

Tourism Development and Transformation of Resource-Exhausted City: A Case Study of Wansheng District, Chongqing, China

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Abstract

In recent years, the resource-exhausted cities are confronting with various complicated predicaments, which have severely hindered their sustainable development. Wansheng has been listed in resource-exhausted cities in 2009 by the Chinese State Council. Faced with the development difficulties by resource depletion, Wansheng promotes the idea of developing tourism industry. Based on the SWOT strategy analysis model, this paper analyzes all the influencing factors in tourism industry development of Wansheng. It draws a conclusion that tourism industry is a key factor in the process of the Wansheng urban transformation. Currently tourism industry needs adopt opportunity-oriented overall strategy in sustainable development. The good outcomes of tourism industry can be summarized as follows: It becomes a new economic growth of the city and optimizes the industrial structure. It also eases employment pressure, protects the ecological environment and promotes city infrastructure.

Keywords: resource-exhausted tourism industry, urban transition.

1 Introduction

Resource-based cities are those whose development mainly depends on the exploitation of natural resources. At the early 1930s Australia scholar H. A. Inns (1930) first made research on resource town. The systematic research began at 1960s. The typical researchers are R.A. Lucas, J. H. Bradbury, B. Marsh, B. Warren, C.O' fairheallaigh, D. S. Haughton and so on. USA, Canada and Australia are the key research countries. The majority researches are on the social and psychology issues in the developing progress such as the prosperity and recession of mining town, the resource-based towns life circle and the sustainable development of resource-exhausted area.

Resource-exhausted cities refer to those whose development of mineral resources is in decay or depletion process. With the development of industries, non-renewable resources are gradually declining, and being depleted. Due to worsen mining conditions, rising costs, low efficiency, or degeneration of flagship product, resource-based cities are bound to undergo the process of construction - prosperity - recession - transition - revitalization or demise. Currently, the world is experiencing the rapid development of urbanization. How to promote a sustainable development of resource-exhausted city is a global issue.

There are totally 118 resource-based cities relying on coal, forest, oil and others in China, among which 69 cities are listed successively as resource-exhausted cities by the National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Land and Resources and the Ministry of Finance on 2008, 2009 and 2012. The Chinese government has made great efforts to improve resource-based cities since 2000. A series of governmental documents and reports reflected the transition intentions of the central government.

Wansheng Economic and Technological Development Zone is located at southern of Chongqing, China. The establishment of Nan Tong mine in 1938 indicated the beginning of Wansheng coal mine industry. From that time on, the region's total production of coal has reached to 140 million tons, which made a significant contribution to former national economic construction. But now it has entered the exhaustion stage of coal mining. It has been listed in resource-exhausted prefecture-level cities in March 2009 by the State Council. Due to the exhausted non-renewable mineral resources, it faces the dilemma of depletion and decline of the mine industry. The city's leading industries should be shifted from mining to other industries.

Wansheng promotes the idea of transition development driven by tourist industry. In 2010, Chongqing municipal government specially issued *The opinion on the promotion of restructuring and development of resource-based city in Wansheng District* which clearly states “to develop Wansheng into an Eco-tourism and leisure base in Chongqing and the country's major tourist destination.” In 2012, National Tourism Administration approved Wansheng Economic and Technological Development Zone as a “tourism transformation pilot unit of national resource-exhausted cities” and meanwhile placed its tourism development plan on the top support list of National Tourism Administration. Wansheng adopts tourism as the transformation industry. Therefore it needs a strategic development. Is tourism industry the best way to the realization of striding transformation in Wansheng?

2 Research Method

This paper uses SWOT model to analyze the tourism development of Wansheng:

2.1 Strengths

Wang sheng is the main recreation and holiday market of Chongqing in 1 hour economic circle. It also has a good tourism position with located at the Danxia-Karst natural heritage corridor and tourism round line in Sichuan-Chongqing golden triangle. Wansheng has a rich high-quality tourism resource. On its natural tourism resource, there are Dark Valley scenic spot, Tong Luowan Drifting scenic spot, Jiu Guojing forest park. On its cultural tourism resource, there is a melt culture of Han, Miao, Gelao and Ni nationalities in a long history.

Wansheng also has an excellent ecological environment with 97% forest coverage. It has clean air and flourishing plants. It is an ideal place to develop resort and holiday-making. Wansheng has a foundation of scenic spot construction and tourism branding. It has the 5A scenic spot and national Geo-park. With a longtime development and marketing, Wansheng has received a regional reputation with a good starting of tourism industry.

2.2 Weaknesses

The economic development of Wansheng is not strong enough. From the table, the 2011 GDP is relatively low among the 40 counties and districts of Chongqing.

The main statistical indicators of Wansheng	GDP	Per-capital GDP	Industry added value	Gross output of farming forestry animal husbandry and fishery	Real estate development investment	Total retail sales of consumer goods	Budget Revenue of Regional Finance
Production Value (Million RMB)	4001	1,572,500	1731	658	487	1593	284
Ranking in Chongqing	22	21	22	17	21	22	22

There is a limitation output on city construction and tourism infrastructure. Because of a longtime mining industry, there is a serious pollution. Wansheng also has a number of disaster risk. The city green land and public recreation space need to be improved.

Wans Sheng also has few professionals in modern tourism service industry. The tourism products and supporting service are simplification without specialty. The majority products are sight-seeing. The tourism infrastructure can't satisfied with the tourists reception need with low-quality and low numbers. It only has 7 travel agencies and more than 50 tourism restaurants. 3 hotels are above 4A.

2.3 Opportunities

Nowadays, the recreation and holiday demand is increasing. China is in the progress of recreation time. The holiday-making market is improving a lot.

Wansheng has a series of potential policies. It is the only tourism economic experimental area in Chongqing. It gets a series of supporting policies from the central government to the local government. It also has a potential market opportunity. Wansheng is located nearby Chongqing. It has a chance to become the recreation backyard for Chongqing and the second home for Chengdu. Supporting of Chengdu-Chongqing economic zone, it has limitless potential with big traveling market. City transportation network can bring a lot of opportunities. Wansheng-Nanchuan highway, Wangan highway and Wanzheng highway will improve the access possibility with nearby cities.

2.4 Threats

There is a fierce regional homogeneity competition among nearby cities. Jiangjing, Zhanjiang, Nanchuan, Wulong also make a great effort on tourism industry. Parts of them have better developments than Wansheng.

There is also a uncertainty of market demands. Getting more out-traveling experience and information in different mediums, people are more and more picky on tourism environment and service quality .

Wansheng still in the process of coal transportation and mining. Therefore it's difficult to change the city environment. It is also a big challenge to develop the tourism destination

Based on the SWOT strategy analysis model, this paper measures all the impact elements with quantitative analysis to make a strategic position. It measures the degree of opportunity, threats, weakness and strengths by Likert scale .The scores are as follows:

Strength	Regional transportation 5	Tourism resource 5	Ecological environment 4	Scenic spot construction 4
Weakness	Economic development -5	Urban infrastructure -5	Operation and management -4	Tourism products and service -4
Opportunity	Recreation demands 5	Politics 5	Market potential 5	Transportation Improvement 4
Threats	Regional homogenization competition -5	Uncertainty of market -2	Eco-Environment -5	Economic Development-5

The finding is the strength=18, Weakness=13, Opportunity=19, Threats=-12. Using four dimensional coordinates, this paper gets the strategic quadrilateral. Barycentric coordinates $P (X,Y)=(\sum X_i/4 , \sum Y_i/4)=P(1.25 , 1.75)$.

Strategic azimuth variable $\text{tg}\theta=Y/X=1.40$, $(0\leq\theta < \pi/2)$, $\theta\approx 0.95$, which locating $(\pi/4 , \pi/2)$. Therefore tourism industry development of Wansheng can adopt opportunity-oriented overall strategy

Wansheng can make use of the increasing demanding of recreation and holiday-making, establish an integrateregional recreation and tourism model with melt local culture and tourism. Make different recreation and holiday-making products for citizens in Chongqing and other cities.

Makes a positive response of a series of preferable policies of national and Chongqing . Supporting the scenic spot construction and management, try to make a market influence. Attracts investments at home and aboard and makes a great effort on holiday and recreation project. Absorb tourism professionals with high salary

It also takes good advantage of highway network construction and makes a connection of the scenic spots along the transportation line. In this way to form a tourism industry circle.

3. Findings

Therefore the tourism industry is the great opportunity to promote sustainable city development. It takes advantage of outstanding landscape features and makes use its advantages to promote its development:

Tourism plays following major functions in the urban transition of Wansheng:

3.1 Tourism becomes a new economic growth of Wansheng

Tourism has become a new economic growth of Wansheng which revives Wansheng's economic development. It has rich tourism resources. The national 5A scenic spot Black Valley which is newly established. Besides, there are national geological park, forest park and other tourism attractions with unique Yelang culture, industry culture and Hong Miao culture. Wansheng District is located in the one hour economic circle and regarded as the south portal of Chongqing. It places at the geometric center which connects Chongqing and Guizhou Province. Its superior geographical location and transportation advantages provide a potential tourism market. The state and municipal government also provide favorable policy support to its tourism development. Therefore, Wansheng proposes the strategic development of building an international tourism destination and increase investment in the tourism industry and achieve remarkable results.

During the period of “Eleventh Five-Year”, Wansheng District spend 1.24 billion RMB on tourism, completed the the previous planning and development objectives. In 2009, Wansheng started a second venture and repurchased three major scenic spots: Black Valley, Wansheng Stone Forest and Tonggu Beach. In 2010, nearly 600 million invested on the Black Valley. During the period of “Eleventh Five-Year”, Wansheng had 5.29 million tourists. It brought direct tourism revenue 677 million RMB, overall tourism revenue 1.89 billion RMB, 95 million RMB of ticket sales. The various economic indicators have reached an average annual which increases of more than 15%. From January to July in 2011, the region had a total of 2,883,000 tourists with an increase of 457% compared to the same period of the previous year. The tourism revenue reached to 400 million yuan with an increase of 414%. Ticket sales reached to 41 million yuan with an increase of 439% . Tourism revenue reached to 1.44 billion yuan with an increase of 696% compared to the same period of the previous year. By 2015, tourism will become a new pillar industry of Wansheng and promote economic development.

3.2 Tourism Optimizes the Industrial Structure of the City

The rising of tourism industry changes the single mine industry pattern, optimizes the industrial structure and promotes Wansheng’s sustainable and steady development of economy. It plays an important role in driving the development of other industries.

In the future, by adjusting and optimizing the industrial structure, Wansheng will gradually form a tourism-leading growth model of industrial clusters to coordinate the development of urban and rural development and industrial development. The tourism industry will effectively promote the development of construction industry, food industry, business, services, financial services and information industry and other related industries. For example, Television Ltd. Valor Group invested 33 million in Chongqing Wansheng to build the largest animation industry base in the southwest. It will create 20,000 jobs directly and indirectly which are expected to promote local agricultural production and marketing, catering, accommodation, construction, logistics, advertising and communication industry and achieve more than 20 billion RMB.

Wansheng combines the six elements of tourism: catering, accommodation, amusement, traveling, shopping and entertainment to increase the depth of the tourism industry development and focuses on creating scenic spot-oriented tourism and leisure industry, modern agriculture-oriented agriculture, modern cultural and creative service industry catered for towns to achieve the transition from the traditional industry to the tourism industry, modern service, cultural and creative industries.

3.3 Tourism Eases Employment Pressure

The tourism development of Wansheng mitigates the local employment pressure of the unemployed and maintains social stability. It conducive to the development of the city and makes an enhancement of the city’s competition ability. The depletion of mineral resources makes Wansheng’s development increasingly declining. The city can not provide more job opportunities and living conditions. Large numbers of people moved out. Lots of factories are relocated. For example, a factory in Ba’nan District moved out with 37,000 employees and more than 60,000 families. Meanwhile, the aging trend is increasing in the region which makes the society and economy out of vigor. Many workers are laid-off. Laid-off workers of state-owned enterprise reached nearly 2 million. The people of urban minimum living standard are 1.8 million which takes up 14% of the urban population. Most of them are too old to be adaptable with more re-employment pressure. Tourism belongs to endogenous export-oriented industries. It is in low employment threshold and can attract a number of employees .It can absorb a large number of laid-off workers of industrial enterprises to re-employed. In 2011, the employments driven by tourism reached 72% of new jobs. “The one center, two rings, three zones” of travel spatial pattern can partially solve the employment problem in Wansheng Economic and Technological Development Zone. It also provides some employment opportunities for local farmers with surplus work force.

3.4 Tourism Protects the Ecological Environment

The development of tourism can protect the environment and achieve sustainable development of city. Wansheng’s coal-dominated industrial structure extends into some energy-intensive industries and pollution-intensive industries. The long-term exploitation of coal resources leads to a large number of coal mining subsidence. Many buildings, roads, plants, agricultural lands and groundwater within the subsidence are destroyed. It seriously affects the ecological environment of the region and directly threatens people’s lives and living environment. Currently, the mined subsidence area has covered five towns: Qingnian, Guanda, Nantong, Wandong, and Conglin.

There are 64,557 acres of arable land and 1,353,017 square meters housing area are destroyed. More than 100,000 lives and property security are directly threatened. Construction of tourism projects is helpful to repair and improve the environment. For example, Nantong will construct an outdoor sports park, while Yutian Bao will become a national mine park by making full use of its factory building and industrial facilities of Donling coal mine. Besides, by popularizing Eco-tourism knowledge, it can improve the awareness of nature conservation and environmental protection of local residents and tourists. People will consciously guard the ecological balance in order to achieve a coordinated development between man and nature.

3.5 Tourism Promotes Infrastructure

The development of tourism promotes infrastructure construction in Wansheng. In order to improve tourism, Wansheng develops traffic environment and road infrastructure. It also makes great efforts on the construction of transportation, water conservancy project, municipal engineering, railways and roads construction and opens up the transport channel to the outside. Wansheng forms an integrated transport network with the main skeletons of Wannan Expressway, Wangan (Ganshui) Expressway, Wanzheng (Zhengan) Expressway and the general framework of around-the-city ring road, tourism ring road. There are also two channels of Sanwang Southern Railway, Wanfeng Railway and rural road network. At the same time, Wansheng promotes water conservancy project construction. It makes planning and construction on natural gas trunk pipelines and branch pipeline. Meanwhile in municipal engineering, it continuously improves the services of Wansheng public facilities. In the construction of passenger transportation systems, it enhances transportation radiation from the urban to the surrounding towns. Wansheng becomes a pilot county by integrating Wansheng bus system into Chongqing suburban city bus system. It accelerates urban information infrastructure by making interconnection of various network resources through integration, upgrade, expansion and transformation of resources. With a variety of measurements and approaches, tourism industry development improves infrastructure and the quality of people's living standard.

4. Conclusions

With the great effort of local and central government, Wansheng has made a significant progress in tourism. Tourism industry becomes a key factor in the process of the urban transition.

Therefore, in order to achieve a successful transition, resource-exhausted cities need to be innovative and develop their transition models with great foresight after taking into account their local resource endowment, the resource exploitation stage, the geographical location and the social culture.

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