

RESIDENTS' ATTITUDES TO TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN ANCIENT VILLAGE RESORTS —Case Study of World Cultural Heritage of Xidi and Hong Villages

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ABSTRACT: Tourism development surely has social, economic and environmental impacts on tourist destinations. The study on resorts residents' attitudes can help understand the nature of tourism development and the extent to which it may influence on tourist destinations. By now, researches on residents' perception and attitudes are plentiful in the international circle and achievements are great, yet few are found in developing countries. As a most representative cultural tourist destination, World Cultural Heritage—Xidi and Hong villages in Yi County of Anhui Province, are drawing the attention of both tourists and academic circles. This article, taking Xidi and Hong villages as examples, seeks to analyze ancient village residents' attitudes towards tourism impacts and then tries further to explore the connection between tourism development and residents' attitudes. Both qualitative and quantitative surveys are applied in the exploratory investigation into local residents' attitudes of tourism impacts. Based on abundant face-to-face interviews with the local households, tourism enterprises concerned, local government and tourists from July to August of 2002, we are able to have a better understanding of local residents' attitudes to community life, and perception of tourism impacts on society, economy and environment. By this we can promote domestic study on resorts residents' attitudes, and provide some theoretical grounds for establishing tourism development planning and perfect community participation system at tourist destinations.

KEY WORDS: ancient village resort; Xidi and Hong villages; residents' attitudes

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1 INTRODUCTION

Study on resorts residents' attitudes has been a major content for Tourism Sociology and Tourism Geography abroad in the past few decades and achievements are so great. Likewise, this field has also drawn domestic scholars' attention to a certain extent in recent years.

Xidi and Hong villages, regarded as the most outstanding representative of ancient villages in southern Anhui, are located in Yi County, Anhui Province. For long, local people mainly live on picking tealeaves, raising silkworm and other farming and forestry practices. Nevertheless, restricted by the natural environment, agricultural productivity and local residents' living standard were still quite low. Since the late 1980s, tourism has, however, accelerated greatly the economic condition improvement and become the pillar indus-

try in both villages. For instance, only in the year 2001, Xidi and Hong villages received 270×10^3 and 200×10^3 tourists, with the ticket income being 8.51×10^6 yuan (RMB) and 3.87×10^6 yuan, respectively (Fig. 1). As a typical kind of cultural resorts, both villages have arrested more attention of tourists and cultural scholars at home and abroad. On November 30, 2000, because of their well-preserved authentic historic heritage and deep historical cultural meaning, both villages were accepted as World Cultural Heritage by the UNESCO. By now, researches on residents' perception and attitudes are plentiful in the international circle and achievements are great, yet few are found in developing countries. This article, taking Xidi and Hong villages as examples, seeks to investigate and analyze ancient village residents' attitudes towards tourism impacts and then tries further to explore the connection between tourism development and residents' attitudes.

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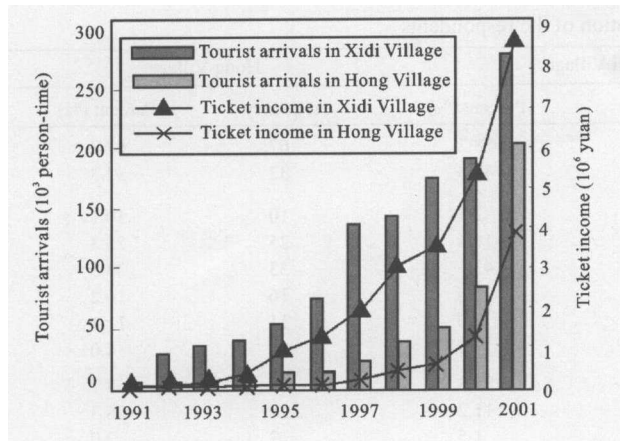


Fig.1 Tourist arrivals and ticket income

2 METHODS AND DATA ANALYSIS

About 300 questionnaires were averagely handed out to the community households of Hong Village and Xidi Village on July 21 and 25 of 2002, accounting for 37.9% and 41.9% of the total households, of which 99 and 134 effective questionnaires were recollected later, with the response rate being 66% and 89.3%, respectively. Besides, qualitative in-depth personal interviews were conducted on those stakeholders who are deeply concerned in tourism industry. On July 5, July 20 to August 5, we undertook quite a lot of interviews on 12 households and tourism enterprise concerned in each village, the local town government, Tourism Bureau of Yi County and Huangshan City.

The questionnaire comprised two main parts. The first part included questions concerned with demographic background, residents' attitudes to tourism and their satisfaction at community life. The second part included 34 statements referring to residents' perception of positive and negative impacts of tourism on society, economy and environment of the local community, in relation to which respondents were asked to indicate the degree of their agreement or disagreement on a five point Likert scale.

Drawing on SMITH *et al.*'s study methods, this article, however, rectified some of their categories according to the present situation in Xidi and Hong villages, and examined several variables that were classified into three major categories (SMITH and KRANICH, 1998). They are residents' attitudes to tourism, satisfaction at community life, and residents' perception of tourism impacts on society, economy and environment.

Residents' attitudes to tourism are assessed by two indexes. The first is a complex index created by sum-

ming responses to several questions measuring residents' general attitudes and satisfactory degree toward tourism development. The second is if resident thinks the quality of life would tend to decline as a result of tourism development.

The residents' satisfaction at community life is assessed by four indexes measuring different dimensions of satisfaction, including general community life, community service facility, community economic benefits, and community residential environment. Of those, community service facility satisfaction is assessed by three indexes, including residents' satisfaction at community infrastructure and tourism services, community public facility and public security.

Residents' perception of tourism impacts are assessed by three indexes in terms of social, economical and environmental aspects, each of which is also based on the summing of respondents' answers to their perception of tourism impacts on the local community.

Table 1 displays information about the socio-demographic background of the respondents. From the table, we may find that the samples include people with different ages, residential time, education level and occupation. The randomly chosen samples ensure the reliability of the study results. With respect to their gender and native place, the majority of the respondents are male (58.2% in Xidi Village and 67.7% in Hong Village) and native residents (84.3% in Xidi Village and 68.7% in Hong Village). As to the number of years they have lived in the communities, the mean is 33.88 and 25.84 respectively. The mean age is 40.61 and 36.10 with a standard deviation of 11.71 and 13.49 respectively. Additionally, the mean education levels are 9.18 and 9.65 years, with a standard deviation of 3.34 and 2.61 respectively.

3 RESIDENTS' ATTITUDES TO TOURISM

Survey shows villagers in Xidi and Hong villages have perceived strongly direct economic benefits from tourism. Fig. 2 indicates the fact that villagers in Xidi have profited more from tourism than the ones in Hong Village. In Xidi and Hong villages, 67.4% and 78.1% residents, respectively, are in favor of "in general tourism development has more advantages than disadvantages". However, they still have doubts about the proper managerial mode for tourism development although more than 2/3 residents support tourism in their village. Residents' attitudes toward tourism development also embody ideas of sustainable development. About 53.8% and 65.3% residents hold "government should be more

Table 1 Background information of the respondents

		Xidi Village		Hong Village	
		Frequency	Percent (%)	Frequency	Percent (%)
Sex	Male	78	58.2	67	67.7
	Female	56	41.8	32	32.3
Age	≤20	3	2.3	10	10.1
	21-30	22	16.4	25	25.3
	31-40	58	43.3	33	33.3
	41-50	29	21.6	16	16.2
	51-60	12	9.0	11	11.1
	≥61	10	7.5	4	4.0
Native place	Local village	113	84.3	68	68.7
	Rest of Yi County	15	11.2	28	28.3
	Rest of Huangshan City	2	1.5	2	2.0
	Rest of Anhui	2	1.5	0	0
	Rest of China	1	0.7	1	1.0
	Missing	1	0.7	0	0
Education level	Illiterate	7	5.2	1	1.0
	Primary school	25	18.7	12	12.1
	Junior middle school	53	39.6	58	58.6
	Senior middle school	36	26.9	16	16.2
	College & above	9	6.7	10	10.1
	Missing	4	3.0	2	2.0
Occupation	Student	5	3.7	11	11.1
	Village cadre	9	6.7	2	2.0
	Tourism managerial personnel	12	9.0	0	0
	Tourist guide	4	3.0	2	2.0
	Driver	2	1.5	1	1.0
	Waiter or waitress	3	2.2	5	5.1
	Restaurant operator	11	8.2	9	9.1
	Farmer	45	33.6	25	25.3
	Retired worker	8	6.0	4	4.0
	Souvenir seller	21	15.7	13	13.1
	Others	11	8.2	27	27.3
	Missing	3	2.2	0	0
	Residential time (year)	≤10	13	9.7	22
11-20		16	11.9	19	19.2
21-30		25	18.7	18	18.2
≥31		76	56.7	40	40.4
Missing		4	3.0	0	0

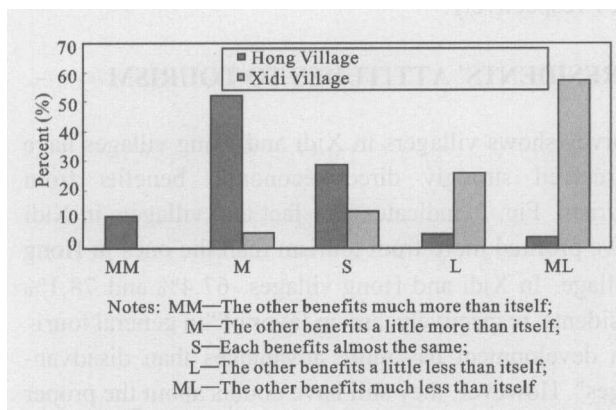


Fig. 2 Comparison of residents' perception of tourism benefits

concerned with the preservation of world cultural heritage rather than encouraging more tourists to come".

This reflects that most residents have realized the importance to protect ancient residences, which are precious un-recycled humanistic tourism resources. Besides, 86.4% and 90.8% of residents, respectively, agree that the successful bidding for World Cultural Heritage is of advantage to enhance their awareness of the protection of ancient residences, cultural relics and heritages.

In the course of personal interview with the local households, few of them hold "during the tourism season tourism development has changed or disturbed their regular life to a certain degree". However, after an in-depth interview, we found that things were not the case they had expected. For instance, most Chinese people would like to arrange such activities as wedding ceremony, birthday celebration for old people,

etc. on May Day, National Day or New Year Day. Nevertheless, it is not the case with Xidi households. On the contrary, they deliberately avoid such "good days", and arrange those activities at off-season of tourism because most of the villagers or their relatives are engaged in tourism or relative jobs in those days. The fact that most people do not think tourism has in some way disturbed their regular life is maybe because they have come to get used to the kinds of inconveniences brought by slow and sustained tourism development. We are told that in the daytime, some residents, especially the old, have to look for some other quieter places to relax their body and mind since their residences are crowded with tourists from early morning to late afternoon. Besides, community residents' regular activities, such as shopping pattern, watering the vegetables in the garden, are also limited to be conducted at a certain period of a day.

This phenomenon is in accordance with COLLINS' (1978) conclusion that the host's behavior can be transformed temporarily. BURNS and HOLDEN (1995) described this change as "coping behaviors". Of course, residents of different age may have different perception of this kind of "coping behaviors". Compared with the older people, the younger ones have more positive attitudes since they obviously hope "the more tourists, the better". BRUNT and COURTNEY's (1999) survey result is in line with this. In a study on the Columbia River Gorge, LANKFORD and HOWARD (1994) found that age is an important index of residents' attitudes.

4 RESIDENTS' SATISFACTION AT COMMUNITY LIFE

4.1 General Satisfaction at Community Life

Through in-depth interviewing with the households and the introduction of stakeholder representatives, we conclude that Xidi respondents' satisfaction with general community life is higher than that of Hong Village respondents. This is clearly manifested by the much smaller number of people in Xidi to go outside for jobs than the latter. Besides, there is a tendency of increasing number of people to move to Xidi in recent years. It is recorded that during the short period from November of 1999 to July of 2002, 8 bachelors aging between 30 to 44 have found spouses from nearby villages or other places who have all moved their domiciles to Xidi. Apart from this, 10 outsider males also married into and lived with their brides' families in Xidi from January of 1998 to December of 2001. We

are told that the ratio of local girls' marrying outside is relatively low. Even if they do marry someone living outside of their hometown, they are unwilling to change their domiciles out. This phenomenon has now drawn the attention of certain department concerned and relative domicile management policy has been implicated accordingly.

4.2 Satisfaction at Community Service Facility

Survey indicates that in Xidi and Hong villages, 47.6% and 76.8% residents, respectively, are unsatisfied with the present state of transport facility, and think it is disadvantageous to tourism development, especially in Hong Village. Generally speaking, this is in accordance with the present transport condition. Although more than 7/10 respondents in both villages state that local infrastructure is improved mainly to meet tourists' needs, they still feel personally beneficial from that. This is manifested by the fact that in the two villages respectively, 89.1% and 67.7% of residents are supportive of "tourism development has enhanced the construction standard and utilization rate of such infrastructure as power supply, water supply and communication facilities". However, since tourism developed in much of a speed in the latest 4 or 5 years and tourist arrivals have increased so sharply in Hong Village, residents thus have perceived increased pressure on local environment, which is shown by the fact that 50.5% of Hong villagers perceive strongly "the arrivals of large number of tourists have caused shortage of water". However, it is not the case with the villagers in Xidi. Since tourism developed in a steady speed, only 25.4% of them realized the pressure for water resources. Another direct impact brought by large number of tourist arrivals is the rapidly increased rubbish. While the eco-environment is relatively fragile in ancient villages, that has increased the difficulty in disposing of rubbish. Toward this phenomenon, residents of both villages have clear perceptions, with Hong villagers' perception being even stronger. Besides, the increasing number of tourists has also resulted in the increasing number of restaurants and hotels. It is no wonder that more than 3/5 residents of both villages agree that the number of local restaurants, accommodation facilities is "enough".

In-depth interviewing with the local households indicates that most respondents have very strong perception of the improvement of communication facility as well as the increased number of community public amusement facilities. They hold that the improvement of these public facilities has definite connection with

tourism development. However, few respondents agree that the improved condition in schools and medical institutes (for instance, the increased number of computers and teaching facilities, the maintenance of school buildings, the whitewash of school walls, the purchase of more advanced medical facilities, the construction of the new Chinese Medical Hospital in Hong Village) have direct connection with tourism development. In our opinion, this is maybe due to the fact that part of the respondents have not fully realized the "refraction effect" on social service, medical care and education brought by tourism development.

MATHIESON and WALL (1982) concluded that tourism contributes to a perception of an increase in crime rates. BRUNT and COURTNEY's study (1999) on a small seashore resort Dawlish also supports this finding to a certain degree. However, survey results of public security in Xidi and Hong villages are different from the above conclusion. In general, public security condition in both villages is rather good. There is no tendency for its worsening as a result of tourism development. We are told in Xidi Town Police Office that public security condition in Xidi Scenic Area is, on the contrary, better than other villages of the town. Occasionally quarrel happens between tourists and businessmen when negotiating the price, but the number is quite small and the case is not serious at all. In 2000 some outsiders came to run amusement facility for people to play chess or cards, only to be closed four months later. The reason is quite simple: most residents were engaged in tourism or related activities, and they surely do not have enough time to take part in gambling or other form of amusements. Some respondents of Hong Village told us that crime at night has been effectively held back due to the improvement of road lighting and road condition. Thereafter, tourism development in ancient villages, at least by now, has not caused such negative

social impacts as the increase of number of crime cases.

4.3 Satisfaction at Community Economic Benefits

Survey indicates that more than 2/3 of the residents in both villages are in favor of "tourism development has enhanced local residents' employment opportunity"; "the increase of employment opportunity for women enables them to be more economic independence". However, results of our interviewing on local households, tourism businesses and government indicate that most of the employment provided for local residents, especially for women, are cleaner, small businessman, waiter or waitress in tourism serve facilities, or temporary worker needed in those kinds of cleaning and construction. Obviously these are usually humble jobs with little payment. Some are needed only for a certain period of a year. Survey result shows that there still remains large distance between residents' real income and ideal income. It is also noticeable that residents' perception of income gap between people engaged in tourism and ones not differs markedly in the two villages (Fig. 3). The villagers in Xidi perceive high benefits from tourism, which is shown in their belief that income difference could be as high as 4000 yuan. Therefore, 57.7% respondents report that there is at least one person engaged in tourism in their families. As for Hong villagers, most of them do not think that great difference exists between those who are engaged in tourism and those who are not. As a result, their engagement in tourism is much lower than the former. As the survey result shows, only 20.2% of respondents report there are family members engaged in tourism. The above survey result also verifies tourists' perception that business atmosphere in Xidi is much stronger than Hong Village. The fact that almost each household along tourist line in Xidi Village does business has, to a certain degree, influenced tourists' interest in enjoying ancient villages.

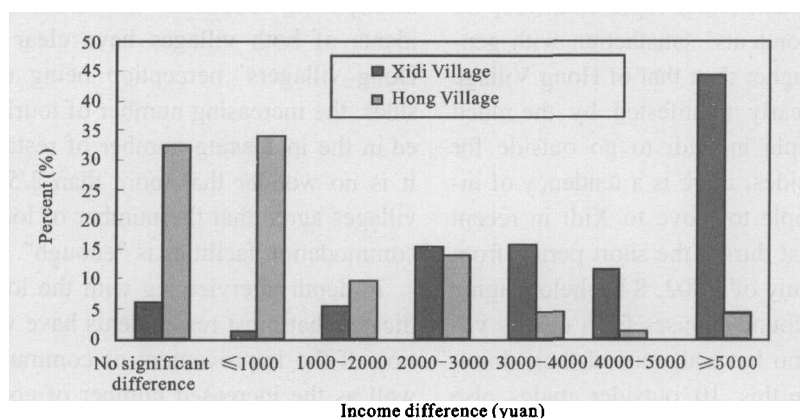


Fig. 3 Residents' perception of income difference between people engaged in tourism and not

Since the villagers in Xidi have stronger perception of economic benefits brought from tourism, it is no strange that they hold a much precautious attitude toward outsiders (Fig. 4), which is shown by their definite objective attitude toward outsiders' doing business in Xidi.

4.4 Satisfaction at residence environment

With the development of the society and the improvement of people's living standard, people begin to pay more attention to their residential environment. However, as the site of World Cultural Heritage, even a piece of brick or wood in the two villages is under strict pro-

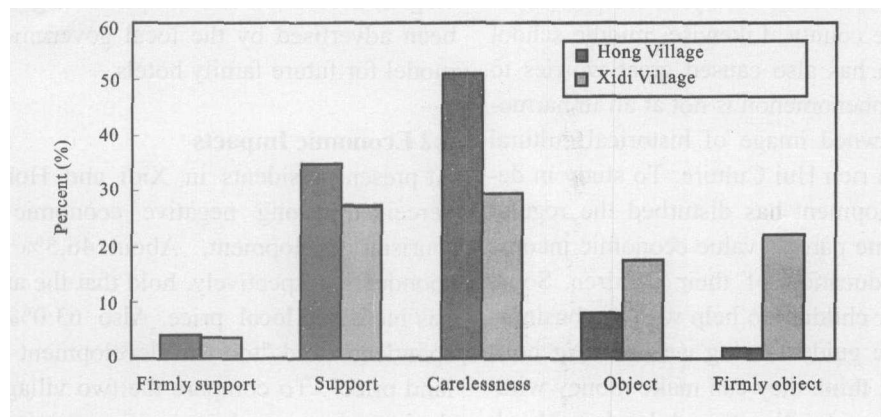


Fig. 4 Residents' attitude toward outsiders doing business in their village

tection by the nation. The contradiction between protection and development becomes even severe. Our survey result on residents' level of satisfaction at their residential environment shows that most of the respondents are unsatisfied with the present condition. Yet as the old proverb in China goes, "it is so hard to desert one's harmonious family, so does his lovely hometown". Survey indicates that 74.2% of villagers of Xidi Village and 61.2% of Hong Village are sentimentally attached to their homeland and are not willing to sell their residence gifted by their ancestors. Table 2 shows that most residents are doubtful about moving to the New District, which is under planning at present. More than half of the residents in both villages claim that they will act in accordance with the actual situation. To compare residents' attitude toward life in Xidi and Hong villages, residents of the former are surely more active and optimistic. Their psychological bearing capacity also seems to be much stronger.

5 PERCEPTION OF TOURISM IMPACTS

5.1 Social Impacts

Toward positive social impacts of tourism, the affirmative ratio of the residents is rather high. In Xidi and Hong villages, 89.9% and 86.5% of residents think "tourism help make the two villages known to others"; 61.7% and 51% hold "tourism has greatly changed local residents' life style and custom"; 66.4% and 47.9% of residents agree "tourism help popularize the common speech of Chinese language and the number of residents speaking with dialect has decreased"; 68.2% and 37.9% of residents hold "tourism help extend young people's opportunity to choose spouses". In general, villagers' perception of positive impacts is stronger in Xidi Village than Hong Village. Toward negative social impacts of tourism, residents of both villages have already perceived to a certain degree "local social moral standard has degenerated", "tourists' uncivilized behavior is

Table 2 Residents' level of satisfaction at residential environment

Place	Satisfaction	Xidi Village				Hong Village			
		Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Dev.	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Std. Dev.
Ancient residence	Yes	37	28.9			16	16.7		
	No, but are used to it	59	46.1	1.96	0.74	34	35.4	2.31	0.74
	No, but no other choice	32	25.0			46	47.9		
New District	Yes	29	23.4	1.87	0.57	17	17.7	2.08	0.66
	Be pending	82	66.1			54	56.3		
	Firmly object	13	10.5			25	26.0		

more serious than local residents", and so on, Hong villagers' perception of negative impacts being stronger than the former.

It must be cautioned that tourism development has caused some adverse effects on local students' ideology and school education. For instance, in 2001, the average graduate score of Xidi Primary School listed the last one in the whole county. Likewise, middle school educational situation has also caused great worries to local teachers. This phenomenon is not at all in harmonious with the renowned image of historical cultural ancient villages with rich Hui Culture. To study in detail, tourism development has disturbed the regular teaching order. Some parents value economic income but overlook the education of their children. Some even encourage their children to help with the business or serve as part-time guides during weekends or holidays. Children also think they can make money without school education and will not work hard at school. Fortunately, local government has realized this serious problem. It is decided that students should go to school as usual during the "Golden Week" in order to decrease students' opportunity to engage in business activities. That is to say, holidays during May Day and National Day are all postponed till tourists are back home. This measurement has taken effect in a certain degree, although it cannot solve the problem fundamentally. Besides, the harmful behavior of some tourists who came to paint has caused negative demonstration effects on students of middle school, such as playing truant, being in love, playing computer games in internet bars, which really deserves the attention of local government and students' parents.

Two empirical studies suggested the direct connection between increasing tourism development and population growth in rural communities. Many of the high-amenity values, such as comfortable environment, pleasant weather, beautiful scenery, and a rural atmosphere attract not only tourists, but also migrants (SMITH and KRANNICH, 1998). By now, a number of studies have cited the evidence of moving to rural counties in the western United States with high amenity values, both for individual migrants and businesses (SMITH and KRANNICH 1998; JOBES 1992; RUDZITIS and JOHANSEN 1989; JOHNSON and RASKER 1993). Likewise, this phenomenon has also appeared in Xidi and Hong villages. By the end of 2002, nearly 10 ancient residences had been sold to outsiders from the place nearby Jiangxi Province, or even remote Beijing and Guizhou Province. Some of outsiders enjoy so much the local spectacular moun-

tain and water as well as the rural scenery, some seek to find a peaceful surrounding after retirement and some take both personal interest and the need for investment into account. For instance, a photographer from Beijing bought an ancient residence called "Kuangguzhai Building", which is well known for its elegant decoration and unique managerial idea and has been advertised by the local government as the ideal model for future family hotels.

5.2 Economic Impacts

At present, residents in Xidi and Hong villages have perceived strong negative economic impacts from tourism development. About 46.5% and 53.5% respondents, respectively, hold that the arrival of tourists has increased local price. Also 63.0% and 87.6% respondents hold "tourism development has raised local land price". To compare the two villages, residents of the latter have much stronger perception. From personal in-depth interview, we can find that industry structure in both villages has altered to a certain degree with the development of tourism. In recent years, more and more community residents give up agricultural production and go in for service trade, especially in Xidi. By now, the economic structure with tourism being the center, and the production of rice and oil plants, silkworm, tea and forestry developing simultaneously have taken its shape in the ancient villages.

5.3 Environmental Impacts

Tourism development and increased tourist arrivals surely have some impacts on residential environment of tourist destinations. Survey shows residents of both villages simultaneously have strong perception of positive environmental impacts from tourism. For instance, more than 60% of residents hold tourism development can help enhance both government and residents' realization of the protection of environment and cultural relics. However, ancient village is a special kind of cultural tourism resources, so it differs from natural landscape for its unique features. More than 2/5 of residents hold "the exhaled carbon dioxide from tourists would erode the outside material of ancient residence"; "too many tourists are harmful in the protection of ancient residences". The host of Ruiyuting Building in Xidi told us that the threshold of his house was stamped broken thrice within 8 months in 2002 due to this reason. Since the eco-environment in ancient villages is relatively fragile, residents of both villages have already perceived some negative environmental impacts from tourism. For instance, in Xidi and Hong

villages respectively, 65.1% and 72.1% residents claim "some students scrawl on the wall of their residences, and the pigment for drawing would pollute the river water flowing through the village"; 44% and 69.7% residents agree that "tourists' rubbish pollute the river water seriously"; 55.1% and 70.7% of residents hold "tourism development caused the degeneration of local environmental quality"; 38.7% and 71.4% of residents realize "tourism development has disturbed community residents' regular life and destroyed the peaceful surrounding of ancient villages". To compare with the villagers in Xidi, villagers in Hong Village have much stronger perception of negative environmental impacts from tourism.

6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

DOGAN (1989) suggested that since residents perceive differently toward tourism impacts, residents' attitudes toward its development might include resistance, retreatism, revitalization, adoption and combination of them. Besides, at different stage of tourism development, the ratio of residents with different attitudes may be different. Using cluster analysis, FREDLINE and FAULKNER (2000) divided residents with different attitudes toward tourism development into the following 5 categories: "lovers", "realists", "ambivalent supporters", "concerned for a reason" and "haters".

To compare with LU Lin's study on residents' attitudes in southern Anhui tourist area made in 1994 (LU, 1996), we find that 8 years later, residents of the above area, represented by Xidi and Hong villages, have no significant difference in the perception of positive social impacts and negative economic impacts. Yet their perception of environmental impacts does change markedly. Eight years ago, 60.2% of residents hold "tourism has not destroyed local eco-environment". As a result, only 27.8% of the respondents hold "government should be more concerned with local eco-environment rather than encouraging more tourists to come". Yet in 2002, 55.1% and 70.7% of residents of the two villages respectively, hold "tourism development caused the degeneration of local environmental quality". In accord with this, the perception of respondents in favor of "government should be more concerned with the preservation of ancient village as world cultural heritage rather than encouraging more tourists to come" have increased significantly, being 54.8% and 65.3% of respectively. What puzzles us is that 8 years ago about 3/4 of residents hold "social, environmental benefits are more important than econom-

ic benefits". However, survey of this time differs from that of last time: 48.4% and 56.1% of residents, respectively, hold "the importance of economic benefits from tourism exceeds some negative impacts on other aspects"; 30.7% and 46.9% of them, respectively, hold "economic benefits from tourism are more important than the protection of environment and cultural relics". In our opinion, this is maybe due to the much complicated relationship among those stakeholders concerned, and their contradiction concentrating on the distribution of tourism income. As a result, local residents become much too sensitive about tourism economic benefits.

In conclusion, 8 years ago, residents of southern Anhui mainly hold the attitude of maintenance and retreatism, the portion of maintenance being even stronger. Residents are mainly comprised of "lovers", "realists" and "ambivalent supporters". No significant "haters" or "concerned for a reason" appeared. While at present, although Xidi and Hong villagers' attitude toward tourism is still mainly composed of maintenance and retreatism, the portion of retreatism has increased in a way. In Hong Village, a tiny minority even holds an attitude of resistance. Residents are mainly composed of "realists", "ambivalent supporters" and "concerned for a reason", though a tiny minority of "haters" has also appeared in Hong Village.

Taken as a whole, the results of this analysis are generally consistent with MATHIESON and WALL's conclusion (1982) that the economic effects of tourism are largely beneficial, the social effects are mainly undesirable, and the environmental effects are mixed. In order to promote effective protection of ancient villages and healthy sustainable development of tourism, beautify the favorable images of tourist destinations, enhance community residents' realization of the importance of both protection and development, and provide tourists with first-rate service and high quality tourism products, local residents should have a better understanding of tourism and play a leading part in tourism planning and development process and actively take part in tourism decision-making process. Make sure that community residents benefit from tourism for the purpose of increasing positive impacts while decreasing negative impacts from tourism at the same time. Since community residents have cost a lot in terms of environment, psychology as well as change of their lifestyle and behavior, it is important to ensure that they are compensated in economic, psychological or material aspects. As WTO (World Tourism Organization) points out, the more benefits local residents can

get from tourism development, the more actively they shall protect local natural environment and cultural heritages, and support kinds of tourism activities. Besides, a suitable and comprehensive education on personnel who are engaged in tourism plays an important role in a successful development and management of tourist destinations. In Xidi and Hong villages, government officials in charge of tourism should be aware of the policy-making process, tourism planning process, the designing and study on feasibility of new tourism items and products, as well as the analysis of social, environmental and economic impacts from tourism. The general education level of the host community should be enhanced to a certain extent. Community residents should be educated so as to enhance their knowledge related to tourism, their identification of the potential benefits and problems brought by tourism and their realization of the

special significance in the protection of environment and cultural relics. In order to reach a common sense in the form, objectives, direction and goal of tourism development among those stakeholders concerned, the local government, undoubtedly, should play a crucial role in the establishment of successful co-operative relationships among them (Fig. 5), which can also help to guarantee that the goal of sustainable development of tourism in ancient villages is met.

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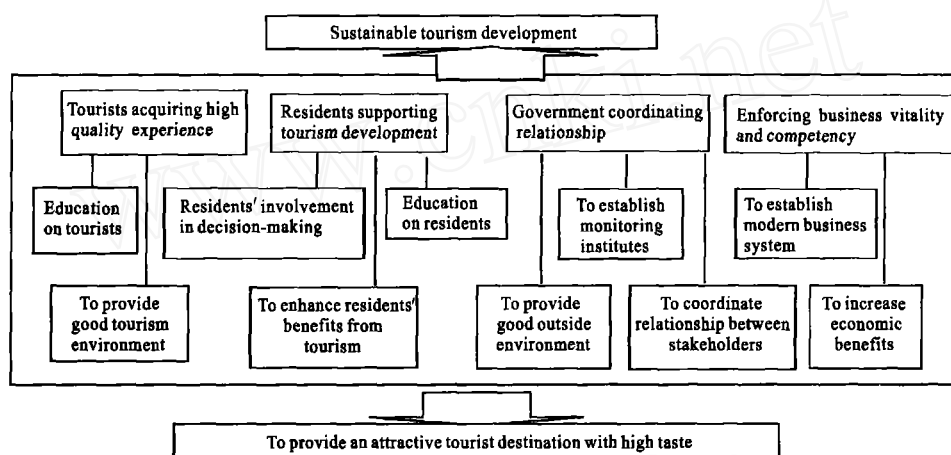


Fig. 5 Model of tourism stakeholder system

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