

# **Advancing Tourism's Contribution to Poverty Reduction and Development**

**Ashish Sharma**

Guru Kashi University, Talwandi Sabo

## **Abstract**

Over the last two decades, Tourism development has become a critical component of China's rural economic and social growth and poverty alleviation efforts. This study investigates tourist development and poverty alleviation in the setting of China, as well as the importance of community-based tourism activities, using the example of a "tourism model village" in Nujiang Lisu Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province, China in people's safety and improvement. Investigate living. According to the report, tourism not only provided rural people with additional income and new employment opportunities, but also increased their reputation for local culture and rural lifestyles. Tourism has a significant impact on the few people who directly benefit from it, but tourism has little impact on the majority of its citizens. Tourism does not alleviate rural poverty as expected from such an important rural economy. There is plenty of room for improvement in the public support local entrepreneurship and the system

**Keywords:** tourism, rural community, poverty reduction, China

## **Introduction**

In many undeveloped areas, tourism has become an important approach to regional development. Tourism development has been shown in numerous studies to have a major influence on underserved rural towns with limited growth options. In some areas, the beneficial economic and social consequences of tourism development have helped to improve village life, whereas in others, negative impacts such as evacuation, environmental and cultural degradation have occurred. The residents' quality of life is decreasing as a result. Despite the enormous poverty reduction potential that tourism offers in such areas, it has not yet been fully realized. Since the 1980s, the Chinese government has promoted tourism as a bailout for struggling economies, particularly in ethnic minorities' underdeveloped rural and isolated locations. Despite an increase in research on tourism and poverty, few extensive qualitative studies focus on rural tourism's distinctive role in poverty alleviation and socioeconomic regeneration in China. As a result, it is critical to comprehend the impact of tourism on poverty-related development difficulties. The major goal of this research is to look into the impact of rural tourism on poverty alleviation in China, as well as the function of community-based tourism in local residents' lives. In the Nujiang Lisu Autonomous Region of Yunnan Province, China, a case study was done in a remote town.

**Tourism and Poverty**

Tourism is often regarded as one of the most efficient means of reducing poverty around the world. Many international projects have proved that tourism can help inhabitants in various tourist destinations better their living conditions and contribute significantly to socioeconomic development. Community-based tourism has the capacity to contribute to the local economy's growth, or is thought to do so. However, according to some studies, the influence on poverty reduction is modest. Studies have highlighted many barriers to locals' access to tourism prospects that could get them out of poverty, such as education, skills, lack of money, elitism and immigration. Empowerment, education, training and job creation, business and business creation, and non-agricultural livelihoods are all part of a proposed strategy to reduce poverty and maximize the benefits of tourism for the poor. There are still many poor rural areas in China, with more than 100 million people living on well-below-poverty-level earnings. The Chinese government has been promoting the development of rural areas of the country through tourism since the 1980s. Rural tourism has been extensively encouraged by the government, with the goal of alleviating poverty and supporting the country's rural economy and social development. The central government developed the Great Western Development Strategy in 2000 to reconcile the vast geographical difference between China's eastern and rich coastal regions and the middle and western regions of poor states. Tourism has been employed as a main instrument for reducing poverty in western China as part of this strategy. The rapid expansion of rural tourism has been supported by strong government policy support and financial incentives. There are more publications on tourism and poverty reduction in China, but few qualitative studies provide comparable data. Few detailed studies have investigated how tourism affects poverty. Therefore, this article contributes to the problem of tourism's impact on poverty alleviation on a local level. The goal is to develop a better knowledge of tourism as a tool for poverty reduction and, more crucially, to evaluate whether tourist activities genuinely help the poor.

**2. Literature Review****2.1. The concept of poverty**

Poverty is an example of the differences that exist between different groups of society in terms of political, economic, environmental and social issues. This inequality arises because some groups benefit from public conditions and decisions, while others are disadvantaged and therefore marginalized. Absolute poverty and relative poverty are two types of poverty. The number of individuals living in poverty is defined as absolute poverty, whereas relative poverty is defined as the percentage of national income received by each income category.

**2.2. The concept of tourism**

Tourism is defined by the World Tourism Organization (WTO) as "the activity of an individual or group of people who stay outside their place of residence for not more than a year for the purpose of achieving fun or other purposes." increase. Tourism is based on the relationship between tourists and the companies that provide tourism services, and is supported by governments and tourism industry companies to ensure that tourists have access to the facilities they need. Comprehensive activities

involving governments, private companies, other tourism agencies and local governments aimed at providing and regulating tourism needs such as accommodation, product travel services, and services that are tourism needs.

### **2.3. The relation between tourism development and poverty reduction**

Government involvement in tourism development through investment rules encourages the entry of development investment into industry, benefits communities through economic activities and enhances people's purchasing power. Government restrictions on environmental protection and education and training are needed to protect the environment and scarce natural resources. Poor tourism programs focus on promoting long-term tourism that benefits the poor. In addition, as a specific strategic approach, proper tourism contributes to increased tourism activity while providing economic benefits to the poor. The poor will enjoy the benefits of tourism through the cooperation and commitment of tourism stakeholders.

### **Methods**

To gather data for this study, a case study was undertaken in Nujiang Lisu Autonomous Prefecture, Yunnan Province, China. Researchers used a number of study approaches to investigate the influence of tourism on local life and poverty, including in-depth interviews, informal interviews, field observations, and secondary data analysis. A detailed interview about the benefits of tourism and the residents' living situations was conducted at the residents' house in Nakacho Village. To acquire a complete picture of the folks, the author contacted all 51 families. The poll included 46 households, which accounted for 90 percent of the community's population. For different reasons, including a lack of time and interest, the five houses declined to engage in interviews. The local people usually interviewed this dialect because it is reversed in Yunnan dialect. Individual and grouped unofficial conversations with men and women of all ages have also been conducted to learn about their life and attractions against poverty. The data of this research was collected through the case studies made in Zhong ding Village in Nugan Liso Meo, China, China. The effects of communal life and poverty were investigated using a variety of study methodologies, including independent interviews, informal conversations, on-site observations, and secondary data reviews. An integrated interview with sightseeing and residents' living environment in a Zhong ding Village household The author called all 51 families and received responses from a diverse range of villagers. In total, 46 houses participated in the study, accounting for 90 percent of the community's population. For various reasons, five households are short on time, money, and interviews. Because peasants are frequently fluent in Yunnan, the interview was conducted in that dialect. Individual and group informal discussions were also done with men and women of all ages to learn more about their lives and attitudes toward tourism and poverty. The data was inspected and interpreted using content analysis approaches. Researchers familiar with the field's language and culture transcribed and translated each interview (Chinese to English). We merged home interview data with important decision makers' comments, field observations, and informal interview data to improve reliability and validity.

### **Results**

The village tour began in the late 1990s, when the number of backpackers visiting the area surged, according to an interview. Thanks to the efforts of the villagers who started a small tourism business, visitors can enjoy horseback riding and home cooking. Home shelters have emerged as a result of government initiatives that promoted them. After the opening of the first guesthouse in the village in 1998, other locals took part in sightseeing to escape poverty. Others entertained travellers with ethnic music and dance, while others created modest eateries and gift shops. Since that time, the economy of the municipality has grown thanks to tourism. In 2006, prefectures praised Nakacho Hamlet as a "model village for fun and relaxation" and a "harmonious cultural village."

Many of the respondents polled expressed enthusiasm for the rise of tourism in their area. They claimed that tourism had a positive impact on local life and poverty alleviation, although their assessments of its scale differed. Tourism is seen as a new economic driver for the city, allowing local businesses to establish themselves. It was commonly accepted that tourism provides many job prospects for self-employed persons, particularly for tour guides, ethnic goods and service sellers, tourist hotels, guest houses, restaurants, and various retail professions. Because of the development in tourism activities in recent years, the local government has undergone significant changes. In terms of disposable income, housing quality, infrastructure, and public services, the average standard of living in a village far exceeds that of neighboring communities. Locals receive more financial support from local governments as "model villages". As a result, Zhongding currently has significantly greater transportation and accommodation capacity to support tourism development. Almost all respondents believed that tourism is good for the neighborhood's economy. but locals were dissatisfied with government subsidies and the unequal distribution of tourism revenue. Residents who did not directly benefit from tourism complained most. To promote tourism, the local government developed a subsidy program in 2002. Initially, nine homes received RMB 10,000 (US \$ 1,611) to build a guesthouse. Since then, only two households with political parties have received interest-free loans totaling RMB 50,000 (US \$ 8,055) from the government. For interest-free loans, the majority of villagers were left behind. In addition, the government has stopped offering admission to the new guesthouse.

### **Conclusion**

This study complements the academic literature on the role of tourism in poverty reduction and community development. The results are complex and there is widespread consensus on improving living standards, employment and accessibility, but there are different views the influence on household income, entrepreneurial prospects, and government subsidies. Studies support the claim that poverty is a multifaceted problem. Tourism is not the cure for all poverty problems. Tourism is not well integrated with other economies and the region relies heavily on government subsidies. In the broader tourism sector, which is dominated by major corporations, small family-owned enterprises can be susceptible. Community-based tourism programmes appear to be suited for relevant efforts in the Chinese context. However, given the circumstances, considered here, tourism, with the exception of some homes, does little to improve the local standard of living. It is doubtful whether tourism programs will actually help improve the local living conditions of everyone. Parallel

to tourism, alternative solutions must be explored. More research is needed to perform a comparative assessment of tourism's influence on rural inhabitants in various regions and to investigate other poverty alleviation strategies.