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Residents Attitudes to Rural Tourism Development in South Taiwan

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Abstract: In the present study we investigate residents' attitudes toward rural tourism development, by means of a questionnaire, was conducted during the summer of 2002 at two locations: Baihe Chen and Danei Shung. Three hundred questionnaires were distributed to local residents in Baihe and Danei. The response rate was 88.7%. We adopted Chi-square, F-test and ANOVA as analysis methods. Finally, it may be concluded that some significant difference between rural festive and enterprise theme farm, we will analyze these differences and some interesting phenomena in this study.

Key words: Rural tourism, resident attitude, comparative study, social impacts

INTRODUCTION

Much of the recent literature on the development of world tourism has been concerned with the impact of tourists in the host community. As countries and regions within countries have turned to tourism as the means to raising people's income, employment and living standards and as a means of ending dependency on a limited range of primary products for export, so the diverse pressures from tourism and its associated development have begun to affect the local population. The land use of the areas designed to be used by visitors changes; traditional culture may be altered and the whole character of a town or village may be destroyed. In the last decade, the rural tourism has been an important industry and rising in Taiwan. Kinds of rural tourism have been developed, such as tourism-farm, rural festive, theme-farm. In this study we will try to explore the rural tourism impacts through residents' attitude.

Butler^[1] postulated a link between tourism development and the attitudes of residents to tourists. As the number of visitors to a region increases, residents who at first were overwhelmingly positive in their attitudes to their guests develop increasing reservations concerning the long-term benefits of the visitors. This may be because the original expectations of the benefits of tourism were unrealistic or because the benefits are perceived to accrue only to a small number of people. Allen *et al.*^[2,3] was concerned with tourism impact on the community life of 20 rural communities. Their findings, based on correlations between community satisfaction ratings and the level of tourism, supported the view that there is a carrying capacity threshold for tourism. Once

development of tourism passed a certain point, residents' perceptions of tourism became less positive. Akis *et al.*^[4] investigated residents' attitude to tourism development in Cyprus, they choose three villages in Cyprus and compare the residents' attitude by areas and tourism developed time.

There are two important types of rural tourism. The first type is rural festive, which was planned by government for tourism development in the last decade, it also became the most important way people experienced rural and the main factor attracting people to visit rural. Rural festivals' scope was a community or a small town, without management organization, but organized by kinds of leisure activities and services by community residents, the main tourism resources are agricultural culture, countryside landscape and simple folk life style. It can be treated as community industry. Rural festive have become very important leisure activities for Taiwan people.

The 2nd type is the enterprise theme farm. The theme farm belongs to organization or association, with limited scope and management by the enterprise, they offered complex agricultural experiences, amusement machines and infrastructures, small zoo, restaurants and hotels. Diverse leisure services and products are supplied by farm; tourists have to pay the ticket fee for entering and experiencing infrastructures in the farm. There are different characters in rural tourism types, the rural festive corresponds with local agricultural and folk culture, it is usually held in one season or a period of time with special meaning for this village and lasted just for one or few months, the scope is unclear or open. The rural culture and landscape belong to all

community residents, thus the tourists maybe bring more impacts in this type rural tourism. Opposite, theme farm is an enclosed farm, tourists activities scope have been limited and their recreation and leisure experienced will be progressed in farm, they are more separated with community residents. In this study we supposed different types of rural tourism would cause different social impacts to rural area. We will analysis and compare residents attitudes in Taiwan rural areas.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Areas surveyed: The research, by means of a questionnaire, was conducted during the summer of 2001 at two locations, among Tainan County in Baihe Chen and Danei Shung, both located in south Taiwan, Tainan County.

Baihe Chen, a small town in Taiwan, once was famous by warm stream before 1970 and after declined. Whose inhabitants most living on lotus planting, lotus seeds as the most important product in this area. The lotus bloom landscape is very beautiful but it didn't transformed to be leisure resource since 1993. Baihe has held the 1st Lotus-festive in 1993 and lasted for 10 years so far. Louts had been a very special plant in Chinese cultural, it has been treated the symbol of elegant, pure and moral. Thus, while the lotus bloom landscape transformed to be the leisure resources, Baihe attract so many people to visit the lotus and experienced the rural life. There are few hundred thousands of people came into for visiting lotus bloom and taste lotus-meal every summer, made Baihe become the most crowded and famous village in Taiwan. Liantan village is the central area of lotus festive, so we choose this area as our study area. Eleven hundred and sixty two residents before 2002, September, 1st, the residents who are above 20 years will be our study population.

Danei Shung, was am obscure mountain area before 1988, whose inhabitants survived on agriculture, especially on fruits planting. 1988, Tainan Farmers Association reclaimed a theme farm in Danei; suddenly this theme farm became one of the most famous destination in Taiwan. This enterprise theme farm named chou-ma-lai, a typical theme farm, includes kinds of leisure infrastructure and equipments:

- Small zoo: animals watching, cow feeding, horse riding.
- Restaurants, coffee shop and agricultural products shops.
- Hotels: wooden houses, Taiwan traditional buildings and grant hotel.
- Swimming pool, spa.

- Bike-riding,
- Gross-skiing,
- Amuse machines.

This theme farm is the first one who transformed agricultural resources as leisure resources and introduced the gross skiing into Taiwan, attracted many young people to enjoy skiing in Taiwan that wasn't snowing. Tourists could stay in the farm all day and experienced their leisure services. This theme farm is located in Daine shung, Urlin village and 1162 residents on 2001, September 1st. This study will choose our samples in Urlin village.

Design of the questionnaire and investigate: The Questionnaire comprised four sections. The first consisted of 24 attitudinal statements concerning the economic, social and environmental impacts of rural tourism, eight in each of the three categories. A final statement sought to provide information on the overall assessment of tourism by the respondent. These questions were referenced by Akis *et al.*^[4]. All statements were measured by five-point Likert scale. As however, the analysis of the data showed relatively few responses in the strongly agree and strongly disagree categories, these were aggregated with the agree and disagree categories, respectively for purposes of analysis. The second section of the questionnaire asked for details of respondents frequency of interaction with tourists and their involvement with the rural tourism industry. The third section looked at social change indicators and their relationship to rural tourism development and allowed form some open-ended responses. A final section elicited basic background data on age, sex, education level and occupation. This study is mainly concerned with an analysis of the attitudinal questions. 300 questionnaires were distributed to local residents in Baihe and Danei. In Baihe, 150 valid questionnaires returned, Daine 119 valid questionnaires returned, the response rate is 89.7%. We adopted Chi-square, F-test and ANOVA as analysis methods.

Composition of the sample: Most of the respondents (68% in Baihe, 67.4% in Danei) were between the ages of 41 and 70. Because in Taiwan rural, agriculture is decline and most young people go to city and look form un-agricultural job, thus aged population is the most common phenomena, which are why most of our respondents are senior residents. Most of the respondents are living by agriculture, (77.3% in Baihe and 76.7% in Danei). There is no significant difference

in samples demographic characters, age, sex, educational level, occupation and marriage situation between two areas.

Data analysis: Attitudinal statement and their assessment: Eight statements sought to measure the perceived changes in investment and spending, standard of living changes, inflation, income distribution and employment opportunities and their distribution between the local people and foreigners in the region. The social impact sought to monitor the attitudes of local people to various social issues; for example, whether rural tourism would provide valuable experiences and more recreational facilities for residents, or whether the effect would be cultural deterioration and deterioration in the quality of life. The environmental impact questions sought perceptions of the effect of tourism on preservation of antiquities, public facilities and roads and the overall quality of the local environment. A final one question asked for an overall assessment of the attitude of rural tourism development in the future: whether, in the opinion of rural tourism incessant development in rural community.

The responses were scored from 1 (for unfavorable, anti-tourism responses) to 5 (favorable, pro-tourism). Thus the latter would be either an agree (or strongly agree) response to a positive statement (e.g. item 1), or disagree (or strong disagree) to a negative statement (e.g. item 5). Thus for each set of eight statements, the maximum possible score is 40, the minimum 8. Mean values were calculated to determine central tendencies.

Table 1 demonstrated no significant difference between the two places in their residents perceptions of the environmental impacts of rural tourism. The

Table 1: Mean values calculated from the responses given to the economics, social and environmental impacts of tourism

Area	Impact		
	Economics	Social	Environmental
Baihe	18	26	26
Danei	24	32	29

the environmental impacts of rural tourism. The differences in the economics and social impact measures between Baihe and Danei are statistically significant at a 5% confidence level. The Danei residents see the economic and social impacts of rural tourism as more positive than Baihe.

Economic impacts: For Baihe, the proportions of respondents who agree with these positive statements are quite low (1st-8.7%, 2nd-7.4%, 3rd-5.4%, 6th-7.4%, 7th-5.5% and 8th-12.7), it means so far, the positive economic impacts aren't obvious to residents (Table 2). The proportions of disagreements with the negative statements (questions 4 and 5) are high to indicate a negative attitude. These proportions indicate the inconsistency in economics impacts; it means the economic impacts are not obvious in Baihe. The reasonable explanation maybe because Lotus Festive last for 3 month in a year, except the period, there are few tourist would come into this village, thus the residents don't perceived the economic impacts.

Danei respondents, in positive statements, expressed more positive attitude than Baihe, 56.3% respondents agree rural tourism attracts more investment and spending and living standard is increasing (50.4%) and (1st-56.3%, 2nd-50.4%, 3rd-10.1%, 6th-63.1%, 7th-24.3% and 8th-10.9%) (Table 3).

Table 2: Economics impacts of tourism development in Baihe

Statement	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Total
1. Rural tourism attracts more investment and spending	107(72.9%)	30(20.0%)	13(8.7%)	150
2. Our standard of living is increasing considerably	113(74.4%)	26(17.3%)	11(7.4%)	150
3. Prices are increasing because of rural tourism	108(72.0%)	34(22.7%)	8(5.4%)	150
4. Rural tourism gives benefits to a small group of people in the region	23(15.3%)	36(24.0%)	91(60.6%)	150
5. Rural tourism creates more jobs for foreigners than for local people	3(2.0%)	28(18.7%)	119(79.3%)	150
6. Rural tourism is helpful to agricultural development	118(78.7%)	21(14.0%)	11(7.4%)	150
7. Employment rate is rising because of rural tourism	121(70.6%)	21(14.0%)	8(5.5%)	150
8. Out-migrant people began return to rural area	102(68.0%)	29(19.3%)	19(12.7%)	150

Table 3: Economics impacts of tourism development in Danei

Statement	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Total
1. Rural tourism attracts more investment and spending	36(30.3%)	16(13.4%)	67(56.3%)	119
2. Our standard of living is increasing considerably	47(39.5%)	12(10.1%)	60(50.4%)	119
3. Prices are increasing because of rural tourism	99(72.2%)	8(6.7%)	12(10.1%)	119
4. Rural tourism gives benefits to a small group of people in the region	23(19.3%)	6(5.0%)	90(75.6%)	119
5. Rural tourism creates more jobs for foreigners than for local people	61(51.3%)	33(27.7%)	25(21.0%)	119
6. Rural tourism is helpful to agricultural development	31(26.1%)	13(10.9%)	75(63.1%)	119
7. Employment rate is rising because of rural tourism	76(63.9%)	14(11.8%)	29(24.3%)	119
8. Our migrant people began return to rural area	93(78.2%)	13(10.9%)	13(10.9%)	119

Table 4: Social impacts of tourism development in Baihe

Statement	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Total
1. Meeting tourists from all over the world is a valuable experience	34(22.7%)	28(18.7%)	88(58.7%)	150
2. Rural tourism has led to an increase in the availability or recreational facilities	123(82.0%)	20(13.3%)	6(4.0%)	150
3. High-spending tourists have an undesirable effect on our way of life	74(49.3%)	57(38.0%)	19(12.7%)	150
4. Rural tourism caused changes in our traditional culture	83(55.3%)	50(33.3%)	17(11.3%)	150
5. Rural tourism has led to an increase in crime events	81(54.0%)	21(14.0%)	48(32.0%)	150
6. More people have been heard about our hometown caused of rural tourism	49(32.7%)	27(18.0%)	74(49.3%)	150
7. Rural tourism has led to an increase of unusual land bargain	85(56.6%)	52(34.7%)	13(8.7%)	150
8. Local residents have a lower quality of life as a result of living in a tourist area	110(73.3%)	35(23.3%)	5(3.4%)	150

Table 5: Social impacts of tourism development in Danei

Statement	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Total
1. Meeting tourists from all over the world is a valuable experience	4(3.3%)	13(10.9%)	102(85.7%)	119
2. Rural tourism has led to an increase in the availability or recreational facilities	19(16.0%)	5(4.2%)	95(79.8%)	119
3. High-spending tourists have an undesirable effect on our way of life	86(72.2%)	25(21.0%)	8(6.7%)	119
4. Rural tourism caused changes in our traditional culture	61(51.2%)	24(20.2%)	34(28.6%)	119
5. Rural tourism has led to an increase in crime events	100(84.0%)	5(4.2%)	14(11.8%)	119
6. More people have been heard about our hometown caused of rural tourism	4(3.3%)	3(2.5%)	112(94.1%)	119
7. Rural tourism has led to an increase of unusual land bargain	100(84.0%)	11(9.2%)	8(8.0%)	119
8. Local residents have a lower quality of life as a result of living in a tourist area	109(91.5%)	4(3.4%)	6(5.0%)	119

The proportions of agreements with the negative statements (questions 4-75.6%) are much higher than Baihe to indicate a negative attitude. The 5th questioned show rural tourism is good to local agriculture, higher than Baihe. These proportions indicate the positive economic impacts are more obvious in Danei.

Social impacts: Both Baihe and Danei have the more positive view of the social impacts of rural tourism, with a mean value of 26 and 32. In Baihe, most respondents agree with the positive statements, 58.7% agree 1st question, 49.3% respondents agree with 5th question, 49.3% agree 6th question, but just 4.0% respondents agree 2nd question and 32.0% respondents agree rural tourism has led to an increase in crime events (5th question).

Danei, the social impact is more positive than Baihe, the proportion of agreeing with positive statement are higher than Baihe. Ex 58.7% respondent agree with 1st question, 79.8% agree with 2nd question (Baihe is 4.0%) (Table 4 and 5). And rural tourism had caused traditional cultural changes more than Baihe in 4th question, maybe the reason is Danei develop rural tourism longer.

About the crime event that caused by rural tourism is lower than Baihe. The proper explanation may be because the theme farm is an enclosed scope land and the Lotus Festival is opened without area limited, the public order is more difficult to control.

6th question, more people have been heard about the hometown because the development of rural tourism, 94.1% respondents agree with this much more than Baihe 49.3% (Table 4). It means Danei resident expressed more positive attitude for the effort in community identity offered by rural tourism.

Environmental impact: Both in Baihe and Danei with more positive attitude in environmental impacts, the Mean score are 26 and 29. In Danei, 69.9% respondents agreed with rural tourism provided an incentive for the restoration of historical building and conservation of natural resources, much higher than Baihe 10.7%, there are 0.05 significant differences in 1st question. 80.7% respondents agree with 2nd question-road and other public facilities are kept at a higher standard, higher then Baihe-42.2%, there are also 0.05 significant differences between areas.

16.6% Baihe respondents agree with 3rd question-tourists greatly add to the traffic congestion, noise and pollution, lower than Danei 35.3%.

In mountain and rural area, there are more law forbidden for new building, so in 4th question construction of hotel and other tourist facilities has destroyed the natural environment is not obvious in respondents attitude.

Fifth question, rural tourism provides an incentive for the conservation of country landscape, Baihe-26.0% agree, Danei-85.7% agree, Danei is higher and arrived 0.05 significant difference level. 8th question-the moving shops and illegal building problem, Danei is more serious than Baihe of 29.4: 10.7% (Table 6 and 7).

Generally speaking, there is both more positive and negative environmental impact in Danei cause by rural tourism, in the same time, the environmental impact isn't obvious in Baihe because the rural tourism's history is shorter and the Lotus Festive just last for 3-5 months every year.

In the relationship between frequency and quality of tourists contacts, most respondents in Baihe were not interacted with tourists usually, because most of the respondents were not involvement in rural tourism

Table 6: Environmental impacts of tourism development in Baihe

Statement	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Total
1. Rural tourism provides an incentive for the restoration of historical building and for the conservation of natural resources	84(56.0%)	50(33.3%)	16(10.7%)	150
2. Roads and other public facilities are kept at a higher standard	74(49.3%)	13(8.7%)	63(42.0%)	150
3. Tourists greatly add to the traffic congestion, noise and pollution	112(74.6%)	13(8.7%)	15(16.6%)	150
4. Construction of hotel and other tourist facilities has destroyed the natural environment	118(78.7%)	22(14.7%)	10(6.7%)	150
5. Rural tourism provides an incentive for the conservation of country landscape	85(56.7%)	26(17.3%)	39(26.0%)	150
6. Rural tourism due to the shortage of public facilities	105(70.0%)	36(24.0%)	9(6.0%)	150
7. Local residents have a lower quality of environment in a tourist area	93(62.0%)	35(23.3%)	22(14.6%)	150
8. Moving shops and illegal building increased rapidly caused of rural tourism	92(61.3%)	42(28.0%)	16(10.7%)	150

Table 7: Environmental impacts of tourism development in Daine

Statement	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Total
1. Rural tourism provides an incentive for the restoration of historical building and for the conservation of natural resources	11(9.2%)	19(16.0%)	89(69.9%)	119
2. Roads and other public facilities are kept at a higher standard	16(13.5%)	7(5.9%)	96(80.7%)	119
3. Tourists greatly add to the traffic congestion, noise and pollution	76(63.9%)	1(0.8%)	42(35.3%)	119
4. Construction of hotel and other tourist facilities has destroyed the natural environment	94(79.0%)	13(10.9%)	12(10.1%)	119
5. Rural tourism provides an incentive for the conservation of country landscape	14(11.8%)	3(2.5%)	102(85.7%)	119
6. Rural tourism due to the shortage of public facilities	67(56.3%)	13(10.9%)	39(32.8%)	119
7. Local residents have a lower quality of environment in a tourist area	93(78.2%)	12(10.1%)	14(11.8%)	119
8. Moving shops and illegal building increased rapidly caused of rural tourism	72(60.5%)	12(10.1%)	35(29.4%)	119

Table 8: Relationship between frequency and quality of tourist contacts in Baihe

Quality	Frequency					Total
	Daily	Almost every day	A couple of times per week	Once a week	Seldom or never	
Very Positive	1 (0.7%)	-	4 (2.7%)	-	1 (0.7%)	6 (4.0%)
Positive	4 (2.7%)	1 (0.7%)	15 (10%)	7 (4.7%)	42 (28.0%)	69 (46.0%)
Neutral	-	-	4 (2.7%)	1 (0.7%)	69 (46.0%)	74 (49.3%)
Negative	-	-	-	-	1 (0.7%)	1 (0.7%)
Very Negative	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	5 (3.3%)	1 (0.7%)	23 (15.3%)	8 (5.3%)	113 (75.3%)	150 (100%)

Table 9: Relationship between frequency and quality of tourist contacts in Danei

Quality	Frequency					Total
	Daily	Almost every day	A couple of times per week	Once a week	Seldom or never	
Very Positive	4 (3.4%)	19 (16.0%)	28 (23.5%)	10 (8.4%)	13 (10.9%)	74 (62.2%)
Positive	1 (0.8%)	4 (3.4%)	7 (5.9%)	5 (4.2%)	7 (5.9%)	24 (20.2%)
Neutral	-	1 (0.8%)	5 (4.2%)	5 (4.2%)	9 (7.6%)	20 (16.8%)
Negative	-	-	-	-	1 (0.84%)	1 (0.8%)
Very Negative	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	5 (4.2%)	24 (20.2%)	40 (33.6%)	20 (16.8%)	30 (25.2%)	119 (100%)

industry and about 50% respondents agree interact with tourist is a good experience (Table 8); in Danei, most respondents stand positive attitude to interact

Table 10: The comparison of overall evaluation of rural tourism: the attitude of developing rural tourism in the future

Area	Strongly agree		Neutral	Strongly disagree		Total
	agree	Agree		Disagree	disagree	
Baihe	41 (34.7%)	56 (47.5%)	19 (16.1%)	1 (0.8%)	1 (0.8%)	150
Danei	72 (48.0%)	37 (24.7%)	35 (23.3%)	2 (1.3%)	4 (2.7%)	119

with tourists and not affected by frequency, 62.2% respondents were very agree, almost 70% of these respondent interacted with tourist a couple of time per week.

A corollary of the type of analysis presented by Bulter^[1] is that, as tourism grows and therefore as interactions between tourists and residents increase, residents would be expected to show mores resentment and hostility to the visitors. However, in the survey of both locations, especially Danei those who have more exposure to tourists tent to regard interactions with them as positive. As frequency of contact with tourists increases, the proportion also increases (Table 9). This would suggest that, in Murphys^[5] terms, tourism in both two places is still at the development or welcome stage: resentment has not yet begun to appear. And the tourist who visits rural for enjoying peace and country landscape, so they will keep friendly attitude as be a good rural visitor.

Over all, our respondents agree, local area should develop rural tourism and Danei respondent are more strongly agree. Both of two places, the attitude weren't affected by age, gender, educational level, occupation and marriage these demographic factor and not affect by familys job, resident region, resident time and distance to destination center.

The best explanation is, presumably, their lives not dependent on rural tourism, but the respondents thought rural tourism would be a good way for preserving rural life or the development dynamics in the future. This finding match with Allens conclusion, that low economics activity and low tourism development tended to cause positive perceptions of tourism: the residents of such areas had high hopes and expectations of the benefits of tourism.

CONCLUSIONS

Comparative analyses of the two places residents give us a broader understanding of their differential perspectives. The Danei respondents attitude in rural tourism is more positive than Baihe, no matter in economic, social and environmental impacts. These two areas with the same tendency with three aspects, social impacts are the most positive one and economics impact is the most negative aspect.

It is likely that rural tourism will continue to develop in Baihe. More and more tourists came in to Baihe, the hotel and resorts were all been booked in summer. But there are some problem have exposed in Baihe The most important plant-lotuss planting area are reducing year by year, because of the diseases and some the lotus-seeds price are much higher than imported, so the farmers lose the incentive to plant lotus, thus, the characters of Baihe Lotus Festive will be lose. So, the local government should solve this problem in the first. In the same time, go with the rural tourism develop, more and more social problems have been emerged, such crime and moving shops problem are more and more serious.

The theme farm in Danei is probably already close to saturation point: although they keep add new infrastructures and equipment, but the number of visitors is declined. Most of the tourists said, this theme farm is a good destination, but the expenditure too high, you have

to pay entering fee, every thing in this farm is more expensive than outside and the most important defect and infrastructure and equipment is out of competence. A theme farm, but is equipped machine just like an generally theme park and the machine looks old and unsafe, out of characters, above factors make tourist just visit once, the visitors re-visit rate is low.

The study of the impact of rural tourism development has just begun in Taiwan rural. The development data banks and the reformulation of theories and models is the first move toward a better understanding of this phenomenon. Especially, rural tourism in Taiwan has very different characters with mass tourism; we have to modify theories for understanding rural tourism impacts in Taiwan. The finding from empirical studies may prove to be a viable source for the development of conscientious planning programs designed to subordinate economics goals to shared social values.

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