

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIO-CULTURAL EFFECTS OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN FENGHUANG COUNTY, CHINA

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ABSTRACT

As more and more people started flocking to Fenghuang County, China, things started to shift dramatically. The economy and society are experiencing these changes simultaneously. Things have changed for the locals because of what happened. Fenghuang attracts visitors from far and wide. Why? Numerous historical sites, representing a wide range of civilisations, and the majority of their edifices are still surviving today. More money, employment, and chances for businesses have flooded into the economy as a result of tourism. The influx of tourists has been good for the local retail, travel, and hotel industries. Additionally, tourism has encouraged the launch of small companies, which in turn has encouraged individuals to strike out on their own. Modernising the county's roadways, hotels, and cultural institutions has boosted the economy. If implemented, the improvements may facilitate economic growth in the county. The growing expense of living, the redistribution of wealth, and the fact that tourism is crucial to the economy are all sources of concern for some people. Through tourism, long-lost customs and artefacts have been rediscovered. Greater attendance at cultural events, such as festivals and arts and crafts fairs, has increased civic pride and fostered greater understanding across different demographics. The public and commercial sectors have worked together to improve access to historic sites and other forms of intangible cultural assets in the hopes of increasing tourism. The preservation of intangible cultural resources has been aided by tourism. Staying truthful while yet making money may be challenging, particularly in certain situations. Things like welcoming new cultures and preserving old buildings are areas where generations disagree. Several extraneous factors have impacted the lives of several youths, heightening their ambitions and altering their goals. The landscape has shifted.

Keywords: Economy, Society, Demographics, Intangible Cultural Resources, Employment.

1. INTRODUCTION

The enormous impact that tourists have on the economies and cultures of the nations they visit has propelled tourism to the forefront of global economic growth drivers. Local economies, particularly in regions rich in cultural assets, have felt the effects of the surge in domestic and international tourism in China. This is especially the case in areas rich in cultural and historical artefacts. A great example of how tourism-driven development and cultural preservation may coexist is Fenghuang County in Hunan Province. This county exemplifies this remarkable link well. The picturesque scenery, ancient wooden buildings, and distinctive Miao and Tujia cultural heritage draw tourists to Fenghuang, a once-remote community. This is because, up until recently, it was not very crowded (Li et al., 2024). Fenghuang County's economy has seen the effects of the tourist boom. This has led to the creation of employment, the improvement of infrastructure, and the promotion of initiatives for small businesses. The hotel, retail, and transportation industries have all benefited from the influx of tourists, leading to increased investment and a stronger local economy. This has expanded the number of factors impacting the regional economy. More and more, people are becoming familiar with regional traditions. The cultural significance of the region has been further highlighted by the government's

financing of architectural projects and historical preservation activities. Authenticity, diluting culture, and jeopardising community values are common concerns raised when discussing the practice of selling history to tourists. Many social issues have arisen as a result of the dramatic rise in the number of visitors. Problems arise when people's ways of life change, when conflicts arise across generations, and when the goals and expectations of the younger generation shift. They have to investigate thoroughly the potential societal, cultural, and economic impacts of an influx of visitors on Fenghuang County. For the purposes of this study, two outcomes affecting Fenghuang County are of primary interest. This county exemplifies the way in which modern tourism is changing long-established Chinese towns. Considered in this case study is the county (Wang et al., 2023).

2. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Fenghuang County in Hunan Province is home to a world-class resort that attracts visitors from all over the world, including many Chinese. Tourists can love this county for its stunning landscapes, diverse population, and rich cultural heritage. In the very northernmost part of China's southern zone is Fenghuang County. A large portion of the county's wealth has historically come from subsistence farming and handicrafts. Upon creation of the county, this condition persisted. The lack of stable, all-encompassing employment options is a direct result of this. This meant that the town's employment opportunities were always limited, and many residents—particularly the younger generation—moved to the city in search of better ones. The younger set of people felt this was crucial. There may be positive and negative outcomes stemming from the rapid increase in tourism in Fenghuang County. The enormous expansion that accompanies tourism is the main source of this shift. There are a lot of new jobs in all sorts of industries thanks to the growth of tourism. Retail, transportation, cultural events, and hospitality are all part of these domains. The long-standing problem of insufficient workers has been swiftly resolved, as this incident demonstrates. Many positive outcomes have resulted from the development of this employment (Tian et al., 2023). The overarching objective is to eradicate poverty, support the growth of micro and small businesses, and offer households more income-generating opportunities. These outcomes, which have been on the rise, are strongly associated with the proportion of households enjoying improved financial security. However, new vulnerabilities in communities have emerged as a result of tourism's central role in the economy. This is due to the fact that an increase in tourism is the primary factor propelling the economy forward. Because there are a lot of temporary, low-paying service jobs, many are worried about the economy's ability to develop sustainably and financially in the long run. The improving economy has people anxious about these things. When it comes to the economy of Fenghuang County, there are a lot of intricate linkages between the few accessible vocations. There has been an improvement to the local economy and a decrease in unemployment thanks to the influx of visitors, but the community is still vulnerable to economic uncertainty. External factors, such as shifts in demand and the market, are associated with these unknowns. Examining the potential impact of tourism on the county's economy and its ability to alleviate employment shortages is crucial in light of the current circumstances (Tang & Xu, 2023).

3. PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

To better understand how the increase in tourism in Fenghuang County deals with the problem of few job prospects and its monetary effect on the locals, this research may analyse and evaluate the current state of affairs. The primary goal of this study is to identify the effects of job openings in the tourism sector on household income, financial security, and anti-poverty initiatives. Because of this, it may be possible to provide a more comprehensive description of the problem. Seasonal, low-paying jobs or those centred on service supply may be subject to certain limitations, which this study investigates. Finding out this is the primary goal of the research. This study aims to shed light on the paradoxical nature of tourism by exploring its

potential to boost the economy and cause economic instability at the same time. Addressing the problem of unemployment is the declared purpose, and this is being pursued appropriately. This may be accomplished by looking into the proposed connection. Finally, this study aims to shed light on how Fenghuang County's economic climate has been affected by the increase in tourism-induced employment. This is the primary objective of the research. The goal of this group is to provide legislators and other stakeholders with the information they need to craft long-term economic development strategies that are both stable and beneficial to the economy in the near term. Making this happen is the main goal of this organisation. The group's primary objective is this.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

Based on the findings of this study, advocates for rural and historic tourist development often point to it as a solution to the shortage of jobs in these regions. This matter has been covered in several reports. The potential negative effects on the economy from an influx of visitors are a major worry. Despite research showing that increasing traffic is a common remedy, this is now the standard. Although tourism might provide long-term financial stability, its impact is limited due to the high number of low-paying, temporary, or informal employment it generates. This makes predicting the tourist industry's long-term viability a challenging task. Several studies have shown that the tourist industry generates a wide variety of employment openings. According to research, rural tourism in China increases family income and decreases poverty. This is borne out by the findings of this research. The benefits of rural tourism are not, however, distributed equitably. Many times, foreign businessmen and ambitious families displace local labour. In a wide variety of contexts, this holds true. However, who gains the most advantage from tourism in Fenghuang County is determined by the regulations and patterns of concentrated ownership. With this in mind, one may wonder whether tourism contributes to ending structural unemployment or if it only serves to deepen inequality (MAOZHENG et al., 2024). There are now more job opportunities in the area because to the growing tourist industry. The increase has also made it less difficult to publicise business endeavours. This link is already challenging due to the complexity of migration. The tourism industry is one potential employer of in-migrants and return migrants alike. This connection becomes somewhat trickier when they consider the mechanics of migration. On occasion, this may help with local shortages, but on other occasions, it might increase competition and put additional pressure on pay. It is difficult to see the connection between these two basic ideas because of the existence of migrants, which complicates the explanation. According to industry experts, the regulations that control the distribution of financial incentives, the quantity and quality of available employment, and other factors are crucial in determining whether tourism can alleviate job shortages. This viewpoint has been voiced by the academic community. This is the correct perspective, according to all academics (Li et al., 2024).

5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What is the impact of job scarcity on socio-culture impacts in Fenghuang County?

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

6.1 Research Design

Methodology used SPSS version 25 to do the quantitative data analysis. The direction and intensity of the statistical association were determined using the 95% confidence interval and odds ratio. At $p < 0.05$, the researchers established a criteria that was considered statistically significant. The data's essential features were extracted using a descriptive analysis. When analysing data transformed by computing tools for statistical analysis or data collected from surveys, polls, or questionnaires, quantitative methods are often used.

6.2 Sampling

In order to contribute to the study, participants were asked to fill out questionnaires. Researchers sent out 730 questionnaires after using the Rao-soft algorithm to establish that the study population consisted of 630 participants. After receiving 700 responses, researchers omitted 30 because of missing data, resulting in a final sample size of 670.

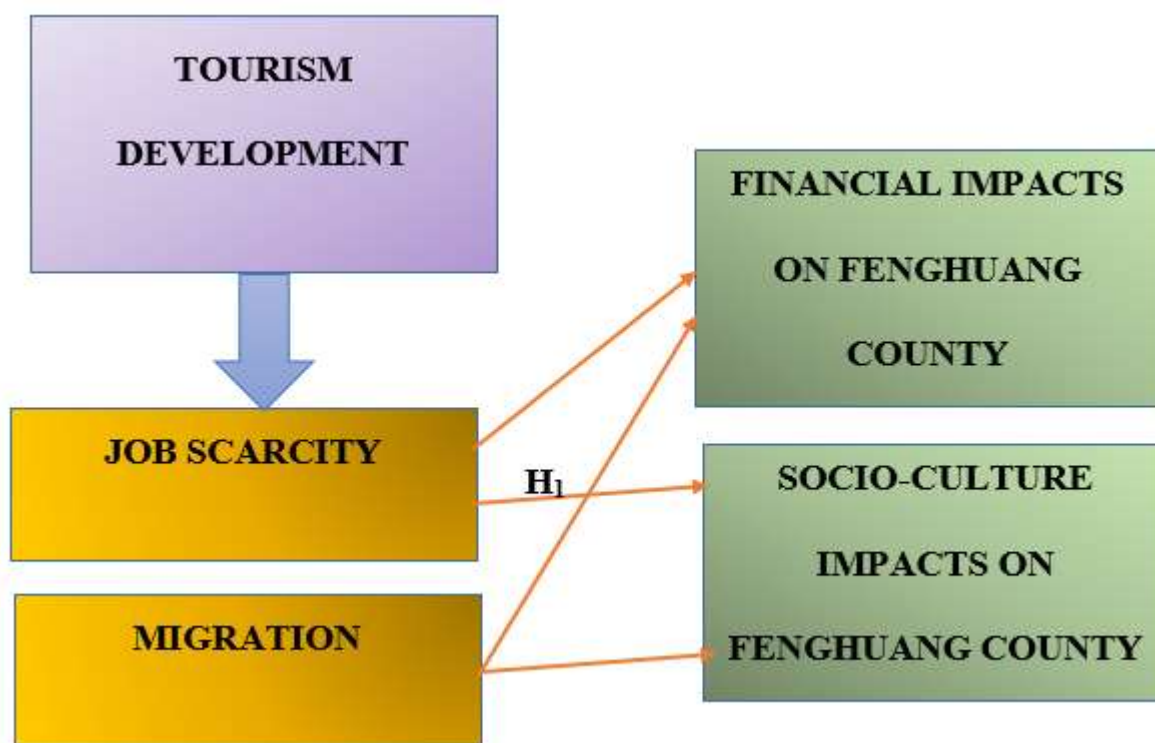
6.3 Data and Measurement:

The primary method of data collection in the research was a questionnaire survey. Part A of the survey asked for basic demographic information, while Part B used a 5-point Likert scale to collect responses on characteristics related to online and offline channels. Many sources, largely online databases, provided the secondary data.

6.4 Statistical Software: With the help of SPSS 25 and MS-Excel, ran the statistical analysis.

6.5 Statistical Tools: Using descriptive analysis, to understand the data on a basic level. The researcher must use ANOVA to analyse the data.

7. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



8. RESULT

❖ Factor Analysis

A common use of Factor Analysis (FA) is to uncover latent variables within observable data. In the absence of definitive visual or diagnostic indicators, it is customary to use regression coefficients for evaluations. In FA, models are crucial for success. The objectives of modeling are to identify errors, intrusions, and discernible correlations. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Test is a method for evaluating datasets generated by multiple regression analyses. The model and sample variables are confirmed to be representative. The data indicates redundancy, as seen by the figures. Reduced proportions improve data comprehension. The KMO output is a numerical value ranging from zero to one. A KMO value ranging from 0.8 to 1 indicates a sufficient sample size. The below quantities are considered suitable, according per Kaiser: The subsequent approval standards established by Kaiser are as follows:

A lamentable 0.050 to 0.059, insufficient 0.60 to 0.69

Middle grades often span from 0.70 to 0.79.

Exhibiting a quality point score between 0.80 and 0.89.

They are astonished by the range of 0.90 to 1.00.

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's Test for Sampling Adequacy Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin statistic: 0.870

The outcomes of Bartlett's test of sphericity are as follows: The degrees of freedom for the chi-square test are around 190, with a significance level of 0.000.

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's Test

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.870
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3252.968
	df	190
	Sig.	.000

This illustrates that claims made for sampling reasons are valid. Researchers used Bartlett's Test of Sphericity to assess the significance of the correlation matrices. A sample is deemed good based on the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin criteria when the result is 0.870. The p-value derived from Bartlett's sphericity test is 0.00. The correlation matrix is not an identity matrix, as shown by a statistically significant outcome from Bartlett's sphericity test.

❖ **INDEPENDENT VARIABLE**

• **Tourism Development**

"Tourism development" refers to the organised and deliberate expansion of a destination's services and attractions with the express purpose of drawing in more tourists. Just like this, they have "tourism development." Improving the area's transit, housing, and hospitality infrastructure is a part of this. Making legislation and initiatives to assist with it is also part of it. Improving the area's physical infrastructure is also a part of it. There has been an increase in the number of businesses offering ancillary services to the hospitality industry. More and better tourists, as well as an increase in interest in the country's cultural and environmental treasures, are signs that the tourism industry is evolving. The term "tourism development" encompasses not only the expansion of the tourism sector, which has been a driving force in Fenghuang County's economic growth, but also the broader social and cultural shifts brought about by an influx of visitors, the creation of new employment opportunities, and the blending of diverse cultural practices. Put simply, each of these areas is seeing an upsurge in tourist. To understand the cultural, social, and economic impacts of the area, this independent variable is necessary (Zhang, 2023).

❖ FACTOR**• Job Scarcity**

There aren't enough jobs in Fenghuang County or anywhere else in China. It is imperative that this massive problem be resolved. This is due to the fact that traditional farming was still the main source of income for most people back when this industry was much smaller and less dynamic. They should resolve this issue immediately. This issue needs their immediate attention. This needs immediate attention. Many more people are finding work in the hospitality, transportation, retail, and cultural performance sectors as a result of the surge in tourism. This has significantly narrowed the disparity. They have taken care of this issue. Many other companies, particularly those involved in the production of cultural performances, have benefited from this growth. Tourist jobs, on the other hand, tend to be low-paying, temporary, and service-dependent. Even if there are fewer job possibilities, it seems like long-term financial security is still a gamble. This is the last obvious step, then (Guo & Li, 2025).

❖ DEPENDENT VARIABLE**• Socio-Culture Impacts On Fenghuang County**

A town experiences a "socio-cultural impact On Fenghuang County" when tourists come to the area, which changes their way of life, beliefs, and relationships. Everyone in the town feels the pinch as a result of the decline in visitors. Here they see how the growth of tourism has preserved daily life, cultural traditions, and community identity while simultaneously opening up new avenues of interaction for both residents and visitors. Perhaps one good thing that might come out of more tourists is the revival of old cultural practices like festivals and arts and crafts. Community members may enjoy better health, more happiness, and a longer life span as a consequence. Cultural marketing, changes in social conventions, and the gradual but persistent erosion of authenticity in portrayals of other cultures are some of the potential downsides. Those are only a few of the many problems that might emerge from this. These are only a few of the many issues that it might bring about; the list is much longer. Tourism plays an essential role in the economic and social development of Fenghuang County. Because of how much of an effect tourists have on the region. Such findings lend credence to the idea that local cultures may suffer as a result of government-sponsored activities and an increase in tourism. This is why everything is the way it is (Feng, 2024).

• The relationship between Job Scarcity and Socio-Culture On Fenghuang County:

The many social and cultural problems in Fenghuang County, there are presently very few work opportunities. This is true because long-standing social structures, societal expectations, and cultural norms all affect how people deal with economic distress and the career options they have. It is still correct because of this. This is the basis for the current predicament. The absence of work is likely to make the differences between rich and poor even worse. A person may need to depend more on family or community standards for money, and it may be tougher for them to advance up the social ladder. It is conceivable for either of these things to happen. People may choose to join the job market and go forward in their industries based on the kind of jobs they find acceptable and appealing. On the other side, socio-cultural behaviours like promoting specific jobs, emphasising local history tourism, or keeping traditional gender norms may have an effect on these traits. The social and cultural environment of Fenghuang County serves as a conduit between the county's economic conditions and the lives, aspirations, and community development of its citizens, rather than the reverse. In other words, they can't see the overall economic situation in Fenghuang County. It would be a big understatement to claim that these are the present conditions. This situation is the consequence of a mix of cultural and societal problems, as well as a dearth of employment options that put people first (Chawla, 2023).

On the basis of the above discussion, the researcher formulated the following hypothesis, which was analyse the relationship between Job Scarcity and Socio-Culture on Fenghuang County.

“H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between Job Scarcity and Socio-Culture on Fenghuang County.”

“H₁: There is a significant relationship between Job Scarcity and Socio-Culture on Fenghuang County.”

Table 2: H₁ ANOVA Test

ANOVA					
Sum					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	39588.620	166	5617.517	1048.826	.000
Within Groups	492.770	533	5.356		
Total	40081.390	669			

In this study, the result is significant. The value of F is 1048.826, which reaches significance with a p-value of .000 (which is less than the .05 alpha level). This means the ***“H₁: There is a significant relationship between Job Scarcity and Socio-Culture on Fenghuang County.”*** is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected.

9. DISCUSSION

This study highlights the significant impact of a safe environment on the economic changes brought about by the surge in tourism in Fenghuang County, hence demonstrating the significance of such an environment. The conclusions of this research were derived after an exhaustive inquiry. The right policies may bring people together, keep financial assets safe, encourage citizens to become involved, and boost tourism. Achieving each of these goals is within the realm of possibility. The limitations are clearly in place to protect monetary assets. Mass tourism and consumerism would devastate historical places and financial repercussions if these regulations weren't in place. Government policies that prioritise spending over investing could unintentionally cause problems, according to the discussion. It is clear from the conversation. It is possible that traditional practices would become commercialised and cultural assets destroyed if policies were to promote large-scale development projects to attract more visitors. Additionally, these regulations could make it less difficult to build tourist attractions. Some research suggests that a safe environment may have an effect on monetary resources, group cohesion, and communal principles. Everything on this list is within reach. Because they provide the groundwork for this collaboration, following the rules is crucial. The effectiveness of aid programs depends on the level of local stakeholder participation in decision-making and the rigour of monitoring procedures. One major concern is that the procedures could not work as planned. Legislation alone is insufficient; the state must also ensure their proper application and provide those who stand to gain an opportunity to vote on the matter. In order to achieve regulatory aims and find a middle ground between preserving culture and fostering economic growth, policies are essential. This is the result after considering all of those factors. According to the arguments, government acts might protect citizens but also increase the likelihood of financial crises. This might be one result. This, in a nutshell, is the main argument. They have the potential to promote greater understanding and cooperation across ethnic groups, preserve cultural practices, and alleviate financial barriers if they are well-planned and given enough consideration. But policies that are primarily concerned with

economics and ignore local traditions run the risk of contributing to cultural decline and identity erosion. The reason for this is because the company's culture is completely ignored by these policies. Here they see the tale from a different angle. Financial asset protection and tourism development are two of Fenghuang County's top priorities. The fact that these events have taken place in different parts of the country proves it. In most cases, the government can use a safe haven to maintain order.

10. CONCLUSION

To fully comprehend why there aren't many jobs in Fenghuang County, they need to think about how social and cultural factors affect the situation. This is because these types of dynamics are really important. There are a lot of things that affect the different types of professions that individuals might find in a society. This is influenced by traditional jobs, cultural norms, and societal expectations. People should know that these things affect how society responds to limits on choices. This contact makes established patterns of economic participation stronger, which might sometimes make it harder for the local economy to come up with new ideas or expand into new areas. This touch may strengthen these inclinations. With all of this in mind, the connection in question is a part that helps make these patterns stronger. To solve the problem of not having enough job opportunities, they need laws and programs that take into account the cultural norms of the people who live there. This is the only method to fix the issue. These programs should help the economy grow in the long run, and they should also provide individuals from all walks of life the opportunity to obtain good jobs. This needs to happen at the same time as their implementation. In a perfect world, this would happen at the same time.

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