

Article

Research on the influence mechanism of rural tourism gentrification based on rural revitalization

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CITATION

Xu Y, Zhang S, Yao Z. Research on the influence mechanism of rural tourism gentrification based on rural revitalization. *Smart Tourism*. 2025; 22(4): 3195.
<https://doi.org/10.54517/st3195>

ARTICLE INFO

Received: 31 December 2024
Accepted: 25 February 2025
Available online: 28 February 2025

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Abstract: Based on the background of China's social development in the new era and the realistic needs of rural revitalization and sustainable tourism development, this paper takes typical rural tourism destinations in Huzhou city, Zhejiang Province and Huangshan city, Anhui Province as examples, and discusses the influence mechanism of rural tourism gentrification using grounded theory. The results show that the driving mechanism of rural tourism gentrification acts on rural areas through different ways, promoting the development and evolution of rural tourism gentrification. The interactive influence mechanism of rural tourism gentrification advances the sustainable development of rural tourism and rural revitalization. This study enriches the research on rural tourism gentrification and provides theoretical support and practical reference for rural revitalization and the sustainable development of rural tourism.

Keywords: rural revitalization; rural tourism gentrification; influence mechanism; the grounded theory

1. Introduction

China's urbanization reached 66.16% in 2023 with economic development, improvement of people's livelihood, urban planning, population growth, etc. The ensuing social problems, such as environmental pollution, traffic congestion and increased living pressure, affect the livability of cities [1]. Rural areas retaining natural landscapes, peaceful atmosphere and authentic life are becoming increasingly popular with urban residents. Therefore, China's rural tourism has developed rapidly [2]. According to the National Bureau of Statistics of China (NBS), the number of rural tourists reached 4.891 billion in 2023. Rural tourism has become an important part and development direction of China's tourism industry [3–6]. On the one hand, tourists bring different languages, manners and ideas to rural residents, which facilitates the passive gentrification in rural areas. On the other hand, through learning and imitation, rural residents improve their own literacy and behavior etiquette, which promotes the active gentrification in rural areas. The gentrification of rural environments, accomplishments, services, and culture makes rural tourism more attractive. The vigorous development of tourism advances rural revitalization. Therefore, it is of great practical significance and value to discuss the rural tourism gentrification.

By reviewing the existing research on tourism gentrification, it is found that the current scholars mainly focus on the concept, causes and consequences of tourism gentrification, and few scholars focus on the influence mechanism of tourism gentrification in rural areas. Therefore, this paper takes typical rural tourism destinations in Huzhou City, Zhejiang Province and Huangshan City, Anhui Province

for example, and discusses the influence mechanism of rural tourism gentrification with the grounded theory. It enriches the study of tourism gentrification and provides theoretical support and reference for the rural revitalization and sustainable development of rural tourism.

2. Literature review

2.1. Gentrification

Gentrification originated from British sociologist Ruth Glass [7,8] in the 1960s, which was used to describe the phenomenon of the middle class replacing the poor in the inner city of London that had already declined. With the development of urbanization, increasing scholars paid attention to gentrification. Currently, research on gentrification mainly focuses on the phenomenon of gentrification, different types of gentrification, and gentrification and urban renewal.

Gentrification was one of the focuses that many scholars paid attention to. For example, Huang and Liu [9] discussed the characteristics, topics and prospects in China. It revealed 3 results. First, the case areas mainly focus on the Yangtze River Delta and Pearl River Delta region, and then expand to the northeast and western large provincial cities and tourist attractions; second, most articles focus on six issues in terms of various forms of gentrification, gentrification and public policy, gentrifiers and cultural elements, gentrification and other urban issues, gentrification and social justice, and education-led gentrification; finally, Chinese gentrification focuses on the combination of Chinese context and increasingly forms the localized research of Chinese gentrification.

There are many types of gentrification, such as business gentrification, green gentrification, tourism gentrification, school district gentrification and so on. Li et al. [10] explored green gentrification of urban parks, which showed that green gentrification in Chaoyang district exhibits unequal spatial distribution, a strong correlation with socioeconomic characteristics, and misaligned community needs. Huang et al. [11] studied the influence of commercial gentrification on surrounding old neighborhoods based on field theory. It revealed two important capital logics in the field. The core field of gentrification is promoted by the interest alliance formed by the local government, developers and gentrifiers, which reflects a top-down global capital logic. The marginal field is constructed by residents, surrounding merchants and tenants, which is presenting a bottom-up local capital logic.

Gentrification and urban renewal. Gentrification is the product of the urbanization process. Therefore, gentrification is closely connected with urban renewal. For example, Song et al. [12] discuss the driving mechanism and social space reconstruction effect of shantytown renovation in Nanjing. The results showed that the shantytown renovation plays a positive role in improving residents' housing conditions. However, the reconstruction of spatial gentrification in shantytowns and the centralized resettlement of the poverty-stricken groups on urban fringes have led to the imbalanced development of new urban space and the insufficient social security for the demolition and resettlement groups.

2.2. Tourism gentrification

On the basis of gentrification, Gotham put forward the concept of tourism gentrification [13]. Then, increasing scholars focus on the study of tourism gentrification [14,15], especially the concept of tourism gentrification, its causes, and its consequences.

2.2.1. The concept of tourism gentrification

In 2005, Gotham [13], professor of sociology at Tulane University, proposed the concept of tourism gentrification for the first time, that is, the process of transforming the neighborhood area inhabited by the middle class into a relatively rich and exclusive area through the development of leisure and tourism. Later, some scholars have explored the concept of tourism gentrification. For example, Zhao et al. [16] and Zhao et al. [17] believe that tourism gentrification refers to the social phenomenon of the reconstruction of certain areas in a city caused by the development of large-scale tourism and entertainment projects, so that the neighboring areas develop into rich and independent areas. Feng and Sha [18] define tourism gentrification as the process of changing the supply system of some tourist reception places through the consumption of tourist space by the middle class, which is manifested in the spatial form and social and cultural atmosphere, making the local community a relatively rich and specialized area. Xu and Han [19] define it as a semi-living phenomenon, meaning that as tourism develops, gentrification phenomena such as the construction of large tourism leisure projects and urban renovation will appear in cities, and the accompanying phenomenon, tourism gentrification, will follow. In the past two decades, increasing scholars have studied tourism gentrification [20,21], and its conceptual connotation has been continuously enriched in practice.

2.2.2. The causes of tourism gentrification

The causes of tourism gentrification include policy, capital, real estate development, population migration, technology, information, etc. For the sake of policy, Bao [22], Mendes [23], Jackjon [24] and Miro [25] proved that policy provided support for tourism gentrification, mainly manifested in planning urban functions, formulating urban development strategies, and implementing development projects. From the capital perspective, Teresa [26] verified that the large-scale investment has provided a solid material basis for tourism gentrification, driven the development of tourism infrastructure, leisure and entertainment, and business projects, and improved the service level and consumption level of the area. In terms of real estate development, the research results of Gladstone and Preau [27] showed that the construction of real estate projects provides impetus for tourism gentrification, improves and enhances the local living environment, raises land value and rents, and creates conditions for population replacement. For the sake of population, the diversification of information, and the new technological means provided by the internet are also important causes of tourism gentrification. The study of Xu et al. [28] and Wang et al. [29] evidenced that the increasing flow of population is a prerequisite for the development of tourism; the diversification of information and the application of the internet in tourism provide more diverse technological means and channels for the marketing of tourism suppliers, indirectly driving the gentrification of tourism. In

addition, Garcia [30], Sigler and Wachsmuth [31], Tanaka et al. [32], and Yoshida and Kato [33] proved that the driving factors of tourism gentrification are not only the result of the globalization “rent gap” caused by the middle-class settlement but also the new forms of tourism and the short-term rentals provided by digital platforms, such as Airbnb’s new dissemination bringing new expansion to the tourism industry.

2.2.3. The consequences of tourism gentrification

The consequences of tourism gentrification are both positive and negative. From the positive aspect, scholars believed that they mainly manifested in tourism, urban development, and employment. For example, Lin [34] manifested that gentrification has driven the development of the tourism industry, the construction of large entertainment projects, the surrounding ecological environment, etc. The study of Kesar et al. [35] showed that the impact on employment is that gentrification has provided a large number of employment opportunities for society. Tourism is a labor-intensive industry, with many job opportunities and diverse job levels. The negative impacts of tourism gentrification were mainly manifested in changes in neighborhood relationships and increasing commercialization. For example, the study of Xu and Han [19] proved that gentrification had forced the displacement of the indigenous population, severed the neighborhood relationships of the indigenous population, and the newly moved high-income stratum has not yet established close neighborhood relationships due to short residence time and busy work.

In addition, tourism gentrification has also caused population displacement. Gotham tested that the income difference brought by the development of tourism gentrification and the rising rent force the population displacement in this area, and the original low-income group is gradually replaced by the high-income group [13].

3. Research design

3.1. Study area

Huzhou City in Zhejiang Province has the reputation of “the first city of rural tourism in China”. The most typical rural tourist destinations are Yu Village, Yu Village and Lujia Village. Huangshan City in Anhui province has rich and colorful natural landscape and cultural resources. With the support of government policies, Huangshan City has gradually built a number of rural tourism demonstration bases, among which Feicui New Village, Xidi Village and Hongcun Village are particularly typical ones. These typical rural tourism destinations rely on beautiful natural scenery, historic cultural landscape, etc. The development of rural tourism in those villages not only realizes the rural tourism gentrification, but also promotes the revitalization and development of rural areas. For example, in 2000, Xidi-Hongcun village was added to the World Cultural Heritage List. In 2019, Yucun was selected for the list of the first batch of key villages for rural tourism in China; Moganshan Scenic Spot, where Yucun Village is located, was recognized as a national tourism resort in China in 2020.

3.2. Methodologies

Data collection method: In-depth semi-structured interviews. This study adopts in-depth semi-structured interviews to collect research data (**Figure 1**).

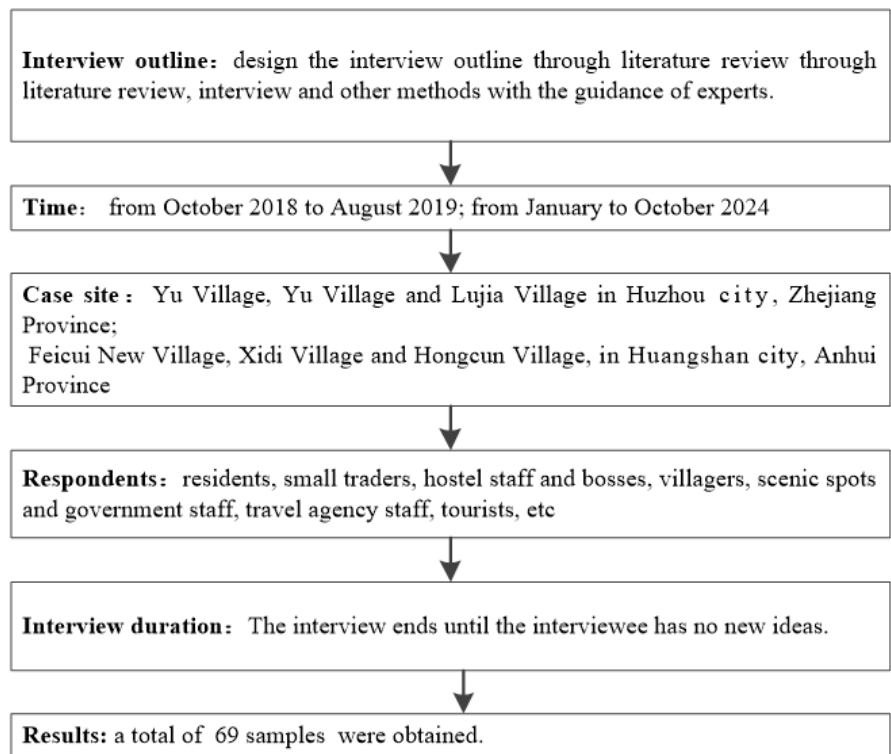


Figure 1. In-depth semi-structured interviews in this study.

Data processing method: Grounded theory. This study processes data through grounded theory to explore the influence mechanism of rural tourism gentrification (Figure 2).

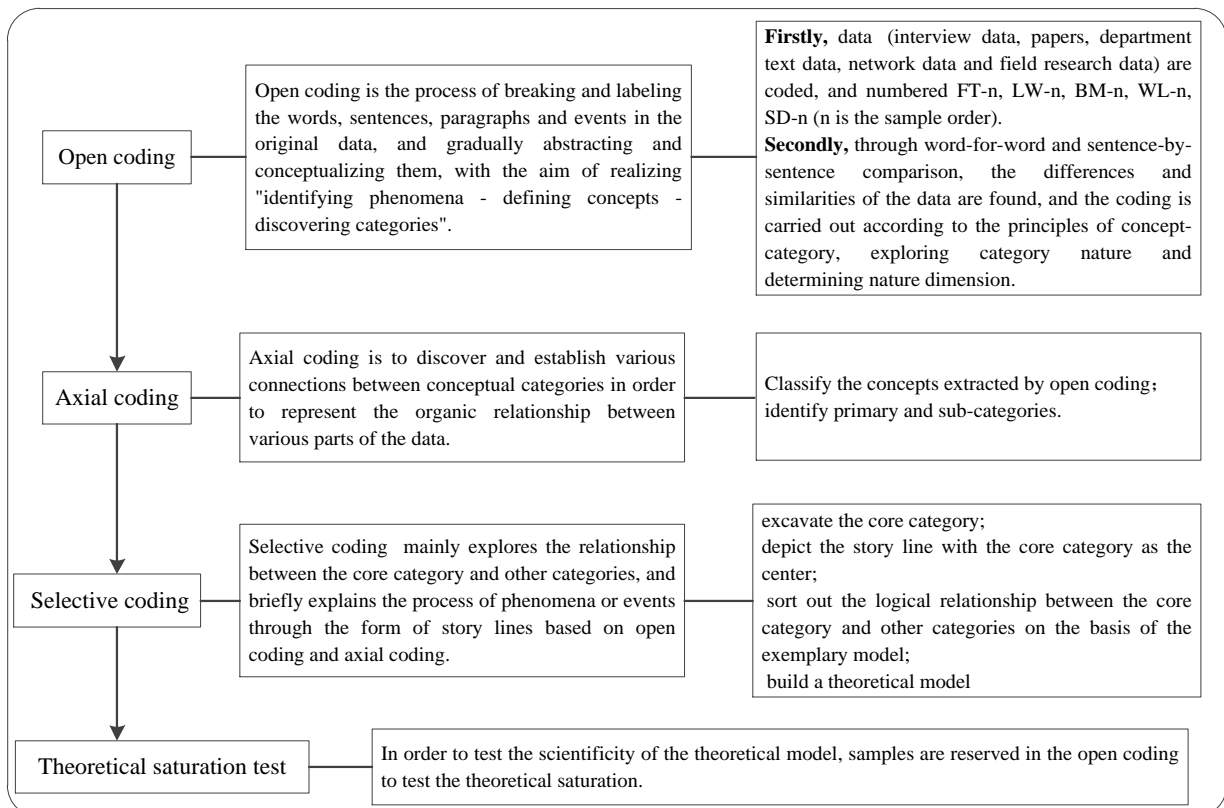


Figure 2. Grounded theory in this study.

3.3. Interview outline

The interview outline in this paper was designed through literature review, interviews and other methods with the guidance of experts.

3.4. Research process

Our team paid visits to typical rural tourism destinations in Huzhou, Zhejiang Province and Huangshan, Anhui Province, several times from October 2018 to August 2019 and from January to October 2024. Respondents include rural residents (residents, small traders, hostel staff and bosses, villagers, etc.), scenic spots and government staff, travel agency staff, tourists, etc. A total of 40 resident samples of interview data and 29 tourist interview data were obtained.

4. The influence mechanism of rural tourism gentrification

4.1. Research data analysis and processing

Before adopting the grounded theory coding, it is necessary to integrate scattered and messy data, extract keywords, sentences and paragraphs, and then break and label the data for simple classification and induction, laying the foundation for the abstraction and conceptualization process of coding.

4.2. Theoretical model construction and testing

According to the process of the grounded theory, the data (papers, department texts, interview data, network data and field research data, etc.) are encoded and analyzed through open coding, axial coding and selective coding.

4.2.1. Open coding

59 sample data (35 resident sample data, 24 tourist sample data) were randomly selected and coded, and 10 sample data (5 resident sample data, 5 tourist sample data) were reserved for testing theoretical saturation to ensure the scientific conclusion.

Through open coding, a total of 48 concepts and 12 categories were formed, which were named according to literature, interviews and research, as shown in **Table 1**.

Table 1. The concept and category of open coding in the influence mechanism of rural tourism gentrification.

Conceptualization	Categorization	Property of category	Nature of dimension	Dimension location
Rural attraction Local development needs Tourism demand Escape the city affordability	Market mechanism	Tension Thrust	weak-strong weak-strong	stronger stronger
Development policy Tourism planning Action plan	Policy mechanism	Policy mechanism Administrative capacity of tourism industry	imperfect-perfect weak-strong	relatively perfect stronger
Convenience service Community management Restraint of resident behavior	Management mechanism	Government management Community management	low-high low-high imperfect-perfect	higher higher relatively perfect

Table 1. (Continued).

Conceptualization	Categorization	Property of category	Nature of dimension	Dimension location
Regulate marketing behavior Mode of action Staff training	Industry mechanism	Industrial structure Integration of primary, secondary and tertiary industries	Unreasonableness-rationalization Independence-integration	more reasonable merge
Natural environment Development environment Supervise each other Environmental constraint	Environment mechanism	Environmental quality Mutual supervision Environmental constraints	Imperfect-perfect Not paying attention to-paying attention to Non compliance-Compliance	Relatively perfect Pay more attention to Willing to comply
Economic structure Commercial form Take up a job Resident income Overall economic development level Investment attractiveness	Economic development mechanism	Economic structure Economic development level	Low-high Low-high	Industrial structure upgrading Raise to higher level
Honest and trustworthy Communicate with tourists Listen to tourists' suggestion	Business ethics mechanism	Business ethics Interact with tourists	Average-good Less-more	Preferably More
Willingness to participate Community management authority Community integrated management Community service facilities	Community management mechanism	Community management efficiency Service facilities	General-efficient Imperfect-perfect	Higher Relatively perfect
Cultural accomplishment Civility Residents' vision Ideology Speech and behavior Be dressed in Personal image Focus on education	Resident representation mechanism	Internal representation External representation	bad-good bad-good	preferably preferably
Protection and inheritance of traditional culture Absorb foreign culture commercialization Embody cultural characteristics	Traditional culture mechanism	Traditional culture Foreign culture Cultural activities or products	destruction-protect repulsion-absorption not embodying - embodying	protection absorb embody
Material life Spiritual life	Living standard mechanism	Material life Spiritual life	poverty-abundance poverty-abundance	richer richer
Ecological environment Human settlement environment Infrastructure Social space	Physical landscape mechanism	Landscape quality Landscape function	bad-good imperfect-perfect	preferably relatively perfect

4.2.2. Axial coding

The analysis results show that there are logical relationships among the 12 categories obtained in open coding. According to the logical relation between categories, two main categories are further summarized: The driving mechanism of rural tourism gentrifications; the interactive influence mechanism of rural tourism gentrification.

The driving mechanism of rural tourism gentrification

(1) Market-driven mechanism

The market-driven mechanism is the basis for rural tourism gentrification. The healthy and orderly development of rural tourism is promoted through the mutual promotion of tourism market demand and supply, which advances the development of rural tourism gentrification. For example, “City life is stressful, air pollution is serious, and the pace of life is fast, so many people in our unit like to experience country life in rural areas during holidays (FT-5)”.

(2) Policy-driven mechanism

A policy-driven mechanism is an important guarantee for the development of rural tourism gentrification. The government promotes and guides the rapid development of rural tourism through the formulation and implementation of rural tourism development policies, tourism planning and action plans, and promotes the development of rural tourism gentrification. For example, “In recent years, the Huzhou government attaches great importance to the development of rural tourism, and issued the” Huzhou Rural Tourism Promotion Regulations “to guide the development of Rural Tourism in Huzhou (FT-7)”.

(3) Management-driven mechanism

The management-driven mechanism is the leading driving mechanism for the development of rural tourism gentrification. The government promotes the healthy development of the rural tourism gentrification by formulating relevant industry management systems. The community mainly promotes the gentrification of community management in rural areas through village regulations, civilized tourism and voluntary service. For example, “In 2019, the Hongcun Village Committee published a new version of the Village Rules and Regulations with more than 1500 words, including 11 treaties, integrating the protection of the environment and ancient buildings into the daily life of villagers (BM-2)”.

(4) Industry-driven mechanism

The industry-driven mechanism is the core driving mechanism of the development of rural tourism gentrification. As the main body of the market, tourism enterprises and rural operators promote the development of rural tourism gentrification by attracting investment, recruiting tourism talents, encouraging employees to improve their cultural literacy, establishing industry organizations, and adopting the way of companies and farmers to carry out production and management. For example, “Our village adopts the way of companies and farmers to develop tourism, which has led many villagers to get rid of poverty and become rich (FT-14)”.

(5) Environment-driven mechanism

An environment-driven mechanism is an important driving mechanism for the development of rural tourism gentrification. The improvement of the environment provides more employment opportunities for the local residents, advances their life quality, and enhances the tourism support and participation behavior of the local residents. Affected by the development of the environment, the local residents take the initiative to restrain themselves, reduce or even eliminate uncivilized environmental behaviors, and promote the development of rural tourism gentrification. For example, “I saw a notice on the bulletin board of the neighborhood committee that uncivilized and environmentally damaging behavior of residents and tourists is not allowed (FT-19)”.

The interactive influence mechanism of rural tourism gentrification

(1) The impact of economic development

Rural tourism gentrification promotes the economic development of rural areas, which is mainly reflected in economic structure, commercial form, employment, residents' income, overall economic development, investment, etc. For example, "Feicui New Village has achieved leapfrog economic development, and its overall competitiveness ranks the best in our town (FT-25)".

(2) The impact of business ethics

Rural tourism gentrification has an important impact on business management and business ethics, which is mainly reflected in the voluntary and honest management of community residents, keeping promises, and being willing to communicate with tourists and listen to their opinions. For example, "Last time I came to talk with this master, I learned to polish small pendants with roots, and this master was very patient and taught me all morning (FT-29)".

(3) The impact of community management

Rural tourism gentrification realizes the gentrification of community management, which is mainly reflected in the improvement of community public service infrastructures, the enhancement of the prestige of community management and the willingness of residents to participate in community management. For example, "There will be a special person in charge of village sanitation and cleaning it every day (FT-33)".

(4) The impact of traditional culture

Rural tourism gentrification promotes the gentrification of traditional rural culture, which is mainly reflected in promoting the protection and inheritance of traditional culture, accelerating the speed of traditional culture absorbing foreign excellent culture, and reflecting cultural characteristics of tourism projects and tourism products. For example, "We have stepped up efforts to inherit and repair traditional Hui culture and architecture (FT-45)".

(5) The impact of living standards

Rural tourism gentrification promotes the gentrification of residents' lives in rural areas, which is mainly reflected in the advancement of residents' material lives, the increase of residents' income and consumption level, and the improvement of local medical treatment. For example, "In our spare time, we meet our neighbors to play mahjong or go out for shopping (FT-52)".

(6) The impact of residents' representation

Rural tourism gentrification on residents' representation is mainly embodied in two aspects: Internal representation (civilization, ideology, attention to education, etc.) and external representation (speech and behavior, people, personal image, etc.). For example, "In the past, you could go out with an unkempt face, but now you must wash your face and comb your hair before going out (FT-44)".

(7) The impact of material landscape

Rural tourism gentrification has an important impact on the local material landscape, which is mainly reflected in the aspects of infrastructure, ecological environment, human environment, living environment and social space. For example, "In the past two years, asphalt roads have been able to reach the village, traffic has

been greatly improved, and water and electricity have been centrally supplied, bringing great convenience to production and life” (FT-58).

4.2.3. Selective coding

Through the in-depth exploration, extraction and analysis of these categories, it is found that the core category, the influence mechanism of rural tourism gentrification, can help you to have a better understanding of the relevant problems taking place in the development of rural tourism gentrification. On this basis, this paper takes Feicui New Village as an example to depict the story line:

Before tourism development: Before the reform and opening up, residents relied on cutting trees, planting fields, picking tea and farming for a living, with a low income, poor living environment and residential environment.

Initial stage of tourism development: Feicui New Village is close to Huangshan Mountain. Its beautiful natural scenery and quiet living environment attract many tourists. On the basis of the household contract responsibility system, the villagers spontaneously organized together, and invested in their own land to establish the Feicui Valley tourism company with the leadership of the village committee.

Rapid development stage: The number of tourists in the Feicui Valley scenic spot continues to increase, and it has successfully created China’s AAAA scenic spot. The development of tourism has changed the local economic structure (from agriculture to tourism), raised residents’ income, enhanced their humanistic quality and behavior etiquette, enriched the material and spiritual life of residents, strengthened the protection of traditional culture, improved their living environment, natural environment and cultural environment. These changes have promoted the development of rural tourism gentrification. However, tourism in this period was mainly sightseeing, and tourism attractions were single.

Maturity stage: With the increasing gap between urban and rural areas, promoting the development of rural areas has become an important issue. Therefore, the government put forward the rural revitalization strategy. Tourism, as an important means to promote rural revitalization, has been widely recognized and promoted. In addition to the Feicui Valley scenic area, homestays have become another important tourist attraction of the Feicui New Village. The development of tourism in Feicui New Village has advanced the development of local economy, upgraded the economic structure and industrial structure on the basis of making full use of tourism resources, promoted the gentrification of the economy, society, culture, environment, community and residents of Feicui New Village.

4.2.4. Theoretical saturation test

In order to test the scientificity of the theoretical model, 10 interview samples were reserved in the open coding process to test the theoretical saturation. Through the coding and analysis of 10 samples, the influence mechanism of rural tourism gentrification has not formed a new category, and all categories are still in the above core category. Therefore, the core category of data reaches saturation, and the theoretical model constructed is reasonable and scientific.

4.3. The influence mechanism of rural tourism gentrification

The results of the grounded theory analysis show that the influence mechanism of rural tourism gentrification mainly composed of the driving mechanism of rural tourism gentrification and the interactive influence mechanism of rural tourism gentrification.

4.3.1. The driving mechanism of rural tourism gentrification

The driving mechanism of rural tourism gentrification includes market-driven mechanism, policy-driven mechanism, management-driven mechanism, industry-driven mechanism, and environment-driven mechanism.

Market-driven mechanisms are the basis for rural tourism gentrification. A policy-driven mechanism is an important guarantee for the development of rural tourism gentrification. The management-driven mechanism is the leading driving mechanism for the development of rural tourism gentrification. The industry-driven mechanism is the core driving mechanism of the development of rural tourism gentrification. The environment-driven mechanism is an important driving mechanism for the development of rural tourism gentrification.

4.3.2. The interactive influence mechanism of rural tourism gentrification

The interactive influence mechanism of rural tourism gentrification is composed of 7 aspects:

(1) The interaction influence mechanism of economic development and gentrification. Rural tourism gentrification has promoted the economic development of rural areas, which is mainly reflected in economic structure, commercial format, employment, resident income, overall economic development and investment, etc.

(2) The interactive influence mechanism of business ethics change and gentrification. Rural tourism gentrification has an important impact on business operation and business ethics, which is mainly reflected in the voluntary and honest management of community residents, keeping their promises, being willing to communicate with tourists and listen to their opinions, and constantly improving and enhancing service levels to obtain more market shares and ultimately promote the sustainable development of rural businesses.

(3) The interactive influence mechanism of community management and gentrification. Rural tourism gentrification realizes the gentrification of community management, which is mainly reflected in improving the community public service facilities, enhancing the prestige of community management and residents' willingness to participate in community management.

(4) The interactive influence mechanism of traditional culture change and gentrification. Rural tourism gentrification promotes the gentrification of rural culture. Rural tourism gentrification has shown the great charm of culture to the public, promoted the protection and inheritance of traditional culture, accelerated the speed of traditional culture to absorb foreign excellent culture, and finally injected new vitality into the development of traditional culture.

(5) The interactive influence mechanism of the improvement of living standards and gentrification

Rural tourism gentrification promotes the gentrification of residents' lives in rural areas, which is mainly reflected in the improvement of residents' material lives, the increase of villagers' income and consumption levels, and the improvement of local medical treatment.

(6) The interactive influence mechanism of residents' representation change and gentrification

Rural tourism gentrification to residents' representation is mainly embodied in two aspects: Internal and external. From the internal representation, rural tourism gentrification improves the civilized quality of rural residents, broadens their horizons, changes their ideas, and makes them pay more attention to education. From the external representation, the gentrification of rural tourism makes the residents more civilized in speech and behavior, more hospitable to people, more decent in personal image, and more excellent in overall quality.

(7) The interactive influence mechanism of material landscape change and gentrification

Rural tourism gentrification has an important impact on the local material landscape, which is mainly reflected in the aspects of infrastructure, ecological environment, human environment, living environment, social space, etc. These changes in turn affect the rural tourism market evolution, government policies and factor input, community management, industrial investment and development environment and other driving mechanisms of rural gentrification development, further promote the healthy development of rural tourism, and realize the sustainable development of rural tourism gentrification.

To sum up, the influence mechanism of rural tourism gentrification is shown in Figure 3.

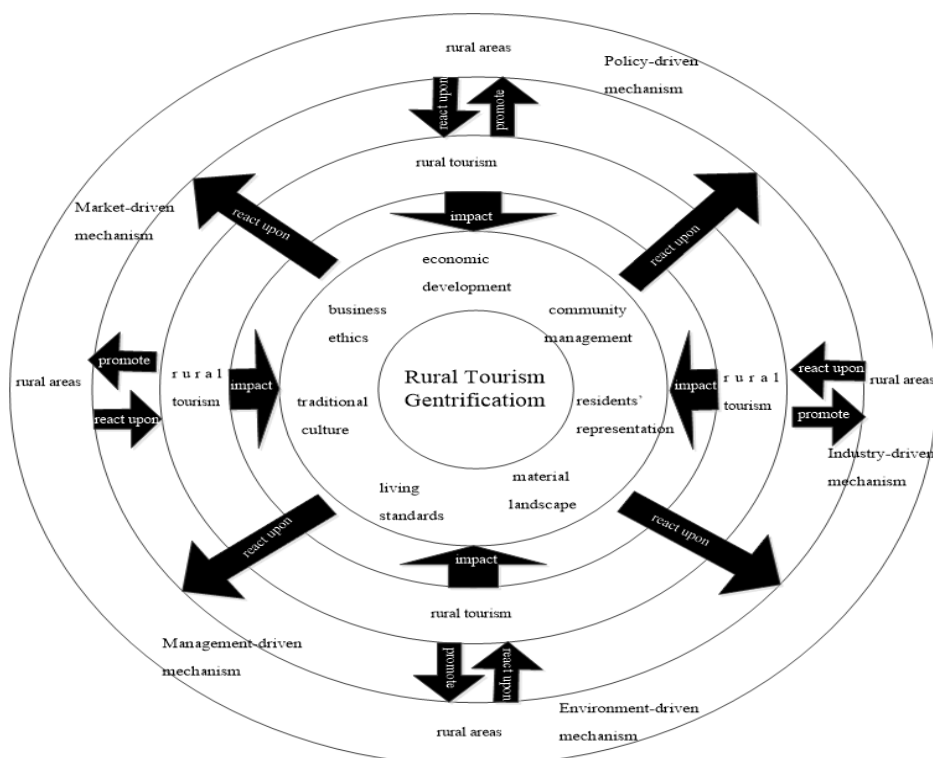


Figure 3. The influence mechanism of the development of rural tourism gentrification.

5. Conclusions

5.1. Results

This paper discusses the influence mechanism of rural tourism gentrification based on rural revitalization. The results show that:

(1) Market supply and demand, development policies, community management, factor industries and the development environment act on rural areas in different ways, promote the development of rural tourism, change the behavioral representation of community residents, material landscape, community governance, business ethics, traditional culture and living standards, and promote rural tourism gentrification.

(2) These developments and changes in turn affect the evolution of the rural tourism market, enhance the attractiveness and competitiveness of rural tourism, achieve the transformation and upgrading of rural tourism and sustainable development, and further promote the sustainable development and evolution of rural tourism gentrification.

(3) The implementation of a rural revitalization strategy promotes the development of rural tourism gentrification, which in turn promotes the development of rural tourism and the implementation of a rural revitalization strategy.

5.2. Discussion

(1) The government can effectively promote the development of rural tourism gentrification with policies in China. It provides policy guarantees and breaks down the obstacles to tourism development. In 2003, for example, when the local government decided to shut down most mines and polluting enterprises, the mountains turned green and the water became clear in Yucun Village. Yucun Village successfully realizes the transformation from “selling stones” to “selling scenery” driven by the development of tourism, and becomes a model place for the construction of beautiful villages and the comprehensive revitalization of rural areas in China.

(2) Community governance provides a basis for the development of rural tourism gentrification. It shapes the internal and external representations of residents through village rules and conventions, guides residents, and enhances their willingness and ability to participate in tourism. In 2023, Xidi Village improved the “Xidi Scenic Spot Tourism Market Comprehensive Regulation Action Plan”, clarified the penalty measures for chaos in scenic spots, strictly prohibited touting, unlicensed tour guides, following peddling, random price increases and other behaviors, standardized the tourism order, improved the tourist experience, and promoted the development of tourism gentrification.

(3) Residents’ involvement is of great importance to the development of rural tourism gentrification. Residents are the promoters of rural tourism gentrification. Xidi Village, as a world cultural heritage site, has rich Hui cultural resources. Some local residents take the initiative to become interpreters of ancient dwellings, introducing the history and culture of Xidi to tourists, and driving the spread and promotion of traditional culture.

(4) Tourists are powerful promoters for the development of rural tourism gentrification. Tourists bring different language landscape, living habits and so on to

the residents of Xidi and Hongcun Village, which promotes the tourism gentrification of Xidi and Hongcun Village. At the same time, the tourism gentrification of Xidi and Hongcun Village also attracts more and more tourists.

5.3. Research deficiencies and prospects

The influence mechanism of rural tourism gentrification varies from one country to another. This study only discusses the influence mechanism of rural tourism gentrification based on China's social background. Future studies can explore the influence mechanism of rural tourism gentrification in different countries and different cultural backgrounds and conduct comparative analysis to enrich the research on rural tourism gentrification.

Author contributions: Conceptualization, YX; methodology, YX and SZ; software, YX; validation, YX, SZ and ZY; formal analysis, SZ and ZY; investigation, SZ and ZY; resources, YX; data curation, YX; writing—original draft preparation, YX; writing—review and editing, YX; visualization, YX; supervision, YX; project administration, YX; funding acquisition, ZY. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research is supported by the following fund projects: Anhui University humanities and social science research project, project number: SK2021A0580; Hefei University Talent Research Fund Project, project number: 21-22RC49; 2023 New Era Education Quality Project (Graduate education), Anhui Province: 2023jyjxggjY259; Hefei University education and teaching reform research project: 2022hfujyzd08.

Conflict of interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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