

Tourism Regulation, Resident Satisfaction and Sustainable Rural Tourism: A Chinese Case

Wenyu Yang¹, Yuxin Lu², Kun Zhou³, Haojie Yin⁴,

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Abstract. Against the UN 2030 SDGs framework, rural tourism facilitates inclusive growth (SDG8), sustainable communities (SDG11), and inclusive governance (SDG16). Resident satisfaction bridges tourism regulation, commercial operation, and destination sustainability. Most prior studies treat satisfaction as a passive outcome of tourism growth and lack an integrated empirical framework that combines tourism law, benefit distribution, and multidimensional resident perceptions. This study constructs a six-dimensional resident satisfaction system that covers economic benefits, living environment, cultural inheritance, government services, community identity, and personal development. Based on 264 valid resident questionnaires from Liulaozhuang Village (a tourism site in Northern Jiangsu), we apply reliability and validity tests, correlation analysis, and multiple regression to explore how satisfaction shapes sustainable tourism development. Regression results show that all six dimensions are positively associated with perceived sustainable rural tourism development ($\beta = 0.198\text{--}0.284$, $p < 0.01$), jointly explaining 58.2% of its variance (adjusted $R^2 = 0.582$); government service satisfaction was the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.284$), whereas personal development satisfaction combined the lowest mean score ($M = 3.21$) with the second-strongest association ($\beta = 0.271$), a “low satisfaction–high association” configuration. The data expose institutional drawbacks: unfair revenue sharing, weak legal protection for resident participation, insufficient support for tourism micro-firms, and a lack of long-term ecological supervision rules. The study embeds tourism regulation and micro-enterprise operation logic within a resident satisfaction framework, adds the dimensions of personal development and community identity, and provides micro-level evidence from a government-led tourism destination. These findings inform evidence-based governance pathways, statutory benefit-sharing rules, resident hearing mechanisms, micro-enterprise incubation, and long-term ecological monitoring. They can be applied to other government-led cultural tourism destinations in developing countries.

Keywords: benefit distribution, community participation, multiple regression, Agenda 2030, destination governance, micro-enterprise incubation.

INTRODUCTION

Sustainable Tourism and the SDGs: Global Context

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable

Development frames tourism as a sector expected to reconcile economic viability, social equity, and environmental stewardship (United

¹ Wenyu Yang, Yancheng Teachers University, Yancheng, China, <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-4856-7799>

² Yuxin Lu* (Corresponding author), Yancheng Teachers University, Yancheng, China, luyx@yctu.edu.cn, <https://orcid.org/0009-0001-4307-2085>

³ Kun Zhou, Yancheng Teachers University, Yancheng, China, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3043-3646>

⁴ Haojie Yin, Yancheng Teachers University, Yancheng, China, <https://orcid.org/0009-0002-8411-7873>

Nations, 2015). Four Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) directly relate to tourism destination governance: SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions). Community-based tourism can catalyse poverty reduction and decent work through participation, entrepreneurship, and equitable benefit sharing (Jackson, 2025). Yet, communities often retain only a small share of tourism revenue, making distributive institutional design a critical bottleneck (Carius & Job, 2019).

There is also something special about rural tourism itself: it will achieve sustainability when resident-included stakeholders develop joint efforts, enterprises take good care of their own environments, visitors feel satisfied, and people living there obtain certain advantages from all these activities; otherwise, they cannot join developmental activities happening locally (An & Alarcón, 2020; Liu et al., 2023). In some places, such as China, many problems arise because there are no clear rules on how profits generated by tourist attractions should be divided among participants, making it difficult for most small businesses run by locals to survive under existing regulations. In addition, few opportunities exist for ordinary residents who want to get involved (Trupp et al., 2025).

Government-Led Tourism in Rural China

Among all policies related to rural revitalisation being implemented throughout China today is one concerning tourism organised around revolutionary heritage sites. In this regard, Liulaozhuang Village, located in Huai'an City, Jiangsu Province, provides a good case because it commemorates 82 martyrs. Under the guidance of local authorities, tourism management regulations have been formulated, and villagers collectively run tourism-related cooperative organisations; therefore, they can also express their satisfaction with these arrangements.

According to some studies in China, locals determine what happens there in relation to travel. They affect their own happiness because they feel something about tourist activity and then trust officials (Jia et al., 2022); they want to take part if they can control nature themselves and obtain good facilities from others. Hence, how people think matters when assessing

whether someone has achieved sustainability goals; otherwise, nothing will work well (Caro-Carretero & Monroy-Rodríguez, 2025). However, few studies focus on inhabitants themselves among the many domestic reports on visitors, nor have researchers examined cases where authorities develop tourism villages north of Jiangsu Province.

Research Objectives and Questions

Since enforcement problems will remain even if laws are in place (Khater et al., 2025), regulation appears within the resident-satisfaction scheme rather than as external information about its setting. Therefore, four goals emerge: first, develop a multidimensional resident-satisfaction model containing elements relating both to regulations concerning tourism itself and to running countryside enterprises generally; second, examine what kinds of correlations exist among these six types of satisfaction when one considers their respective relationships to sustainable tourism development in rural areas; third, find out what institutions cause satisfaction levels to stay low; finally, on this basis, determine which kinds of improvements regarding regulations, forms taken by businesses, and so on need attention if one wants to achieve SDGs overall.

Three Core Research Questions: (1) How are local tourism regulatory arrangements and collective benefit distribution mechanisms associated with multidimensional resident satisfaction in government-led tourism destinations? (2) Which satisfaction dimensions are most strongly associated with sustainable rural tourism development, and what regulatory and commercial sustainability risks correspond to the lowest-scoring dimensions? (3) How can a tripartite governance framework integrating tourism regulation, tourism business operation, and SDG-oriented community sustainability be constructed for government-led tourism villages in developing regions?

Whereas prior research has predominantly modelled residents' perceptions as responses to tourism development (Gursoy et al., 2019), this study positions resident satisfaction as an explanatory construct within an integrated regulation–business–sustainability model and extends conventional measurement with personal development and community identity dimensions. Practically, it offers transferable reference points for benefit distribution rules, resident hearing mechanisms, micro-enterprise incubation and ecological supervision in

government-led cultural tourism destinations.

Research Significance

This study expands the theoretical framework of tourism community resident satisfaction by introducing tourism administrative regulation and micro-tourism enterprise operations as intermediate logical links, thereby breaking the single-social-perception research paradigm in traditional tourism literature. It combines stakeholder theory, tourism community satisfaction theory, and the SDGs sustainable development framework to form an integrated analysis model of “law-business-sustainability-resident perception”, enriching empirical research on sustainable tourism governance in Chinese state-led rural destinations, and providing comparative research materials for global sustainable tourism scholars.

Liulaozhuang Village is in the critical growth stage of tourism industrialisation. Residents are core stakeholders in the rural tourism business; their satisfaction directly determines willingness to participate, tourism service quality, and community stability, which in turn affect the sustainable operation of village tourism projects. This research identifies institutional defects in tourism legal services, revenue distribution rules and micro-entrepreneur incubation using resident satisfaction data, providing an evidence-based reference for decision-making by local tourism administrative departments. The proposed governance strategies can be replicated in similar revolutionary cultural tourism villages in Northern Jiangsu and other developing regions that use government-led tourism models.

Research Structure

This paper follows the standard structure of international peer-reviewed journals: Section 2 reviews literature covering sustainable tourism SDG, tourism legal governance and resident satisfaction; Section 3 elaborates theoretical framework, research hypotheses, questionnaire design and data collection methods; Section 4 presents objective statistical results without subjective discussion; Section 5 interprets regression findings, compares with prior literature and analyzes theoretical contributions and practical risks; Section 6 summarizes core conclusions, proposes targeted governance strategies, clarifies research limitations and future research directions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sustainable Tourism Research under the SDG Framework

Recent scholarship has anchored tourism research in the SDG framework. Standardised sustainable tourism management is associated with higher tourist satisfaction and long-term industry performance (Aniramu et al., 2025), community participation in tourism governance fosters entrepreneurship and equitable benefit sharing (Jackson, 2025), and formally designed revenue-sharing arrangements contribute measurably to multiple SDGs. However, communities often capture only a minor share of revenue (Carius & Job, 2019). This literature establishes the SDG framework as the study's normative reference point while indicating that its regulatory and distributive preconditions remain under-examined.

Tourism Regulation and Destination Governance

Tourism regulation, the legal norms, administrative rules, and formal arrangements governing tourism development, has attracted growing attention. Robust legal frameworks are a precondition of sustainable tourism governance, yet enforcement capacity and compliance incentives remain structurally weak (Khater et al., 2025). Formal instruments such as laws, rules, and zoning plans only define the space of possible outcomes; effective governance balances regulation with self-organisation (Hartman, 2021). The participatory involvement of regulators, operators, communities, tourists, and non-governmental organisations improves the quality and legitimacy of planning outcomes (Pham et al., 2025; Roxas et al., 2020).

A second strand addresses distributive governance. Governance arrangements condition the fairness of benefit distribution in community-based tourism, with marginalised groups frequently disadvantaged (Dangi & Petrick, 2021), and benefit inequalities generated under mass tourism can be reproduced within community-based arrangements (Dolezal & Novelli, 2022). Multi-stakeholder participation improves tourism planning systems in Oman (Al Mahrizi et al., 2024). In Chinese rural destinations, residents' cognition of regulations and policies is significantly associated with participation in tourism environmental governance (Fan et al., 2024). Few studies, however, connect tourism regulation to the

sustainable operation of resident-run tourism businesses, leaving the regulation–business linkage underdeveloped.

Resident Satisfaction in Tourism Communities

Resident satisfaction research has matured into a predominantly perceptual body of work (Sharpley, 2014). Perceived benefits are positively and perceived costs negatively associated with residents' support for tourism development (Gursoy et al., 2019). Subsequent studies elaborate on the underlying mechanisms: community attachment moderates impact perceptions and life satisfaction predicts support for sustainable tourism (Eslami et al., 2019); perceived social impacts influence quality of life and, through it, supportive behavior (Ramkissoon, 2023); and impact perceptions shape support indirectly through quality-of-life satisfaction (Demirović Bajrami et al., 2020).

Measurement studies have progressively multidimensionalized the satisfaction construct. Models spanning economic, sociocultural, environmental, and institutional dimensions find the institutional dimension particularly salient in protected areas (Trišić et al., 2023), and destination image, environment, and economic and sociocultural factors determine perceived destination quality in rural Romania (Muresan et al., 2019). In Chinese rural destinations, residents' life satisfaction, together with community participation, predicts support for tourism development (R. Wang et al., 2021). Across this literature, however, satisfaction is almost uniformly positioned as an outcome of tourism development, and conventional four-dimensional frameworks rarely capture residents' higher-order demands for governance voice and entrepreneurial self-realisation.

Community Participation, Benefit Sharing and Tourism Micro-Enterprises

Community-based psychological ownership strengthens residents' sense of responsibility and belonging, promoting participation in rural tourism (Guan et al., 2025). In Chinese villages, participation is positively associated with support for tourism development, though perceived intra-community conflict mediates this association negatively (M. Wang et al., 2021). A sustainable livelihood assessment of community-based tourism homestays in Laos found that a coordinated, community-anchored approach is a prerequisite for realising multiple SDG benefits (Pasanchay & Schott, 2021). Tourism micro and

small enterprises channel much of this participation: finance, skills, market access and the institutional environment are their principal challenges (Trupp et al., 2025), and residents' negative perceptions of tourism's impacts reduce support for sustainability initiatives and, in turn, micro-business viability (Andereck et al., 2025). This literature links participation, benefit sharing and micro-enterprise viability but rarely situates them within the regulatory architecture of government-led destinations.

Research Gaps

Synthesising these streams, three gaps motivate the present study. First, a paradigm gap: resident satisfaction is overwhelmingly modelled as a passive outcome of tourism development; how multidimensional satisfaction relates to the sustainable operation of rural tourism businesses under binding regulatory constraints is rarely analysed. Second, a dimension gap: prevailing frameworks omit residents' higher-order demands for governance voice and entrepreneurial self-realisation, mismatching communities where government supply and collective benefit rules dominate in the everyday tourism experience. Third, a regional and theoretical gap: micro-level evidence on government-led red tourism communities in East Asia, particularly in China, remains scarce, and few studies integrate tourism regulation, tourism business operations, and the SDG framework into a unified resident satisfaction model. The study addresses these gaps through a six-dimensional resident satisfaction framework estimated on survey data from a government-led tourism village in northern Jiangsu, China.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research area

Located in the northwestern part of Huaiyin District, Huai'an City, Jiangsu Province, China, Liulaozhuang Village is another famous red-themed tourism destination. It has its own historical significance: to commemorate the heroic deeds of the 82 Martyrs from the Liulaozhuang Company, a cemetery was erected, along with a revolutionary culture museum and an agricultural industrial park. Thus emerged another typical case of governmental guidance over operations among revolution-culture type villages.

District and township administrative departments direct tourism under local policies

and village collective asset management rules. However, the village exhibits institutional weaknesses common to government-led destinations: incomplete revenue-distribution provisions, limited legal guarantees for residents' participation in decision-making, and insufficient financial and training support for resident-operated micro-enterprises. This mix of state direction and institutional gaps makes it an informative case for examining how regulation, business operations, and resident satisfaction interact in sustainable rural tourism.

Theoretical Framework and Conceptual Model

The framework rests on two complementary bases. First, social exchange theory (SET) (Nunkoo & Ramkissoon, 2011) and the bottom-up spillover perspective hold that residents weigh tourism's costs and benefits across life domains, and that domain satisfaction shapes quality-of-life judgments and support for tourism development (Demirović Bajrami et al., 2020; Eslami et al., 2019; Ramkissoon, 2023). Second, in rural China, community involvement

in tourism has been linked to residents' life satisfaction under the Tourism Agenda 2030 (Jia et al., 2022). Given the government-led mode, a governance dimension is added: effective destination governance requires clearly defined stakeholder roles (Roxas et al., 2020), and legal frameworks that balance conservation with development underpin sustainable outcomes (Khater et al., 2025).

The conceptual model specifies six dimensions of resident satisfaction as independent variables: economic benefit, living environment, cultural inheritance, government service, community identity, and personal development. The dependent variable is sustainable rural tourism development, measured by perceived economic, social, and environmental sustainability; five demographic variables (gender, age, education, monthly income, occupation) serve as controls. Each satisfaction dimension is hypothesised to be positively associated with the dependent variable. Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual model.

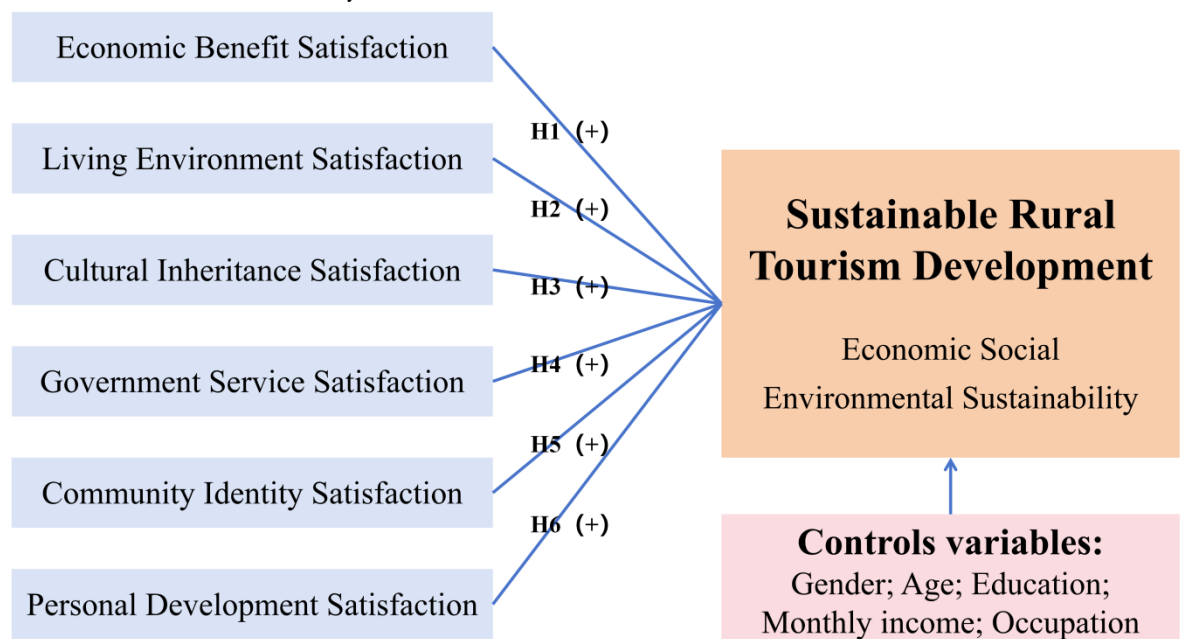


Figure 1. Conceptual research framework of satisfaction and sustainable rural tourism development

Source: Authors' theoretical construction, 2026.

Research Hypotheses

Tourism creates employment and sales channels, and transparent revenue distribution should raise economic satisfaction and support for tourism.

H1: Economic benefit satisfaction is positively associated with sustainable rural tourism development.

Public investment in infrastructure and

ecological restoration improves living conditions and sustains the environment that micro-businesses depend on.

H2: Satisfaction with the living environment is positively associated with sustainable rural tourism development.

Residents satisfied with their cultural heritage are more willing to participate in cultural tourism, thereby differentiating the destination's

offering.

H3: Cultural inheritance satisfaction is positively associated with sustainable rural tourism development.

Under the government-led mode, satisfaction with policy, subsidies, and training reflects residents' trust in tourism planning; this dimension is expected to carry the strongest association.

H4: Government service satisfaction is positively associated with sustainable rural tourism development.

Recognition of residents' contributions to tourism affairs strengthens community identity and participation.

H5: Community identity satisfaction is positively associated with sustainable rural tourism development.

Residents who achieve personal development through tourism entrepreneurship contribute to the destination's sustained innovation capacity.

H6: Personal development satisfaction is positively associated with sustainable rural tourism development.

Measures and Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire scale is revised based on established international and domestic tourism resident satisfaction scales, adjusted to align with the legal, commercial, and sustainability characteristics of Liulaozhuang Village's tourism business. All items use a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree / Very Dissatisfied; 5 = Strongly Agree / Very Satisfied). The questionnaire is divided into three parts, all of which are translated into English for academic analysis; the original Chinese version is submitted as Supplementary Material.

Part 1: Demographic control variables: gender, age, education, monthly income, occupation;

Part 2: Six-dimensional resident satisfaction scale (24 items total, 4 items per dimension), covering tourism benefit distribution rules, government tourism administrative service, resident entrepreneurial support, cultural protection regulations, and community participation systems;

Part 3: Sustainable rural tourism development perception scale (6 items), measuring economic, social, and environmental sustainability performance under the SDGs

framework. A pre-survey was conducted among 30 permanent village residents. The Cronbach's α of the whole pre-survey scale reached 0.892, KMO=0.886, indicating acceptable reliability and validity. The researchers revised ambiguous items before formal distribution.

Sampling and Data Collection

Random sampling was carried out across all 8 villager groups in Liulaozhuang Village, ensuring a balanced distribution of age, occupation, and income. A total of 280 paper questionnaires were distributed, and 264 were recovered, yielding an effective recovery rate of 94.3%. All respondents are permanent residents who have lived in the village for more than 6 months; verbal informed consent was obtained before completing the questionnaires, and all data were anonymised to protect personal privacy, in compliance with academic research ethics standards.

Analytical Tools

SPSS 26.0 statistical software was adopted for quantitative analysis, including:

1. Descriptive statistical analysis of demographic characteristics and satisfaction item scores;

2. Reliability analysis (Cronbach's α) and validity analysis (KMO & Bartlett test, principal component factor analysis);

3. Pearson correlation analysis to test correlation between variables and VIF test to eliminate multicollinearity;

4. Multiple linear regression analysis to verify research hypotheses, taking six satisfaction dimensions as independent variables, sustainable rural tourism development as the dependent variable, and demographic indicators as control variables.

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics of Sample Demographics

Table 1 presents the demographic Distribution of Valid Samples. In terms of gender structure, among the 264 respondents, 128 were male (48.5%), and 136 were female (51.5%). The male-to-female ratio is nearly equal, with slightly more women than men, consistent with rural areas where men work outdoors during the day and women stay home longer. The sample has good representativeness.

Table 1. Demographic Distribution of Valid Samples (N=264)

Indicator	Classification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	128	48.5
	Female	136	51.5
Age	≤18	8	3.0
	19–30	36	13.6
	31–40	52	19.7
	41–50	74	28.1
	51–60	58	22.0
	≥61	36	13.6
Education	Primary and below	42	15.9
	Junior high school	98	37.1
	Senior high / Technical secondary	76	28.8
	College / Bachelor	44	16.7
	Postgraduate and above	4	1.5
Monthly Income (CNY)	≤2000	38	14.4
	2001–3500	82	31.1
	3501–5000	96	36.3
	5001–8000	36	13.6
	≥8000	12	4.6
Occupation	Traditional agriculture	58	22.0
	Tourism-related practitioner	62	23.5
	Migrant worker outside village	44	16.7
	Non-tourism individual business	28	10.6
	Enterprise& institutional staff	32	12.1
	Others(student, retired etc.)	40	15.1

Note: Percentages are rounded to one decimal place; totals may differ from 100.0% due to rounding.

From an age-structure perspective, respondents have a relatively wide age distribution. 8 residents aged 18 and below, accounting for 3.0%; 36 residents aged 19-30, accounting for 13.6%; 52 residents aged 31-40, accounting for 19.7%; 74 residents aged 41-50, accounting for 28.1%; 58 residents aged 51-60, accounting for 22.0%; 36 residents aged 61 and above, accounting for 13.6%. The sample mainly consists of middle-aged and young adults aged 31 to 60, accounting for 69.8% of the total sample. They are the main participants and direct beneficiaries of rural tourism development in Liulaozhuang Village and have the deepest understanding of tourism development, which can provide effective informational support for this study.

The cultural level of the interviewed residents is generally low, with a majority having junior high school or high school education. 42

residents with primary school education or below, accounting for 15.9%; 98 residents with junior high school education, accounting for 37.1%; 76 residents with high school or vocational education, accounting for 28.8%; 44 residents with college or undergraduate degrees, accounting for 16.7%; and 4 residents with graduate degrees or above, accounting for 1.5%. A total of 174 residents have middle and high school education, accounting for 65.9% of the sample, which is similar to the educational background characteristics of the rural population in Liulaozhuang Village.

The monthly income of the interviewed residents is generally moderate to low, with most ranging from 2000 to 5000 yuan. Specifically, there are 38 residents with a monthly income of less than 2000 yuan, accounting for 14.4% of the total sample; 82 residents with a population of 2001-3500 yuan, accounting for 31.1%; 96

residents with income ranging from 3501 to 5000 yuan, accounting for 36.3%, are in this income range with the highest number of people; 36 residents with a population of 5001-8000 yuan, accounting for 13.6%; 12 residents with a budget of over 8000 yuan, accounting for 4.6%. From the income distribution, it can be concluded that 177 residents have a monthly income between 2001 and 5000 yuan, accounting for 67.4% of the total sample size, indicating that the income structure of residents in Liulaozhuang Village is mainly composed of middle- and low-income groups. On the one hand, this indicates that overall satisfaction with local tourism economic benefits still needs improvement. On the other hand, it also shows that rural tourism development has opened new channels for residents to increase their income. Some residents obtain additional income by participating in tourism operations, scenic area services, agricultural product sales, etc.. However, there is still considerable room for development in the breadth and depth of income growth.

In terms of employment situation, the surveyed residents have a relatively diverse occupational composition, including traditional agriculture, tourism services, migrant work, individual business and other fields. Among agricultural residents, there are 58 people, accounting for 22% of the total population. Traditional agricultural production is the main source of livelihood for some families, and there are 62 tourism-related employees (such as rural tourism management, scenic area services, and tourism product sales), accounting for 23.5% of the total population. Among various

professions, the proportion is the highest, indicating that the development of rural tourism in Liulaozhuang Village has created many employment opportunities for residents, and the tourism industry has gradually become an important industry for absorbing labor force; 44 migrant workers, accounting for 16.7% of the total population, indicate that a considerable number of residents choose to leave the village to seek employment opportunities, which is to some extent related to the insufficient carrying capacity of local industries and the limited types of employment positions; 28 individual business owners (non tourism), accounting for 10.6% of the total number of people; 32 employees of the enterprise or unit, accounting for 12.1% of the total number of employees; There are 40 other practitioners (students, retirees, etc.), accounting for 15.1% of the total number. Rural tourism practitioners account for about a quarter of the workforce, indicating that rural tourism has a significant impact on the local employment structure.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability analysis tests the stability and consistency of the questionnaire scale, and this article uses Cronbach's α to measure it. Generally speaking, a coefficient greater than 0.9 indicates high reliability; between 0.8 and 0.9 indicates good reliability; between 0.7 and 0.8 indicates acceptable reliability; and a coefficient less than 0.7 indicates insufficient reliability. The reliability of 264 valid questionnaires was assessed in SPSS, and the results showed a Cronbach's α of 0.951 for the total scale, indicating high reliability (Table 2).

Table 2. Cronbach's α Coefficient of All Measurement Dimensions

Measurement Dimension	Item Number	Cronbach's α
Economic benefit satisfaction	4	0.885
Living environment satisfaction	4	0.872
Cultural inheritance satisfaction	4	0.864
Government service satisfaction	4	0.891
Community identity satisfaction	4	0.879
Personal development satisfaction	4	0.886
Sustainable rural tourism development perception	6	0.903
Full scale	30	0.951

Note: Conventional reliability threshold: $\alpha \geq 0.70$.

The reliability coefficients for all six dimensions of the scale are greater than 0.8. The coefficient for the satisfaction dimension of

tourism economic benefits is 0.885, the satisfaction dimension of human settlement environment adaptation is 0.872, the satisfaction

dimension of local cultural inheritance is 0.864, the satisfaction dimension of government tourism services is 0.891, the satisfaction dimension of community respect and identity is 0.879, the satisfaction dimension of personal development realization is 0.886, and coefficient for the perception dimension of rural tourism development is 0.903. The reliability coefficients for each dimension exceed the critical value of 0.8, indicating that the questionnaire is internally consistent and the measurement results are

relatively stable.

As Table 3 shows, the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure was 0.941, and Bartlett's test was significant, $\chi^2(435) = 6234.521$, $p < 0.001$. Principal component analysis with orthogonal rotation extracted seven factors (eigenvalues > 1) explaining 76.38% of variance; item loadings ranged from 0.723 to 0.846 with cross-loadings below 0.40, supporting structural validity.

Table 3. KMO and Bartlett's Sphericity Test

Test Index	Value
KMO Sampling Adequacy	0.941
Bartlett Approximate Chi-square	6234.521
Degrees of Freedom	435
Significance (p)	0.000
Cumulative variance explained (%)	76.38
Item loadings on intended factors	0.723-0.846
Cross-loadings	< 0.40

Descriptive Statistics of Resident Satisfaction Dimensions

The scores of resident satisfaction dimensions are presented in Table 4. The overall average satisfaction score for the economic benefits of tourism is 3.42, which falls between "average" and "satisfactory". The highest score for increasing employment opportunities is 3.58 on average; next is the change in household income, with an average score of 3.51 points; the score for expanding sales channels for agricultural products is 3.38 points; the lowest score is for the fairness of tourism revenue distribution, at 3.21. The average score for the satisfaction dimension of human settlement environment adaptation is 3.65, the highest among the four dimensions. The score for infrastructure improvement is 3.74, the highest in this dimension; the score for optimising public spaces is 3.55, the lowest in this dimension; the scores for the remaining items are 3.69 for transportation convenience and 3.62 for environmental sanitation improvement. There are four dimensions of satisfaction with the inheritance of local culture: changes in neighbourhood relations, protection of cultural inheritance, community cohesion, and improvement of rural image. The average satisfaction score with the inheritance of local culture is 3.51 points. The highest score is 3.63 for rural image improvement, 3.54 for cultural

heritage protection, 3.48 for changes in neighbourhood relationships, and 3.39 for community cohesion. The satisfaction dimension of government tourism services comprises four items: policy support, implementation of funding subsidies, public service provision, and skills training services. The statistical results show that the average score for the satisfaction dimension of government tourism services is 3.38, which is the lowest among these four dimensions. The score for public service supply is 3.45 points, policy support is 3.41 points, funding subsidies are 3.35 points, and vocational skills training services have the lowest score at 3.29 points. The overall average score for the satisfaction dimension of community respect and identity is 3.29, which is relatively low among the six dimensions. The highest score for recognition of labour achievements is 3.42 on average; The score for the degree of adoption of opinions and suggestions is 3.35 points; The perceived score for social status improvement is 3.26 points; The score for speaking rights and participation in tourism affairs is the lowest, with an average score of 3.13. The satisfaction dimension of personal development includes four items: opportunities to showcase talents and strengths, degree of personal value realisation, opportunities for innovation and entrepreneurship, and sense of job achievement

and satisfaction. The statistical results show that the average score for the satisfaction dimension of personal development achievement is 3.21, which is the lowest among the six dimensions. The highest scores are for job achievement and satisfaction, with an average score of 3.35. The score for opportunities to showcase talents and strengths is 3.28, and the score for personal value

realisation is 3.18. The lowest score is for innovation and entrepreneurship opportunities, with an average score of 3.03. The lowest-scoring residents have fewer ways to realise their self-worth and fewer opportunities for entrepreneurship and innovation in tourism development.

Table 4. Resident satisfaction score

1st dimensions	2nd Questions	Mean	SD
Economic benefit satisfaction	Changes in household income	3.51	0.78
	Increased employment opportunities	3.58	0.74
	Fairness in the distribution of tourism revenue	3.21	0.86
	Expansion of sales channels for agricultural products	3.38	0.81
	Overall	3.42	0.68
Living environment satisfaction	Infrastructure improvement	3.74	0.71
	Environmental sanitation improvement	3.62	0.76
	Optimization of Public Space	3.55	0.79
	Convenient transportation and travel	3.69	0.73
	Overall	3.65	0.64
Cultural inheritance satisfaction	Changes in Neighborhood Relations	3.48	0.77
	Cultural inheritance and protection	3.54	0.75
	community cohesion	3.39	0.82
	Rural image enhancement	3.63	0.72
	Overall	3.51	0.66
Government service satisfaction	Policy support intensity	3.41	0.79
	Implementation of funding subsidies	3.35	0.84
	Public service supply	3.45	0.76
	Skills training services	3.29	0.88
	Overall	3.38	0.71
Community identity satisfaction	The degree of adoption of opinions and suggestions	3.35	0.82
	Perceived improvement in social status	3.26	0.85
	The degree of recognition of labor achievements	3.42	0.79
	The right to speak and participation in tourism affairs	3.13	0.88
	Overall	3.29	0.72
Personal development satisfaction	Opportunities to showcase talents and strengths	3.28	0.84
	Degree of personal value realization	3.18	0.86
	Innovation and entrepreneurial opportunities	3.03	0.91
	Sense of achievement and satisfaction in work	3.35	0.81
	Overall	3.21	0.75

Correlation Analysis

From Table 5, it can be seen that there is a significant positive correlation between satisfaction with tourism economic benefits and rural tourism development, with a correlation

coefficient of 0.527, which is significant at the 0.01 level; There is a significant positive correlation between satisfaction with the adaptation of the living environment and the development of rural tourism, with a correlation

coefficient of 0.584, which is significant at the 0.01 level; There is a significant positive correlation between satisfaction with the inheritance of local culture and the development of rural tourism, with a correlation coefficient of 0.563, which is significant at the 0.01 level; There is a significant positive correlation between government tourism service satisfaction and rural tourism development, with a correlation coefficient of 0.601, which is significant at the 0.01 level; There is a significant positive correlation between community respect, identity satisfaction, and rural tourism development, with a correlation coefficient of 0.556, which is significant at the 0.01 level; There is a significant positive correlation between personal development satisfaction and rural tourism development, with a correlation coefficient of 0.572, which is significant at the 0.01 level. The correlation coefficients between the six dimensions and rural tourism development are all greater than 0.5, indicating a moderate positive correlation between residents' satisfaction in each dimension and rural tourism development, which supports the research

hypothesis. The highest correlation between government tourism service satisfaction and rural tourism development (0.601) indicates that the residents of Liulaozhuang Village have the closest relationship between their support for the government and tourism development, which is also in line with the fact that rural tourism in Liulaozhuang Village is led by the government and promoted by policies; There is also a high correlation between personal development satisfaction (0.572) and community respect and recognition satisfaction (0.556), indicating that the degree of satisfaction with high-level needs is closely related to tourism development.

At the same time, the correlation coefficients between each variable are between 0.482 and 0.653. To test for multicollinearity, variance inflation factor (VIF) tests were conducted for each variable. The VIF values for each dimension were all less than 4, well below the critical value of 10, indicating no serious multicollinearity among the variables. This makes it suitable for multiple regression analysis

Table 5. Correlation Analysis Results for Various Variables

Variables	Economic benefit satisfaction	Living environment satisfaction	Cultural inheritance satisfaction	Government service satisfaction	Community identity satisfaction	Personal development satisfaction	Rural tourism development
Economic benefit satisfaction	1						
Living environment satisfaction	0.563**	1					
Cultural inheritance satisfaction	0.528**	0.612**	1				
Government service satisfaction	0.482**	0.573**	0.638**	1			
Community identity satisfaction	0.512	0.548	0.596	0.621	1		
Personal development satisfaction	0.498	0.534	0.562	0.587	0.653	1	
Rural tourism development	0.527**	0.584**	0.563**	0.601**	0.556	0.572	1

Note: ** indicates significant correlation at the 0.01 level (two-tailed).

Multiple Regression and Hypothesis Testing

Conduct a multiple linear regression analysis with the development of rural tourism as the dependent variable, six dimensions of resident satisfaction as independent variables, and gender, age, education level, income level,

and employment status as control variables (Table 6). After adjusting the regression model, the R-squared value is 0.582, and $F = 41.276$. The significance is 0.000, indicating a strong model fit. Together, the six dimensions explain 58.2% of the variation in rural tourism development.

Table 6. Multiple Regression Results Predicting Sustainable Rural Tourism Development

Variable	Non standardized coefficient B	Standard error	Standardization coefficient β	T-value	Significance
Constant	0.847	0.236		3.589	0
Economic benefit satisfaction	0.231	0.06	0.217	3.856	0
Living environment satisfaction	0.298	0.065	0.263	4.572	0
Cultural inheritance satisfaction	0.215	0.063	0.198	3.427	0.001
Government service satisfaction	0.316	0.065	0.284	4.896	0
Community identity satisfaction	0.267	0.062	0.245	4.306	0
Personal development satisfaction	0.294	0.063	0.271	4.667	0
Gender	0.042	0.058	0.031	0.724	0.47
age	-0.027	0.024	-0.058	-1.125	0.262
educational attainment	0.038	0.029	0.069	1.312	0.191
Income level	0.056	0.032	0.093	1.758	0.08
Employment situation	0.029	0.021	0.072	1.382	0.168

Note: Adjusted $R^2 = 0.582$, $F = 41.276$, Significance = 0.000

In terms of the degree of impact, the satisfaction levels of government tourism services, personal development realization, adaptation to the living environment, community respect and recognition, tourism economic benefits, and local cultural heritage are ranked from high to low as government tourism service satisfaction, personal development realization satisfaction, adaptation to the living environment satisfaction, community respect and recognition satisfaction, tourism economic benefits satisfaction, and local cultural heritage satisfaction. The maximum regression coefficient for government tourism service satisfaction is 0.284 because rural tourism in Liulaozhuang Village is dominated by red

tourism, and its development, construction, and promotion are all led by the government. Government policy support and funding subsidies are directly related to the development of tourism, and residents' sense of support for the government is closely related to tourism development; The second highest satisfaction rate for personal development is 0.271, indicating that residents' demands for realizing personal value, unleashing talents, and gaining a sense of achievement in tourism development are becoming increasingly evident, becoming an important driving force for tourism development; The satisfaction rate of adapting to the living environment ranks third (0.263), because infrastructure improvement and

environmental remediation are the basic conditions for rural tourism development. They are also the most direct part for residents to feel the dividends of tourism development. The progress of projects such as road hardening, garbage disposal, and public lighting will directly affect the quality of life and tourism service environment of residents; Community respect and identity satisfaction rank fourth (0.245), and residents' demand for respect, recognition, and voice is becoming an important factor affecting tourism development; The satisfaction of tourism economic benefits ranks fifth (0.217). Although tourism economic benefit satisfaction can become one of the driving forces for residents to participate in tourism, its marginal

impact on tourism development is smaller than that of government tourism service satisfaction, personal development satisfaction, and living environment adaptation satisfaction due to the imperfect mechanism of benefit distribution and other reasons; The impact of satisfaction with the inheritance of local culture is minimal (0.198), which may be due to insufficient exploration of the red cultural resources in Liulaozhuang Village and low participation of residents in cultural inheritance. The positive effect of satisfaction with local cultural inheritance has not yet been fully realised. Figure 2 compares the standardised regression coefficients (β) across the six satisfaction dimensions.

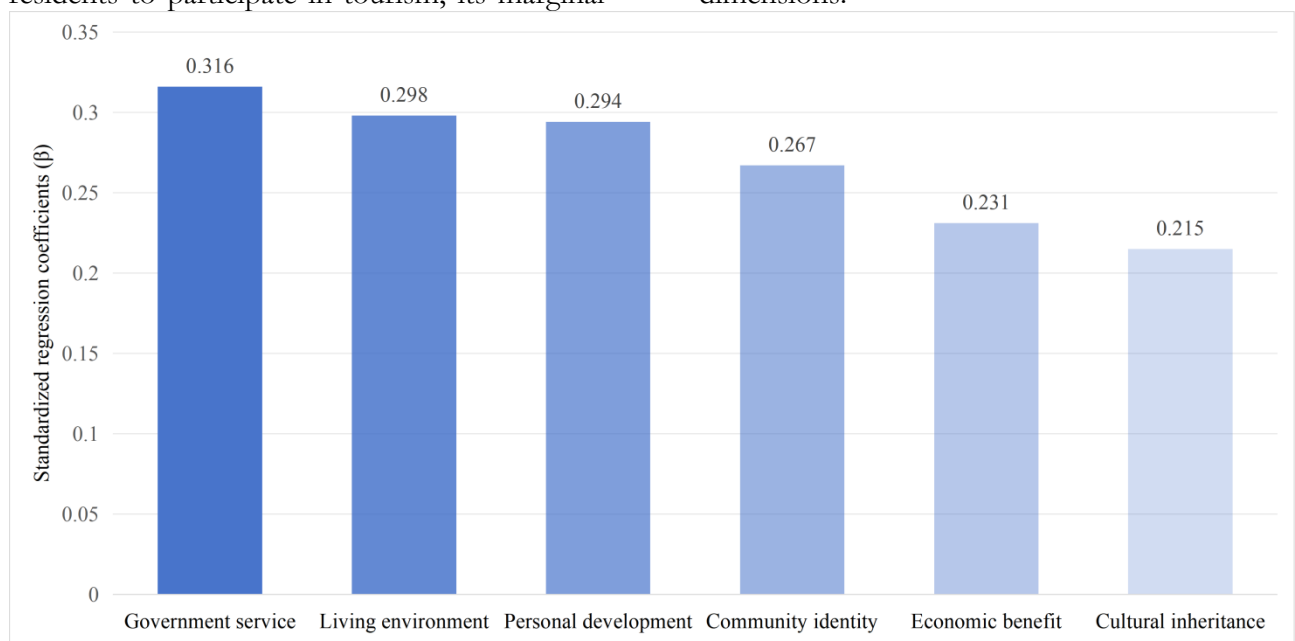


Figure 2. Standardised regression coefficients (β) of the six resident satisfaction dimensions
Source: authors' survey data, Liulaozhuang Village (N = 264).

The significance of control variables such as gender, age, education level, income level, and employment status is all greater than 0.05, indicating that demographic characteristics have no significant impact on rural tourism development in Liulaozhuang Village. The various dimensions of resident satisfaction in this study are the main factors affecting rural tourism development. The basic demographic characteristics of residents (gender, age, education level, income level, employment in

tourism-related industries, etc.) do not have a direct and significant impact on tourism development, again showing that residents' subjective perception (satisfaction) plays an important role in rural tourism development.

Hypothesis Test Summary

The test results on satisfaction with tourism economic benefits show a significant positive impact on rural tourism development ($\beta=0.217$, $p<0.01$), ranking fifth among the six dimensions (Table 7).

Table 7. Hypothesis Verification Results

Hypothesis	Standardized β	p-value	Influence Ranking	Verification Result
H1	0.217	0.000	5	Supported
H2	0.263	0.000	3	Supported

H3	0.198	0.001	6	Supported
H4	0.284	0.000	1	Supported
H5	0.245	0.000	4	Supported
H6	0.271	0.000	2	Supported

Note: All six research hypotheses are statistically supported. Demographic control variables do not significantly influence the dependent variable ($p > 0.05$).

The higher the satisfaction with residents' economic benefits, the stronger their enthusiasm for participating in tourism development, supporting H1.

Satisfaction with the adaptation of the living environment also has a significant positive effect and is the third most significant influencing factor. The higher the residents' satisfaction, the more they support tourism development, thereby supporting H2.

Satisfaction with the inheritance of local culture has a significant impact ($\beta = 0.198$, $p < 0.01$) and ranks sixth. The higher residents' satisfaction, the more they recognise tourism development, thereby supporting H3.

Satisfaction with government tourism services has the most significant impact ($\beta = 0.284$, $p < 0.01$), ranking first. The higher residents' satisfaction with government support, the higher their trust and participation in tourism development; H4 is established.

Community respect and satisfaction have a significant positive effect ($\beta = 0.245$, $p < 0.01$), ranking fourth. The more respect and voice residents receive in tourism development, the higher their support, as H5 establishes. Self-actualisation satisfaction has a significant impact ($\beta = 0.271$, $p < 0.01$), ranking second. The more residents realise their personal value and utilise their talents, the stronger the effect on tourism development, and H6 is established.

DISCUSSION

Interpretation of Findings

All six satisfaction dimensions were significantly and positively associated with perceived sustainable rural tourism development, with coefficients differing markedly, a pattern linked to the village's government-led governance mode.

Government service satisfaction showed the strongest association ($\beta = 0.284$). Public service delivery is residents' main experience of governance, so policy implementation, subsidies, and training map most directly onto evaluations of the industry's future. This aligns with evidence that policy supply underpins sustainable tourism enterprises and with complex adaptive systems accounts in which the effects of formal rules hinge on delivery quality (Hartman, 2021).

Personal development satisfaction ranked second ($\beta = 0.271$) yet scored lowest ($M = 3.21$), a "low satisfaction–high association" configuration. Residents' entrepreneurial aspirations remain unmet because incubation support for resident-operated micro-enterprises is limited. Living environment satisfaction ranked third ($\beta = 0.263$) despite the highest mean ($M = 3.65$). Improvements rely on short-term project funds; without permanent village-level funding, long-term prospects remain vulnerable.

Figure 3 contrasts the mean satisfaction scores with the corresponding standardised coefficients, visualising the "low satisfaction–high association" configuration of personal development.

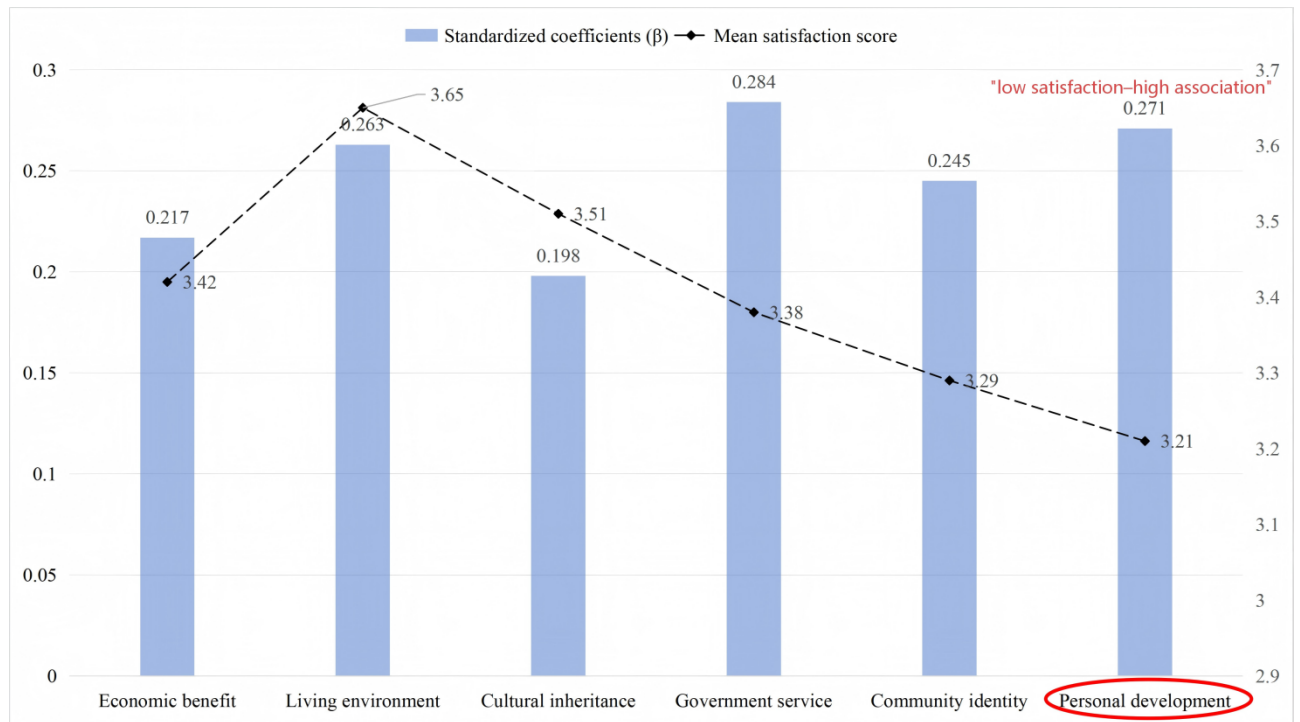


Figure 3. Mean satisfaction scores versus standardised regression coefficients (β) across the six dimensions.

Source: authors' survey data, Liulaozhuang Village (N = 264).

Community identity satisfaction ranked fourth ($\beta = 0.245$), its weakest item concerning residents' voice in decision-making — consistent with the regulation–participation linkage in Chinese rural destinations (Fan et al., 2024). Economic benefit satisfaction ranked fifth ($\beta = 0.217$): non-standardised revenue distribution appears to dilute the dividend–sustainability association. Cultural inheritance satisfaction was weakest ($\beta = 0.198$): protection rules emphasise memorial-venue hardware while offering few channels for sharing cultural dividends. No demographic control was significant: institutionally shaped evaluations, not background, were associated with perceived sustainability.

Comparison with Prior Research

Resident perception is a core criterion for evaluating sustainable tourism management (Caro-Carretero & Monroy-Rodríguez, 2025); the findings extend that market-oriented European evidence to a government-led East Asian village, suggesting this centrality holds across governance modes. Jia et al. (2022) linked community involvement to life satisfaction via perceived impacts and trust in government; the strong associations between government service and community identity here fit that logic. Gursoy et al.'s (2019) meta-analysis showed that benefit–cost effects of support vary across settings; the primacy of government service is

one such variation: governance evaluations outweigh benefit–cost ones under state dominance.

Theoretical Contributions

There are also three novelties involved here: first, incorporating regulations about visitors themselves along with operations related to commerce among elements constituting satisfaction according to social-exchange logic and downward diffusion; second, taking account of two additional outcomes concerning people living there personally, in addition to collective memory on their own; third, providing information regarding what was enacted by some officials themselves rather than left entirely either to markets alone or to residents collectively, which seldom occurs at present.

Institutional Risks and Governance Implications

There is also a distributive risk because no uniform rule exists for how much money will remain at the level of each village collectively. Justice depends partly upon what governance arrangements determine about distributions themselves (Dangi & Petrick, 2021); hence inequalities recur when unequal people participate (Dolezal & Novelli, 2022). Legal provisions regarding collective portions, dividends, and transparency help realise Goal 16 of good governance, which Carius and Job (2019) find supported by redistribution itself,

among other factors.

Secondly, a low discourse power score means there is still some chance that people will opt out altogether because major-project hearings have not been institutionalised. Participation does nothing if conflict remains unresolved (M. Wang et al., 2021), and institutions reduce opposition when they provide channels for residents' views about what tourism contributes locally toward decent work (Target 8.9) or other goals.

Third, the "low satisfaction–high association" profile of personal development signals risks for resident-operated micro-enterprises facing constraints in financing, skills, market access, and institutions (Trupp et al., 2025). Village incubation bases, micro-loans, and tiered training would turn these aspirations into viable heritage- and ecosystem-based businesses (SDG 11) and spur heritage and ecosystem protection (SDG 15).

Fourth, reliance on temporary government funds for environmental improvement is an ecological risk. Earmarking a fixed share of collective revenue for environmental governance by law, with long-term impact monitoring, would institutionalise responsible tourism production under SDG 12 (Target 12.b) and stabilise the ecological basis of living environment satisfaction (Carius & Job, 2019; Trupp et al., 2025)

Limitations and Future Research

Several limitations apply. One village and a cross-sectional design constrain generalizability and permit only associational inference. A single-questionnaire self-report may introduce common method bias. Future work should test the framework across villages, longitudinal designs, governance modes, and countries.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on 264 valid resident questionnaires collected in Liulaozhuang Village, a government-led "red tourism" attraction located in northern Jiangsu, China, a six-dimensional resident satisfaction framework—economic benefit, living environment, cultural inheritance, government service, community identity, and personal development—was formed. These six dimensions were significantly and positively associated with the outcome, with government service satisfaction showing the strongest standardised coefficient and cultural inheritance satisfaction the weakest. In contrast,

demographic characteristics showed no significant association. Therefore, in a state-led destination, evaluations of institutional delivery and of residents' own development opportunities matter more for perceived sustainability than economic dividends alone.

The study contributes a satisfaction framework that integrates tourism regulation, commercial operations, and the 2030 Agenda; demonstrates the empirical relevance of two underexamined dimensions—personal development and community identity; and supplies micro-level evidence from an underrepresented destination type. For policy, the findings identify four mutually reinforcing priorities: statutory rules for fair distribution of collective tourism revenue, institutionalised resident hearings, incubation support for resident-operated micro-enterprises, and legally secured long-term ecological funding and monitoring—measures aligned with SDGs 8, 11, 12, 15, and 16 and transferable, with adaptation, to other government-led destinations in developing economies. As the evidence is single-village, cross-sectional, and self-reported, conclusions remain associational; multi-village, longitudinal, cross-mode, and cross-country research is needed to test the framework's robustness and portability.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors reported no potential conflict of interest.

Ethics Statement

All survey participants provided verbal informed consent before filling out anonymous questionnaires. No sensitive personal identification information was collected during data collection, and all original survey data were used only for academic statistical analysis to protect resident privacy, complying with international social science research ethical standards.

Author Contributions (CRediT)

Wenyu Yang: Conceptualisation, Methodology, Investigation, Writing – original draft. Yuxin Lu: Conceptualisation, Writing – review & editing, Supervision, Project administration. Kun Zhou: Data curation, Formal analysis, Validation. Haojie Yin: Investigation, Visualisation, Data curation. All

authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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Data Availability Statement

The survey data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author (luyx@yctu.edu.cn) upon reasonable request, subject to privacy protections for anonymous respondents.

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