finances, and poor marketisation of the tourism industry. Finally, evaluating the effectiveness of community participation in tourism is also an important direction for research, which includes assessing the degree of community participation and the capacity of community participation from a quantitative perspective.

Research on community participation in tourism in China started late, mainly in the late 1990s. During the development of the research, the topic has experienced an evolution from absence to gradual prominence. Scholars have mainly focused on topics such as the types, contents, influencing factors, modes, distribution of benefits, and empowerment of community participation, and have gradually placed these studies in the context of China's unique economic and social system.

Community participation tourism research in China has basically inherited the ideas of relevant foreign theoretical studies in terms of classification, content, and influencing factors, and is mainly classified according to the degree of community participation. Different scholars have proposed different classification methods and levels:

Community participation into four stages according to the degree of scale: individual participation, organisational participation, mass participation and comprehensive participation^[4]. Community participation into primary participation, active participation and mature participation according to the degree of attributes^[5]. That some communities have gradually transitioned to the mature participation stage^[6]. The categorisation of direct and indirect participation, and later added the concept of complementary participation to refer to the villagers' material support for tourism and residents' lives through farmland farming. In terms of the content of community participation, the four dimensions of economic, political, social and psychological participation, while further

emphasised the importance of economic participation^[7]. The content into two dimensions, transactional participation, which is related to rights, and welfare participation, which is related to benefits^[8]. The research on influencing factors mainly focuses on the community micro-level, including conceptual constraints, resident quality constraints, and benefit distribution constraints. Some scholars have also analysed it from the perspective of stakeholders, covering factors such as government, enterprises and non-profit organisations^[9]. Distribution of benefits is the core issue in community participation tourism research, and Chinese scholars use economic theories to explain the interest game in the community, such as stakeholder theory to summarise different types of game conflicts and propose solutions; the nature of the participation of each interest subject by constructing a game equilibrium model in order to realise Pareto-optimality in community tourism^[10].

2.3 Research Status of Study Tourism in Shaoxing City

The development of study tours in Shaoxing has gone through three remarkable stages:

(1) From sightseeing tours to educational tourism theme tours

In the 1990s, Shaoxing's tourism industry was still mainly dominated by traditional sightseeing tours. Shaoxing in order to stand out in the market of sightseeing tours. Begin to seek a new path of development, began to focus on the theme of tourism in the 'education', this shift gradually laid the Shaoxing cultural tourism characteristics of the brand.

(2) From the educational tourism theme tour to study tours

In 2016, China's Ministry of Education and other 11 departments issued the opinions on the study trip for primary and secondary school students, the study trip into the compulsory curriculum for primary and secondary schools. Shaoxing has taken this opportunity to actively promote the development of study tours and continue to unleash its potential through policy support. This policy dividend has provided a strong impetus for the development of study travel in Shaoxing, further consolidating its position in the field.

(3) From study travel to city branding

As competition for study travel destinations intensifies, Shaoxing has adopted a strategic positioning to become a 'benchmark city for study travel in China'. This strategy is supported by the Zhejiang Provincial Government, further enhancing Shaoxing as an internationally competitive study travel destination. Study tours have become a unique brand feature of Shaoxing.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Plan

On the basis of literature combing and policy analysis, following the logic of 'what (the concept and definition of community participation in the development of study tours) - why (the reasons for community participation in the development of study tours in Shaoxing City) - how (who participates in the development of study tours in Shaoxing City) - How to do (how the Shaoxing community participates in the development of study tours)' logic, the comprehensive use of literature research, field observation, semi-structured interviews, subject analysis and other methods, combined with the Shaoxing City study tour policy, proposed in line with the Shaoxing City community participation in the development of study tours in the path of action and the mechanism of influence.

3.2 Research Methods

(1) Literature analysis method: through the collection, collation and induction of relevant information, we understand the writings, literature, policy documents and other information on community participation in tourism at home and abroad, and on this basis, combined with the relevant information on study tours in Shaoxing City, we provide theoretical support for the analysis of the status quo and the outline of the interviews.

(2) On-site observation: This paper takes on-site observation in participatory observation as the basic research method, stationing itself in the community of Shaoxing where the destination of study and research travel is located, observing the work of the local community, observing the local tourism planning and tourism activities, etc., and trying as much as possible to understand the strategies and goals of the community's actions based on the values and life situations of the

people involved in the community.

(3) Secondary data collection: As the investigation progresses, the author establishes close contact with the community, gradually identifies the key participants and then begins to collect relevant secondary data. By tracking the participants and digging up related events, the author collected in-depth data on the community's participation in research and study tourism, and explored the social logic and cultural significance behind the characters and events.

(4) Thematic analysis: Thematic analysis refers to the process of summarising the collected text (e.g. policy content) to extract some themes, with six steps: familiarising with the data, preliminary coding, searching for themes, examining the themes, defining and naming the themes, and writing the report.

4. Results

The thematic analysis of the secondary data collected resulted in the following seven themes:

(1) Policy support and co-operation:

The Shaoxing Municipal Government strongly supports the development of study tours in terms of policy. For example, the Shaoxing Municipal Bureau of Culture, Radio, Film and Television Tourism and the Education Bureau collaborate to promote local study tours. The government has helped the industry by introducing special plans, setting local standards, drawing study maps, and developing study curricula.

(2) Base and camp construction:

Shaoxing completed the construction of three large-scale study camps, including the Dayu Culture Study Camp, the Lanting Study Camp, and the Huiji Mountain International Study Camp, during the period of 2021-2022, which provided basic conditions for study teams to stay in Shaoxing. The city has one national primary and secondary school students' study and practice education base, five provincial primary and secondary school students' study and practice education bases (camps), and 29 primary and secondary school students' study and practice education bases (camps) at the municipal level and above.

(3) Market development and publicity:

Shaoxing and CCTV science and education channel 'follow the book to travel' column cooperation, filming publicity Shaoxing study

series programmes. At the same time, Shaoxing give full play to the brand advantage of the 'East Asian Cultural Capital', the introduction of China, Japan and South Korea students in the same class 'hometown' class and other study activities, the comprehensive use of overseas publicity media matrix, at home and abroad to promote the introduction of Shaoxing's study resources in an all-round way.

(4) Community study product innovation:

Shaoxing put forward the concept of 'community study', that is, the study can be carried out at home, as well as the concept of 'pan-community study', around the community to carry out study, but not limited to the community and study. The city's districts, counties (cities) adhere to the characteristics of the development of study, around the 'cultural roots, Yue Di style, townspeople and celebrities, close to nature, science and technology exploration, red heritage, beautiful countryside' and other content 'one city, one policy' to create a study demonstration base.

(5) Digital application scene:

Shaoxing for the study trip to create an information sharing, intelligent study, education evaluation, market supervision and other functions complete 'study tour a thing' digital system, to create a multi-span synergistic study digital application scene.

(6) Integration of study tours with public life:

During the epidemic prevention and control period, Shaoxing actively expanded local study activities, and launched the 'Love Shaoxing - Tour Shaoxing' summer study theme activities in 2022, integrating study travel with citizens' life through the way of the government setting the stage and citizens' experience.

(7) International cooperation and promotion:

Shaoxing, as the 'Capital of East Asian Culture', is actively expanding the scope of the construction of Friendship Cities, exploring the establishment of a long-term mechanism for cooperation with Friendship Cities, hosting the International Friendship Cities Conference, and bidding for the 2022 China International Friendship Cities Conference. Shaoxing also strengthens cooperation with famous international sports, exhibition organisations and multinational companies, holds a number of sports and exhibition projects at a high level, accelerates the construction of the Shaoxing International Convention and Exhibition

Centre, and introduces professional festival operation teams.

5. Conclusion

Shaoxing has demonstrated comprehensive development in the field of study tours, with government policy leadership and infrastructure construction laying a solid foundation for the industry, market expansion and branding raising the visibility of study tours in Shaoxing, product innovation and digital applications enriching the content and improving the efficiency of services, while the deep integration of study tours with citizens' lives and active international cooperation further enhance the attractiveness and competitiveness of study tours in Shaoxing. The attractiveness and competitiveness of study tours, and the extensive community participation have injected vitality into the field, together promoting Shaoxing as a popular destination for study tours nationally and even internationally.

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