

# Research on the Path of Community-Based Tourism Development in the Context of Rural Revitalization—Take Naobao Village of Hohhot City as the Case

Yucheng Hao<sup>1,\*</sup>, Wenjing Liu<sup>1</sup>, Jingru Zhang<sup>1</sup>, Zhiying Wu<sup>1</sup>, Boyuan Di<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Administration, Manzhouli College of Inner Mongolia University, Manzhouli, China

<sup>2</sup>Department of Law, Manzhouli College of Inner Mongolia University, Manzhouli, China

\*Corresponding author

**Abstract:** As a new form of rural tourism, community-based tourism can play an important role in the process of rural revitalization. This paper takes Naobao village of Hohhot City as the case, and points out that there are problems in rural tourism development at present, such as lack of villagers' willingness and enthusiasm to participate, loss of local culture and collective memory, and low tourist experience and market competitiveness. By analyzing the reasons and summarizing the advanced experience of community-based tourism development in Mingyue village of Chengdu City, this paper proposes that the tourism villages facing similar difficulties as Naobao village can refer to the development path of "communitization" of rural tourism. By mobilizing villagers to actively and extensively participate in community-based tourism development activities, promoting the deep integration of local culture and customs with community-based tourism development, innovating community-based tourism products and improving service quality, local can promote the sustainable development of tourism, improve villagers' living standards and assist rural revitalization.

**Keywords:** rural tourism, community-based tourism, rural revitalization

## 1. Introduction

The report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China proposed that the most arduous and onerous task of comprehensively promoting Chinese rural revitalization is still in the countryside, "We will foster rural industries with local features to create more channels for increasing rural incomes. We will consolidate and expand our achievements in poverty alleviation and help areas and people that have just shaken off poverty build their own momentum for growth. We will develop infrastructure and public services in rural areas in a well-planned and coordinated way and build a beautiful and harmonious countryside that is desirable to live and work in." In this context, although agriculture is still the core of rural development, rural areas are no longer only linked to agricultural production, but are regarded as a multi-functional space to stimulate new social and economic activities. Rural revitalization requires fully tapping the value of various production factors and fully activating the multiple functions of space such as production, life, ecology and culture [1]. However, the traditional mode of rural tourism development based on a single goal and the interests of minority groups can not meet the practical needs, and a new regional and comprehensive mode of tourism development and management is urgently needed.

Community-based tourism refers to community participation in tourism development, which is established on the land collectively owned by the community and developed based on its production and life style, traditional culture and natural scenery. In the process of decision-making, development, planning, management and supervision of tourism, the opinions and needs of the community are fully considered, and the community is regarded as the main body of development and participation [2]. Make rural communities become the spatial carrier of rural tourism activities, and all elements of the community participate in the development of rural tourism and benefit extensively. Community-based tourism can realize the integration of multiple subjects, elements and business forms, provide guarantee for sustainable tourism development and rural community development, and has important practical significance for promoting rural revitalization.

## 2. Development status

Naobao village is located at the southern foot of the middle of Daqingshan Mountain Range, belonging to Baoheshao Town, northeast of Hohhot City, with about 3000 people and 900 households, and more than 350 permanent residents. Located at the intersection of National Highway and Ring Expressway, 11km away from Baita Airport and only half an hour's drive from the city center, it has good traffic conditions and location advantages. It was founded in the Kangxi period of the Qing Dynasty and settled here by immigrants from Shanxi Province to settle down, with the blending of Jin and Mongolian culture as local cultural characteristics. For a long time, the natural conditions are harsh, the land is barren, and the groundwater resources are scarce. The villagers' income source is mainly agricultural cultivation, but the crop production is low, it is difficult to maintain their livelihood, and they cannot give play to the significant advantages of the local economic location. In 2012, flash floods severely damaged homes and infrastructure in the village. Under the leadership of the general Party branch secretary of the village, the villagers scientifically planned the reconstruction work of the new village, implemented the strategy of rural revitalization and the concept of green development, and embarked on a diversified development path with rural characteristics tourism industry as the main, logistics and science and technology agriculture as the supplement, providing job opportunities for the village and surrounding villagers. In 2019, the total income of rural tourism exceeded 100 million yuan, and the annual income of some families exceeded 100,000 yuan, and it was rated as "the key village of National Rural Tourism" by the Central Development and Reform Commission and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

## 3. Existing problems and reason analysis

In this study, 210 questionnaires were distributed in the Naobao village by random sampling, 205 were successfully recovered, and 202 were valid, with an effective rate of 96.2%. In terms of the survey methods, it is mainly carried out through two ways: household survey and village committee discussion, and the survey objects include tourism operators, tourism staff, non-tourism villagers, and village committee staff. The statistical results showed (as shown in Figure 1) that 92 men and 110 women were surveyed, accounting for 45.5% and 54.5% respectively. In addition, although the elderly account for more than half, the overall number of 45-64 years old is still more, with a certain ability to participate in tourism.

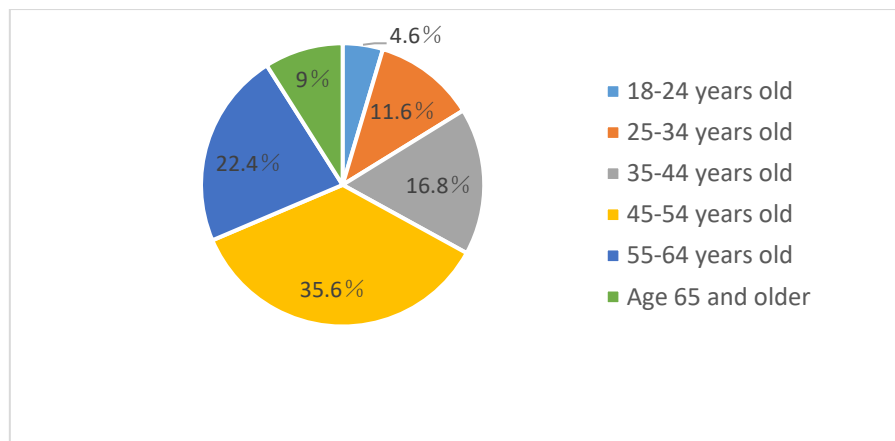


Figure 1: Age distribution of residents in Naobao village, Hohhot City in 2023

### 3.1. The willingness and enthusiasm of villagers to participate in rural tourism activities are insufficient

In the process of rural revitalization, effective collective actions can fully stimulate the vitality of rural society, attract more subjects to participate, and play an important role in solving the rural development dilemma and building a beautiful countryside [3]. According to the survey data, the proportion of villagers who support the development of rural tourism in Naobao village is 84%, but the willingness and enthusiasm of villagers to participate in rural tourism activities is not high, and the proportion of families engaged in local tourism business activities is only 28.2%. Although rural tourism is highly recognized for its role in promoting local economic development, job creation and employment, most villagers in the community do not choose to engage in tourism work or business.

On the one hand, community participation is not driven by economic benefits, and the benefits of individual villagers are insufficient. In terms of household income (as shown in Figure 2), families with an annual income of 20,000-50,000 yuan account for the largest proportion, followed by families with an annual income of 50,000-100,000 yuan, indicating that although the Naobao village introduces tourism to develop its economy, the income of local villagers is still generally low. In addition, the survey found that the majority of men choose migrant workers, which also reflects that the economic remuneration of migrant workers is higher than the work and business income of local rural tourism. First, due to the neglect of the villagers' main position and initiative in community governance and tourism construction, the community collective organization is low, and the villagers' individual bargaining power is weak and their initiative is not high; Second, because there are a large number of outlanders and profit-making organizations operating tourism activities in Naobao village, the positions are sufficient but the salary and treatment are low, and there is interest competition with the villagers engaged in tourism business activities.

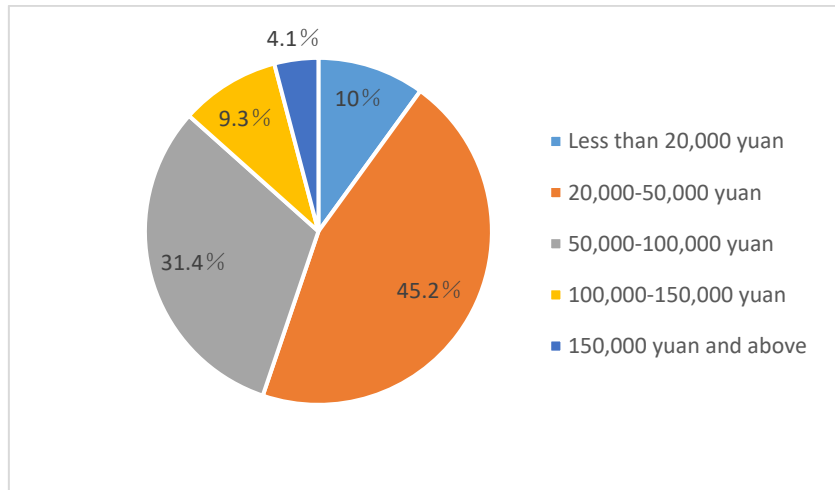


Figure 2: Annual income distribution of residents in Naobao village, Hohhot City in 2023

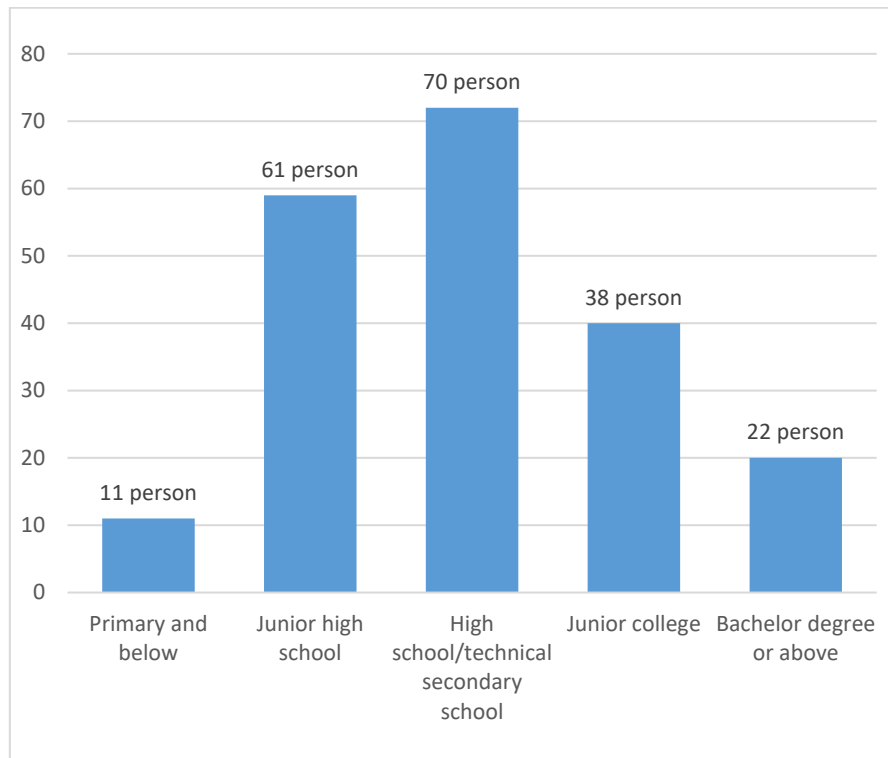


Figure 3: Education status of residents in Naobao village, Hohhot City in 2023

On the other hand, because there are certain conditions and requirements for community participation, the villagers' professional knowledge reserve and management skills are insufficient. In terms of

education level (as shown in Figure 3), 29.7% of the villagers have received higher education, and 64.8% have received secondary education. The villagers have a relatively high level of education, have a certain cognitive foundation, and have the ability to receive relevant professional knowledge and skills, but lack professional guidance and training, and some villagers are afraid of difficulties.

### ***3.2. The evolution of tourism landscape causes the loss of local culture and collective memory***

In the process of tourism development, community residents are the holders of local traditional culture, have the autonomy to inherit and promote community culture, and must respect the cultural rights and cultural subject status of residents [4][5]. However, places often lose their characteristics in the process of development, such as "de-localization" and "no locality". Because of the abandonment of the traditional rural style, the introduction of the ancient water towns in southern Yangtze River style cultural tourism landscape and the combination of European and Chinese ornamental architecture, the new village has quickly become the focus of media attention, and even known as a northern town with delicate southern scenery.

Under the background of integrating non-local landscape into local communities, some scholars selected 9 representative perception scenes in Naobao village and adopted landscape grading experiment to explore the intensity and spatial carrier of villagers' nostalgia, collective memory and local identity through the visual scene grading of villagers' living environment. Out of 319 valid questionnaires, the answer of "local identity" (91.54%) was significantly higher than that of "nostalgia" (77.43%) and "collective memory" (71.16%). In the dimension of "nostalgia" and "collective memory", scene g (festival activity scene) is the highest scoring item, accounting for more than 60% and 55% respectively, while scene e (symbol modeling) is the lowest scoring item, indicating that folk culture scenes such as festival activities are the core scenes bearing residents' nostalgia and collective memory. Symbolic modeling and new landscapes and scenes are difficult to trigger residents' nostalgia and collective memory. In the dimension of "local identity", the scoring rules for each scene are relatively balanced, so it is not the unique viewing of scene g that improves its scene selection rate in the dimension of nostalgia and collective memory [6].

According to the experiment, although the current quality and economic benefits of the tourism landscape in Naobao village make the villagers have a high degree of local identity, the great changes in the local landscape style and the emergence of a series of tourism effects have indeed blocked the spatial basis and material carrier of residents' collective memory and nostalgia, resulting in a threat to the relationship between people and places. However, in the face of better landscape environment and positive tourism development effects, villagers will not "collective amnesia", but temporarily weaken their own nostalgia. Villagers' emotions and attachments to local meaning will continue to change due to changes in the environment. Nostalgia and collective memory can lose their material carriers and can be concentrated in spiritual carriers. Rurality is the core attraction of rural tourism, and culture is the soul of rural tourism. If there is no non-physical rural landscape, the loss of local culture and collective memory of tourism communities will be further aggravated.

### ***3.3. Rigid tourism model and lack of innovation result in low tourist experience and market competitiveness***

At present, the development of rural tourism industry in some areas of China is generally homogenized, lacking industrial characteristics and serious repetitive construction, which is not conducive to building high-quality characteristic brands [7]. The development mode of rural tourism in Naobao village is relatively simple, lacking innovative activities and projects. The tourism income is still dominated by common tourism fee items such as snack street, folk food, film and television shooting, training and accommodation, and lacking tourism projects that are close to nature, unusual and distinctive in local culture. Many cultural resources have not been fully tapped, and the combination of project culture and business is not close. Lack of derivative tourism cultural and creative goods and ecological agricultural green products. The service quality and product quality of some tourism projects are not high, and the tourism experience of tourists is relatively mediocre, and the winter tourist season is relatively depressed compared with the summer tourist season, there is a significant gap between the number of tourists and tourism income, the consumption capacity of attracting tourists is limited, the tourism development space is insufficient, and the development potential has not been fully developed, which leads to the low market competitiveness of rural tourism in Naobao village.

#### 4. Advanced experience

The development mode of "communitization" of rural community-based tourism fully respects the main status and subjective will of community residents, and the open and integrated development of "communitization" from the point to the surface is different from the enclave and stage development of "scenicization" from the surface to the point, emphasizes the integration of rural tourism and community production and life [8], and the effective play of the integration function of community-based tourism resources directly affects the rational allocation of resources and the efficiency of tourism development. The successful experience of community-based tourism development in Mingyue village, Pujiang County, Chengdu, has certain reference value and significance for Naobao village and other tourism villages facing similar difficulties at present.

Mingyue village was an important post station on the Southern Silk Road and the ancient Tea Horse Road in the Tang and Song dynasties, and the "Qiong" kiln firing technique has been inherited to this day. In the 1990s, it gradually declined due to inconvenient transportation location and economic and social changes. After Wenchuan earthquake reconstruction, village tourism was transformed and developed. Community building began in 2014, and through four dimensions of government support, cultural and creative leverage, industrial support and public welfare promotion, the local government, new villagers, old villagers and social forces have been able to help, reshaping a cohesive community, which can be roughly divided into three stages [9].

The first stage is to cultivate community consciousness as the core and enhance the collective action ability of villagers. First of all, the government takes the initiative to delegate power, the governance focus goes down to the grassroots, and social organizations play their role. Architects and community planners visit and communicate with villagers and conduct field research, publicize the government's tourism support policies, design preliminary tourism public space planning schemes, explain and solicit opinions from villagers, and attract their interest in construction. Record the villagers in the community who are willing to participate in the community-based tourism management in the form of individuals, organizations or participation shares [10]. Secondly, the new villagers can be introduced into the village and settled down by renting and transforming idle courtyards. The new villagers help the old villagers master the craft technology through training and learning. The old villagers teach the new villagers their agricultural planting experience through communication and other ways.

The second stage will focus on the operation of tourism cooperatives to enhance the momentum of community economic development. The new and old villagers jointly develop and launch local special products such as Mingyue Brew, handmade tea, dried bamboo shoots, vegetation dyed clothing, bamboo woven crafts, etc. Artists and cultural makers guide the development of pottery, batik, tea house, farm and other special projects. The added value of traditional industries continues to increase, bringing stable economic sources.

The third stage will focus on the collaborative assistance of public welfare organizations to enhance the self-organizing capacity of communities. The Mingyue village Project working group has gradually withdrawn from the organization of rural cultural creation and construction, and the tourism cooperative has become the leader of community development. Local groups such as The Cattle Class Choir and Mingyue Flower Song and Dance Troupe provide festival performances and artistic inheritance for Mingyue village. At the same time, with the help of Chengdu "Tianfu Community Tour" applet and other platforms, the village conduct community publicity, cultural and creative exhibitions, travel reservation and service feedback.

#### 5. Countermeasures and suggestions

##### *5.1. Mobilize villagers to actively and extensively participate in community-based tourism development activities*

First of all, the local government should fully respect the main status and subjective will of the villagers in the tourism community, gradually delegate power to the grassroots, give play to the role of social organizations, and try to let the NaoBao villagers realize self-organization and management of the tourism community. On the one hand, the economic status and collective interests of local tourism practitioners should be protected, and healthy competition should be promoted. On the other hand, it can provide technical guidance and professional training for the villager through introduce the professionals responsible for community-based tourism development, and help the community to find and hire relevant

craftsmen, architects and community planners. Second, after the experts' communication visits, policy interpretation, accompanying research, plan drafting and opinion consultation and other preparatory work is completed, the community collectively deliberates on its own, by voluntary involvement in tourism activities of villagers to participate in tourism cooperatives to share dividends, improve the community economic subject status, organization degree and collective action ability and efficiency. Finally, guided by the policy preferential treatment of the introduction of relevant talents by the government and the economic subsidies for settling in the village, the residence of experts and talents is realized, the training service and technical guidance are provided to the new villagers, the professional knowledge reserve and tourism management skills of the old villagers are strengthened, and the conservative psychology and difficult mentality are offset.

### ***5.2. Promote the deep integration of local culture and customs with community-based tourism development***

The people's livelihood is the foundation, and culture is the soul. First of all, it is necessary to reshape the material carrier of local culture and collective memory, not only to maintain an open and inclusive attitude to create a unique non-local landscape culture, but also to rely on the ecological environment and historical and cultural advantages to protect the local traditional landscape culture. On the basis of the introduction of the ancient water towns in southern Yangtze River style landscape and the combination of European and Chinese ornamental architecture, and based on the guidance and suggestions of community planners and other professionals, planning transformation and style restoration should be carried out in appropriate areas, and traditional buildings and residential courtyards must be restored and protected, so as to combine the Jin and Mongolian cultural customs with natural scenery full of wild interest and scattered village forms [11], and deepen the regional cultural heritage. At the same time, villagers, entrusting parties, designers and others co-constitute a supervisory organization to formulate systems and norms for the construction of public space, and supervise and inspect the progress of the project and the implementation of the plan. Secondly, it is necessary to develop the spiritual carrier of local culture and collective memory, and promote the inheritance and innovation of intangible cultural heritage by carrying out folk culture performances such as Shehuo, Family Drama, Yangko and Mongolian Han Melody, holding creative activities such as music festivals, concerts, farmers' markets, traditional costumes and cultural relics exhibitions, and launching cultural and creative souvenirs reflecting Jin and Mongolian culture. Villagers' sense of identity, sense of belonging and sense of responsibility to the community should be enhanced, their awareness of self-development should be awakened and their ability to develop independently should be enhanced, thus forming the endogenous driving force of community-based tourism development [12].

### ***5.3. Enhance the visitor experience by innovating community-based tourism products and improving the quality of services***

First of all, a rural research society with the participation and multiple co-governance of villagers, governments, enterprises, experts, associations and public welfare organizations should be established to provide feasible suggestions for the sustainable development of rural community-based tourism as a "brain bank" and consultation and communication institution of the community. The villagers of the community still occupy the main position, and all parties shall conduct consultation and decision-making under the premise of fully respecting the collective will of the villagers. The government and primary-level organizations of Communist Party of China should play a leading and exemplary role; The enterprise as the entrusted party to provide infrastructure construction and engineering project services; Experts, associations and public welfare organizations can provide professional technical guidance, personnel training and education, and volunteer services to help Naobao village improve the quality of community-based tourism services according to the needs of tourists. Secondly, with the help of new villagers and experts, innovative ideas will be provided to deeply explore the Jin and Mongolian cultural values and ecological environment resources, and special tourism projects such as landscape pastoral walking, village folk custom experience and ancient style viewing should be developed and launched to realize the integrated development of agriculture and tourism. At the same time, the expansion function of e-commerce should be added to provide tourists and the public with online ordering and after-sales service for cultural and creative products and ecological agricultural green food of Naobao village, promote the integrated development of agriculture and tertiary industry, and help rural revitalization.

## 6. Summary

Taking Naobao village of Hohhot City as an example, this paper summarizes and draws on the advanced experience of community-based tourism development in Mingyue village of Chengdu City to demonstrate the advantages of "communitization" of rural tourism. However, Inner Mongolia is a vast region, and the actual situation of Naobao village can hardly reflect the overall state of rural tourism development in Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region. In order to further explore and demonstrate the rationality of community-based tourism development model taking root and promoting in rural areas of Inner Mongolia, it is still necessary to expand the research scope and continue to carry out in-depth research in different banner counties and villages.

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