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# An Analysis on Rural Tourism Development Model in Yi County of Huangshan City

Xiangye SONG\*, Hongna LI

School of Business Administration, University of Science and Technology Liaoning, Anshan 114051, China

**Abstract** The Yi County's rural tourism model has changed a lot, gradually transferring from the single model to the composite model, which integrates sightseeing, touring, entertainment, leisure, vocation, and shopping. This article mainly focuses on the rural tourism development model. Yi County is a typical case for others, which gives a new development model.

**Key words** Rural tourism, Development model, Yi County

Yi County is located in Huangshan City of Anhui Province, which is one of the six ancient counties. It is about 30 kilometers from Mount Huangshan, and 61 kilometers from Huangshan Airport. Anhui Jiangxi Railway and Huangqi Highway go through it. Yi County is the birthplace of Huizhou Merchants, and Huizhou Culture, and also the provincial famous historical and cultural site. In 2007, China National Tourism Administration identified it as one of the first batch of 17 China Top Tourism Counties. In May, 2011, the world cultural heritage – Xi Di, and Hong Cun Ancient Village became the National five A – level scenic spots. Yi County successfully transferred to famous rural tourism county from the traditional agricultural county, and became the most important window for opening outside.

## 1 Analysis on rural tourism resource distribution of Yi County

### 1.1 Analysis on topography and geomorphology of Yi County

Yi County is located in the range of Mountain Huangshan, and its northern and southern slopes, which has obvious characteristics of southern mountainous area in Anhui Province. The topography and geomorphology of Yi County determine the advantages of the rural tourism development. Therefore, Yi County seeks the suitable rural tourism development model with its resources.

We need to analyze dynamic development system, which is combined with the topography and geomorphology of different districts and counties. From the perspective of the dynamic mechanism of tourism development in each district and county, Yi County's rural tourism development mainly depends on Xidi – Hongcun Basin with ancient village tourism; Tunxi District mainly depends on tourism development model with urban tourism; Mountain Huangshan District mainly depends on Circum – Mountain Huangshan scenic spot as its development power with the core scenic area, and relies on the Mountain Huangshan zone for tourism development; She County is mainly around Xin'an River, which

focuses on the historical and cultural tourism, mainly urban tourism<sup>[1]</sup>. The above factors show that Yi County has absolute predominance of topography and geomorphology to develop rural tourism, which has high competitiveness. Furthermore, from the external environment and tourism development situations of other districts and counties in Huangshan City, Yi County has the basic conditions for the rural tourism development, and it needs to take the rural tourism development model.

### 1.2 Analysis on rural tourism resource distribution of Yi County

From the tourism map of Yi County, we can see that tourism resource mainly is distributed in ancient village area on the basin. Xidi and Hongcun ancient villages are the center, with radial spreading around; it can drive the surrounding scenic spots development to develop rural tourism.

We make analysis from the location of Yi County tourism area, according to the regional level of differentiation with the different gradients. Spatial gradient analysis should be made from four dimensions. The first dimension is the big district level, according to the international and the national level analysis; the second dimension is the provincial level, according to the national and regional level analysis; the third dimension is the prefecture level, according to the regional and provincial level analysis; the fourth dimension is the district and county level, according to the provincial and municipal analysis<sup>[2]</sup>. This article makes research for Yi County's tourism spatial pattern analysis, according to the fourth dimension. Firstly, we analyze the Yi County's status of tourism industry in Anhui Province. Secondly, we analyze the position of tourism industry in Huangshan City.

From the view of the spatial pattern of Huangshan City tourism development, its development is focused on the pattern in the north and east. Yi County is located in the north of Huangshan City. From the aspect of tourism resource distribution, Yi County tourism is obvious dominant in the three districts and four counties of Huangshan City.

For the spatial pattern of tourism industry, traffic pattern often plays the key role. The changes of transport lines usually change the pattern of tourism flow to go into the tourist area;

therefore, it has great influence on tourism development spatial pattern in tourist area, and then affects tourism development. Huangshan City tourism landscape is mainly around the Mountain Huangshan scenic area. From the early 1980s, it began to make large-scale development, with the improvement of traffic facilities and changes; the overall tourism development spatial pattern was also going through a series of changes. In 2012, Yi County road density was up to 66.5 km/hundred square kilometers. The opening of Hui – Hang highway, He – Tong – Huang highway, and Huang – Qi – Jing highway makes the convenient transportation for

Yi County rural tourism development, and makes a solid foundation. In August 2015, Beijing – Fuzhou high-speed rail will be officially opened; it will bring the new development climax for the Mountain Huangshan and Yi County tourism.

From the characteristics of the regional spatial distribution of tourism resources, it basically has three cluster groups. The three cluster groups respectively are southern city cluster humanities tourism resources group, Mountain Huangshan scenic spot natural ecological resources group, Xidi – Hongcun ancient tourism resources group, as shown in Table 1<sup>[3]</sup>.

**Table 1 Characteristics of spatial distribution of tourism resource in Huangshan City**

Tourism resource cluster types	Spatial support	Main tourism resource
Xidi – Hongcun ancient villages tourism resources group	Xidi – Hongcun in Yi County	Xudi ancient village; Hongcun ancient village; Nanping village; Sai Jinhua's Former Residence; Taohuangyuan rafting; Mountain Pingshan; Mukeng Bamboo Forest; Daguling Hill; Longchiwan Bay
Mountain Huangshan scenic spot natural ecological resources group	Huangshan District; Tangkou	Mountain Huangshan scenic spot; Taipinghu Lake scenic spot; Feicuigu Valley; Furong Valley

Data source: The above tourism economic data are from tourist association of Huangshan City.

From Table 1, we can see that Yi County's tourism resource is one of the three cluster groups, and it has rich tourism resources, so Yi County should always take advantages of the spatial pattern to play resources cohesion and expand the influence of the Yi County rural tourism.

## 2 Analysis on rural tourism economic status of Yi County

**2.1 Vertical comparison; rapid growth** Yi County is near the Yangtze River delta, and with the support of the regional economy, its tourism develops rapidly. According to the market share survey of Yi County, the top five tourist-generating regions are: Shanghai, Anhui, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, and Hubei. The residents' incomes increase continuously, which provide a good tourist-generating region for Yi County tourism market.

According to Yi County tourist association statistics, in 2013, the Yi County totally received 6.4353 million tourists with 3.50% year-on-year growth; inbound tourism received 0.2889 million tourists with 12.09% year-on-year growth; tourism revenue was 5.18255 billion RMB with 4.47% year-on-year growth; tourist foreign exchange earning was 68.71 million US dollars with 8.41% year-on-year growth. According to the preliminary statistics, tourism industry has contributed more than 30% of GDP in Yi County, and rural tourism has already become Yi County's pillar industry of the national economy. Table 2 shows the tourism economic indicators of Yi County from 2011 to 2013. From it we can see that in these three years, the hospitality volume of tourists, tourism revenue, inbound tourists volume, and tourist foreign exchange earning have experienced different degrees of growth. On the whole, Yi County's rural tourism develops rapidly<sup>[4]</sup>.

**Table 2 Tourism economic indicators in 2011 – 2013 of Yi County**

Year	Total tourists received 10 <sup>4</sup> persons		Inbound tourists received 10 <sup>4</sup> persons		Total tourism revenue 10 <sup>4</sup> \$		Tourist foreign exchange earning 10 <sup>4</sup> \$	
	Quantity	Year-on-year growth	Quantity	Year-on-year growth	Quantity	Year-on-year growth	Quantity	Year-on-year growth
2011	518.05	32.08%	20.68	32.7%	408211	34.05%	4941.88	30.67%
2012	621.75	20.02%	25.77	20.68%	496064	21.52%	6286.98	27.22%
2013	643.53	3.50%	28.89	12.11%	518255	4.47%	6871	9.3%

Data source: the above tourism economic data from tourist council of Yi County.

**2.2 Horizontal comparison; stronger competitiveness** Yi County rural tourism economy maintains good momentum of overall development. From tourism economic development indicators of each district and county of Huangshan City in 2013, as shown in Table 3, we can see that Yi County's economic indicators are still very good in Huangshan City. The indicators of Yi County ranked third in 2013, thus Yi County's rural tourism is at the rising stage<sup>[5]</sup>.

can reflect the status of the local tourism development. From the vertical and horizontal comparison analysis of Yi County, its rural tourism economy develops very quickly in recent years, and compared with other districts in Huangshan City, Yi County rural tourism development is at the rising stage, and also needs to continuously strengthen its competitiveness. So Yi County should diversify its model to integrate regional rural tourism resources within the scope, and should continuously develop its rural tourism industry, and try to make different industries effectively unify together, thus promoting Yi County's rural tourism economic status.

Analysis of tourism development cannot be without the analysis of the economic development; the quantity of tourism indicators

**Table 3** Tourism economic indicators in various districts and counties of Huangshan City in 2013

Ranking	Total tourists received 10 <sup>4</sup> persons		Inbound tourists received 10 <sup>4</sup> persons		Total tourism revenue 10 <sup>4</sup> yuan		Tourist foreign exchange earning 10 <sup>4</sup> \$	
	Quantity	Year-on-year growth	Quantity	Year-on-year growth	Quantity	Year-on-year growth	Quantity	Year-on-year growth
Tunxi District	746.00	3.49%	38.04	11.48%	837846	4.51%	16593	8.26%
Huangshan District	652.30	3.76%	30.17	11.58%	505835	4.38%	6821	8.24%
Yi County	643.53	3.50%	28.89	12.09%	518255	4.47%	6871	8.41%
She County	579.17	3.07%	19.4	10.88%	496569	3.31%	6132	8.63%
Xiuning County	334.09	3.35%	12.94	10.81%	260363	4.14%	3920	8.85%
Huizhou District	326.21	3.87%	14.39	12.18%	210114	4.95%	4775	8.47%
Qimen District	176.64	3.88%	0.42	4.24%	115420	4.74%	61.12	7.24%

### 3 Analysis on rural tourism development models of Yi County

Through 30-year development, Yi County's rural tourism has formed relatively mature development product, organization management model and development safeguard mechanism. Diversification of tourism product development model makes Yi County's rural tourism have unique local characteristics, and good market competitiveness. The common efforts of the government, enterprises and individuals make the organization management model, which can mobilize all parties involved in the rural tourism development, management, and operation. Guarantee mechanism of policy, capital, and concept helps Yi County rural tourism to create a good development environment.

To analyze Yi County's rural tourism development situation, its rural tourism development models can be roughly summed up as the following four categories.

**3.1 Sightseeing development model** Yi County has rich ancient tourism resources, with profound cultural background. At the beginning of the rural tourism development, it has limited fund and experience, only making small-scale exploratory development, and rural tourism development focused on sightseeing tourism. This model belongs to the rural tourism development primary model. Xidi and Hongcun ancient scenic spots adopted the sightseeing as their rural tourism development model at the early stage.

**3.2 Folk culture experience development model** At the deep development stage of sightseeing tourism, Yi County rapidly develops folk culture experience development model. Yi County, as the birthplace of Hui culture, has many intangible cultural heritages, which form its local characteristics of folk customs and living custom. There are many fairy tales, life anecdotes ballads, proverbs, and folk performing, etc. On previous days of Chinese New Year, residents hold "thriving day – dish pig" activities; on Qingming Day, they make Qingming cakes; in Xidi scenic spot, they regularly hold "number one scholar comes back home", and "throw the embroidered ball" activities, etc. Folk culture experience gives the uniqueness of Yi County rural tourism, and this model strengthens the Yi County rural tourism attraction.

**3.3 Sport entertainment events development model** Yi County is the typical mountainous landform in the southern Anhui Province, and it has Xin'an River tributary – Zhanghe River. In

recent years, it establishes the dam, the water conservancy project, then it develops a series of water games entertainment projects. With rising of the rafting tourism in recent years, the rafting projects attract numerous tourists. Taohuayuan Rafting scenic spot is the typical water entertainment development model, which also includes the historical culture.

Mountain landform makes good condition for holding the international mountain bike festival. In April 2014, Yi County has successfully held the ninth International Mountain Bike Festival, which had a huge scale. Meanwhile, it held Huizhou Food Festival, and Bike Photographic Exhibition, etc. All these create popularity of the Yi County rural tourism.

In November of each year, Yi County also held the International Photography Festival, which has been held for eight times. There are 21 National Top One-hundred Photographic spots, such as Tachuan, Xieli, Lucun, Mukeng, etc. Additionally, in each spring, they hold Wuli Peach Flower Festival, and Shenchong Picking Tea-Leaves Festival.

**3.4 Leisure vocation development model** Today, the demand of tourists is not only to stay on the sightseeing tourism. With the fading of group tour, the self-driving tour has thrived. Tourists need the restaurants, hotels, and rural home inns in existing scenic spots to upgrade. In order to satisfy the tourists, Yi County develops a series of different rural tourism products, such as leisure vacation, and tea garden leisure vacation, which belongs to the higher level of rural tourism development model.

Yi County established of Huangshan Wonderland ZhongKun International Hotel with the five-star standards, outdoor sports base, the large live – action performance "Aju in Hongcun", the famous temple – Chazilu Temple in Tang Dynasty. In addition, there is Singapore Banyan Tree Hotels & Resorts, which creates the high quality international leisure center. Yi County attracts foreign investment to develop "Zhulan Bar", "Huang – Yue Art Academy", "No. 3 Town", which are the new leisure vacation experience forms of rural cultural leisure tourism products.

According to the above detailed analysis of Yi County rural tourism development conditions, we can see that the development of rural tourism might involve various tourism development models. In the specific development of Yi County rural tourism, it adopts diversified development model of rural tourism products,

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should comprehensively consider the urban population scale, the economic scale, and the future development potential. Both Anshan and Fushun have the larger population scale and better the economic strength. Due to the spatial distance between Fushun and Shenyang is very close, and the two cities' built-up areas relatively develop, nearly connected together. It is obviously that Shenyang and Fushun will be urban integration; in the near future, the two cities will integrate into one city. Therefore, cultivating Anshan to be the new growth pole is the very realistic choice. Yingkou's economy has developed rapidly in recent years; especially the Yingkou Port construction makes very important effect on the economic development of Liaoning province, the Northeast China Region, even the Eastern Inner Mongolia Region. The establishment of Yingkou 100 million tons big port will greatly shorten the distance to sea of Shenyang, the Northeast China Region, and the Eastern Inner Mongolia Region. Strengthening the economic relations to Yingkou could establish the "dual-core" development model of the urban agglomeration.

### 3.2 Establishing "One Hour" tourism transportation circle

It should accelerate the establishment of Shenyang Highway Network; make all efforts to build the "One Network, Two Rings, Six Coverages," the main structure of the highway, which takes the center of Shenyang in the Liaoning central cities. Speedily developing the intercity traffic between Shenyang to Anshan, to Fushun, to Benxi, to Yingkou, to Liaoyang, and to Tieling will realize the arrival time from Shenyang to the six cities within one hour, which build "Big Shenyang One Hour Tourism Transportation Circle." It takes Shenyang as the center to accelerate the in-

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and it integrates several development models. On the premise of ecological protection and culture protection, Yi County maximizes its rural tourism resources, and fully realizes the economic benefits, social benefits, and environmental benefits.

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ter-city rail transit construction in urban agglomeration. It should break the regional blockade and local protection, reduce the intercity highway toll station, especially the urban entrance toll station to realize transportation accessibility in urban agglomeration; it should develop vehicle rescue integration and the car rental market integration; it should expand Taoxian International Airport to enhance the relations of Shenyang to domestic and abroad central cities; it should speed up the construction of Yingkou 100 million tons big port to shorten the distance to sea of Shenyang, the Northeast China Region, and even the Eastern Inner Mongolia Region, which could strengthen the connection with domestic and foreign important ports, and Liaoning central urban agglomeration could open wider to the outside.

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