

Research on the Mechanism and Evolving Path of Community Empowerment in Cultural Heritage Sites

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Abstract: Under government-led tourism development model, the traditional cultural communities have problems of inadequate and uneven development of tourism empowerment. Based on the theories of four-type power and the core-periphery tourism destination theory six tourism communities of a mature cultural tourist destination - Wudang Mountain - were investigated to explore the development status of empowerment problems. To explore the mechanism and evolution path of community tourism empowerment in mature cultural heritage sites as well as figure out the roles played by local government, tourism enterprises, local elites and tourists. This paper proposes an improvement strategy for the empowerment promotion of cultural heritage sites. Research indicates that: (1) In terms of community disempowerment dimension, the government is the highlight stakeholder of influence and the local elite is the second remarkable stakeholder of it. (2) Regarding the passive community empowerment, government is the most remarkable stakeholder. (3) In terms of community self-empowerment and psychological dimension, there is a significant difference in community location; the empowerment development in peripheral areas is more significant than in core and transition areas. (4) In the aspect of the residents' overall tourism satisfaction, the transition area has the lowest satisfaction level and the highest level of tourism-support. The core and peripheral areas show opposite results. (5) Among four dimensions of community tourism empowerment, the passive empowerment has the most significant impact on the residents. The conclusion of the study is that the development path of empowerment in China's cultural heritage sites should be based on the government-led background, focusing on the community's development of self-enhancement, differentiation of community space and groups as well as proposing targeted enhancement strategies based on their own character.

Keywords: Cultural Heritage Site, Tourism Empowerment, Mechanism and Path

1. Introduction

The mountainous area of China (about 70% of the whole territory), is a topographical uplift with low developed economy, as well as a gathering area for cultural tourism resources. [1] Tourism research in cultural heritage sites has important practical and theoretical value in promoting rural revitalization and poverty alleviation precision. Tourism community is the owner of cultural heritage sites and tourism resources. It is the most important object in the boosting of local community empowerment, which should receive help. It is not substantial concern of tourism development. [2]

Nowadays, the development of tourism in cultural heritage sites of China still faces problems. Such as neglecting of the interests of local community, controlling of private investment to heritage area and tourism non-sustainable development. [3] Therefore it is necessary to promote the inheritance of local culture and the development of tourism industry via community tourism empowerment, the study of community tourism empowerment has become a hot research topic during recent years.

1.1. Tourist Community

The community is a group of people and area they belong to, that carry out social activities and have interconnected with common cultural ties.[4] The “tourism community” is developed on the “community” basis, which is a society form that causes changes in population structure and demographic characteristics through the driving force of tourism economy. [5] The development and spatial evolution of tourism communities have the following distinctive features.

From the perspective of stakeholders, who influence the participation of tourism communities, they can be divided into core stakeholders, squatters and marginal stakeholders. [6] Among them: government, tourism enterprises, tourists, local elites are core stakeholders. They also are the main players that affect community empowerment and disempowerment. The power among the stakeholders is significantly different. For example, in the development of Chinese community tourism, the government’s power is much stronger than other groups’ [7] and it plays a leading role in community tourism empowering.

From the perspective of temporal evolution of tourism communities, each stage has its own characteristics. At the development stage in China, the fundamental driving force for tourism development is economic advancement and insufficient attention paid to individual empowerment. While in the mature western countries, tourism community main purpose is its power

and development, as well as paying more attention to the individual empowerment of the tourism community. During the development phase different levels of community empowerment also have different emphasizes. [8]

1.2. Community Tourism Empowerment

The empowerment of community tourism refers to the process of enhancing the community residents capacity and power through the tourism development and harmless advancement of community tourism realizing. [9] The concept of empowerment was first introduced into the field of tourism research by Akamal and the necessity of empowering community tourism was proceeded. [10] The four-dimensional framework theory was advanced by Scheyvens. It says, that the empowerment of community tourism is divided into political empowerment, social empowerment, economic empowerment and psychological empowerment. [11] At present, most scholars in China and abroad use the framework system to combine the theories and methods of tourism, geography and sociology to conduct research on community tourism empowerment.

To explore the dominant groups and evolving mechanisms that affect empowerment, Vene Klasen and Miller promoted four-types power theory: “Power over”, “Power to”, “Power with”, “Power within”. [12] As it is shown in Table 1:

Table 1. Four types of power.

Four-types power	Type of empowerment
Power over	a type of control that ultimately controls people's decisions
Power to	Transfer of power, such as government, business, etc., to transfer power to local communities
Power with	a power to cooperate with each other within and between communities
Power within	Self-awareness power

From: Vene Klasen & Miller, 2007 [12]

“Power over” emphasizes control and restrictions on the community; “Power to” refers to the external groups, such as government and enterprises (transferring power to the local community); “Power with” refers to collective community empowerment; “Power within” emphasizes the awareness of empowerment and ability of individuals in the community. This theory can effectively analyze the structure and evolution mechanism of community power, and thus has become an emerging method for increasing the power of tourism in recent years. [13-14]

Currently, in the study of community tourism empowerment, the four-dimensional theory is applied from the economic, social, environmental and institutional dimensions of the community, to analyze empowerment and the integration of relevant theories of tourism destinations. While the structure and evolving mechanism of power are not involved. The theory of four-type power can explain the power structure of the community, power development stage, internal and external factors. However, there is few researches with this theory and even less with quantitative analysis of the scale. This paper takes the neighboring communities of mature cultural heritage site (Wudang Mountain Scenic Area) as the research object. It uses the theory of four-type power,

combining it with the stakeholder theory and the core-periphery theory of tourism. It constructs the dimension of quantitative analysis and analyzes the influence of local government, tourists, tourism enterprises and local elites on the community evolving of the tourism rights. The article explores the differences between community tourism empowerment, tourism satisfaction and tourism support, thus providing development of countermeasures for community tourism in cultural tourism destinations from a spatial perspective.

2. Theoretical Framework and Methodology

2.1. Framework for Community Tourism Empowerment

From the perspective of stakeholders, the influence of community tourism empowerment is divided into “power over” and “power with”. From the dimension of community internal structure, the development of community power is analyzed from the standpoint of “power with” and “power within”. According to the core-periphery theory of tourism, the analysis of community's self-enhancement is divided into internal groups. In order to study the relationship between the

overall evaluation of residents' tourism development and the empowerment of tourism, the evaluation of residents' tourism support and satisfaction was designed. Thereby a framework

of community tourism empowerment was constructed, as it is shown in Table 2:

Table 2. Community tourism empowerment framework.

Dimension	Key points	Specifications
Leading groups	Research on the dominant stakeholders of community rights: "Power over"	Local government dominates and controls local tourism development Tourism companies dominate and control local tourism development Local elites dominate and control local tourism development Tourists dominate and have a major impact on community life
	Research on the dominant stakeholders that empower the community: "Power to", "Power with"	The local government plays a leading role in supporting the development of local community tourism. Tourism enterprises play a major role in supporting the development of local community tourism Local elites play a leading role in supporting local community tourism development Tourists play a leading role in supporting the development of local community tourism
Community structure	Study on group differentiation of empowerment among communities and within communities: "Power with"	The community established a tourism association for negotiation with local governments and enterprises to secure the rights of the community. The village committee of the community raises funds to repair roads, decorate road signs, farmhouses, etc. Establishment of mutual aid associations to provide targeted support to the elderly people in this community Establishment of an organization, which often transmits information of the tourists' needs and organizes the uniform regulation, farmhouse music, souvenir prices, etc.
		Self-empowerment among communities Mutual cooperation of organizations can guarantee the community interests maintenance.
Tourism development evaluation	Research on Self-empowerment of Community Individuals: "Power within"	I fully understand my own rights in the development of local tourism and behave accordingly. Let my family be happier through tourism development. Through tourism development, women and children can have more opportunities for personal growth and education. Through tourism development I am able to earn more money and cover family's expenses. I often participate in tourism trainings and other related events.
	Evaluation of overall residents' satisfaction from tourism development	Satisfied with the development of tourism Support the further development of tourism

From: Rowland (1997) [15]; Ibrahim & Alkire (2007) [16]

2.2. Case Overview

Wudang Mountain, located in Shiyan City in the northwest of Hubei Province, is one of the famous Taoist holy places in China. In 1994, the ancient architectural complex of Wudang Mountain was added to the "World Cultural Heritage List". In 2006, it was named as "National Key Cultural Relics Protection Unit". [17] From 2010 to 2013, Wudang Mountain was China's national tourist area of 5A-level, China National Forest Park and one of the UN World Cultural Heritage Sites. [18] The main local tourism enterprises are: Shiyan Wudang Mountain Tourism Development Co. Ltd., Hubei Wudang Mountain Cultural Tourism Co. Ltd., and Hubei Wudang Taiji Lake Cultural Tourism Co. Ltd. According to the survey, these three companies are state-owned enterprises led by the local government.

By the end of 2016, the local resident population of the Wudangshan Special Zone was about 50,000. Residents used tourism as their main source of income. The total tourism revenue in 2017 reached 4.13 billion RMB, and the number of Chinese and foreign tourists reached 7.6 million. Through the development of tourism, the disposable income of local urban residents per capita reached 29,475 RMB, and the farmers' net income per capita reached 13,692 RMB. [19] After 40 years of rapid tourism development, Wudang

Mountain Scenic Area has become a representative mature cultural heritage site in China.

2.3. Research Methods

The status of tourism communities empowerment in Wudang Mountain Scenic Spot was investigated through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The scope of the investigation was the Wudang Special Zone in Danjiangkou City and Shiyan City in Hubei Province. The survey targets local residents (including ordinary residents, tourism operators, tourism practitioners and government officials). The investigation time is May-July and September-October of 2017. The household interview is the main survey method. Due to the different cultural background of the residents, to match the interviews, the questionnaires of the interviewees were filled in with the investigators help. A total of 500 questionnaires were distributed in this survey, 496 were collected, from which 480 valid questionnaires with the 95% of effectivity rate. The questionnaires were processed by SPSS statistical analysis software and the interview results were used as auxiliary explanations for the questionnaire analysis.

The questionnaire uses the Likert 5-point scale, where 5 is totally agree, 4- agree, 3 - neutral, 2 - disagree and 1 - totally

disagree. The questionnaire includes demographic characteristics (gender, age, occupation, income, etc.), aspects of “power over”, “power to”, “power with”, and “power within” community tourism empowerment and aspects and evaluation of overall residents’ satisfaction of tourism development.

In the sample ratio, the case is divided into three areas of collection (Table 3), which are 238 core areas, 150 transit areas and 112 marginal areas. The valid questionnaires of the core areas are 232 samples, 144 at the transit and 104 samples at marginal areas. The effectivity rate is 97.47%, 96% and 92.86% accordingly.

Table 3. Different regions characteristics of Wudang Special Economic Zone.

Area	Characteristics	Wudang Mountain Special Zone
Core area	With more tourist visits and tourist shopping spots, the infrastructure is relatively perfect, and the degree of tourism development is relatively mature.	On both sides of the main road of the scenic spot, inside the Wudang Mountain Scenic Area, such as Taizipo, Zixiao Palace, Nanyan Palace, Jinding and other core scenic spots
Transition area	Between the core area and the transition area, the infrastructure is generally well-developed, tourism development is underway. A certain degree of conflict between tourism development and the community exists.	The area between the core area of Wudang Mountain Scenic Area and Laoying Village, such as Yuxu Palace and Laoying Village
Marginal area	The characteristics of tourist areas are gradually blurred, the number of local residents and non-tourist-oriented facilities exceeds the number of tourist facilities. The conflict between tourism development and community is less.	Liu Ximen Village and other areas

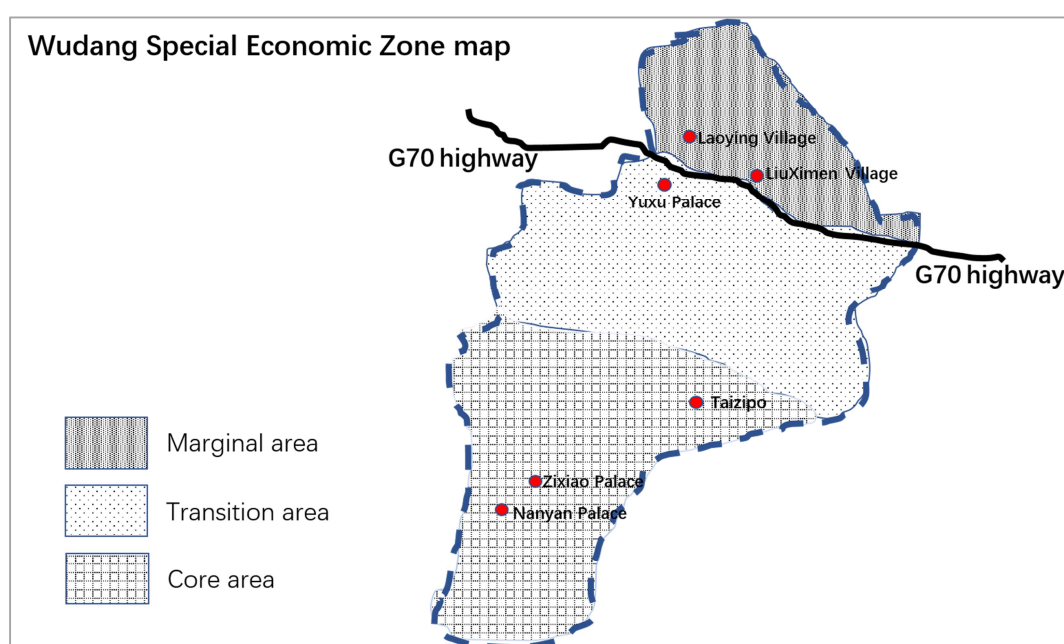


Figure 1. Wudang Special Economic Zone map.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Case Demographic Characteristics and Reliability Test

Table 4. Demographic characteristics of Wudang Special Economic Zone.

Survey Samples		Core area		Transition area		Marginal area	
		Number of people	%	Number of people	%	Number of people	%
gender	male	107	46.4%	59	41.2%	52	50%
	female	125	53.6%	85	58.8%	52	50%
age	≤20	0	0	8	5.9%	0	0
	21~30	82	35.7%	51	35.3%	26	25%
	31~40	58	25%	42	29.4%	52	50%
	41~50	33	14.3%	17	11.8%	9	8.3%
	51~60	24	10.7%	17	11.8%	0	0
	>61	35	14.3%	8	5.9%	17	16.7%
	Below primary school	49	21.4%	17	11.8%	9	8.3%
Education	Middle school	41	17.9%	25	17.6%	43	41.7%
	High school	66	28.6%	51	35.3%	43	41.7%

Survey Samples		Core area		Transition area		Marginal area	
		Number of people	%	Number of people	%	Number of people	%
Living period	College	49	21.4%	25	17.6%	9	8.3%
	Master and higher level	27	10.7%	25	17.6%	0	0
	≤10y	16	7.1%	0	0	0	0
	11~20y	0	0	17	11.8%	17	16.7%
	21~30y	99	42.9%	59	41.2%	35	33.3%
	31~40y	58	25%	42	29.4%	35	33.3%
	>41y	59	25%	25	17.6%	17	16.7%
Tourism employment	Personal employment directly related to tourism.	144	62.06%	90	62.5%	64	61.5%
	At least one person in the family is directly involved in tourism-related work.	74	31.8%	48	33.3%	32	30.7%

The reliability test of the questionnaire was carried out by using the L. J. Cronbach Alpha (α) reliability coefficient method. The Alpha (α) of the “power over” dimension was 0.705, the “power to” dimension was 0.794, the “power with” dimension is 0.644, the “power within” dimension Alpha (α) is 0.714. The total Alpha (α) is 0.787. The survey results are representative.

3.2. Evaluation of Community Tourism Empowerment and Residents' Overall Tourism Development

3.2.1. Four-dimensional Evaluation of Community Tourism Empowerment

(i) From “power over” dimension

Table 5. Community tourism disempowerment analysis table from “power over” dimension.

“Power over”	Core area Mean/standard deviation	Transition area Mean/standard deviation	Marginal area Mean/standard deviation	Total Mean/standard deviation
Government				
G1 The local government dominates the development of local tourism activities	4.61/0.497	4.88/0.332	4.00/1.348	4.56/0.78
G2 The local government did not consider the rights of the local community during the tourism development process.	3.71/1.329	3.59/1.121	3.17/1.403	3.56/1.282
subtotal	4.16/1.092	4.24/1.046	3.58/1.412	4.06/1.170
Company				
C1 Tourism companies dominate the development of local tourism activities	3.86/0.756	3.76/0.437	3.42/1.165	3.74/0.791
C2 The behavior of tourism companies determines my tourism business behavior	3.43/0.997	3.94/0.748	2.83/1.467	3.46/1.103
subtotal	3.64/0.903	3.85/0.610	3.12/1.329	3.60/0.966
Local elite				
E1 Local elites have a major impact on community tourism activities	4.11/0.994	3.71/0.772	3.25/0.866	3.81/0.953
E2 Local tourism elites have earned most of the local tourism revenue	3.79/0.957	4.06/0.556	3.50/1.243	3.81/0.934
subtotal	3.95/0.980	3.88/0.686	3.38/1.056	3.81/0.940
Tourist				
T1 Tourists have a major impact on community life	3.32/1.090	3.41/0.795	2.58/1.443	3.19/1.125
T2 Tourists do not respect community culture and customs, and have a negative impact on community folk customs.	3.50/0.839	3.29/0.686	3.08/0.289	3.35/0.719
subtotal	3.41/0.968	3.35/0.734	2.83/1.049	3.27/0.943
Total	3.79/1.022	3.83/0.839	3.23/1.235	3.68/1.047

Overall, the local government (mean 4.06) is the dominant factor of influence, with local elites (mean 3.81) being the second influencing factor, while tourism companies (mean 3.60) and tourists (mean 3.27) have relatively small impacts. According to local residents, the local tourism enterprises in Wudang Mountain are government-led and state-owned. In addition, in the process of developing tourism in Wudang Mountain, local elites often have more capital, skills and voice, they can get more than the income and opportunities of ordinary villagers, so on the “power over” level, the local elite is second dominant group.

In terms of spatial differentiation, from “power with” and “power over” dimensions, the three areas (core, transition and edge) are the same as the whole Wudang Mountain. Local governments and local elites remain the leading groups in the first and second case.

To summarize, local government has the most significant role at “power over” level and the role of the local elite is at the second place. The above-mentioned mean analysis confirms the views of the residents as well as supports the research conclusions of Bao Jigang and Sun Jiuxia. [7]

(ii) From “power to” dimension

Table 6. Community tourism empowerment analysis from “power to” dimension.

“Power to”	Core area Mean/standard deviation	Transition area Mean/standard deviation	Marginal area Mean/standard deviation	Total Mean/standard deviation
Government				
G1 Local government supports local community participation in decision-making, etc.	4.11/0.832	4.18/0.636	4.00/1.279	4.11/0.880
G2 Tourism representative institutions characterize the overall interests of the community	3.68/0.819	3.88/0.781	4.00/0.953	3.81/0.833
subtotal	3.89/0.846	4.03/0.717	4.00/1.103	3.96/0.866
Company				
C1 Tourism companies encourage local communities participation in support programs	3.61/1.257	4.12/0.697	4.58/0.900	3.96/1.101
C2 Tourism development companies give themselves more power to participate in tourism activities	3.46/0.922	3.47/0.874	3.92/1.165	3.56/0.964
subtotal	3.54/1.095	3.79/0.845	4.25/1.073	3.76/1.050
Local elite				
E1 The development of tourism has promoted reformation and improvement of the village committee organizational functions, so that they have more participation in tourism rights.	3.36/0.911	3.41/0.507	3.92/1.084	3.49/0.869
Tourist				
T1 The arrival to the destination gives them more power to participate in tourism activities.	3.71/0.897	3.88/0.781	4.17/0.937	3.86/0.875
Total	3.65/0.966	3.82/0.763	4.10/1.050	3.8/0.943

Overall, the local government (mean 3.96) is the dominant factor of influence, tourists (average 3.86), tourism companies (mean 3.76) and local elites (mean 3.49) represent the second, third and fourth factors accordingly. The above dimensions have significant differences. The conclusions obtained through interviews are compatible with the mean analysis. Local residents believe that government is the most significant factor in residents' tourism activities support, such as infrastructure construction, tourism development, training, etc. Visitors take the second place in “power to” dimension, when tourism companies take the third.

In terms of spatial differentiation, the core and transition areas have no significant difference from the point of “power to” dimension. However, the means of such groups as local governments, tourists and local elites in the marginal areas are small, indicating that there is no dominant group leading the empowerment in the marginal areas.

To conclude, from the perspective of the passive community empowerment, the local government and tourists are the most influential groups, what supports the findings of Bao Jigang and Lin Minhui. [20]

(iii) From “power with” dimension

Table 7. Community tourism empowerment analysis from “power with” dimension.

“Power with”	Core area Mean/standard deviation	Transition area Mean/standard deviation	Marginal area Mean/standard deviation	Total Mean/standard deviation
The community established a tourism association, responsible for negotiating with local governments, enterprises, etc.	3.57/0.920	3.59/0.870	4.50/0.522	3.77/0.907
The village committee raises funds to repair roads, decorate road signs, farmhouses, etc.	4.61/0.629	4.12/0.781	4.25/0.754	4.39/0.726
Establish an association, which often transmits information on the needs of tourists, the price of farmhouses, souvenirs and regulations unification	3.21/0.917	3.00/0.791	3.83/1.030	3.28/0.940
Establish mutual aid associations to provide targeted support to the elderly people in the community	3.79/1.101	4.06/0.556	4.00/1.128	3.91/0.969
These mutual aid organizations can guarantee interests of the community	3.64/0.870	4.12/0.781	4.08/1.084	3.88/0.908
Total	3.76/1.001	3.78/0.864	4.13/0.929	3.85/0.955

Overall, the Wudang Mountain's mean of “power with” dimension is 3.85, which indicates that the local community cooperation has achieved certain goals, but it is still relatively weak. According to the residents' interviews, the village committee mainly implements the higher-level government instruction, what is opposite to the bottom-up federations and mutual aid associations, which exist widely in the Western countries and are not sufficiently developed in terms of “power with” dimension.

In terms of spatial differentiation, there is no significant difference between the core (mean 3.76) and the transition

region (mean 3.78) in power level, but there is a significant difference from the marginal region (mean 4.13). In the interview, the core and transitional area residents believed that government and other groups dominated the development of tourism, so community's self-enhancement was restrained to a certain level. At the same time, government, tourists and other groups weakly impacted the marginal areas communities. The impact of empowerment is small, but it promotes the self-enforce development of community residents.

Therefore, in the dimension of community's

self-empowerment, the overall evaluation is positive and the village committee is the main driving force, but comparing to the foreign communities there definitely is a certain gap.

[20-21]

(iv) From “power within” dimension

Table 8. Community tourism empowerment analysis from “power within” dimension.

“Power within”	Core area Mean/standard deviation	Transition area Mean/standard deviation	Marginal area Mean/standard deviation	Total Mean/standard deviation
I fully understand my own rights in the development of local tourism and decide my behavior autonomously.	3.43/1.136	3.59/0.507	4.42/0.793	3.68/0.985
It lets me and my family be happier through tourism development.	4.29/0.600	3.94/0.827	4.33/0.888	4.19/0.743
Through tourism development, women and children can have more opportunities for development and education.	4.50/0.509	4.18/0.951	4.25/1.055	4.35/0.790
Through tourism development, lets me earn more money and support family expenses.	4.21/0.876	4.18/0.951	4.08/1.165	4.18/0.947
I often participate in training related to tourism and other related skills.	3.36/0.870	3.18/1.185	4.00/1.044	3.44/1.035
Total	3.96/0.944	3.81/0.970	4.22/0.965	3.97/0.965

The score of the “power within” level is 3.97, which indicates that the power awareness of local community residents' has been well developed. Moreover, through the development of tourism, they and their families have a happier life and a better future. In terms of spatial differentiation, the perception of residents in the marginal area (4.22) is

significantly higher than in the core (3.96) and transition (3.81) areas, mainly because the core and transition areas residents are more affected by the local government and the village committee. The community development in marginal area is relatively free and sufficient, what ultimately leads to higher evaluation of residents psychological empowerment.

3.2.2. Evaluation of Overall Tourism Development in the Community

Table 9. The analysis of community tourism development.

	Core area Mean/standard deviation	Transition area Mean/standard deviation	Marginal area Mean/standard deviation	Total Mean/standard deviation
Satisfied with the development of tourism	4.57/0.836	4.29/0.686	4.58/1.165	4.49/0.869
Support the further development of tourism	4.68/0.819	4.71/0.686	4.33/1.155	4.61/0.861
Total	4.63/0.822	4.50/0.707	4.46/1.141	4.55/0.863

In total, local residents generally have a high evaluation of the overall tourism development of the community and strongly support the further tourism development. In terms of spatial differentiation, residents in the transition area have the lowest overall tourism development evaluation, but the highest willingness to support the further tourism development. According to the interview, the residents of the transition area noticed the core area development and its resident's economic improvement. They are eager to keep up with the local tourism express development, so that their income can also be improved.

3.2.3. Correlation Analysis of the Community Tourism Empowerment and the Evaluation of Residents' Overall Tourism Development

In order to explore the relationship between community

tourism empowerment and residents' overall tourism development evaluation, the correlations between “power over”, “power to”, “power with”, “power within” and residents' overall tourism development evaluation were analyzed.

Through the Pearson correlation coefficient, the data collected by the survey was analyzed and the following results were obtained. The Pearson rate between community passively empowerment and overall tourism development evaluation showed significant rate of 0.663.

Linear regression analysis was performed on “power over” (X1), “power to” (X2), “power with” (X3), “power within” (X4) and overall tourism development evaluation (Y). The results are shown in Table 10.

Table 10. Regression analysis coefficient.

Model	Non-standardized coefficient		Standard coefficient	t	Sig.	Collinear statistic	
	B	Standard error				Tolerance	VIF
(constant)	1.450	0.479		3.025	0.004		
“power to”	0.817	0.124	0.663	6.562	0.000	1.000	1.000

The linear regression equation is: $Y = 1.450 + 0.817X_2$. After subsequent verification, the R-square of the equation can reach 43.9%. In the regression equation, only “power to” has

significance. Moreover, the further results prove that the passive community empowerment relying on foreign groups is the most significant factor that affects the overall resident's

tourism development evaluation.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

In conclusion, the following statements can be made: (1) Local government and local elites are the most significant factors influencing community empowerment from “power over” dimension. (2) Local government and tourists are the most significant factors in the community from the point of “power to” dimension. (3) In terms of tourism self-improvement, the evaluation of the marginal area is significantly higher than core and transition areas. There is a significant imbalance compared with the western community in the sense of “power with” dimension as well. (4) From the standpoint of community psychological empowerment, the evaluation of marginal communities is significantly higher than core and transition areas. Its overall evaluation is higher from “power within” dimension. (5) In the aspect of residents' overall tourism development evaluation, the transition area has the lowest satisfaction and the highest support level. The core and marginal areas are opposite. (6) The correlation analysis between community tourism empowerment and residents' overall tourism development evaluation shows that passive empowerment of communities is the most significant factor.

To summarize, the main reasons of the large differences between China's community tourism and foreign communities are the different development systems, management models as well as different levels of community participation and capabilities. [22-25] Therefore, the main recommendations in terms of policy are as follows: (1) The government's guiding role should receive its highest power level. To bridge the gap between the communities and achieve balanced development of each region, community participation should be used as the basis, while the passive transfer of power as the way guidance. Currently, the biggest attention should be paid to the “power to” empowerment role, to improve the community's power system and to give a corresponding free development space, thereby ensuring the effectiveness of empowerment. (2) Furthermore, attention should be paid to community participation and community self-development. Western practice shows, that community self-enforcement is an important empowerment-leading factor. Nowadays, comparing with the Western World, the self-enrichment of Chinese communities is on the early development stage and it has obvious imbalance. Consequently, it is necessary to encourage community participation, actively promote the self-development of the community, improve community's ability to participate as well as promote the community self-enhancement. (3) In terms of spatial differentiation, there are significant differences between the marginal, core and transition areas. The imbalance of regional empowerment limits the development of community empowerment. So, it is necessary to implement accurate identification and certain management of community empowerment by applying effective scientific procedures to different regional environments and different

community conditions.

Through the study of the tourism empowerment mechanism and path in cultural heritage sites, it has certain reference value in promoting the community empowerment development. The case study studied in this paper is a mature cultural tourism destination and the conclusions are also based on this tourism destination type. Therefore, in the future, comparative research on different types of tourism destinations should be conducted. In addition, we conclude that the role of local governments, tourism companies, local elites and tourists in other types of tourist destinations should be slightly different. This remains to be further empirical analysis, which is also the direction of future efforts.

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