



**AN INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT  
AND RESIDENTS' QUALITY OF LIFE IN TOURISM DESTINATIONS  
IN TRANSITION IN CHINA: A CASE STUDY OF YANGSHUO,  
GUANGXI PROVINCE**

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## Preface

The first time I went to Yangshuo was with my family back in 2007. The beautiful views, the Liu Sanjie music show, and extremely busy West Street all left a strong impression on me. I was delighted that I had the opportunity to return to this place and to get to know its people in more depth during my PhD study.

It is an absolutely different feeling to have a hands-on experience of something. When you read about the impacts of tourism on people's quality of life in a textbook or journal article, it's a more holistic view. But when you have actually been in the place and spoken to people, seen the smiles on their faces, heard their voices, shared their emotions and noticed the changes, it is very different. I realised, not simply understood, how tourism has changed people's lives, made them happy, or made them worried. Talking to the residents and getting to know each of them made them no longer a number in the statistical analysis - the quantity matters, and each individual also matters. One thing I am sure about is that without tourism, their lives would be very different.

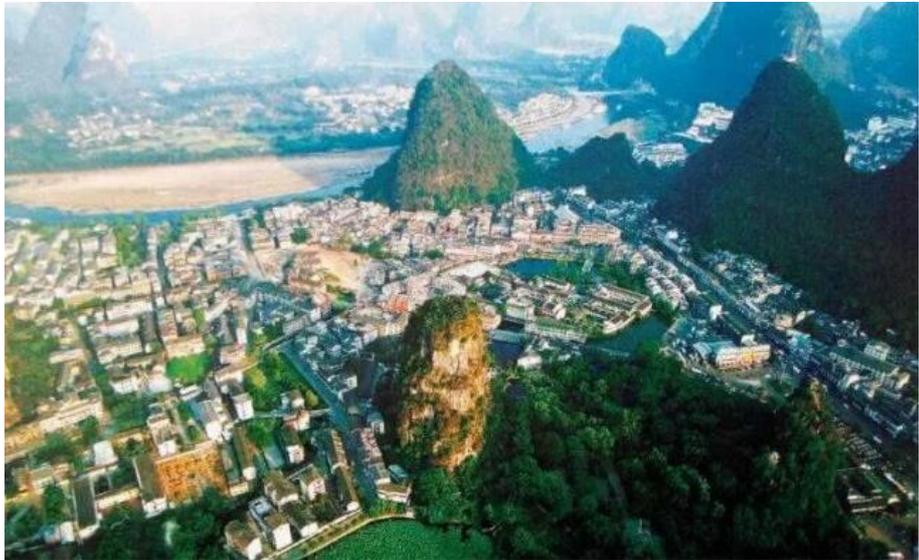
This study was conducted to determine residents' perceived quality of life; to understand their opinions, emotions and perceptions. Their answers to my questions and their statements contained their emotions, attitudes and perceptions. My interviews were undertaken in Mandarin, and many of my participants' powerful words lost their power or effect when I translated them into English, due to my translation skills which are not at a professional level. This is a big pity.

Another unfortunate aspect is that due to the length, the methodology and the focus of the thesis, I cannot share the whole stories of my participants. However, I hope the snapshots in this thesis can help you to imagine and feel the life of Yangshuo residents living between blue rivers and green lotus.

Li He, Melbourne, 27 July 2019



Yangshuo 1961 (Photographer unknown. Provided by Yangshuo Tourism Bureau)



Yangshuo 2005 (Photographer unknown. Provided by Yangshuo Tourism Bureau)



Yangshuo 2014 (Photo taken by Hongsheng Liao. Provided by Yangshuo Tourism Bureau)

## **Abstract**

Tourism, as an instrument to eliminate poverty in rural communities globally, has attracted great academic attention for over a decade. One of the key topics in tourism impact research is how tourism influences local residents' quality of life, which has been studied intensively using a quantitative approach. However, while correlations between tourism impacts and residents' quality of life were evidenced by numerous case studies, our understanding of what influences the links between the two remains limited. This gap restrains the effectiveness of using tourism to improve residents' quality of life in the process of developing the economy in the destination community. Additionally, as quality of life is a highly-contextualised concept, there is a call for more studies to be undertaken on tourism-related quality of life in different cultural contexts, including China.

To address the need to understand the factors 'bridging' tourism impacts and residents' quality of life, the presented study conducted a case study in the first tourism destination that was opened to international visitors in China, Yangshuo County, Guangxi Province. The study aimed to identify the important domains of quality of life among residents in Yangshuo and their perceived tourism impacts, explore the links between residents' quality of life and tourism development from different perspectives of various tourism stakeholders, and understand residents' expectation of improved quality of life and tourism development in the long term.

A qualitative case study methodology was applied. Over 45 residents, government representatives and tourism stakeholders were interviewed during June and July 2015. The key findings include the following:

1. Interviewed residents' perceived quality of life domains include family and family culture, material and environmental well-being, employment, income and living cost, community identity and social interaction, public service and safety, lifestyle and freedom and sense of security. Tourism was perceived to contribute to the enhancement of these residents' quality of life throughout the years, especially in the material and environmental well-being and employment

and income life domains. However, these residents perceived a reduced satisfaction degree towards environmental well-being and sense of security for future income due to the recent tourism development in Yangshuo.

2. The perceived economic, socio-cultural and environmental impacts of tourism in Yangshuo were similar to existing tourism impact case studies. More positive economic impacts were perceived while more negative environmental impacts were identified. There were diverse views in some impacts, influenced by personal level factors. However, different from what literature suggests, these residents were supportive of tourism development in Yangshuo regardless of their household dependence on the tourism industry, which might be explained by the theory of place attachment.
3. Triple “bridges” composed of Tian (Time), Di (Place), Ren (People) as well as opportunities affected by policy and other tourism stakeholders were identified as links between tourism and residents’ quality of life. The bridges illustrated how the timing of tourism development, the destination characteristics and people-people interactions determined how residents’ perceived tourism impacts on their quality of life. The declining residents’ quality of life was primarily associated with the decrease in opportunities, including their capability to access future income. Policy change was seen as the principal cause. However, from the government’s and other interviewed stakeholders’ perspectives, the re-structure of opportunities in Yangshuo was key to its sustainable tourism development and the realisation of residents’ expectations.

Based on these findings, a theoretical framework was developed to describe tourism impacts and perceived quality of life through bridges, opportunities and factors influencing opportunities. The implications of the findings and the conceptual framework to a broader community, the limitations of this study and future research recommendations are provided in this thesis.

## **Doctor of Philosophy Declaration**

“I, Li He, declare that the PhD thesis entitled *An Integrated Framework Of Tourism Development And Residents' Quality Of Life In Tourism Destinations In Transition In China: A Case Study Of Yangshuo, Guangxi Province* is no more than 100,000 words in length including quotes and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references and footnotes. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work”.

**Signature**

**Date**

## **Acknowledgements**

My PhD at Victoria University, Australia, has been a long journey of curious discovery, academic learning, professional growth and, especially, self-discovery and self-breakthrough. My study attempted to address an important research problem that matters to the broad communities. The completion of this thesis attempted to answer an important question that only matters to me — can I overcome my perfectionism and procrastination?

I am so glad that the answer to the latter question is “YES”. I would like to thank the many people responsible for where I am today.

First and foremost, I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to my principal supervisor, Professor Terry DeLacy, and my co-supervisor, Dr Min Jiang, for their constant guidance, encouragement, mentorship and support during this journey. I have experienced many challenges due to my own personality weaknesses or changes in my life. Without Terry and Min’s invaluable support and supervision, I would not have been able to overcome these difficulties and have the thesis submitted today. Additionally, they shared with me not only their knowledge in research but also wisdom in being a good and responsible person. Terry and Min helped me through the toughest times. They gave me the confidence to believe in myself. I cannot show enough gratitude to both of them.

I would like to acknowledge Victoria University for providing a fee waiver essential to pursue my PhD degree. I also would like to thank ORTQI (previously named Office for Postgraduate Research) for providing research training, support and various assistance. I would also like to thank my tourism colleagues at the university for their invaluable advice and help.

Yangshuo was the case study location for this thesis. Many people in Yangshuo supported and helped me with my data collection, especially all my participants, who gave me their time and generously shared their experiences and thoughts. I cannot list

their names for confidentiality reasons, but I would like to acknowledge their important contribution to my successful data collection.

Above all, and although I doubt if any of them, apart from my partner, will read my thesis, I would like to give special appreciation and thanks to my family as well as my friends back in China for their understanding, love and encouragement during this journey. I thank my father in particular as he helped me to contact the data collection location. My mother accompanied me while I was undertaking data collection in Yangshuo. I love them more than I love myself.

The very last sentence is for myself. Thank you for not giving up. Sometimes, it is not about how fast or early you get to a destination. It is about the fact that you get there.

‘Stay hungry. Stay foolish.’

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# **Chapter 1 Introduction**

This introduction chapter provides an explanation of the research background and support for the research question. The study objectives, research problem and questions, the scope of the study and key assumptions, and the research are defined. Further, the contributions of the study are discussed before the structure of the thesis is presented.

## **1.1 Background to the research**

This study is about tourism development and residents' quality of life in communities developed from a previously poor area to the currently popular tourism destinations in China. The study aimed to address the research problem of how tourism influences rural communities from the perspective of residents' quality of life and community development.

Quality of life (QOL) can be broadly understood as “an overall state of affairs in a particular society that people evaluate positively” (Spradley 1976, p. 100). It describes how people view or feel about their lives, often demonstrated by people's satisfaction with various life domains. Over the past few years, tourism-related QOL studies have gained a great amount of attention, as they provide a new version of residents' standpoint to evaluate tourism development, which “will deepen our understanding of both the long-term success and sustainability of tourist destinations” (Woo, Kim & Uysal 2015, p. 84).

Earlier researchers suggested that QOL can be measured at four levels: the individual level, the family level, the community level, and the societal level (Uysal et al. 2016). For each level of QOL, the concept can be conceptualised and measured using reflective or formative indicators (Sirgy 2001). Reflective indicators refer to “eccentric measures of the construct in the most proximate fashion; they reflect a view of the construct as being unidimensional” while formative indicators “represent the view that the construct is multidimensional, and that the best way to measure the construct is through some

composite of the dimensions that make them up” (Uysal et al. 2016, p. 245). The latter approach is more widely used in the QOL research field.

Under either way to conceptualise QOL, how it will be measured attract the most attention from scholars in this field. In brief, QOL can be measured using subjective or objective indicators (Costanza et al. 2007). Objective indicators often refer to quantifiable indicators, such as the UN’s Human Development Index at the society level and the illness status at the individual level. Objective indicators can be defined, gathered, measured without involving subjective evaluation of individuals. Therefore, it can provide a snapshot of some important aspects of QOL at different levels, especially at the higher levels, such as community and society levels (Noll 2004).

Subjective indicators on the other side are based on individuals’ perception, such as satisfaction and happiness and thus used more frequently to measure QOL at the individual level (Uysal et al. 2016). Subjective indicators claim that in the final instance, only individuals themselves can evaluate their own experiences and judge their own QOL. Such measurement also enables comparison across different QOL domains (Andrew & Withey 1976).

As mentioned earlier, QOL is more frequently understood as a formative concept; therefore, the dimensionality of QOL remains one of the debates in QOL research. There is little agreement regarding either the number or scope of these QOL dimensions. The number of QOL domains ranges from as few as four to as many as 173 (Abrams 1973, Cummins 1996). Most commonly used QOL domains include emotional well-being, health, intimacy, safety, community, material well-being, and productive activity (Uysal et al. 2016).

Since the 1990s, tourism, described as “the world’s largest voluntary transfer of resources from rich people to poor people” (Mitchell & Ashley 2010, p. 1), started to attract policymakers and scholars’ attention as a way to eliminate poverty in low-income developing countries. Much empirical evidence has supported the view that tourism can unquestionably play an important role in poverty reduction, especially in increasing local residents’ income and living standards (Mitchell & Ashley 2010).

However, many challenges remain. For example, in some places where tourism was adopted to alleviate poverty, the development of the community did not keep pace with rapid economic growth, resulting in social ills such as increased crime and drug abuse (He, Li & Ming 2007). Tourism sustainability, as one of the main foci of tourism development, was thus not effectively achieved (Mowforth & Munt 2008).

Sometimes, residents can even move away from their communities, which are not an uncommon phenomenon nowadays (Zhang 2012). As a result, the tourism policymakers in the government and community need to take residents' perspectives, perceptions and views into consideration when they plan and develop tourism related programmes in a tourism destination, and help residents realise their needs and achieve a higher level of quality of life.

Prior to this, the key issue is to understand how residents perceive their quality of life and the impacts of tourism on their quality of life domains. As introduced above, although numerous studies have been conducted to measure QOL using different scales, different communities view different domains more important than the others. This indicates the variety of QOL perceptions of different communities and cultures. QOL is highly contextualised and needs to be examined in the destination context.

## **1.2 Focus of the study**

### **1.2.1 Objectives**

This study aimed to explore how tourism has influenced destination communities in terms of residents' QOL in China, especially residents' perceived change in their QOL before and after tourism develops. More specifically, the following are the objectives of the study:

- ① To identify the important domains of QOL among residents of destination communities in China through the framework of QOL.
- ② To explore the relationships between residents' QOL and tourism development from different perspectives of various tourism stakeholders.

③ To understand residents' expectation of improved QOL and tourism development in the future/in the long term

④ To evaluate the feasibility of tourism development and policies in addressing residents' expectation and to propose practical suggestions on tourism policies and development strategies for the studied destinations.

### **1.2.2 Research problem**

Before measuring QOL of residents, it is important to explore how residents in a community perceive their quality of life, or “what is a good life”. This question is highly contextualised, but currently most QOL definitions have a western origin.

As a result, the research problem that this study has addressed is *how tourism has influenced residents' quality of life in a tourism destination in China where tourism has been developed for over decades.*

### **1.2.3 Research questions**

Based on the research problem and the research objectives, the research questions of this study are as follows:

① What are the important domains of QOL identified by the residents of the destination community in China?

② What are the positive and negative impacts of tourism perceived by residents in relation to their quality of life domains?

③ What are the links between tourism and residents' QOL?

④ What are the key challenges that prevent tourism development in enhancing residents' QOL in a sustainable way in the community?

### **1.2.4 Scope and key assumptions**

This study specifically looked at the relationships between tourism and residents' QOL in a China context. The focus was on perceptions of residents who live in a place where tourism has been developed for a long time and has had a significant impact on the local

community. In order to capture the unbiased perception of residents about their quality of life, a qualitative approach was adopted for the study.

Existing studies have investigated local residents' perceptions of the economic, socio-cultural and environmental impacts of tourism and their associated influence on residents' QOL. There were empirical studies evidencing that positive tourism impacts can enhance residents' QOL and their positive attitudes towards tourism development. This was the key assumption for the current study, namely that tourism development has the capacity to contribute to the enhancement of residents' QOL in a tourism destination. However, it is important to be aware that this assumption does not neglect the negative tourism impacts and other problems associated with tourism development in a community. Instead, it emphasises the need to pay attention to factors that have influenced the impact of tourism on local residents and understanding how residents define their own QOL.

### **1.3 Research design**

A case study qualitative approach was adopted by the current study to explore residents' QOL perceptions. A case study destination, Yangshuo, was chosen from the oldest tourism destinations in China where tourism has developed for over 30 years and greatly changed the local community, at least from an economic perspective. The reasons for choosing this destination were: Firstly, Yangshuo has a record of tourism development for over 40 years, with foreign visitors having played an extremely important role in its earlier development. The interaction between local residents and foreign visitors could lead to a big change in residents' QOL perceptions.

Secondly, after such a long period of tourism development, the average income of Yangshuo residents increased according to its yearbook records. However, in recent years, the development of both its tourism and the community has slowed down considerably. Yangshuo is one of the oldest tourism destinations in China, but the emergence of new tourism destinations in the country with similar tourism resources or attractions has led to a decline in Yangshuo's attractiveness and competitiveness in the China tourism market. Changes are needed and although tourism innovation is taking place, there are conflicts and tensions within the community. People will be more likely

to share their opinions in such circumstances.

Lastly, through her professional and social networks in Yangshuo, the researcher has managed to connect with different stakeholders and local residents. Primary data were collected via observation, survey, in-depth interviews and analysed with the assistance of NVivo.

## **1.4 Significance and anticipated outcomes of the study**

The potential contribution of this study can be viewed from both theoretical and practical perspectives.

### **1.4.1 Theoretical advancement in tourism study**

This study aimed to gain a better understanding of tourism development and its influence on residents' QOL in destinations in transition. It is hoped that the study can make a significant contribution to existing knowledge by establishing an integrated framework of residents' QOL perception with regard to tourism development in their communities. The communities this study focused on used to be classified as areas experiencing poverty before tourism was introduced as a strategy to eliminate poverty. Additional to economic benefits, residents expect better QOL through tourism nested in their communities. To have residents assess their own QOL in relation to tourism development, as well as to have other tourism stakeholders assess the feasibility of tourism in realising residents' expectation, the study examined the effectiveness of tourism in contributing to residents' QOL research from a holistic perspective.

More specifically, the study has assisted in identifying the key domains of QOL perceived by the Chinese community residing in the tourism destinations and in examining how different factors may induce differences between the QOL perceptions, such as the ethnic backgrounds. The study also explored the understanding and attitudes of tourism stakeholders in terms of how tourism can contribute to realising the expectation of residents in enhancing their QOL. Based on this, the study was able to develop an evaluation framework that could be used for the local community to evaluate the feasibility of residents' perceptions. This is important because it could lead

to more educated or informed residents contributing more to the green industry concept.

Furthermore, this study has added to the discussion of tourism-related QOL in the less developed community settings, in this case, the tourism destinations in transition in China, which brings a new context to the field. This is an important context as: firstly, given that tourism has frequently been adopted as a strategy to eliminate poverty in many developing countries and regions, the understanding of how local residents' QOL is influenced by tourism can facilitate policymakers to evaluate this strategy and take into consideration the residents' perspectives.

Secondly, due to language and accessibility difficulties, the literature on tourism impacts in China and written in Chinese has not been acknowledged internationally, while English research journals comprise limited articles reporting tourism and residents' QOL studies in China. The complexity and variety of the Chinese contexts have not made many contributions to the knowledge of tourism and QOL literature. By locating the research in China, this study brings the complexity of Chinese contexts into global conversations about tourism and QOL.

#### **1.4.2 Practical contribution to tourism development in the study destination**

The knowledge produced about residents' QOL can guide successful planning policies in tourism development. With the understanding of the relationships between tourism and residents' QOL and what residents' expectations are, important issues for a sustainable approach to the development and management of destinations can be identified. Consequently, tourism policies and programmes can be formulated to enhance residents' QOL.

Additionally, this study contributes as it employed in-depth interviews with participants. This process can help the residents to understand their own concerns of life and the importance of sustainability. This is an important contribution to the case study community, Yangshuo, where the tension exists between residents and tourism development projects that are commencing.

## **1.5 Structure of the thesis**

The thesis contains eight chapters. The next chapter, Chapter 2, provides a detailed literature review on tourism and quality of life to set up links between existing studies and the current research topic. At the end of Chapter 2, the knowledge gap which this research has addressed and the conceptual framework that guided the research design are presented.

Chapters 3 and 4 then introduce the research design of the current study and the case study location in China. A qualitative research approach was adopted for the study and the data collection was conducted in Yangshuo County, Guilin City in China.

The next three chapters (i.e. 5, 6 and 7) provide results, discussion and findings integrated as three key themes, namely residents' perceived QOL, residents' perceptions of tourism impacts and bridges and opportunity linking tourism and residents' QOL.

The thesis concludes with Chapter 8, which links the research findings with each of the research questions, and provides a detailed discussion of the research framework of this study and its implications. Limitations of the study and recommendations for future research are provided at the end of the chapter.

## **Chapter 2 Literature Review**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents a review of the literature that is relevant to the research problem of the study. The chapter has three aims. Firstly, it provides an introduction of key discussions on QOL to delineate my understanding of the concept. Secondly, it offers an in-depth review of studies on tourism and QOL that took a perspective of community residents to set up the knowledge base for this study. Thirdly, it presents the conceptual framework of this study.

QOL research is an important field of study in the social, behavioural, environmental, and policy sciences. The last few decades have witnessed a plethora of QOL studies and the evolution of the concept in different disciplines (Land, Sirgy & Michalos 2012). The introduction of QOL research in Section 2.2 is by no means exhaustive in its coverage; it focuses mainly on the definition of QOL and arguments that informed this study. What was particularly drawn from the literature included: (i) how to define QOL; (ii) what to consider when studying QOL; and (iii) examples of QOL models.

The link between tourism, its consequences and QOL of its stakeholders is an emerging study area gaining momentum in tourism research. Most research in this study area has been on the impact of tourism on QOL of tourists or residents (Guo et al. 2007a; Guo et al. 2007b; Moscardo 2009). My review in Section 2.3 focuses mainly on the relationship between tourism and residents' QOL. Specifically, the section summarises the general findings and measurements of residents' QOL in relation to tourism.

Given that this study explored tourism-related QOL in the Chinese context and QOL itself is highly contextualised, a more comprehensive review of studies on tourism and QOL in China is presented in Section 2.3.4. I performed a systematic literature review to integrate findings from studies published in the Chinese language to answer the question: what do we already know about tourism's impacts on residents' QOL in destinations in China? This integral review enabled me to identify unique

characteristics of the Chinese context and to incorporate such uniqueness into the conceptual framework of the thesis.

It is perhaps useful to point out that it is a commonly accepted assumption in tourism research, either explicit or implicit, that tourism can bring significant benefits to its various stakeholders (Uysal et al. 2016). This assumption is not to neglect the costs of tourism development, such as its environmental influences that are often reported as negative impacts. Instead, it stresses the importance of paying attention to the costs and the long-term goal of the tourism industry – to improve sustainability and development and to enhance the quality of life of tourism stakeholders.

My interpretation of research material included in this chapter and collected data in the later chapters was based on this assumption: tourism has the capability to enhance residents' QOL. It means that I looked for explanations or influential factors when results of empirical studies showed no relationship between tourism and residents' QOL, or when residents reported negative tourism impacts on their QOL. In other words, I took the position suggested by Uysal et al. (2016): “as researchers, we are in a position to test and empirically demonstrate that tourism can indeed improve QOL of tourism participants and non-tourism alike.”

Lastly, a conceptual framework built on Costanza et al.'s model of QOL (Costanza et al. 2007) is delineated in Section 2.4. The conceptual framework locates QOL in a system in which opportunities, social norms, and policies are considered. It is expected to offer a systematic way to examine the impacts of tourism, directly or indirectly, explicit or implicit, on residents' QOL. This conceptual framework reflects my understanding of QOL and the tourism system, demonstrates my viewpoint of the potential role of tourism in community development, and it finally, it guided the research design and the data analysis of this study.

## 2.2 Quality of life (QOL) and its theories

### 2.2.1 A brief history of QOL

The major goal of societal development is to improve the human experience of the present generation as well as future generations. “Quality of life” is a term used in both theory and practice to capture such human experience (Costanza et al. 2007). Another term used interchangeably with QOL is well-being. A search of the EBSCO online research database from January 1980 to July 2016 reveals over 46,000 results in journal articles using the term “quality of life” or “QOL” and over 33,663 results with the term “well-being” or “well being” or “wellbeing”. In this thesis, I have used the term “quality of life”, as it is used more frequently in the tourism-related QOL study field (Moscardo 2009; Ridderstaat, Croes & Nijkamp 2014; Uysal, Perdue & Sirgy 2012a; Uysal et al. 2016). Additionally, in comparison with “well-being”, the translation of QOL in the Chinese language is clearer. Its translated term, “*Sheng huo zhi liang*”, has been used by Chinese scholars since 1980.

QOL can be considered as an “offshoot of the social indicators movement” starting from the mid-1960s in the United States (Uysal et al. 2016). The movement then spread to European and other countries afterwards, driven by the political climate of the late 1960s and early 1970s. During that period of time, debates such as whether “more” continued to equal “better” received great public attention, which presented the public doubts on using economic indicators to represent social progress (Noll 2004). “Quality of life” was thus born as an alternative to the traditional economic measures, such as gross national product (GNP), to reflect societal development and changes. QOL was considered “the new, multidimensional and much more complex goal of societal development” (Noll 2004).

Till now, QOL has been widely studied across multiple disciplines, including psychology, health and medicine, food science and nutrition, economics, environmental science, sociology, political science, planning, business and management, education and other social sciences (Land et al. 2012). This research field has seen a tremendous number of book publications (e.g., the book series of QOL research published by Springer Publishers), specialised journals and newsletters (e.g., Applied Research in

Quality of Life), conferences and congresses, and many national and international professional organisations (e.g., International Society for Quality-of-Life Studies) (Uysal et al. 2016). The understanding, measurement and improvement of QOL are the core objectives of this study field.

## **2.2.2 The concept of QOL and its measurement**

With input from different disciplines and social contexts, there are extensive debates surrounding the definition of QOL and its measurements. I did not intend to unfold the extensive discussion of the concept but aimed to present some key topics and important viewpoints derived from the QOL literature. They have informed my definition of QOL.

### ***2.2.2.1 The meaning of QOL – what is QOL?***

Research into the conceptual definition of QOL explicitly or implicitly seeks answers to the question of what does a good life mean? As mentioned in the preceding section, the concept of QOL was at first an offshoot of the social indicators movement and was raised as an alternative indicator of societal development. Definitions proposed by international organisations often stressed such characteristics of the concept. For example, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development defined QOL as “the notion of human welfare (well-being) measured by social indicators rather than by ‘quantitative’ measures of income and production” (OECD 2005, p. 1). This type of definition favours statistic measurements of social indicators on living conditions and is used most frequently at the district or national levels. Examples of such social indicators include unemployment rates, crime rates, estimates of life expectancy, health status indices, school enrolment rates, to name a few (Land et al. 2012).

In some other definitions, QOL is seen as equivalent or closely related to psychological constructs, such as subjective well-being, happiness, life satisfaction, hedonic well-being, positive and negative affect and so on (Shackman et al. 2005; Uysal et al. 2016). In this vein, QOL often refers to the degree to which individuals, groups or communities perceive satisfaction or dissatisfaction towards various life domains or with life as a whole. For example, Kartakoullis et al. (2013) described QOL as individuals’ assessment of their lives, including life satisfaction (cognitive), the existence of positive affect (emotional), and the lack of negative affect (emotional). Similarly, Kim, Uysal and Sirgy (2013) illustrated QOL as a combination of sense of material well-being,

sense of community well-being, sense of emotional well-being, sense of health and safety, and life satisfaction, highlighting the importance of subjective well-being in QOL. Such understanding gave rise to the popularity of subjective measurements of QOL (the subjective measurement of QOL is detailed in the next section).

Although both of the above QOL definitions have many advocates, there is considerable agreement on the statement that QOL, as a complex concept, should include both objective and subjective dimensions (Chen 1999). For example, Lane (1996) described QOL as a state and a process. He emphasised the active role of personal experience and the capacity of individuals as a constitutive element of the process: “Quality of life is properly defined by the relation between two subjective or person-based elements and a set of objective circumstances. The subjective elements of high quality of life comprise: (1) a sense of well-being and (2) personal development, learning growth. ... The objective element is conceived as quality of conditions representing opportunities for exploitation by the person living a life” (Lane 1996, p259).

More recently, Costanza et al. (2007) argued that overall QOL is determined by not only the level of human needs met but also the degree to which individuals or groups are satisfied with that particular level, with reference to opportunities to fulfil the needs. This definition implies that QOL is determined by the societal “supply” of living conditions and personal “demand” of various needs. In short, good quality of life depends on the capability of society to offer what is needed for good living conditions. It also covers individuals’ “personal judgement” on how their life quality is satisfied according to their criteria. This understanding of QOL was adopted for this study.

#### ***2.2.2.2 The components of QOL – what are the domains of QOL?***

The domains of QOL are aspects of life experience that are relevant for welfare considerations or contribute to the happiness of an individual or a group. Research of this topic explores the question of what the final value is for individuals. The premise of addressing this question with life domains is that QOL is a multifaceted construct. Various studies in different disciplines have identified numerous domains and ways to classify them – some may be referred to in this thesis, but it is impossible to list all.

For example, Schalock (1996 pp. 126-127) summarised eight important dimensions of QOL: (1) emotional and psychological well-being (e.g. safety, happiness, freedom from stress); (2) interpersonal and social relationships (e.g. family, interactions, supports); (3) material well-being (e.g. financial, food, employment, shelter, social economic status); (4) personal development, competence and goals (e.g. education, skills, fulfilment, personal competence); (5) physical well-being (e.g. health, nutrition, leisure, health care, mobility); (6) self-determination, individual control and decisions (e.g. autonomy, choices, decisions, personal control, personal goals); (7) social inclusion, dignity and worth (e.g. acceptance, status, supports, roles, work environment, residential environment); and (8) rights (e.g. privacy, voting, access, ownership, civic responsibilities).

Cummins (1996) reviewed some empirical studies and suggested seven QOL domains which were well supported by empirical evidence: material well-being, emotional well-being, health, productivity and friendship, safety and community. Sirgy (2002), furthermore, conducted a review on 13 models and identified between five to 16 QOL domains from a marketing perspective. In the same year, Alkire (2002) undertook another review of different approaches and identified five to 11 QOL domains.

Some scholars relate QOL domains with “human needs”. Research into basic human needs was often referred to by these scholars, such as Maslow's (1954) “Hierarchy of Needs,” Max-Neef's (1992) “Matrix of Human Needs”, Cummins' (1993) “The ComQuality of life-A5”, Frisch's (1998) “Quality of Life Inventory,” Sirgy et al.'s (1995) “Need Hierarchy Measure of Life Satisfaction”, to name a few. Costanza et al. (2007) provided a list of basic human needs derived from Max-Neef's (1992) “Matrix of Human Needs” and Nussbaum and Glover's (1995) “Basic Human Functional Capabilities”, which included subsistence, reproduction, security, affection, understanding, participation, leisure, spirituality, creativity, identity and freedom. Moscardo (2009) summarised some of the main components of QOL as being basic physiological needs, security, belongingness, and self-esteem. However, it is important to realise that some of the needs proposed in different studies overlap and some are conflicting (Costanza et al., 2007). Some needs can be objectively assessed while other needs are subjectively determined by individuals (Bubolz et al. 1980).

In summary, it is hasty to claim that one list of domains can suit all studies. Various disciplines also demonstrate distinctive preferences in QOL domains. For example, in medicine and health science, one of the most important domains of QOL is related to “self function”, as the groups being studied are often people suffering from certain diseases (Noll 2004). In management, Sirgy (2006) has argued the importance of goal-related attainment in employee well-being (Sirgy 2006). Obviously, the process of identifying QOL domains should always consider the purpose of the study – the aim is not necessarily to be exhaustive, as long as the identified domains yield enough information regarding the problem of the research.

### ***2.2.2.3 The measurements of QOL – what are the indicators of QOL domains?***

It is not surprising that there are extensive debates on how to measure QOL, mirroring the discussion on QOL conceptual definitions. Scholars either use quantitative social or economic indicators to present the living conditions and the degree to which human needs are met, or look at self-reported levels of happiness, fulfilment and satisfaction towards different life aspects (Costanza et al. 2007). A simple but useful way to classify QOL measurements is the subjective approach versus the objective approach.

The objective approach uses objective social, economic and health indicators (Cummins et al. 2003). Examples include: indices of economic production, literacy rates, life expectancy, to name a few. Data collection in relation to these objective indicators does not require participants or the assessed groups to provide a subjective evaluation of the indicators. Researchers in this vein employ tools such as the UN's Human Development Index (HDI) and gross domestic product (GDP) per capita to measure QOL at the community levels (Costanza et al. 2007). Numerous tools to measure QOL at the individual levels are also developed, especially in the research field of medicine. For example, health-related QOL can be measured for specific subgroups of populations based on demographic variables and health conditions (Costanza et al. 2007).

Although the objective measurements using quantitative indicators can present a snapshot of QOL at the community or individual level of how well certain quantifiable needs are met, they were criticised by Costanza et al. (2007) as “narrow, opportunity-biased, and cannot incorporate many issues that contribute to QOL such as identity and

psychological security” (p.5). The same authors also pointed out that the process of selecting and collecting “objective” measurement indicators often relies on subjective judgments of the researchers, which also makes the objective measurement somewhat “subjective”.

However, admitting the limitations of the objective approach, these relatively objective measures have the potential to enable us to collect standardised data that has higher resilience to factors that may influence people’s perceptions. For example, Aaronson et al. conducted an International Quality of Life Assessment (IQOLA) Project in up to 15 countries to validate an objective index incorporating many scales for use in cost-utility studies. Their result was widely cited (Aaronson et al. 1992).

In contrast to that, subjective measurements of QOL typically use survey or interview tools to collect data from individual participants. The subjective approach is based on the ground that at the end, it is each individual who will perceive and evaluate their own QOL. This position was criticised by Erikson (1993) by indicating that “with an approach based on people’s own assessment of their degree of satisfaction is that it is partly determined by their level of aspiration”. He also argued that measuring satisfaction is “measuring how well they are adapted to their present conditions” (Erikson 1993, p. 77). Concerns have also existed regarding the fact that social comparison influences people’s judgement of their QOL, as people will compare themselves with others instead of (Schwarz & Strack 1999).

Today, more academics in the QOL areas believed that QOL should be measured by both objective and subjective indicators, guided by QOL definitions that have combined objective and subjective elements - “good living conditions” and “positive subjective well-being” (Zapf 1984). This approach provides a holistic picture of people’s QOL. However, there can be time and cost constraints which make this approach challenging for researchers to employ in their research.

### **2.2.3 Research considerations of QOL**

This section deals with a number of important considerations in relation to QOL that were derived from the literature.

### ***2.2.3.1 Environment and opportunity***

Bubolz et al. (1980), taking a human ecological approach, argued that perceived QOL is influenced by the human environment in terms of environmental resources and individuals' interaction with the environment to meet the needs. According to his interpretation, QOL comprises fulfilment level for a set of human needs. Humans relied on a specific environment to meet these needs through people's interaction with the environment.

In the same vein, Costanza et al. (2007) used the term "opportunities" to capture individual ability to meet their needs using the available resources of the environment (Costanza et al. 2007). I find this term suitable to describe the link between QOL levels and available resources, as it highlights the importance of both supply and demand sides – the ability of the environment to satisfy individual needs and the ability of individuals to access and interact with relevant resources to meet their needs.

It is important to mention that the factor of opportunity described in here can be considered as an influential factor of QOL or as one domain of QOL. For this study, I adopted the former line of understanding.

### ***2.2.3.2 Cultural influence***

QOL is culturally dependent. Hofstede was one of the earliest researchers who discussed the cultural relativity of the QOL concept (Hofstede 1984). He argued that people have their own judgement about what considers a good QOL and their cultural environment plays a key role in determining this judgement. He identified four value dimensions that could be used to distinguish cultures from each other: power distance, individualism, masculinity, and uncertainty avoidance.

According to Hofstede (1984), the first dimension, power distance, represents the extent to which the person with less power tolerates such power inequality. The second dimension, individualism, represents the extent to which individuals are prioritising the interest of themselves and their families, as opposed to collectivism in which individuals feel attached and loyal to the collective. Masculinity, as the third dimension, represents the extent to which a culture uses sexes to shape distinguishing social roles for male and females. The last dimension, uncertainty avoidance represents the extent

to which people within a culture are made nervous by uncertain situations and the extent to which they will try to avoid such situations. Hofstede (1984) suggested that the divergence between cultures in these four value dimensions led to different standards of a high-quality life. With the observed increase in the divergence between countries, one culture's standards for the QOL were unlikely to prevail (Hofstede 1984).

Given that the focus of this research is QOL of residents in tourism destinations in China, accepting QOL as being cultural dependent highlighted the importance of understanding the definition of this concept in the Chinese context, particularly concerning QOL domains.

### ***2.2.3.3 Weights of life domains***

When QOL is understood as a multi-dimensional concept, the interrelationship between life domains is a complex matter of research. A simplified but feasible and widely applied solution is to assume that each domain of QOL contributes in varying degrees to overall QOL. These varying degrees of contribution can be defined as “weight” or “importance” (Costanza et al. 2007). Namely, the degree of a particular life domain’s contribution to the overall QOL indicates the weight of this QOL domain.

The literature review suggested that a domain will have greater weight or importance when it is: (i) associated with more recent experience; (ii) conceptualised as a part of a current phase of one's life; (iii) not categorised as an extreme example of one's experience; (iv) judged in the presence of others with exemplary characteristics in that domain (this is related to the social comparison which is detailed in the next subsection); (v) valued by others whom the individual respects; (vi) regards as losses over gains (Costanza et al. 2007; Schwarz & Strack 1999).

It is important to point out that the introduction of the weighting method here shows an intention to claim that the overall QOL and various life domains can be represented by a non-linear function, although many researchers used such function to integrate domain scores to represent overall QOL level quantitatively. Costanza et al. (2007) described weighting of QOL as “fluid and dynamic across time and context” (p. 272). Efforts in weighting life domains contribute to an understanding of what domains are important (either judged subjectively by individuals or relatively objectively by experts)

and should be paid more policy attention. Moreover, by tracking both the satisfaction and weighting scores of life domains, researchers can analyse and determine if the change in overall QOL is caused by a change in how well needs are being met or changes in how each need is weighted.

#### ***2.2.3.4 Social comparison***

Can we claim that one's QOL is high by comparing it with another individual's miserable circumstance? This is one of the questions calling for consideration of how social comparison influences QOL perceptions when evaluating QOL levels. Objective measurements are favoured partially because this approach can minimise the degree to which QOL is dependent on comparing one person's life to others' around them.

In Shin and Johnson's (1978) "theory of happiness", happiness as an overall assessment of QOL in his opinion is primarily a product of the positive assessments of life domains and favourable comparisons of these domains with those in the past or those of other people. In other words, QOL is affected by individuals' past experience and social comparisons with others. This echoed Michalos' (2003) "Multiple Discrepancies Theory" of satisfaction, in which individuals are said to use the results out of their comparison to multiple standards to decide their satisfaction levels. Examples of standards are past conditions, others, or aspirations (Michalos 2003).

Social comparison is a rather complex process. Social comparison theory can partially explain the scenarios of Fool's Hell and Fool's Paradise described in the following subsection (Sirgy et al., 2006).

#### ***2.2.3.5 Real Paradise, Fool's Paradise, Fool's Hell and Real Hell***

Sirgy et al. (2006) initiated the above phrases to describe four extreme circumstances with reference to the outcomes of objective and subjective measurements of one's QOL. Real Paradise represents good outcomes of both objective and subjective measurements of QOL, meaning that individuals' lives are good and they also feel satisfied with their lives.

Another circumstance is that the objective measurement outcomes are bad, but the subjective measures are good; namely, people's lives are assessed as bad, but they still feel good about their lives. This circumstance is called Fool's Paradise.

On the contrary, if objective measures are good and subjective measures are bad, reporting people's lives as good but their level of satisfaction with their lives is bad, it is a classic case of Fool's Hell.

Lastly, both objective and subjective measures are bad. People's lives are bad, and they feel bad about their lives. This circumstance is named as Real Hell (Sirgy et al. 2006).

The Fool's Paradise and the Fool's Hell, although with exaggeration, have mirrored the potential conflicts between objective and subjective measurements of QOL, and questioned the expression of "good QOL" – what exactly does this mean? This argument deserves extensive discussion on the philosophical level. Sirgy et al. (2006) offered a good explanation of their understanding of the philosophical foundations of the QOL research field.

#### **2.2.4 QOL frameworks**

A good QOL framework can help with a clear, constructive understanding of QOL and the development of plans for QOL improvement. I propose to classify existing QOL models into two types: model of QOL domains and framework of QOL in a broader system.

The former type of QOL framework focuses on the construction of one's QOL. It illustrates how QOL domains or dimensions are interrelated and contribute to QOL. For example, in the model of "Quality of Life hierarchy" based on the theory of social production functions (Ormel et al. 1999) (See Figure 2.1), the relationship between life domains was described as different levels of goals. With reference to Figure 2.1, from bottom to top, each level is important to the level above in the hierarchy. For example, physical and mental activities producing arousal support the stimulation or activation and the reach of an optimal level of arousal. This domain in turn supports the satisfaction towards the physical wellbeing as one of the universal goals.

Top level	Subjective Wellbeing				
Universal goals	Physical Wellbeing		Social Wellbeing		
First-order instrumental goals	Stimulation/ Activation (optimal level of arousal)	Comfort (absence of physiological needs; pleasant and safe environment)	Status (control over scarce resources)	Behavioral Confirmation (approval for 'doing the right things')	Affection (positive inputs from caring others)
Activities and endowments (means of production for instrumental goals) (examples)	Physical and mental activities producing arousal	Absence of pain, fatigue, thirst, hunger; vitality; good housing, appliances, social welfare, security	Occupation, life style, excellence in sports or work	Compliance with external and internal norms	Intimate ties, offering emotional support
Resources (examples)	physical & mental effort	food, money, health care	education, social class, unique skills	social skills, competence	spouse, empathy, attractiveness

Figure 2.1: “Quality of life hierarchy”  
Ormel et al. 1999.

The latter type of QOL framework locates QOL in a dynamic system, in which certain factors that may influence QOL are proposed. For example, Hughes (1990) developed an interacting network of factors that together define one’s QOL (Figure 2.2). In this framework, personal autonomy, expressed satisfaction, physical and mental well-being, social-economic status, quality of the environment, purposeful activity, social integration and cultural factors were identified as influential factors in terms of “sub-systems” (Hughes 1990). These relationships between the factors were also demonstrated.

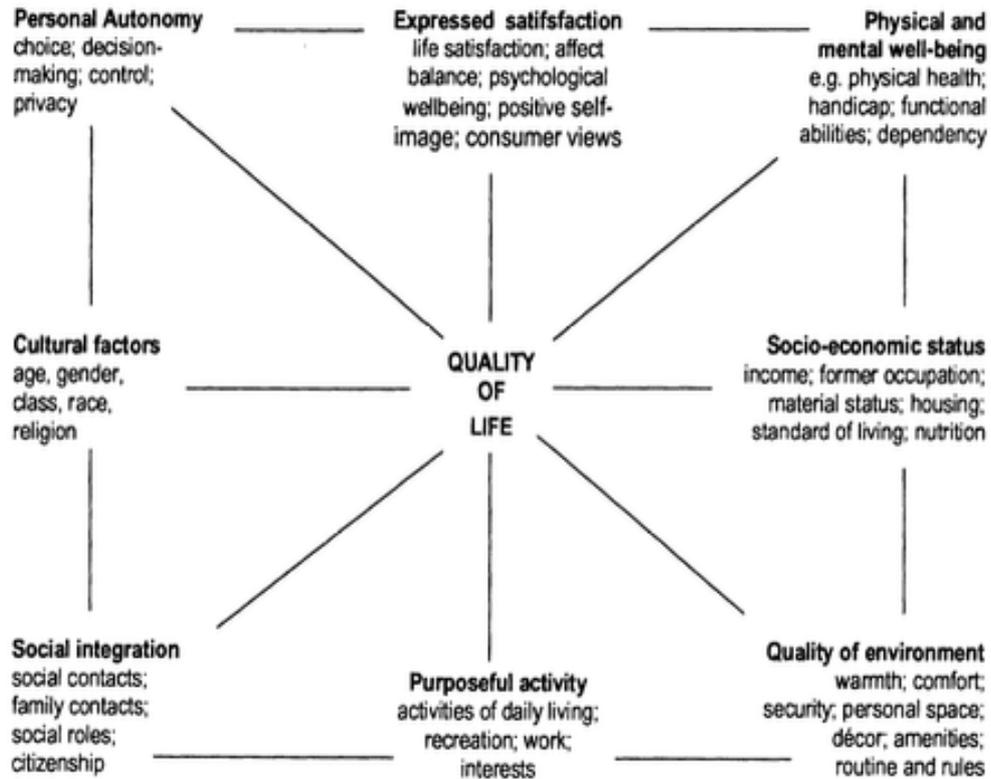


Figure 2.2: Quality of life network

Hughes 1990.

In another example, Costanza et al. (2007), mentioned a few times in the preceding sections, related QOL to the opportunities offered to individuals to meet their needs (Figure 2.3).

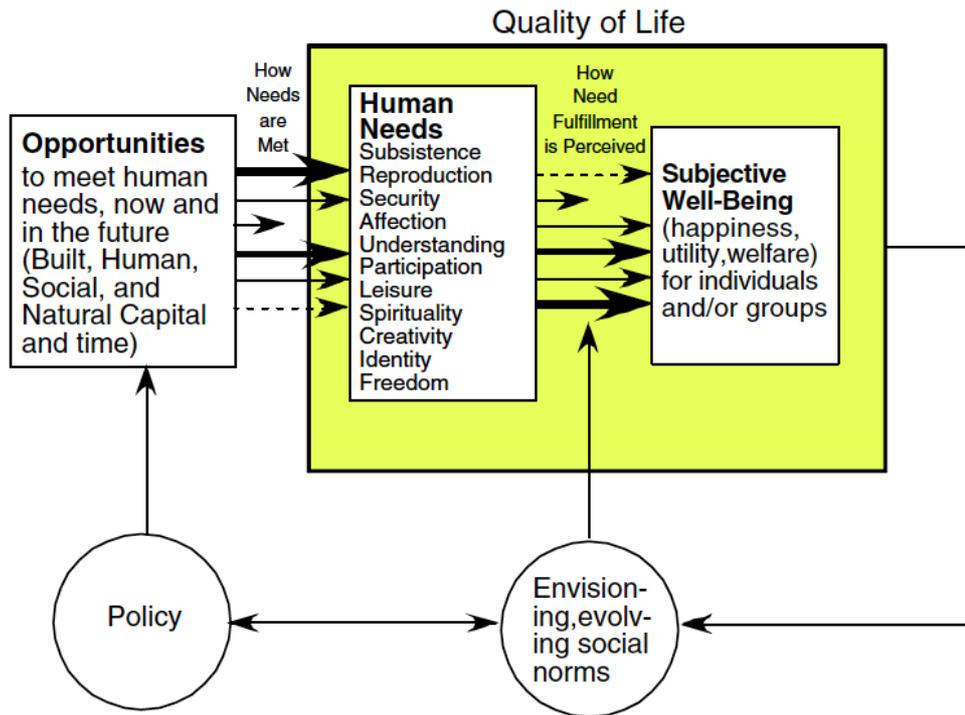


Figure 2.3: Quality of life (QOL) as the interaction of human needs and the subjective perception of their fulfilment

Costanza et al. 2007.

The latter type of broader QOL framework that links QOL to other factors can be used or adapted to understand what impacts QOL. For instance, Moscardo (2009) combined Costanza et al.'s (2007) idea of opportunity in relation to QOL and Hall's (2005) system models of tourism to put forward a holistic framework for exploring relationships between QOL and tourism impacts (Figure 2.4). She argued that this framework is better for critically analysing tourism impacts (Moscardo 2009).

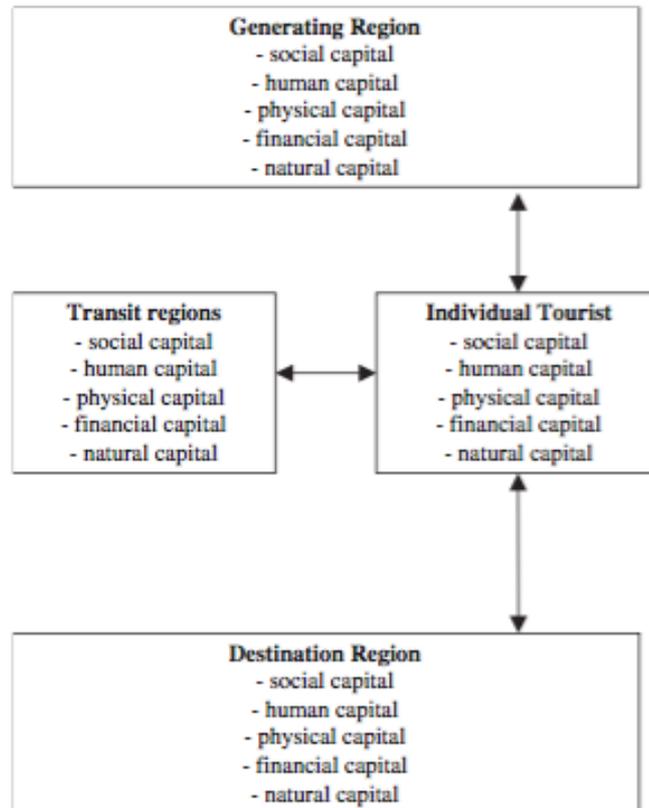


Figure 2.4: The framework of tourism impacts on QOL  
Moscardo 2009.

In summary, as stated at the beginning of the chapter, QOL research is an important field of study and has received great attention in various disciplinary fields for decades. The academic discussion in this area is numerous and extensive. The introduction of QOL research in this section is intended to be illustrative rather than exhaustive, to demonstrate what I learnt from the literature about QOL and QOL research in general and my position in relation to key debates over the concept.

The next section showcases research on the impacts of tourism on QOL in the tourism context. The gap in knowledge is identified in this section. A few review articles and handbooks of QOL in tourism serve as the main sources for references included.

## 2.3 Tourism impacts and QOL

### 2.3.1 Tourism impacts vs. tourism-related QOL

QOL was firstly introduced into tourism by researchers looking at tourism impacts. As the most heavily researched tourism topic, a plethora of studies have documented a variety of positive and negative impacts of tourism on tourism communities and residents. Table 2.1 below contains a list of a few reviewed articles to present the most widely reported tourism effects in the recent tourism journal articles (e.g. Ap & Crompton 1998; Guo et al. 2014; Wall & Mathieson 2006).

**Table 2.1: Common tourism impacts**

Aspects	Positive	Negative
Economic	Improved living standard Increased investment and business activity Employment opportunities Increased income for residents Tax revenues Improved public infrastructure	Increased living costs (such as land, food, goods and services) Increased speculation Increased tax burdens The leakage of revenues
Socio-cultural	Enhancement of local identity and pride Increased interests of residents in the international world Social exchange with visitors Opportunities to upgrade local recreation facilities Enhanced community spirit Revitalising traditional culture Cultural preservation Cultural pride Cultural exchange Enhancement of educational environment	Traffic congestion Overcrowding in public areas Increased divorce rates Increased social problems such as gambling, drug use and crime Political corruption Bankruptcy Uprooting traditional society Materialistic orientation Children's decreased motivation to study Tension between residents and tourists Culture exploiter Disruption of traditional cultural structures and behavioural patterns
Environmental	Greater awareness of the need to preserve the environment Local beautification (such as the cleanliness of the town) Less pollution problems compared to other types of industries such as manufacturing	Environmental pollution Destruction of natural resources Degradation of vegetation Depletion of wildlife Increased noise level Increased littering

Since introduced into tourism in 1999, QOL has been gaining momentum in tourism research. Relationships between tourism, tourism consequences and stakeholders' QOL have drawn great research attention. The difference between tourism impact studies and QOL studies can be captured by the distinction between their research focus: "...impacts studies largely focus on the way people perceive tourism influences communities and the environment, whereas QOL studies are typically concerned with the way these impacts affect individual or family life satisfaction, including satisfaction with community, neighborhood, and personal circumstances..." (Andereck & Nyaupane 2011, p. 249).

Both research fields provide an individual standpoint to understand tourism development for long-term success and the sustainability of the destination. However, the former study field focuses more on eliminating the negative impacts and enhancing the positive impacts, while the latter one focuses on understanding QOL of different tourism stakeholders in relation to tourism development.

So far, tourists and residents of tourism destinations are the major subjects in tourism-related QOL study areas. As I mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, my focus during this study was on tourism's impacts on QOL from a residents' perspective. It is not surprising that most items in Table 2.1 above directly or indirectly affect destination residents' QOL. For instance, tourism may lead to an improvement in public infrastructure or provide more leisure options for both visitors and locals, which can increase the community environment and leisure domains of residents' QOL. In contrast, perceived negative impacts including traffic congestion, increased crime, increased cost of living and tension between residents and tourists may reduce residents' satisfaction with their everyday life (Andereck et al. 2007).

The links between impacts of tourism development, residents' perceived QOL, and residents' attitudes towards tourism development were mostly researched in this study area (Andereck & Nyaupane 2011; Andereck et al. 2007; Ridderstaat et al. 2014; Woo et al. 2015; Yu, Cole & Chancellor 2014; Liburd, Benckendorff & Carlsen 2012; Uysal et al. 2012a, Uysal, Perdue & Sirgy 2012b, Uysal, Woo & Singal 2012c). Figure 2.5 depicts the relationships among these constructs. Generally, evidence has shown that

relationships exist between residents' perceived tourism impacts and perceived QOL; residents' perceived QOL predicts their attitudes towards tourism development.

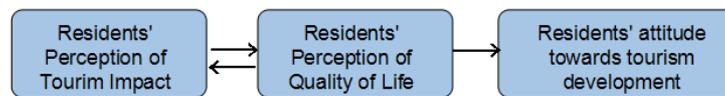


Figure 2.5: Main focus of QOL research in tourism

In this vein, topics of studies are often classified into three themes: (i) exploring the links between tourism impacts and QOL; (ii) comparing different groups of community residents; and (iii) examining residents' QOL in relation to tourism development stages (Uysal et al. 2016). Some general findings of these topics are presented in the next section.

### 2.3.2 General findings of tourism impacts on residents' QOL

#### 2.3.2.1 *The relationship between tourism impact and QOL*

Many studies provided evidence to support the existence of relationships between tourism impact and residents' QOL (e.g., Andereck & Nyaupane 2011; Stokowsky & Park 2012; Woo et al. 2015).

For example, Kim et al. (2013) proposed a theoretical framework linking community residents' perceptions of tourism impacts with residents' QOL in terms of different life domains and overall life satisfaction. Their model reflects three propositions: (1) residents' perception of tourism impact affects their sense of well-being in various life domains; (2) residents' sense of well-being in those life domains affects their overall life satisfaction; and (3) the relationship between residents' perception of tourism impact and their sense of well-being is moderated by tourism development stages. They tested the model by means of a survey in four communities in Virginia varying in levels of tourism development. Results fully supported that residents' perception of tourism impact (economic, social, cultural and environmental) affects their sense of well-being in corresponding life domains (material well-being, community well-being, emotional well-being and sense of health and safety) (Kim et al. 2013). These findings suggest that when residents perceive the positive economic, social, and cultural impact of

tourism, their satisfaction with corresponding life domains such as material well-being, community well-being and emotional well-being increases. On the other hand, when residents perceive a negative tourism impact, their corresponding life domain such as sense of health and safety will decrease.

Still in the context of the United States, Woo et al. (2015) extended the study locations from one single state to five sites in different states and introduced the concept of the perceived value of tourism development in their study measuring residents' QOL and their support for future development. They found that residents' perceived value of tourism development positively affects their QOL in terms of the non-material and material life domain satisfaction.

There is one study in English, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, which explored how QOL influences tourism development (Ridderstaat, 2016). This study assessed the linkages between QOL, tourism development and economic growth in Aruba. QOL was measured using objective indicators from the Human Development Index. The results confirmed a two-way direct relationship between tourism development and QOL. While tourism development and economic growth contributed to QOL domains, QOL played an important role in determining tourism development too (Ridderstaat, 2016).

### ***2.3.2.2 Comparison between types of residents***

Literature showed mixed results in terms of how residents' characteristics may influence their perceptions of tourism impacts and QOL (Andereck et al., 2007). Frequently mentioned influential factors include occupation, culture, level of involvement in tourism activities, education (Andereck et al. 2007; Woo 2013). Existing studies found that residents with a higher income perceived a significantly higher positive economic impact from tourism than people with a lower income; people with less education or living in the urban area perceived more social costs; social costs were found to be negatively correlated with QOL; residents with different cultural backgrounds perceive tourism effects on QOL domains differently (e.g., Andereck et al. 2007).

### ***2.3.2.3 QOL in relation to the level of tourism development***

Literature suggests that tourism affects residents' QOL differently at different stages of tourism development, mirroring the change in residents' attitudes towards tourism (Kim et al. 2013; Kerstetter & Bricker 2012; Meng et al. 2010). Bulter's Tourism Area Life Cycle is often used to explain the reason behind this change.

The Tourist Area Life Cycle was initiated by Bulter (2004), and explains that tourism areas evolve through a recognisable life cycle illustrating different stages of popularity: from exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation, till either decline or rejuvenation. One of the key indicators for determining at what stage a destination is at is tourist arrival. Going through different stages of tourism development, the visitor numbers change from growing, reaching the peak and then falling (Bulter 1980). Tourism impacts perceived by residents also change over these stages. Generally, more positive impacts are perceived during the initial phases of tourism development, but these will diminish after tourism reaches a threshold due to its carrying capacity, resulting in a change in residents' attitude and overall QOL (Bulter 2004). The theory was evidenced by a number of studies in the past (e.g., Allen et al. 1988) and in more recent (e.g., Cecil 2010).

On the other hand, some scholars argued that higher tourism development resulted in higher QOL in terms of objective QOL domains. Meng et al. (2010) did a study in China by comparing different provinces with varying levels of tourism development. Thirty-one provinces, municipalities, and autonomous regions were grouped into three categories. Tourism development was assessed based on data coming from the National Bureau of Statistics of China, and provincial bureaus of statistics and QOL was measured using ten objective indicators. Results showed that provinces with higher levels of tourism development witnessed their residents experiencing a much better life than those with a lower level of tourism development (Meng et al. 2010).

In summary, we can draw the following conclusions based on the existing literature on tourism impacts and residents' QOL: (i) the impact of tourism development significantly affect residents' QOL in a destination community; (ii) residents may perceive tourism impact on their QOL differently, depending on the extent to which they directly benefit from tourism and some other characteristics (e.g. education,

cultural background and income levels); and (iii) residents' perceived QOL levels and attitude toward tourism tend to differ depending on the level of tourism development, although mixed results were found in the literature .

It is important to point out that in the last conclusion, QOL is defined subjectively as residents' perceived satisfaction or subjective well-being. Most empirical results suggested that QOL is favoured more at the early than later stages of tourism development. The objective measurements of QOL, on the contrary, yielded a different result – higher tourism development suggests higher QOL. This is interesting, as the contrasting conclusions from studies using objective or subjective measurements of QOL leads to the circumstance described by Sirgy et al. (2006) as Fool's Hell for the later or higher stage of tourism development. Residents perceive their conditions as poor but their living conditions may be rated as good according to the objective indicators.

### **2.3.3 Measurement of QOL in relation to tourism**

As mentioned in the introduction chapter, QOL as a whole or as various life domains are often measured using objective and subjective indicators at different levels. It may also be worth pointing out that Perdue et al. (1991) and Meng et al. (2010) are two of the few research teams not examining QOL at the individual levels. Perdue et al. (1991) investigated tourism related QOL in 100 countries using objective indicators. Meng et al. (2010) compared residents' QOL between three provinces with varying levels of tourism development in China. Other than those two, the majority of studies were undertaken at the individual level (Uysal et al. 2016).

The vast majority of other studies conducted QOL assessment at the individual levels using a subjective approach. For example, Cecil et al. (2010) measured QOL using five subjective indicators: overall health, frequency of physical activity, stress level, sense of community and overall QOL. For these studies, the survey method was most frequently used. Most studies collected primary data using Likert scales (See review article of Uysal et al. 2016). Most survey instruments were customised and contained different question items, leading to challenges in comparing the results of these quantitative studies. One most frequently used survey instrument was developed by

Andereck and Nyaupane (2011). By assembling 38 items from existing published sources related to tourism attitude and residents' perceived quality of community life and testing them in a sample of residents from Arizona, the authors produced an eight-dimensional scale for measuring tourism-related QOL: community well-being, urban issues, way of life, community pride and awareness, natural/cultural preservation, economic strength, recreation amenities, and crime and substance abuse.

The innovation in Andereck and Nyaupane's (2011) measurement is that tourism-related QOL scores were computed by multiplying and averaging scores from not only residents' satisfaction of QOL domains, but also residents' perceived weight of these QOL domains and the extent to which they were influenced by tourism development. By incorporating the personal importance of QOL items, Andereck and Nyaupane (2011) suggested that "even if an individual feels tourism influences a certain aspect of her or his community, unless that characteristic is deemed personally important, the individual is unlikely to attribute any meaning to whether tourism positively or negatively affects that attribute" (Andereck & Nyaupane 2011, p. 11).

Very limited studies used the interview approach to understand residents' QOL in relation to tourism (Uysal et al. 2016). Jurowski and Brown (2001) conducted 400 telephone interviews in Lexington, Kentucky, to investigate the association between residents' community involvement and their perception of tourism-related QOL. They found that residents who are involved in tourism perceived a higher level of satisfaction towards their QOL than those who were not involved in tourism. Gjerald (2005) conducted 19 interviews with permanent residents in a tourism destination and found that residents recognised the contribution of tourism to their enhanced life quality.

From my point of view, most existing studies presumed residents' QOL domains and then asked participants to rate each domain with reference to tourism impacts. The correlations between life domains of certain impacts were statistically significant, but the understanding of its underlying mechanism and what affects the relationships between tourism and residents' quality of life was comparatively limited. This was also pointed out by Uysal et al. (2016) in their most recent review article:

“We note that community residents' perception of tourism impact on their QOL is a topic that has been researched since 1980. However, the findings of the studies are not expectedly straight- forward, most of these studies focused on the delineation of impact types of tourism (cultural, social, economic and environmental and ecological) and support for tourism development. The relationship between tourism impact and QOL of community residents needs further research and empirical substantiation. QOL constructs should be explored further in terms of both as outcome and moderating variables, along with support for tourism development as a dependent variable” (p. 257)

I found two frameworks developed exclusively in tourism for tourism-related QOL. One was proposed by Moscardo (2009) as an organising framework to use the concept of QOL to fully understand QOL. This framework was mentioned in Section 2.2.4 (See Figure 2.4). It suggested that tourism impacts should be assessed with reference to social, human, physical, financial and natural capitals that are needed for QOL. The assessment of tourism impacts should occur at generating, transit and destination regions from residents' perspective as well as individual tourist's perspective. This framework has its value in assessing tourism impacts but does not offer enough insight into QOL.

Another framework was developed to model the importance of vocations to QOL (Dolnicar, Lazarevski & Yanamandram 2013). It is named the Grevillea Model, based on the premise that QOL is a concept that is heavily reliant on individual's perceptions: “what determines a good QOL for one person, may not determine the same QOL for another person”. The framework is useful in understanding visitors' QOL but not suitable to apply in residents' QOL investigation.

In summary, I propose that there is a need to develop a cohesive and holistic conceptual framework for exploring how residents' QOL is influenced by tourism in a dynamic tourism system and guiding QOL measurements. This study has filled this gap by developing a conceptual framework of tourism-related QOL from a resident's perspective. The framework is presented in Section 2.5.

## **2.4 Systematic literature review: Tourism and residents' QOL research in China**

In China, earlier scholars in QOL research include Yining Li (1986), who was one of the first to evaluate QOL in the western economy. In *social development and society indicators* produced by the China society academy, QOL was recognised as an important indicator of the societal development in China (Ye 1990). Wang (2011) reviewed QOL research in China and classified it into three stages: 1980–1992: the starting and preparation stage, bringing western theories and findings in the China context; 1993–2001: the exploration and growth stage, focusing on minority and socially vulnerable subgroups; from 2002 onwards: the stage of maturation (Wang 2011). Considerable agreements have been reached in two aspects: (i) QOL contains both subjective and objective dimensions, with the subjective dimension referring to satisfaction and happiness; and (ii) the QOL measurements in certain districts or for specific subgroups have been developed and widely accepted.

The concept of QOL was introduced in tourism in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century and since then has been gaining momentum. This section presents a systematic literature review of research in China examining tourism and residents' QOL, aiming to be exhaustive in covering what is known in this topic.

### **2.4.1 Brief introduction of systematic literature review**

A systematic literature review is a method of selecting, evaluating and interpreting existing research relating to a specific topic. Generally, it answers one or more defined research question(s) by gathering and summarising all available existing empirical evidence, following an explicit literature search and selection strategy. It was first proposed in health science in the 1970s and is commonly used in this domain to examine the effectiveness of a healthcare intervention to inform medicine and health-related practice and policy (e.g. Ozawa & Sripad 2013). This approach has also gained attention in areas such as criminal justice, education, international development, social welfare (The Campbell Collaboration 2015), and more recently, software engineering (e.g. Brereton et al. 2007), environment and sustainability (e.g. Lique et al. 2013), management (e.g. Johnsen, Miemczyk & Howard 2017) and so on, due to increasing

‘recognition of the importance of evidence-based practice to inform policy decisions and professional practice’ (Ridley 2012, p. 189).

A systematic literature review has not yet been applied extensively in tourism research. A few examples of the use of systematic literature review included Carter et al.’s (2015) review of sustainable tourism research in Cambodia; Assaf and Josiassen’s (2016) summary of frontier studies in the tourism literature; Peng et al.’s (2015) study examining international tourism demand elasticities; and Loulanski and Loulanski’s (2011) synthesis of cultural heritage and tourism research.

Performing a systematic literature review involves multiple discrete steps and the process has been introduced in detail in many guidelines. For example, the process generally includes: (i) framing questions for a review; (ii) identifying relevant reference; (iii) assessing the quality of the studies; (iv) summarising the evidence; and (v) interpreting the findings (Khan et al. 2003). During the summarising phase, particular methods, named meta-analysis or meta-synthesis (or narrative synthesis), are selectively employed to synthesise quantitative or qualitative data. The former refers to the use of statistical techniques for integrating similar, individual quantitative findings, while the latter focuses on examining qualitative studies and providing a narrative synthesis (Ridley 2012).

Different from general, traditional reviews, a systematic literature review is designed to be replicable by clearly detailing the review objectives, the literature searching strategy (e.g. time frame, terms searched), the precise inclusion and/or exclusion criteria for references and the evaluation or synthesis methods (Cronin et al. 2008). This also allows the readers to assess the reliability and validity of the review. Additionally, a systematic review aims to include as complete a list as possible of available studies on a particular topic to provide a comprehensive understanding of the topic. As indicated by Ridley (2012), it is usually “in itself a research study, addressing research questions and using the literature as data to be coded, analysed and synthesised to reach overall conclusions” (Ridley 2012, p.190).

There are different motivations to conduct a systematic literature review in different fields. In health science, the main purpose is to rigorously and systematically aggregate

empirical studies to inform clinical practice and healthcare policy. In software engineering, the key advocator, Kitchenham and his colleagues (2004; 2007) stated that systematic review could help to identify current gaps, new framework, future topic and novel hypothesis and “provide the means by which current best evidence from research can be integrated with practical experience and human values in the decision-making process regarding the development and maintenance of software”.

The motivation for the current study to apply a systematic literature review was to gain a holistic and comprehensive understanding of tourism and destination residents’ quality of life in China. Reasons to focus exclusively on the Chinese literature are: (1) this research examined tourism-related quality of life in China; (2) few studies on tourism-related QOL in China were reported in English literature. Therefore, this systematic review has included relevant studies available in Chinese to address the question: What do we already know about how tourism influences residents’ quality of life in China?

As the systematic literature review here is part of the overall literature review of this study and its result was mainly used to inform the conceptual framework and the data analysis of the study, the researcher simplified the steps provided in the guideline described by Petticrew and Roberts (2006) to conduct the systematic review:

1. define the research questions;
2. identify inclusion and exclusion criteria;
3. carry out the literature search;
4. extract the data from included studies;
5. consider quality of included studies;
6. synthesis included studies.

#### **2.4.2 Define research questions**

As mentioned in the preceding section, the systematic review was undertaken to address the question of what we already know about how tourism influences residents’ quality of life in China. Several more specific sub-questions were proposed:

- Q1. What are the dimensions of residents' QOL in China?
- Q2. What are the tourism impacts relating to residents' QOL in China?
- Q3. What are the relationships between tourism and residents' QOL in China?
- Q4. What are the factors that affect the relationships?
- Q5. What are the key challenges and barriers of the research field?

### 2.4.3 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The objective of defining the inclusion and exclusion criteria is to ensure that the review only uses research evidence relevant to the framed research questions. Additionally, it offers an opportunity for the readers to understand the scope of the review. Journal articles, conference proceedings and books/book chapters in the Chinese language, published from January 1915 to June 2016 in digital databases with full-text access were considered. The reason for excluding theses is the big number of them in this area with many not being accessible online. It also eliminated editorials, prefaces, poster sessions, panels and tutorial summaries. The starting year of 1915 was chosen because this is the earliest year that could be selected in all three major Chinese databases. The review eliminated works that do not clearly relate to the proposed research questions. Further, when different versions of a study reporting same findings exist, which may appear as a book chapter, a conference or journal article, the first preference was given to published journal articles. Table 2.2 below presents all the criteria.

**Table 2.2: Inclusion and exclusion criteria**

<b>Inclusion</b>	<b>Exclusion</b>
Full-text Published between 1915-2016 Discussed tourism Discussed residents' QOL In the form of journal articles, conference proceedings and book/book chapters In Chinese language In the China context	Full-text not available Not related to our research questions From duplicated studies Outside search time span Focused on visitors' perspective Only mentioned QOL as a tourism outcome in less than ten sentences In the form of theses, editorials, prefaces, poster sessions, panels and tutorial summaries Review articles of studies in other countries

#### **2.4.4 The literature search process**

The three main databases for academic works in the Chinese language are CNKI (China National Knowledge Infrastructure) ([www.cnki.net](http://www.cnki.net)), Wanfang Data ([www.wanfangdata.com](http://www.wanfangdata.com)) and Weipu Database of China ([www.cqvip.com](http://www.cqvip.com)). I used CNKI as the key database for the primary literature search and used the other two databases to search for complementary articles.

After the preliminary search in CNKI, the search for “quality of life (sheng huo zhi liang)” and “tourism (lv you)” in themes returned 142,243 hits; when adding “quality of life” and “tourism” in abstract, 1,323 studies were returned, including 389 dissertations and 934 journal articles. The journal articles were first checked against the criteria of inclusion and exclusion upon screening their titles, abstracts and keywords. One problem appeared in this process as some abstracts were very short and didn't enable me to identify their relevance. Thirty-three articles were left. Then I performed the same search in the other two databases and four articles were added.

In the second round, I searched for terms that have a meaning similar/close to QOL, including “Happiness (xing fu gan)”, “Well-being (fu li)”, with “Tourism (lv you)” in abstract/keywords/titles of the three databases. A total of 109 relevant articles were found. After the screening process, ten articles were added. After the first and second round of searching, 47 articles were included in the systematic review (Gao 2012a, 2012b; Hu et al. 2014; Li 2009; Zhang 2014; Zhao 2014; Chen 2009). A few review articles were then checked for missing references.

According to the quick screening, it was noted that in the current literature, there are more conceptual or theoretical discussions than empirical studies. Guo and her colleagues were one of the first teams that conducted QOL assessment in relation to tourism. In 2007, Guo et al. (2007b) reported an empirical study in Zhouzhuang on residents' perceived tourism development, quality of life, residents' attitudes and the correlations between these constructs. Likert scales with multiple questions were used to assess these subjective indicators. The results yielded a very complicated model showing correlations between the impacts of tourism and domains of QOL.

In Guo et al.'s (2007b) empirical study, QOL was represented using eight domains: family life, lifestyle, social interaction, social identity, social safety, living facilities, expenditure structure and entertainment spending. Eight dimensions for perceived tourism impacts were created: cultural perception, community perception, environmental perception, benefits perception, employment perception, policy perception, general price perception and confidentiality perception. Thirty-one lines of associations between these dimensions were found. Among them, strong relationships were observed in residents' perceived quality of their family lives and perceived general cost and confidentiality influenced by tourism, as well as lifestyle – perceived tourism's impact on community attachment, belongingness, environmental awareness etc.

More recently, Guo, Kim and Chen (2014) conducted a survey among residents in Shanghai using a questionnaire containing 34 QOL-related items and 34 impact-related items. Respectively, eight domains of QOL and nine domains of tourism impacts were generated as a result of factor analysis. The QOL domains are: public security, leisure time, family cohesion, community construction, society's atmosphere, economic margin, and living cost. The study presented a complex result about the correlations between different tourism impact domains and QOL domains, but overall the finding is in accordance with previous studies illustrating a positive relationship between positive tourism impacts and related QOL domains.

## 2.5 Conceptual framework of the study

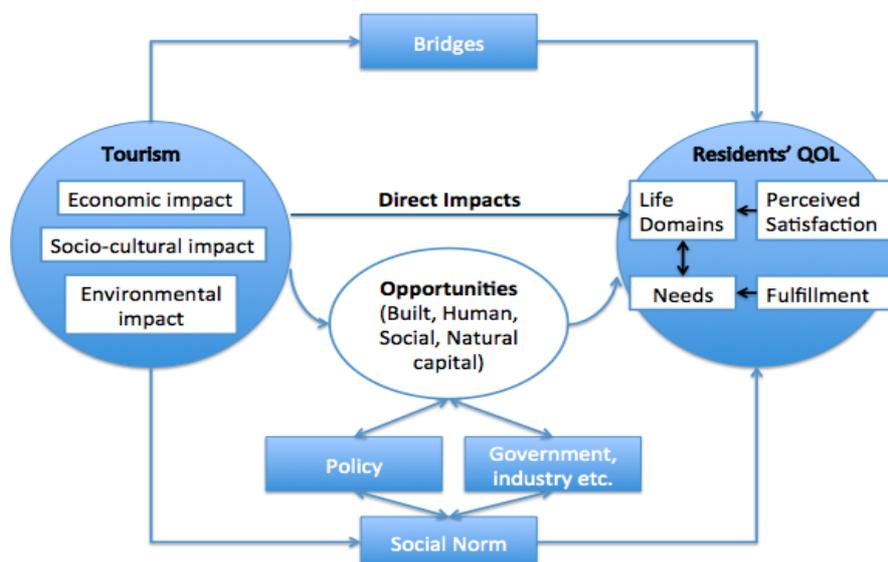


Figure 2.6: Conceptual framework of the study

The conceptual framework of the study, depicted in Figure 2.6, is built on Costanza et al.'s (2007) QOL and opportunity model (see Section 2.2.4). In my framework, the following are proposed:

1. QOL is defined by the extent to which one feels subjectively satisfied with various life domains and the extent to which one's needs are objectively fulfilled.
2. Tourism can directly affect domains of residents' QOL.
3. Tourism can indirectly affect how residents' needs are fulfilled by influencing opportunities to meet human needs (including build, human, social, and natural capital) (Costanza et al. 2007).
4. Policy and other stakeholders affect opportunities for one to meet one's needs.
5. Social norm influences one's value and is influenced by tourism development.
6. There are "bridges" linking tourism impacts and residents' QOL in the form of tourism activities, host-tourist interaction etc.

## Chapter 3 Methodology

### 3.1 Introduction

This study aimed to answer the following key research question: How do residents perceive their QOL in the tourism destination in China now and in the future? As a research question that focuses on understanding and explanation in a specific cultural setting, it has an explorative nature and can be best addressed by a qualitative approach. This chapter describes in detail **how I framed my research**, including my positioning and research paradigm (Section 3.2), and the chosen methodological approach and research design (Section 3.3); **how I conducted my research**, including the selection of case study, data collection activities and data management (Section 3.4); and **how I made sense of my data**, namely data analysis process (Section 3.5). The last section concludes the chapter with a brief discussion of how my methodological approach, informed by my conceptual framework, has achieved my study purpose.

### 3.2 Research paradigm: Constructivism

The paradigm is the overlying view of how the world exists, which consists of a set of beliefs that guides research, such as ontology (the nature of reality), epistemology (the relationship between the researcher and the research subjects) and methodology (the way of knowledge construction) (Jennings 2010 pp. 34-36). It is important to state clearly the philosophical stance of research because it influences the way a researcher collects data and understands what good quality research is.

This study was informed by the constructivist paradigm, also known as the interpretive social sciences paradigm. It assumes that (i) there are multiple realities or explanations to explain a phenomenon; (ii) researchers and participants interact and co-create subjective understandings within an essential social context; and (iii) an inductive approach, qualitative methodology, should be used to develop explanations of phenomena (Denzin & Lincoln 2005). The current study, operating in this paradigm, sought to understand tourism's different influences on residents' QOL in China from

an insider's perspective (Jennings 2010). I see this phenomenon as a dynamic, subjective process and focus on understanding its meanings.

Constructivism as a suitable philosophical framework is adopted in this research. According to Stake (1995): "Most contemporary qualitative researchers nourish the belief that knowledge is constructed rather than discovered. The world we know is a particularly human construction" (Stake 1995, p. 99).

The interpretive tradition implies that researchers should not take predisposed assumptions when studying a context. Instead, researchers intend to understand how respondents "make meaning of a situation or phenomenon" (Jennings 2010). This meaning is mediated through the researcher-as-instrument. My role in this study was as an observer as well as a creator. My personal background, including gender, age and culture, and my value of QOL had an impact on my sense making. I point out such influence in the findings and discussion chapters.

In agreement with this worldview, the presented study adopted a qualitative approach and a case study design to explore residents' perceived QOL in relation to tourism development in the context of China. In-depth interview was the major method used to collect primary data about residents' perspectives.

### **3.3 Research design: Qualitative case study**

Qualitative research is about study things in their natural settings. It involves the "use and collection of a variety of empirical materials – case study, personal experience, introspection, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts – that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives" (Denzin & Lincoln 1994, p. 2).

Qualitative approach was chosen for this study because of the nature of the research problem and the purpose of the presented study. QOL is a highly contextualised concept and relies on individuals' to construct their own meaning. Qualitative research methods enable researchers to understand and interpret the meaning that individuals assign to

their experiences (Denzin & Lincoln 2000). The purpose of this study was to discover the meaning that residents give to tourism development in the community.

Typical qualitative research questions are in the forms of “how” and “what” type of open questions, which allow respondents to share their own thoughts freely without being biased by researchers. For the current study, I explored residents’ QOL by asking the following what questions: (a) What are the important domains in your life? (b) To what extent are you satisfied with your current life quality? And (c) What are the tourism impacts that you perceive as having influenced your quality of life?

There are many different research design frameworks developed for qualitative research, such as ethnography, case study, the grounded theory, narrative and so on. They identify various ways to conduct qualitative research with different focuses. Similarities between these designs are: focusing on understanding and meanings, emergent design, purposive sampling, collecting data in natural settings, focusing on context and holism, acknowledgement of the role of the researcher in interpreting and co-creating findings, concurrent data collection and analysis, and results predominantly expressed in narrative or case study forms (Charmaz 1990). This study chose a case study research design for its strength in providing a holistic understanding within the context boundaries.

Robert K. Yin and Robert E. Stake as the leading case study researchers have written extensively about case study research. One difference between Yin and Stake is their philosophical stance. Yin (2012) is a realist, and his case study design starts with setting up a good protocol, while Stake (2006) is a constructivist and his case study approach aims to capture the nuance of settings. For the purpose of this research, I relied primarily on Stake (2006), particularly his quality criteria, but I used definitions and techniques from both authors.

In this study, the phenomenon under investigation was residents’ QOL associated with tourism development. The case for the current study was Yangshuo, a small county in Guangxi Province, located in southwest China. Data was collected through in-depth interviews, and additionally by reviewing documents provided by Yangshuo local government. Specifically, interviews were conducted and audio recorded, recordings

were transcribed into word documents, and data were coded for emergent themes. Another component of case studies is the unit of analysis, defined as the area of focus of the study (Yin 2009). For this study, this unit of analysis was individuals participating in the study and their perceptions.

As already mentioned in the above paragraphs, the case chosen in this study is Yangshuo, a small county in Guangxi Province, located in southwest China. Generally, a case study is chosen because it presents a collective of common characteristics or conditions (Stake 2006). Yangshuo, as a case, was chosen for the following reasons:

1. It is one of the earliest tourism destinations in China.
2. The tourism development in Yangshuo is at its mature and transforming stage.
3. I am familiar with its local culture, as my family have lived in the province for over six years.
4. Local residents who have been exposed to tourism for over 40 years are open to communication and sharing their thoughts.
5. There are networking resources from the local community, who supported me to approach local residents and conduct the research.

### **3.4 Overview of data collection process**

Figure 3.1 below illustrates the process of the case study in the current research. Six phases were identified from the selection of the case until the data analytic process. In this section, each phase is detailed to show how I conducted the case study, particularly focusing on the data collection process.

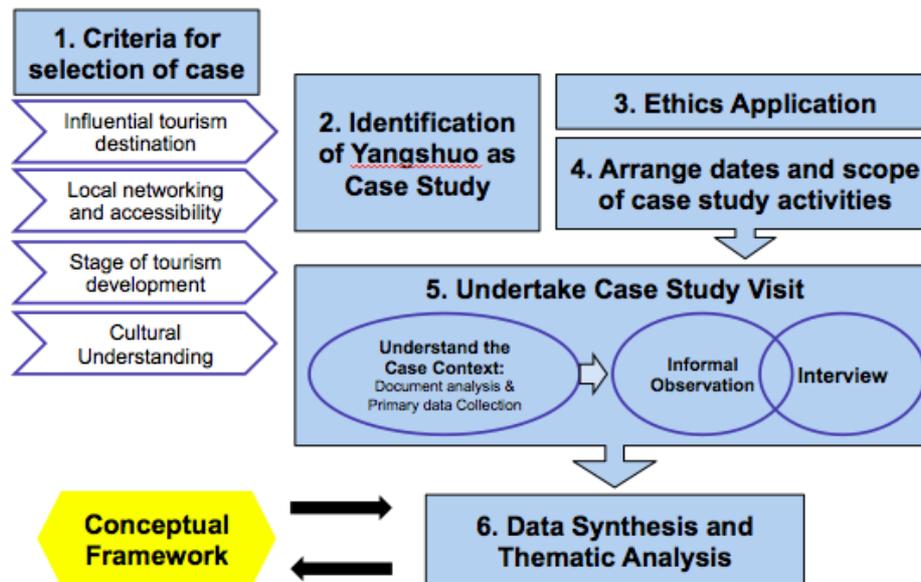


Figure 3.1: Case study process

### 3.4.1 Case selection

During the first phase of case selection, Yangshuo was chosen as the destination for the case study. Cases can be viewed as examples of an object, or phenomenon or condition – it is the object, phenomenon or the condition that case study researchers are studying (Skate 2006). The general questions asked when selecting cases are: Is the case relevant to the phenomenon or condition you want to study? Do the cases provide diversity across contexts? Do the cases provide good opportunities to learn about complexity and contexts? (Stake 2006). The presented study intended to gain a holistic understanding of the phenomenon that residents perceive their quality of life differently in relation to tourism impacts in a destination in China. Residents from destinations with a longer tourism development history have stronger perceptions about tourism impacts. Therefore, mature and earliest destinations in China were suitable cases for my study.

Other criteria included the accessibility of local support and cultural understanding. Yangshuo County is in Guangxi Province. I have lived in Nanning, Guangxi for over six years and my family is still living there while I study abroad. I paid a few visits to Yangshuo before and my father used to work there. Therefore, although I am not a local from Yangshuo, I know the place well and understand its culture. This gave me the advantage of taking a qualitative approach because I could see my own subjectivity more clearly during data collection or data analysis.

In the next chapter, Yangshuo is introduced in more detail regarding its culture, history, educational context, political context and current situation.

### **3.4.2 Ethics consideration**

This study involved humans participating in interviews, so the human research ethics approval was obtained from the Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee and Yangshuo Tourism Department. During the data collection process, participants were required to sign a consent form or provide oral consent prior to their participation. Informed consent ensures that “participants must understand the nature and purpose of the research and must consent to participate without coercion” (Burns 2000, p. 18). It highlights the nature of any research participation: voluntary and fully informed. Within the consent form, information is provided to participants about the research purpose and processes, any potential risks or harm, the benefits of the research, how the participants were chosen, their ability to ask questions concerning the research, the voluntary nature of their participation, the identity of the researcher and sponsor and how findings will be used (De Vaus 2002). Additionally, the consent form states that participants’ anonymity and confidentiality will be assured to protect their privacy (De Vaus 2002).

In order to ensure that participants would not experience any harm in the course of the project, I assessed whether there would be any physical, psychological, legal and other risks associated with participating in this research. Overall, this project was perceived as “low risk”. The project focus was on tourism and residents’ QOL, which relates to people’s positive psychology and everyday life; therefore, there was no potential risk. During interviews, some participants did not feel comfortable to be audio recorded and their feelings were respected. I used note taking as a way to record what they said.

### **3.4.3 Data collection activities**

The data collection was conducted from June till July 2015. I spent five weeks in Yangshuo for this purpose. According to Yin (2012), good case studies should have multiple sources of evidence to support researchers’ findings. He identified direct or participant observation, interviews, archival records, documents and physical artefacts

as common sources of evidence and encouraged researchers to use these sources in different combinations according to the need of the research (Yin 2012).

In this study, four types of data collection activities were undertaken: collecting primary information from Yangshuo Tourism Bureau, document analysis, personal observation and interviews. Among them, interviews were the primary source for collecting data on residents' perception of their quality of life. The whole on-site data collection process was divided into two overlapping stages. During the first stage, I collected primary and secondary data about Yangshuo's tourism development and local history, culture, education and other aspects. The main purpose of this stage was to understand the context of Yangshuo, refine the interview question outline and devise a data collection strategy. A sheet with a list of questions was distributed to staff from Yangshuo Tourism Bureau to gain some understanding of the level of tourism development, the impacts of tourism identified from the government's perspective and regions for data collection and questions to ask. Observation and document analysis serve as a way to understand the context of the case and to triangulate the evidence.

Triangulation refers to the establishment of converging lines of evidence to enhance the trustworthiness of the study findings. Stake (2012) suggested that each finding needs to have at least three confirmations and assurances that key meanings are not being overlooked. Recognising that the perception is highly subjective and dynamic, the triangulation employed in this study did not focus on residents' perception but instead on the links between their lives and the tourism development in Yangshuo, in other words, the change and the channels to perceive the change.

#### **3.4.4 Understand the research context: Primary data collection**

A list of questions was developed to collect primary data about tourism development in Yangshuo from staff working at Yangshuo Tourism Bureau. There were 11 questions, including: (1) Ranking the rewards Yangshuo has received according to the influence and popularity of the rewards; (2) Ranking the events and festivals in Yangshuo according to local residents' participation; (3) Ranking nine towns in Yangshuo according to the overall influence of tourism, the percentage of residents' participation in the tourism activities, and the richness of tourism resources; (4) Listing three of the

most popular tourism events for local residents; (5) Identifying the most popular tourism attractions among residents; (6) Identifying tourism attractions in need of strengthened management; (7) Identifying tourism attractions which have brought obvious improvement to local infrastructure; (8) Identifying influential local enterprises in hospitality, tourism attraction, entertainment and shopping; (9) Identifying existing large-scale tourism projects and their major influences; (10) Identifying incoming or constructing tourism projects and the main reason to bring them into Yangshuo; and (11) In terms of stages of tourism development in Yangshuo, stating what the key points of time are and stating their opinion of the current tourism development stage.

Table 3.1 is an example of the ranking questions asked.

**Table 3.1: Sample question**

No.4	Please rank the towns with 1-9 according to different criteria		
	Level of overall tourism impacts on the region	Level of residents' participation in tourism	Tourism resources
Yangshuo Town			
Gaotian Town			
Xingping Town			
Baisha Town			
Putao Town			
Fuli Town			
Jinbao Township			
Puyi Township			
Yangdi Township			

Five staff from different positions in Yangshuo Tourism Bureau provided responses to these questions. The information collected helped me to gain a good understanding of the level of tourism development and the impacts of tourism activities and projects on local residents as perceived from the government's perspective. Given that the participants work at the administrative management level of tourism in Yangshuo, it is assumed that their views are comparatively holistic due to their positions, knowledge and experience. A detailed summary of their responses is presented in the next chapter concerning the case study location, Yangshuo Country. The integration of these views

and opinions was also used to inform the development of the interview questions and the purposive sampling of interviewees.

#### **3.4.5 Understand the research context: Document analysis**

Document analysis is a qualitative research method used to review and evaluate primary and secondary sources of documents (Bowen 2009). Generally, the documents are produced from the research, such as speeches, diaries, reports, newspaper articles, journal articles and so on (Bowen 2009). Document analysis is most frequently employed in historical research and involves examining the intent and purpose of documents within their historical context rather than simply providing a description of the document (Liamputtong & Ezzy 2005). In other disciplinary areas, researchers consider the critical reviewing and evaluation of existing documents as document analysis, bearing questions in mind such as: What type of document is it? Does it have any particularly unique characteristics? When was it written? Who was the author and what was their position? For whom (what audience) was the document written? What is the purpose of the document? Why was the document written? And what evidence is there within the document that indicates why it was written? (ANU, online resources).

In this research, documents that the researcher analysed included Yangshuo yearbooks from 1985 till 2014, annual technical reports produced by Yangshuo Observation Stations and other publications of Yangshuo produced by the local government bureaus. The analysis of those documents helped the researcher to develop a good understanding of the context of Yangshuo, particularly its history and economic growth. It also helped to identify some items on the interview sheet and the management survey.

#### **3.4.6 Sampling**

This research was explorative in nature, leading to an inductive data collection approach. Sampling interviewees in this study were selected by means of a mix of convenience sampling, snowball sampling and purposive sampling techniques. This is due to the difference between the ways I approached different groups of participants.

Snowball sampling, also named chain sampling, refers to recruiting future participants from existing participants, like a rolling snowball (Liamputtong & Ezzy 2005).

Generally, the first few participants are a researcher’s acquaintances. They can help the researcher to access other participants by referring them to the study. This sampling technique is often criticised for its community bias, caused by the strong impact of the first few participants.

In this study, however, the bias of snowball sampling was not a big concern because the researcher also used a purposive sampling technique prior to snowball sampling. The purposive sampling ensured that the first group of participants was diverse according to a number of different factors. Most factors were extracted from the existing studies (Guo, 2011), including age, gender, occupation, and degrees of interaction with tourists and financial reliance on the tourism industry. According to the last factor, residents in Yangshuo were classified into a few groups, as indicated in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2: The grouping of residents**

<b>Degrees of interaction with tourists/financial reliance on tourism industry</b>	<b>High reliance</b>	<b>Partial reliance</b>	<b>Low reliance</b>
<b>High interaction</b>	Residents who frequently interact with tourists and whose financial income relies on the tourism industry, including hotel receptionists, travel agent staff, restaurant waiters/waitress, bike rental agent staff, flower sellers, street retailers (souvenirs), bamboo raft rowers, tourism attractions receptionists, tour guides etc.	Fruit shops, some local retailers, some restaurants	Some farmers living along the two rivers; some residents living on West Street
<b>Average interaction</b>	Owners of hotels, restaurants	Taxi/motorbike drivers; people working in the	Police, some government officers

		entertainment business	
<b>Low interaction</b>	Investors, residents who are renting out their houses	Souvenir hand-makers	Teachers, students, government officers, librarians, telecoms firm officers, people who retired etc.

Another factor recommended by the Yangshuo Tourism Bureau was towns of residency. Yangshuo County has a few towns, including Yangshuo town as its business central. Different towns experience tourism at a different level, which may potentially influence residents' perceptions of their quality of life. Therefore this factor was also considered when approaching residents with the assistance from Yangshuo Tourism Bureau. These towns are detailed in the next chapter about case study location.

### 3.4.7 Informal observations

Stake (2006), in the book "Multiple Case Study Analysis" said "...the most meaningful data-gathering methods are often observational – both direct observation and learning from the observations of others. The latter, indirect method is necessary for activity at which the researcher is not present; the researcher needs to ask someone who was there, and to find records kept of what happened and artefacts that suggest it." (Stake 2006, p.4).

My research looked at the impacts of tourism on local residents' quality of life. It involved not only the current state but also the past 40 years of tourism and residents' lives in Yangshuo. My observations were conducted at different times with different purposes: understanding the context of Yangshuo, deciding on the sampling techniques and doing interviews.

My observation occurred during multiple visits to different villages, local shops, main streets in towns, attractions, agencies, restaurants, government departments and rivers and parks. The information gained through observations was documented in field note cards in handwriting, coded with date, place and events and later transferred in digital forms to NVivo during or after the data collection trip.

### 3.4.8 Interviews

Three groups of tourism stakeholders were interviewed in Yangshuo: residents and community leaders, government officers, and tourism enterprise managers. The purpose of interviewing each group was different. Residents were the focus of the current study and their interviews were conducted first. Semi-structured interviews were used to explore residents' free perception without biasing them with pre-set QOL conceptualisation (Yin 2012). Three core questions were asked: (1) How do you find your life quality living in Yangshuo? (2) How does tourism development in Yangshuo impact your current life? (3) What are the changes you want to see happening in Yangshuo?

Coded No. _____ Date & Time: ____/07/15 ____:____:____ Venue: _____		Info: Age/ gender/ Occupation/ Income/ County/ Tourism income proportion/length of residence			
旅游影响 Actual Tourism Impact	旅游影响感知 Perceived tourism Impact	感知桥梁 Perception Bridge		生活质量要素 Considered QOL element	生活质量 QOL dimensions
		Events/Facts	relevant / irrelevant		
经济		旅游获奖(中国最美古城/最适宜居住)	让我非常骄傲/很自豪/无所谓/喜欢		满意/信心
个人利益		宣传活动(啤酒鱼大赛/宣传开拍报等)	如果与我有关, 我很喜欢参加/不参加的原因		社会治安/文明
政策		旅游节日(元宵节的西街联欢晚会/篝火节)	我很喜欢和家人朋友一起去		城市环境
物价		旅游景区(遇龙河/西街/公园/攀岩活动)	有时间的时候, 我平时经常参加/喜欢参加		经济商业/物价
		景区乱象(拉客/抢客/宰客)	我听了很不高兴/理解游客宰客的现象		自然环境
文化		旅游治理	得到景区治安变好让我很高兴。		生活便利度
民俗		旅游培训/教育课程	如果有时间, 我很乐意参加		城市口碑
活动		基础设施/城建(景区/公路/绿化/干净)	旅游改善了		交通/通讯
文化旅游		交通(日常/高峰期/出现方便程度)			遗产/文化
		旅游生意/旅游相关职业/工作	对家庭重要性/更多选择		社会保障/就业
社会		旅游项目(酒店/工作机会/刺激消费/环境)	大型酒店项目, 这让城市显得更高档大气		社区认同
治安		旅游项目征地	我得到了分红		邻里人际关系
文明风气		百亿投资大型规划项目(游乐场/千人会议)	我也想去看一看		个人/家庭地位
		旅游人数波动	竞争更激烈		物质条件
社区		名人来访			收入/工作
自然环境		与游客的接触(工作场合/非工作场合)			娱乐休闲
基础设施					健康
人际关系					家庭/子女发展
					消费/购物
					舒适度
					自由度
					安全感/压力
					充实
					被认可度
					幸福感

Figure 3.2: Interview sheet

An interview sheet (Appendix E) was developed to help me to make notes about the interview content. It included (1) the top section to record the demographic and background information of the residents; (2) the left and right side section for capturing the aspects of tourism impacts or QOL mentioned actively by the residents and their responses to the rest of the common aspects; and (3) the central section to document events or examples the participants used to show how tourism impacts have influenced their lives.

In total, 32 participants were interviewed. Most of them were interviewed on a one to one base,

**Table 3.3: Key attributes of interviewed residents in Yangshuo**

<b>ID</b>	<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Income reliance on tourism industry</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Town of birth</b>	<b>Town of residence</b>	<b>Sampling method</b>
R1	30-40	none	Working in telecommunication	Female	Baisha County	Yangshuo County	Snowball
R2	30-40	none	Government officer	Female	Guilin City	Yangshuo County	Recommended
R3	20-30	High	Hotel owner	Female	Yangshuo County	Gaotian County	Recommended
R4	50-60	High	Hotel owner	Male	Xingping County	Xingping County	Recommended
R5	50-60	High	Hotel owner	Female	Yangshuo County	Yangshuo County	Snowball
R6	20-30	Median	Hotel customer service	Female	Yangshuo County	Yangshuo County	Convenience Sampling
R7	40-50	Median	Hotel security	Group	Baisha County	Yangshuo County	Purposive Sampling
R8	40-60	Median	Restaurant owner	Female	Gaotian County	Gaotian County	Snowball
R9	30-40	Median	Restaurant owner	Couple	Baisha County	Yangshuo County	Snowball
R10	20-30	Median	Hotel customer service	Female	Yangshuo County	Yangshuo County	Convenience Sampling
R11	30-40	Median	Hotel customer service	Female	Other	Yangshuo County	Convenience Sampling
R12	40-50	Low	Electronic Car Driver	Female	Yangshuo County	Fuli County	Convenience Sampling
R13	60-70	Low	Electronic Car Driver	Male	Yangshuo County	Fuli County	Snowball
R14	30-40	High	Hotel manager	Male	Yangshuo County	Yangshuo County	Purposive sampling
R15	40-60	Median	Restaurant waitress	Female	Fuli County	Fuli County	Recommended
R16	40-60	High	Retail	Male	Yangshuo County	Fuli County	Recommended
R17	50-60	High	Hotel owner	Female	Yangshuo County	Yangshuo County	Purposive sampling
R18	60-80	Median	Retail	Female	Gaotian County	Gaotian County	Recommended
R19	70-80	High	Retail	Female	Yangshuo County	Gaotian County	Recommended
R20	70-90	High	Retail	Group	Gaotian County	Gaotian County	Recommended
R21	30-50	High	Tour guide	Group	Yangshuo County	Gaotian County	Purposive Sampling
R22	50-60	Median	Driver	Male	Yangshuo County	Yangshuo County	Convenience Sampling
R23	20-30	Median	Restaurant manager	Male	Yangshuo County	Yangshuo County	Purposive Sampling

<b>ID</b>	<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Income reliance on tourism industry</b>	<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Town of birth</b>	<b>Town of residence</b>	<b>Sampling method</b>
R24	40-50	Median	Farmer	Group	Yangshuo County	Yangshuo County	Purposive Sampling
R25	40-50	Low	Tourism Attraction Security	Male	Yangshuo County	Yangshuo County	Purposive Sampling

From Table 3.3, it can be noted that some interviews were conducted with more than one interviewee simultaneously. These interviews were carried out in a natural setting, such as interviewees' working space and the group were naturally formed, for example, security staff working in the same shift, the couple working in their own noodle bar and so forth. These naturally occurring groups reflect their work or life routines, which would make them relaxed and comfortable to interact when responding to my interview questions (Henn et al. 2010). Comparing my interviews with individuals and interviews with groups, revealed that participants in the group interviews were in the "speaking freely mode" earlier and more easily than individuals, although no apparent differences were identified by the researcher when coding their responses. Additionally, most group interviews were informal interviews.

Based on the interviews of the residents, a list of government apartments that are in charge of issues relevant to residents' QOL and tourism impacts was identified. With the assistance of the tourism bureau and my personal networking, all of the identified Yangshuo government departments were approached and representatives from 18 out of 23 government departments were interviewed (one was a group interview). Questions posed to them included two parts. One was about their response towards the issues mentioned in residents' interviews. Another one was about their own perceptions of life quality and tourism impacts in Yangshuo.

Based on the survey result and the interviews with residents, a number of influential tourism enterprises were identified as the third group for interviews. The questions asked were the enterprise managers' perceptions of the relationships between their attractions or projects and local residents, the perceived tourism development challenges and opportunities in Yangshuo, and their life quality evaluation in Yangshuo.

These formed data from the 23 interviews (G1-G23) with the representatives of different government departments/bureaus and the eight interviews (E1-E8) with directors/senior managers of influential tourism enterprises in Yangshuo. It is useful to point out that almost all participants interviewed in the second stage also recognised their residence identity with Yangshuo, in which case they were also asked questions regarding their residency experience and QOL perceptions. Their responses were also used to contribute to themes developed to explain residents' perceived QOL.

## **3.5 Data analysis**

### **3.5.1 Analysing interviews: Thematic analysis**

Informed by the conceptual framework of the present study introduced in the previous chapter (Figure 2.6), a thematic analysis was employed on the interview data. Thematic analysis is a widely used qualitative data analysis method, focusing on identifying patterned meaning or themes within data that provide an answer to the research questions being addressed (Liamputtong and Ezzy 2005). Thematic analysis “goes beyond simply counting phrases or words in a text and moves on to identifying implicit and explicit ideas within the data” (Guest 2012, p 45). Most qualitative researchers consider thematic analysis as effectively capturing the “intricacies of meaning” within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke 2006; Guest, MacQueen & Namey 2011; Liamputtong & Ezzy 2005).

Thematic analysis has been used widely in case studies to examine similarities and differences between information collected through different data collection techniques. In this research, I only performed thematic analysis on my interview data because the observation data is fragmented, but the interpretation of the themes identified using thematic analysis was supplemented with other sources of data in my research.

It is important to point out that interviews were conducted in Mandarin and the analysis was performed directly on the Chinese transcripts, rather than the English translations. This was to avoid the influence of subtle nuances between original words and according translations on the sense-making process. For example, the main concept studied is

strongly related to personal perceptions and evaluations. There were cases in which interviewees used terms with positive or negative implications to describe a scenario. It is harder to capture such implications from the translated English terms.

On the other hand, it is also clear that my translation of the interview data served as another level of interpretation of what participants said. If considering the thematic analysis focused on patterns and themes, which represent my interpretation of the phenomena, the translation itself focused on understanding and representing individual participants.

### **3.5.2 “Past” versus “now”**

Each of the interviewees was asked to ‘share freely about what they think the impacts of tourism in Yangshuo are’ and ‘tell me how your life is here’ (Appendix D). During the interview discourse, based on their responses, I followed up with questions orienting the conversation to more personal reflections based on their own living or working experience. Through this process, I noticed some interesting features: (a) Participants preferred to cite others’ views and opinions when commenting on recent changes or impacts of tourism in Yangshuo; (b) Participants preferred to use their own experience as evidence to support claims about positive or negative aspects of life in Yangshuo in the past; (c) Participants were well informed of the environmental and economic impacts of tourism on Yangshuo and were familiar with words such as employment rate, living cost.

It is important to point out that participants referred to “past” and “now” frequently in their stories, but the time division was not definite and varied according to their ages, their own situations at the starting point, year of initial tourism participation, current jobs they are doing, their family situations, and the counties in which they live and work. This study explored residents’ perceptions of their quality of life based on their own system of well-being and happiness and their own life time frame. Although I have looked for similarities between the years of turning point suggested by participants, in the following sections when discussing QOL domains, “past” and “now” are referred to in relative terms based on individual criteria instead of absolute terms.

### **3.5.3 Perceived impacts versus actual impacts**

Studies focusing on the impacts of tourism have examined the potential, perceived and actual impacts of tourism generally and have been predominantly undertaken from the destination community or residents' perspective. Research looking specifically at tourism and residents' QOL has two approaches: understanding impacts perceived by residents and assessing specific impacts using an economic matrix.

It is understandable that researchers are interested in perceived impacts, as it is the communities of these residents' destinations who are actually impacted by the existence of tourism in the region. However, it is also argued that the perceived impacts may not reflect the actual impacts as perception is biased and limited by personal or collective experience as well as interests.

For example, in Yangshuo I received varying input regarding why the air was polluted. Some believed tourism had a negative impact on air quality. Others believed that tourism has contributed to the improvement and sustainability of air quality in Yangshuo as residents' sense of environmental protection was enhanced by tourism, changing the way residents interact with Yangshuo's natural environment.

This example shows that people's perceptions regarding the impacts varied, and it is hard to claim the true, actual impact. On the other hand, it is highly likely that all the factors as indicated by the residents contributed to the change of the air quality in Yangshuo in the short or long term. This study did not aim to generate a picture of the actual tourism impacts on the local community, as it is too complicated and beyond the research ability and scale of this PhD project. The purpose of this study was to understand how tourism influences residents' QOL and how to improve residents' QOL. Taking an interpretivist epistemology, this research followed two assumptions. First, everyone's reality is constructed differently by themselves in their own means. Second, if something is true, it is true in its consequences. It means that I took what interviewees believed as their own reality and explored their perceived QOL in their own reality. What the actual impact of tourism is could be important to me as a researcher, but not to the participant of this study. In other words, what my interviewees believed or

perceived could not be the actual impact, but this was acceptable in this study and the difference between perceived and actual impact was not considered in this study.

### **3.6 Summary**

In this chapter, the research design and the methodology of this study were presented, in terms of how I framed my research, how I conducted my research, including the selection of case study, data collection activities and data management including how I made sense of my data, namely the data analysis process. Under constructivism, a qualitative case study approach was adopted in this research. Yangshuo was chosen as the case study location according to a number of criteria. Four different types of data collection activities were undertaken, with the focus on using interviews to collect primary data about perceptions of different stakeholders in Yangshuo. Thematic analysis was then applied to interview data to explore themes from the data to address my research question.

In the next chapter, a more detailed description of Yangshuo is provided, to illustrate the context of the case study and the current dilemma in this popular tourism destination.

## **Chapter 4 Yangshuo: The case study location**

### **4.1 Introduction**

In the last chapter, the research design and methodology for this study were introduced. It was also indicated that Yangshuo was chosen as the case study for this research for its importance as one of the first tourism destinations open to international visitors and a current popular destination for domestic visitors, the accessibility of the local support, the cultural understanding and the stage of its tourism development. According to Robert E. Stake (2006), while it is important to gather data through direct observation and interviews, it is also important to learn from existing materials about the history, the cultural context, the educational context, the political context and relevant research of the case. The key concept of this study, QOL, is highly contextualised. The understanding of local residents' QOL in relation to tourism is based on a good understanding of Yangshuo County itself. Therefore, in this chapter, I first provide an illustration of the historical, cultural, political, administrative, educational, economic and natural environment profile of Yangshuo. Then based on my observation and document analysis, the current tourism development in Yangshuo is introduced in detail.

### **4.2 Profile of Yangshuo**

#### **4.2.1 Historical, cultural, administrative and political contexts**

Yangshuo is a county spanning 1436.91 km<sup>2</sup> (554.79 sq mi) in the northeast of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, China (Committee of Chorography of Yangshuo County 2007a). Since 2003, the administrative region of Yangshuo County has been divided into six towns and three villages, including Yangshuo Town, Baisha Town, Fuli Town, Xingping Town, Putong Town, Gaotian Town, Hejinbao Township, Yangdi Township and Puyi Township. Among them, Yangshuo Town serves as the business and administrative centre of the county, where the county government and the Communist Party of China (CPC) County Committee sit. To avoid confusion, in this thesis, I use Yangshuo County or Yangshuo to refer to Yangshuo County, and use Yangshuo Town

to refer to the town that holds the same name as the county but is only part of the case study.

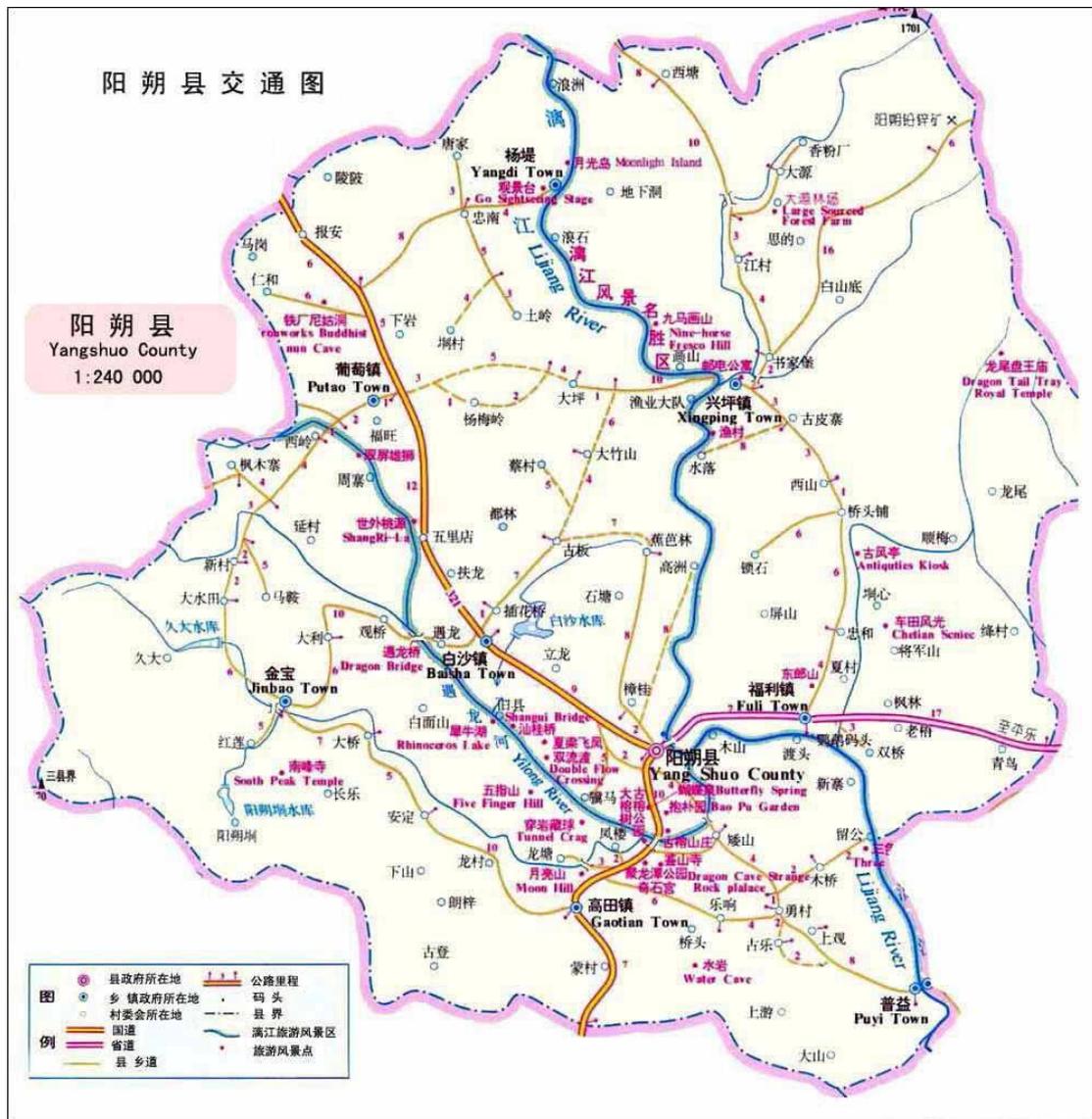


Figure 4.1: Yangshuo administrative region map

Yangshuo Town is the capital town in Yangshuo County (Committee of Chorography of Yangshuo County 2007a). A cruise on the river allows the small town to become known to foreigners. Located about 90 kilometres south of Guilin City, Yangshuo Town is the downstream end of the cruise, famous for scenic views such as Green Lotus Peak, Fu'an Wharf, Shutong Hill or Shuidongmen Wharf. Additionally, Yangshuo Town has one of the most popular attractions in Yangshuo, West Street, which attracts both domestic and international visitors for its western cafes, restaurants and hotels (Travelchinaguide, 2016).

In addition to Yangshuo Town, Xingping is another major town in Yangshuo that became popular because of the Li River. The Li River takes a big turn at Xingping, which is endowed with famous, poetic scenery. For example, newly-issued 20 RMB note has the Xingping river scenery on its back. Many visitors would come specifically to Xingping for photos (Travelchinaguide 2016).

According to the Yangshuo County Annals (2003), the history of Yangshuo dates back to 590 A.D. in the Sui Dynasty. It was named after the Yangshuo Mountain in the north of the region. From the time of the Tang Dynasty (founded in 618 and ending in 907), the beautiful natural environment in Yangshuo attracted many visitors; however, the country itself did not have much development and the local residents, mostly farmers, were generally very poor. A rough layout of the Yangshuo Town centre was formed in the Song Dynasty (founded in 960 and ending in 1279), consisting of a few straight lanes named as East Street, West Street, South Street, North Street and so on. West Street has been the main street in Yangshuo since then but stayed a narrow lane with only a two-meter width for a very long time, until the early 1990s when the large scale infrastructure construction started. In the late 1970s, Yangshuo opened up for tourism and soon became well known among foreign visitors for its beautiful and unique natural views. Many foreign backpackers were attracted to the place and thus decided to stay (Committee of Chorography of Yangshuo County 2007a). They resided along West Street and ran their own small business, which then turned the street into one of the key attractions in Yangshuo, famous for its western features. West Street thus started to gain its popularity among domestic visitors. The rapid tourism growth in Yangshuo gave rise to many country construction plans and policies favouring tourism development, such as protecting and refurbishing the old streets and ancient architecture to reflect local history and cultural characteristics. Additionally, venues and facilities for public cultural events such as singing fairs and festivals were built (Committee of Chorography of Yangshuo County 2011).

According to the Census data in 2013 (Yangshuo Yearbook 2014), the total population of Yangshuo County was 318,339. Fuli Town had the largest population of 48,641, followed by Baisha Town with a population of 47,851 and Yangshuo County with a number of 47,208. Yangshuo has 14 ethnic groups. As Yangshuo is located in Guangxi

Zhuang Autonomous Region, the major minority ethnic group in Yangshuo is Zhuang (12.17% of the total population). The other minority ethnic groups are Yao (0.88% of the total population), Hui (0.10% of the total population), Miao (0.05% of the total population), Tibetan, Dong, Korean, Tujia, Mongol and Bai. Han still has the largest population in Yangshuo, presenting over 84% of the total population (Yangshuo Yearbook 2014). Some of the minority ethnic groups' cultures and traditions have been preserved and integrated into a Yangshuo style of living shared by many residents. The diversity of ethnic cultures has made Yangshuo be a comparatively open community, which was viewed as the foundation for its rapid tourism growth.

Yangshuo County is under the jurisdiction of Guilin Prefecture City. The distance between Yangshuo and the city centre of Guilin is about 66 kilometres by road and 86 kilometres by water (Committee of Chorography of Yangshuo County, 2007a). Similar to other county-level divisions, policies in Yangshuo are carried out via Yangshuo County Government, and different government departments are in charge of different administrative duties.

It is not rare to find tense relationships between local residents and local governments in rural China, due to the conflict of interest in many aspects (Fewsmith & Gao 2014). In Yangshuo, however, the political environment is more complex. From my observation and interviews, local residents in Yangshuo have mixed attitudes towards the local government. The negative attitude comes from residents' perceptions of government corruption, policies that are believed to take benefits out of the hands of residents, unfairness and so on.

On the other hand, according to the interviews with the local government officers and my own observation of residents' homes and attitudes, the power of local government is weakened by the early open-up of Yangshuo County to foreign visitors. The impact of Yangshuo's early open-up was two-dimensional. First, local residents became more open-minded after tourism started and they were exposed to western values and cultures. Second, due to the popularity of Yangshuo among foreign visitors, when leaders of foreign countries visited China, they often paid a trip to Yangshuo. Since the first Yangshuo yearbook published in 2001, there has been a list of foreign leaders' visits to Yangshuo under the Key Events section in every issue of the yearbook. Residents in

Yangshuo, particularly those residing in Yangshuo Town, were used to greeting important leaders from the state government or other countries. Many of them hung their group photos with the key international leaders on the wall of their residential or business properties.

Such experiences reduced the psychological distance between themselves and political leaders from China and other countries, and thus reduced their perceptions of the difference of power between themselves and the local government. In one interview with a government representative, the participant shared his own experience of dealing with a dispute between his organisation and local residents. From the way he described the story, I felt that he was very concerned about the potential actions the residents might take against him and his organisation. *Yangshuo attracts great attentions because of its unique role as a small tourism destination to welcome and greet important leaders from foreign countries. You know, those big names.* I think this comment from the participant can explain well why the local government officers are much more cautious about local governance and tension between themselves and residents than in other counties.

Besides the historical influence, the present political reform in China has also impacted the political environment and county governance in Yangshuo. Overall, it is apparent that tourism has played an extremely important part in the development and economic growth in Yangshuo County and the formation of Yangshuo's history and culture. The detailed introduction of Yangshuo's tourism development is provided in Section 4.3.

#### **4.2.2 Natural environment in Yangshuo**

The landscape in Yangshuo depicts typical karst topography. The country is decorated with thousands of karst peaks and caves and a number of winding rivers flowing among the peaks. The two most important rivers that traverse the country are the Li River and Yulong River (Yangshuo Yearbook 2012). The Li River flows 86 kilometres from Guilin city centre to Yangshuo, where the Karst Mountains and river sights highlight the famous Li River cruise (Yangshuo Yearbook 2012). The local scenery in Yangshuo County is regarded as the essence of Guilin (Yangshuo Tourism Bureau Website).



Image 4.1: Photo “Yangshuo Beauty” taken by Fangkou Wu; provided by the Yangshuo Tourism bureau



Image 4.2: Photo “Li River of Ease” taken by Fangkou Wu; provided by the Yangshuo Tourism bureau

One of the most famous poems about Yangshuo was written by the poet Bin Shen in Tang Dynasty, and the last sentence of the poem described the residency in Yangshuo as “living in the green lotus” (碧莲峰里住人家). One of my resident interviewees

expressed a deep love for and attachment to Yangshuo. She said: *the beauty of Yangshuo doesn't lie in the mountains and doesn't lie in the rivers. The real beauty of Yangshuo lies in the interaction between mountains and rivers – the mountains reflected in the river and the river surrounded by the mountains.* I think this is an accurate description of the unique and attractive natural beauty of Yangshuo.

#### **4.2.3 Economy in Yangshuo**

The main driver of GDP growth in Yangshuo shifted from the agricultural sector to the manufacturing sector, and now to the service sector, in which tourism plays a big part. In 2013, the service sector contributed to 56% of the GDP in Yangshuo and accounted for 66% of the local fiscal income (Yangshuo Yearbook 2012). The total GDP in 2013 was approximately RMB 8.44 billion, which doubled the total number in 2008 of RMB 3.85 billion. In 2003, 1995 and 1980, this number was respectively 1208 million, 701.88 million and 47.41 million (Committee of Chorography of Yangshuo County 2007a).

### **4.3 Tourism development in Yangshuo**

The role of tourism as the key economic driver in Yangshuo was recognised by the local government because Yangshuo has plenty of mountains but limited farmlands. Thus the tourism and service industry was regarded as a good option to use the land resources more efficiently in many parts of the county (Committee of Chorography of Yangshuo County 2011).

The history of tourism development in Yangshuo has been mentioned briefly in the earlier section with the history of Yangshuo (Committee of Chorography of Yangshuo County 2007a). In the late 1970s after Yangshuo was opened up to foreign visitors, it became popular with foreign backpackers from various countries. At the beginning the number was small. By the late 1990s, the number of backpackers became greater and some of the foreign backpackers decided to stay in Yangshuo and lived along West Street. Their residency and the shops, restaurants, cafés or clubs they opened lent another semantic interpretation to the name of West Street: the western street, or the street with westerners. At that time, domestic tourists only represented a small portion

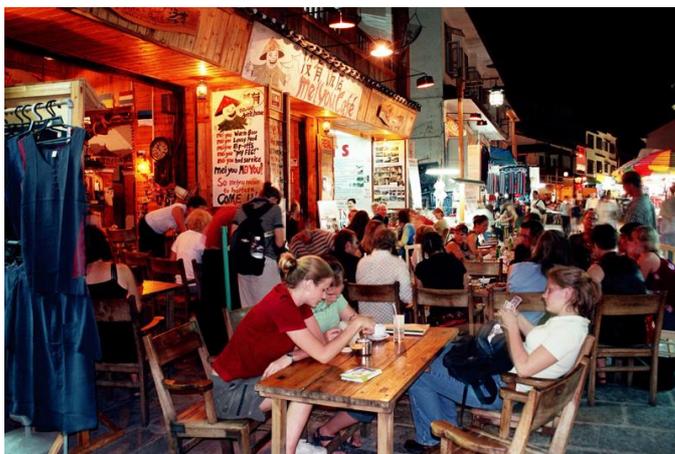
of all the visitors. By 2005, domestic visitors outnumbered foreign visitors by a great margin and West Street started to become commercialised. Landlords of the buildings in West Street started to rent their buildings out and moved to other places to live (Committee of Chorography of Yangshuo County 2011). Today, Yangshuo remains as one of the most popular destinations in China for both domestic and foreign travellers for its beautiful natural views, minority ethnic cultures, rural lifestyles, and historical attractions (Committee of Chorography of Yangshuo County 2014).

The official website of Yangshuo Tourism Bureau has listed 14 different tourism attractions (<http://www.yangshuotour.com/sights-list.html>, extracted in Oct 2016).

### 1) Butterfly Spring Park



### 2) West Street (Xi Jie)



### 3) Xingping Fishing Village



### 4) Fuli Ancient Town



### 5) Totem Ancient Trail



6) Yangdi



7) Li River



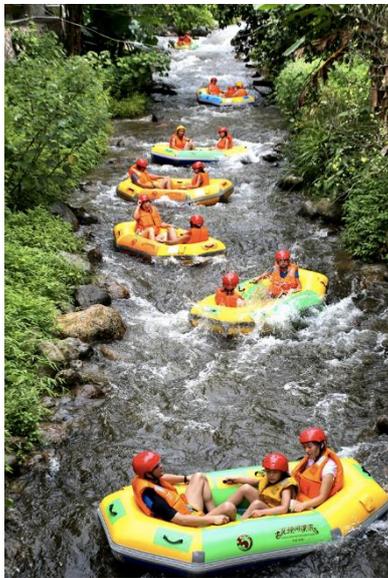
8) Big Banyan Tree



9) Live Show Impression Sanjie Liu



10) Longjing River Kayaking



11) Moon Hill



## 12) Qixian Peak Tea Garden



## 13) Yulong River Bamboo Rafting



## 14) Shangri-la (Shi Wai Tao Yuan)



There are other popular attractions or iconic must-see sites recommended by other travel information websites (e.g., Qunar.com, TripAdvisor.com) or listed in the

Yangshuo Yearbooks. They are: Ten-Mile Gallery (Shili Hualang), Xilang Hill, Yangshuo Park, Assembling Dragon Cave, Green Lotus Peak, Sanjie Liu Above-water Park, Shutong Hill, Snail Hill, Xianggong Mountain and so on.

In addition to these natural, historical or built attractions, various events and festivals are held in Yangshuo to attract visitors, including local traditional cultural festivals and created festivals or events, such as Li River Fishing Light Festival, Beer Fish Competition, to name a few (Yangshuo Tourism Development Report 2015).



Image 4.3: Photo “Dance with Sheng Music” taken by Fangkou Wu in a minority ethnic group performance; provided by the Yangshuo Tourism bureau



Image 4.4: Photo “Beer Fish” (unknown photographer) provided by the Yangshuo Tourism bureau

In order to better understand the tourism resources and activities in Yangshuo, particularly how local residents may participate in these tourism resources or events, I collected primary data from five officers working in Yangshuo Tourism Bureau in June 2015, who are in charge of tourism data and policy analysis and have much knowledge about the tourism sector in Yangshuo. Questions asked about tourism events and resources and local residents’ engagement included: (1) Ranking the rewards Yangshuo has received according to the influence and popularity of the rewards; (2) Ranking the events and festivals in Yangshuo according to local residents’ participation; (3) Ranking nine towns in Yangshuo according to the overall influence of tourism, the percentage of residents’ participation in the tourism activities, and the richness of tourism resources; (4) Listing three of the most popular tourism events for local residents; and (5) Identifying the most popular tourism attractions among residents.

Although there were slight differences between the five responses, the purpose of these questions was to gather a comparatively consistent view from the perspective of tourism bureau staff. Similarities and agreements were the focus of this data integration. Briefly, among all listed attractions, the Yulong River (5), the West Street (4), Impression Sanjie Liu (4), the Xingping Ancient Town (3) and Yangshuo Park (2) were regarded by the participating tourism bureau staff as the most welcomed attractions among local residents.

Regarding the degree of tourism impacts, tourism resources and tourism participation, there was consensus among the participants. The nine towns/townships were grouped into three levels based on participants’ responses. The first group included Yangshuo Town, Xingping Town and Gaotian Town. They were considered as having abundant tourism resources, high participation from local residents and great impacts on tourism. Yangshuo Town was considered as having the highest level of local residents’ participation in tourism and the highest tourism impacts while Xingping Town was believed to have the most abundant tourist resources. Tourist resources in Xingping Town include a very famous river reach of the Li River which boasts the Nine Horses

Fresco Hill, the Longjing River kayaking, Xitang Fishing club, Lotus caves, fishing villages, among others. Residents living in places from this group of towns were the main target of my resident interviews.

The second group comprised Yangdi Township, Fuli Town and Baisha Town. They had comparatively lower degrees of tourism impact, residents' participation and tourist resources. Each of them, however, has at least one popular tourism attraction, for example, the Fuli Ancient Town in Fuli Town, the Li River walking trails in Yangdi Town and the Shangri-La in Baisha Town.

The last group comprised the remaining Putao Town and Jinbao and Puyi Townships. These three towns were either comparatively far from Yangshuo Town Centre or from the Lijiang River.

Another set of questions asked was about influential awards had Yangshuo received and most popular or influential tourism activities or festivals. The tourism events commonly highlighted by the five tourism bureau staff were the Li River Fishing Light Festival, the Lantern Festival in West Street and the Beer Fish Cooking Contest. They were regarded to have attracted many local residents to participate. However, the staff all agreed that the participation rate of residents to local tourism events was relatively low, but they differed vastly regarding which awards were more influential

Based on the data collated in the Yangshuo Yearbooks, comparatively rapid tourism growth in Yangshuo, in terms of visitor numbers, started from 1999 but has experienced big fluctuations over the past 15 years (See Figure 4.2 and Figure 4.3). Specifically, in 2011, the total visitor number was 9.35 million, followed by 10.50 million in 2012, 11.70 million in 2013 and 12.29 million in 2014. Based on the information provided by officers from Yangshuo Tourism Bureau and existing documents, there were a few key turning points.

Among all attractions, a few were chosen by the tourism bureau staff as being in demand for improvement in their management, such as Beihong Xu's Old House and the Yulong River. The latter has been under a reform that turned the individual bamboo

crafting business into an enterprise and charged visitors a unified passenger fee. This reform received much criticism from local residents living along the Yulong River.

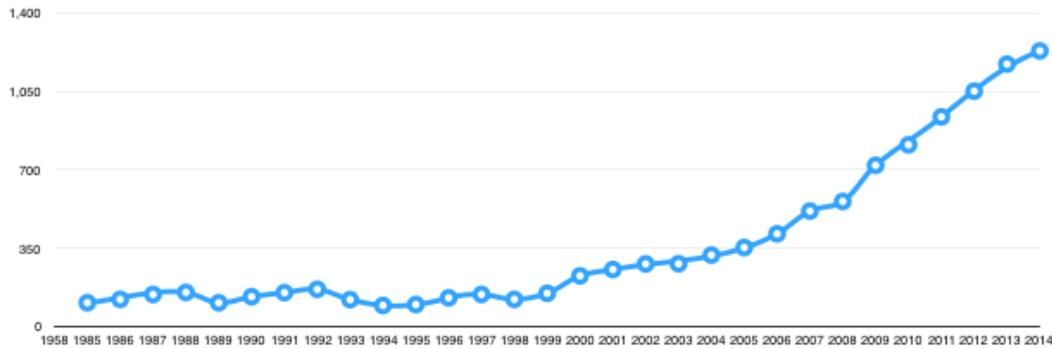


Figure 4.2: Recorded number of tourist arrivals (in 10,000)

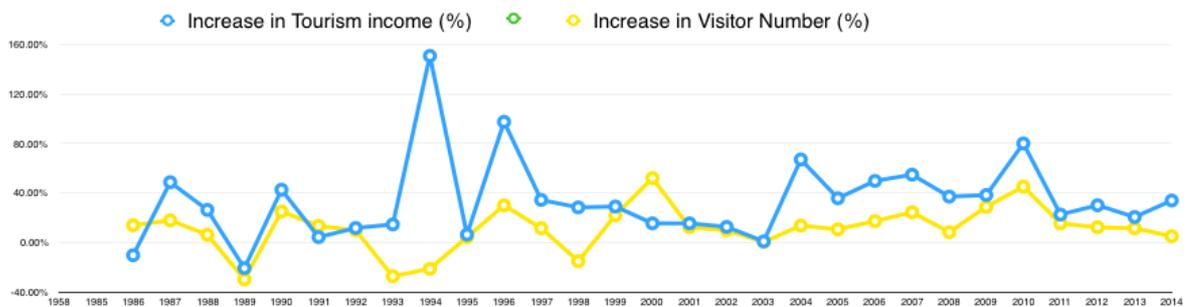


Figure 4.3: Longitudinal data on the increase rate in tourism income and visitor number

In 1999, home hotels started to become popular and the capacity of tourist accommodation in Yangshuo increased dramatically (Committee of Chorography of Yangshuo County 2011). As a result, Yangshuo witnessed an increase in the number of overnight tourists as well as its tourism income. However, its growth was hit by the outbreak of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in southern China in late November (Monitoring Report on the Sustainable Tourism Development in Yangshuo 2013). Between November 2002 and July 2003, the outbreak of SARS, a viral respiratory disease, in southern China caused over 770 deaths and spread to over 37 countries (McGehee et al. 2013). It seriously influenced the travelling and tourism industry (Dombey 2004). Yangshuo was no different (McGehee et al. 2013). Yangshuo Tourism Development Report 2015 showed that from 2001, the tourism income growth rate each year was over 30%, except in 2002 and 2003. The growth rate for these two

years was 12.62% and 1.24%. In comparison, the growth rate in 2004, post the SARS event, was 66.39%.

Fortunately, in 2004 the live music and dancing show, *Impression Sanjie Liu*, was premiered. At the very first live performance at the natural theatre that used the Li River and surrounding hills as its stage in China, *Impression Sanjie Liu* received great attention and successfully attracted many domestic and international visitors. Because the show was performed only in the evening, many tourists had to stay overnight in Yangshuo after watching the show. Yangshuo thus shifted from a transit route region to a tourism destination region and the number of overnight tourists in Yangshuo increased significantly. *Impression Sanjie Liu* undoubtedly played an extremely important role in this shift.

The global financial crisis of 2008-2009 caused a big decline in the international tourism market (Kapiki 2012, Smeral 2010). According to the statistics released by the China National Tourism Administration, the number of inbound tourists for China declined by 1.4% at the national level. Guilin City alone experienced a decline of 2.2% in international arrivals (China National Tourism Administration Statistic Report of 2008, 2009). Additionally, many unexpected disasters such as storms and snowstorms, earthquakes, unrest and floods hit the country during 2008. Yangshuo thus experienced a considerable drop in the total number of tourist arrivals in that year.

In the following years, with the positive impact of the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympic Games and the emergence of many new tourism policies and strategies to revitalise the industry, the tourism sector rebounded strongly. In 2009 and 2010, tourist arrivals grew by 28.78% and 45.11% respectively, international tourist arrivals grew by 11.2% and 22.6% respectively, and total tourism income grew by 38.29% and 80% respectively in Yangshuo (Yangshuo Yearbook, 2009, 2011).

In 2013, the new China Tourism Law came into effect to regulate malpractices in the tourism industry, in particular coercive shopping, low prices, and poor quality tours. These malpractices affected the number of cheap group tours countrywide (Ma et al. 2015). In the same year, China's State Council released legislation restricting the use of public funds for travel purposes as part of President Xi Jinping's campaign against

corruption and extravagant spending, leading to a decline in the high-end tourism market (Bao 2015). As a result, the tourism growth in Yangshuo slowed down in 2013.

Some relatively large local tourism enterprises were identified by the staff from Yangshuo Tourism Bureau and are listed in Table 4.1 below. These enterprises are well known to local residents and have a considerable impact on local communities.

**Table 4.1: Influential local enterprises in Yangshuo**

	<b>Enterprises</b>
Hotels	Green Lotus Hotel (Bi Lian Jiang Jing), Gui Fu Hotel, New West Street Hotel, Jun Hao Hotel, Wu Yue Hotel, Gui Fu Hotel
Restaurants	Da Shifu Beer Fish Restaurant
Attraction operators	Yulong River Shuoyuan Company, Longjing River Kayaking Operator, Ten-Mile Gallery (Shili Hualang)
Entertainment sites	n/a
Retails	Le Le Lai Supermarket, the shopping square of West Street

Similarly, some current or planned large scale tourism-related projects were identified: Yuerong Holiday Resort, Guilin Rui Sheng Holiday Resort, Hong Shang Sheng Jing, the eco-agricultural tourism zone from Yangshuo Town to Guban (30 kilometres), Yangshuo Tourism Resort, the upgrading project of Ten-Mile Gallery (Shili Hualang), visitor collecting and distributing centre, railway station upgrading, River View Hotel (He Pan). It is expected that those projects will provide great employment opportunities to local residents, upgrade the surrounding infrastructure, and attract more high-end visitors to Yangshuo.

#### **4.4 Chapter summary**

This chapter presented an overview of the case study location, Yangshuo County, Guilin City, Guangxi Province. The historical, cultural, administrative and political contexts of Yangshuo was first introduced. Then its natural and the economic landscapes were illustrated. A detailed introduction of the tourism development in Yangshuo was then provided. In the next three chapters, findings merged from the data collected from Yangshuo will be presented.

# **Chapter 5 Residents' perception of Quality of Life in Yangshuo**

## **5.1 Introduction**

The previous chapter provided the context for the case study by describing the historical, cultural, political, administrative, educational, economic and natural environment profile of Yangshuo. This profile has shown the value of Yangshuo as a case study, in which tourism has developed for over 40 years and impacted Yangshuo's development and changes in residents' everyday life.

In the next three chapters, data from observation and interviews conducted in Yangshuo are coded, analysed and presented. As explained in Chapter 3, interviews were conducted at two different stages. During the first stage, the focus was on local residents to gain an understanding the impact of tourism and QOL from their perspective. During the second stage, representatives from government departments and large tourism enterprises in Yangshuo were purposively recruited to present perspectives of the tourism industry and Yangshuo government.

This chapter focuses on reporting and analysing data of stage one's interviews with residents who reside and work in Yangshuo to address the first research question: What are the important domains of QOL identified by the residents of destination community in China?

A profile of the interviewees is firstly provided to show the backgrounds of interviewees. Then I discuss the key findings related to interviewees' QOL perceptions. When interviewees talked about their current QOL, many of them compared their lives currently and before, naturally showing the perceived change in their QOL. In relation to the first research question of this study, this chapter also clarifies how residents' QOL perceptions – what they consider as a good life or the important dimensions of a good life – are shaped by their participation in and interaction with tourism. In addition to understanding elements that are important to life quality, I attempted to capture the unique elements that are strongly related to tourism and at the same time determine

residents' evaluation of their current life quality. This chapter concludes with a summary of the key factors influencing residents' life quality and their "definitions" of a good quality of life.

## **5.2 Interviewed residents' profile**

It was important to understand the interviewees' backgrounds as the study aimed to delve into their experience and perceptions, which are determined by their life experience and the community they live in.

This section reports on 25 formal (in-depth) and informal interviews with residents who work or reside in one of the counties in Yangshuo. These residents represent the aggregate community in Yangshuo. One of the purposes of employing purposive sampling together with convenience sampling and snowball sampling was to ensure the diversity of participants in the interviews. As a result, the majority of the interviews were conducted in Yangshuo County, Gaotian Country and Fuli County, but some residents' stories covered their living experience in Baisha County and Xingping County. These five counties, as discussed in Chapter 3, are the major counties in Yangshuo, either containing a large percentage of Yangshuo's population or heavily influenced by Yangshuo's tourism development.

The interviews were characterised according to estimated age, gender, occupation, town of birth, town of residence, and income reliance on the tourism industry. The purpose of these classifications was to identify important differences that influence residents' perception of tourism impacts and QOL. Any information that could lead to the participant being identified was removed. Among these characteristics, occupation and income reliance on tourism industry have been reported in many quantitative studies as having an influence on residents' attitude and perceptions of tourism impacts (Hu et al. 2014). Age and gender naturally influenced people's QOL while town of birth and town of residence determine the main localities of residents' living or working experience in Yangshuo. The following table shows the sample according to these key attributes identified.

**Table 5.1: Key attributes of interviewed residents in Yangshuo**

<b>Key attributes</b>	<b>Variables</b>	<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Age group	20-30	4	16%
	30-40	5	20%
	40-50	6	24%
	50-60	4	16%
	60+	4	16%
Occupation	Tourism related	21	84%
	Non-tourism related	4	26%
Income reliance on tourism industry	High	9	36%
	Median	11	44%
	Low/none	5	20%
Gender	Male	18	54%
	Female	15	46%

In Chapter 3, the time reference issue has been explained. Each of the interviewees was asked to ‘share freely what they think the impacts of tourism in Yangshuo are’ and ‘tell me how your life is here’ (Appendix D). During the interview discourse, based on their responses, I followed up with questions orienting the conversation to more personal reflections based on their own living or working experience. Through this process, I noticed some interesting features: (a) participants preferred to cite others’ views and opinions when commenting on recent changes or impacts of tourism in Yangshuo; (b) participants preferred to use their own experience as evidence to support claims about positive or negative aspects of life in Yangshuo in the past; (c) participants were well informed of the environmental and economic impacts of tourism on Yangshuo and were familiar with words such as employment rate and living cost.

It is important to point out that most participants referred to the “past” and “now” frequently in their stories, but the time division is not definite and varies according to their ages, their own situations at the starting points, year of initial tourism participation, current jobs they are doing, their family situations, and the counties they live and work in. The study explored residents’ perceptions of their QOL based on their own system

of well-being and happiness and their own life time frame. Although I looked for similarities between the years of turning point suggested by participants, in the following sections when discussing QOL domains, “past” and “now” are referred to in relative terms based on individual criteria instead of absolute terms.

### 5.3 Overall QOL in Yangshuo

To respond to one of my core questions ‘what is your life in Yangshuo’, the following sections draw on the interviews to identify what the important QOL domains are as perceived by Yangshuo residents interviewed, as well as to identify residents’ satisfaction, concerns and perceived changes.

Over 60% of the interviewees were satisfied with their overall life quality in Yangshuo when asked the general question about their feeling of their life in Yangshuo. Some residents provided reasons that are related to a specific quality of life domains with which they are satisfied. Some found it hard to answer the question of why they thought so. One person said that *people from here are all contented* (知足常乐). It describes the life philosophy by which people believe that happiness lies in contentment, which is rooted in the traditional Chinese culture (Zeng & Guo 2012). This is a part of the culture of the community in Yangshuo, which might derive from the agricultural history in this region in the past. Contentment is considered a good quality in Yangshuo and has influenced residents’ perception of life quality.

A few others used the word “liveable” to describe Yangshuo as a good place to live. One person said that *I like travelling and have been to many big cities. In comparison with these cities, Yangshuo is more liveable. The life here is ...more leisurely and carefree* (闲情逸致). The preference towards a leisurely, relaxed or laid-back lifestyle is also part of the culture in Yangshuo, and was emphasised by many interviewees. This lifestyle is also associated with the feature of Yangshuo as a tourism destination. While the association will be detailed in a later chapter, it is important to point out that the leisurely and carefree lifestyle is attractive for visitors who spend a relatively long period of time in Yangshuo (Yangshuo Yearbook 2012).

The rest of the interviewees used the word ‘no feeling’ or ‘can be better’ to describe their current level of perceived satisfaction towards their overall quality of life. No one used strong emotional words such as ‘disaster’.

However, although the evaluation of the overall QOL was positive, for specific QOL domains the responses were mixed, with both similarities and differences between different participants. As discussed in Chapter 2, the literature suggests that QOL can be defined by the extent to which individuals can satisfy their own needs. One way to classify these needs is: physiological needs (subsistence, good health and physical protection from harm); security (having a stable place to live and work); belongingness (ability to engage in social, cultural and political activities); self-esteem (knowledge, confidence, having choices) (Costanza et al. 2007). Responses from my interviews supported most factors. The life domains suggested in my study include: family and family culture, community and social relationship, material and environmental well-being, lifestyle and freedom, and sense of security. They are discussed in the following sections.

Regarding the comparison between past and now, interestingly, most interviewees responded that QOL was enhanced in the past but reduced in recent years. The domains that greatly contributed to this perception are material and environmental well-being and sense of security. These aspects are discussed in detail in the relevant sections.

## **5.4 Family and family culture**

Family and family culture is an important QOL domain for Yangshuo residents. This is not surprising, as the family is one of the basic elements in Chinese culture (Zeng & Guo 2012). I decided to start with this life domain because I think it explains changes and concerns in other domains. Since tourism started in Yangshuo, residents’ traditional way of life has been shifting due to the exposure to new ways of living, the economic development and the influences of outsiders. Residents have engaged in various tourism-related activities, including offering food and accommodation; guiding; selling admission tickets to attractions; selling crafts, or souvenirs; river cruises; transportation; providing leisure activities; and working at the attractions or performances. Some families have abandoned agriculture and transformed their own houses into small hotels

providing bed-and-breakfast services. Some have leased their properties to other business people for running retails, hotels or restaurants and earned income from renting. People have learnt new skills such as communication to stay competitive; women have been empowered to take an active role in the tourism industry; young people stay at home to work instead of hunting for jobs in big cities like Guangzhou or Shenzheng. These changes have influenced the family domain of residents' QOL in both a positive and negative way.

**Residents spent less time with their family members during traditional festivals,** which was raised by a few middle-aged and elderly interviewees. The festivals specifically referred to include the Spring Festival, Duanwu (Dragon-boat) Festival and Mid-Autumn Festival. They are family-orientated traditional festivals in China. They are public holidays as well as peak travel seasons. Residents who engage in tourism are faced with the busiest business seasons during these festivals, so instead of going home to be with their families, they spend most of the festival days working and earning money. *'I cannot remember when was the last time for my whole family to visit my father and brother on the lunar New Year's Day'* said one participant, whose father lives with her older brother in a different county. Her family runs a small restaurant in Gaotian. During the Chinese New Year, they only close their business for half-day on New Year's Eve. One person expressed his worry that *the tradition of celebrating festivals with families can be gone. Now you celebrate festivals with strangers.*

**Women became more independent and empowered.** Women's role witnessed different changes in different suburbs. In Baisha, where the major income source is growing fruits (e.g. Shatian pomelo), men generally stay at home to take care of the fruits while women seek casual jobs in Yangshuo County when there is less work to do in the orchards. *My partner didn't want to look for jobs in tourism. He isn't good at talking. Many men in my hometown are like him, not interested in working in tourism. I think it doesn't matter. So I came to Yangshuo to give it a try...to look for a job. At first I don't know how to speak with other people either...It doesn't bother me anymore now.* A female participant from Baisha shared her experience of working in Yangshuo Country as a restaurant waitress and then a tour guide. She goes back home to help in the orchards during the harvest season. The gender difference between men and women in approaching tourism-related job opportunities was also noted during my

observations. Except for a few types of jobs such as kayaks and security guides, most tourism-related jobs are carried out by more women, if not women only, than men. Some men did not express a desire for tourism jobs. Through engaging in tourism, women contribute independently to the household income and thus gain more empowerment in the family. This is an enhancement to their life quality.

**Some people favoured working “at home” a better option than hunting for jobs in other cities.** This view was supported by some young participants from their own perspectives and some middle-aged participants from their parents’ perspective. One person explained his reason for running a home-based accommodation business instead of renting the property for approximately the same income as *the key concern is children. I want to keep them, my children, near me. Because in this way...I don’t know how to say it...because at least he will not go out and mess things up. Now many young people turn bad when going out to work (打工) and play with other young people. Their hearts become totally wild (心玩野了).* To protect children from becoming “bad” is one concern from the parents’ perspective. Another person said: *Although the wage of working in the local areas is lower, but you feel more relieved. The whole family stays together. They can at least live and cook together. There is no pressure on living and eating. In Guangdong, although the salary is higher, at least RMB 3000 to RMB 4000 per month. However, after deducting for food and renting, not much is left. Therefore, in comparison, most people prefer to work in the local region.* From the young people’s own perspective, they found staying at home to continue a family-run business or taking on other tourism-related jobs in Yangshuo, and surrounding counties allowed them to take better care of their parents or other family members. One participant in his early 20s said that *there are many opportunities in Yangshuo. I think I can have a good future here. But, the most important thing is if I work as an assistant manager in this restaurant, I can go home and visit my family regularly during my breaks.*

## **5.5 Material and environmental well-being**

According to the visitors, the average living standard of people in the tourism towns in Yangshuo is higher than that of people in towns with less tourism in terms of quality of

housing and roads, while the quality of the natural environment is deemed worse nowadays than in the past.

### **Living quality**

Exposed to the opportunities offered by tourism, particularly through interactions with tourists, Yangshuo people prioritised increasing household income and pursuing a higher QOL. Living quality is a key domain of QOL for most participants and is reflected primarily by housing conditions. For example, with a better understanding of modern housing needs, Yangshuo families had built new style multilevel houses with bathrooms and toilets included inside the houses and purchased modern furniture, televisions, fridges and other necessary items. Almost all residents were satisfied with their living environment at home and acknowledged the improvement in their housing quality. Only a few participants were waiting for their houses to be built. One person said that *in the past, we don't have toilets inside the house. Now, my house has three levels and 20 rooms in total, and there are bathrooms and toilets for every room at every level.* WiFi has also become popular in new houses built for providing accommodation to visitors.

In places that are along the Li River and major access streets to core attractions, the government plans, promotes or commences special tourism demonstration programmes, such as the “Li River – Dongan Tourism Demonstration Zone” programme implemented by Guilin city. Free house refurbishment offers are provided to residents living in the programme zone. One person said that *we are waiting now for the government to get us the white painted wall (白粉墙), grey tiles and some garden. This is free. But they don't pay us either.*

### **Infrastructure**

In addition to individual houses, public space, roads and infrastructure were also an important QOL domain. While admitting the rapid improvement in this domain since tourism started, many interviewees also expressed concerns. One is the unequal resource allocation. An example was provided by a hotel owner in Xingping. The hotel is located next to the Li River. The owner said that while the building of riverbank walking trail for visitors was taking place fast, the construction of the public hall and

square had not progressed for a very long time. He showed me where the construction site is. It seemed like a temporary “waste centre”. This participant sees himself as a leader in their small community. He organises regular events for his neighbourhood. Because there is no public space for them to gather and meet, he uses the first level of his own house as a meeting place. In his opinion, the government gives preference to tourism-related construction over non-tourism-related infrastructure or facilities. Similar examples were provided by these participants regarding roads, public toilets and so on.

### **Natural environment**

All interviewees raised the factor of the natural environment in Yangshuo and its change since tourism started. At the same time, the beautiful natural environment in Yangshuo forms an important part of their QOL. As introduced in earlier sections, residents advocate a relaxed and leisurely lifestyle in Yangshuo. An important element of this lifestyle, apart from the liveability of Yangshuo, is its “clean” natural environment. One person said that *the air and environment in Yangshuo is much better than other places...because we rely on tourism, we don't have many manufactories. We don't have any pollutions. We protect our natural environment pretty well... I definitely won't want to move out from Yangshuo.* Additionally, “poetic” is also an important feature of Yangshuo’s natural environment. Many participants expressed their pride of the “poetic spirit (诗意)” of Yangshuo’s mountains and rivers. One sang a song during the interview to describe its attractiveness: *The sound of high mountains and running waters, telling the love from faraway places. The beauty drawn by spring, summer, autumn and winter, greeting you in the hotel of Dongling.* (高山流水玉之音, 五湖四海皆有情。春夏秋冬画美景, 东岭别墅欢迎你).

On the other hand, compared to the natural environment in the past, many said that the natural environment had deteriorated now, especially the quality of water. One said: *I used to drink the water from Li River directly, but no one dares to do it now. The water gets very dirty. The hotels and restaurants emit waste into the river... In the past, when I was doing the river cruise business, our rafts were made of bamboos and manually driven. It took two hours to go and return between here and Nine Horse Hill. The bamboo rafts don't pollute the river. Nowadays, cruises use engines. The engines*

*polluted the river, but they are fast. It only takes 45 to 50 minutes for a return trip. I still remembered that I was always singing folk songs when our rafts went down the river. The visitors all loved my singing. It doesn't happen anymore now. Another person said that the environment condition is not improved, instead, it is worsened, and the noise is louder and louder.*



Image 5.1: Rafts with engines

Some residents, however, had opinions in contrast to those quote above. One perceived an overall positive change in the natural environment in Yangshuo as a result of the government's efforts in reducing waste and rubbish and promoting conservation for the tourism development purpose. Another positive change mentioned is the flowers with different colours that have been planted and which enhance views of the mountain.

## **5.6 Employment, income and living cost**

Before tourism became popular, there were limited cash-earning opportunities in Yangshuo. Since then, West Street has attracted a substantial number of visitors and has greatly contributed to local residents' livelihoods by creating opportunities for employment and cash earnings. As mentioned earlier in the section regarding family and family culture, tourism has enabled some residents to seek jobs in Yangshuo county or operate their own businesses in the community. This is especially beneficial for residents with disadvantages, such as mothers and single parents with young children, the disabled, the elderly, and many women.

In an informal interview with two elderly women selling souvenirs outside the Darongshu attraction, I was very impressed by their stories. One of these women was 86 years old, could not hear well and was blind in one eye. The other elderly woman was 76 years old. Her husband was disabled in a tractor accident a long time ago and then, unfortunately, her older son had a stroke. She voluntarily acted as my translator when I asked the 86 year old women questions by speaking loudly to her in their own dialect. The souvenirs they were selling are traditional hand-made hemp shoes (Image 5.1). The 76-year-old participant told me that without tourism, she would not have been able to support the whole family by herself and successfully raise two sons. She also earned enough money to build houses for each of her sons. Now, her older son married and moved out with his own family. She is living with her younger son. She concluded that *I feel very lucky. I'm very satisfied with my life.*



Image 5.2: Handmade hemp shoes

On the other hand, opportunities to participate in tourism are unevenly distributed in Yangshuo. The main areas of concentration are in and around Yangshuo Town and to a lesser extent, along with the major tourism attractions and resources. Within the community, those with location advantages, strong financial capital and/or business skills and mindsets have more opportunities than those who do not have these advantages. Residents from West Street, for example, enjoy the good location advantages. They were the first group of residents in Yangshuo who benefitted from tourism development in this region. Residents whose assigned household lands are next to roads are also at an advantage. Many of them turned their private houses into home-based hotels or restaurants and earned a good income in the early years.

For people who do not participate in tourism, lack of experience and resources were the perceived barriers, in addition to those who were not interested in tourism. Even though not every resident participated in the tourism business directly, many of them have

connections. For example, farmers sell their vegetables to restaurants which receive more visitors than locals.

There is an increasing number of local livelihood options in the community which are directly or indirectly related to tourism. Many self-run or family-based enterprises have emerged as a result of tourism, such as family-owned hotels, restaurants, stores etc. For enterprises like hotels or lodges, revenue was generated not only from charges for accommodation, food and beverages, services, vehicles for hire but also sales of entry tickets to attractions. The restaurants serve drinks and meals to visitors. The stores generally sell various street food and souvenirs, for example, handicrafts made by residents.

Sometimes, the residents partner with each other in running their own tourism business. For example, households that run hotels or lodges usually pay family members, relatives, or other neighbours for help, such as promoting their business and attracting visitors, and organising and guiding tours. This led to the next important QOL domain, social interaction, discussed in Section 5.7.

While the employment opportunities and household income in Yangshuo increased, the average living cost there also increased. Almost all interviewees, in particular residents who are not working in tourism-related jobs, emphasised the increasing living cost as a negative impact of tourism development on residents' QOL in Yangshuo. While recognising there were differences in individuals' income and expenditures, in general, the increase in living cost in Yangshuo was identified as a problem for every participant. One participant who works as a civil servant said that *I have been working in my position for over seven years but still couldn't afford to buy an apartment in Yangshuo county*. Another person said that *...People who did tourism early earned a lot of money. Now, you can't be rich in Yangshuo, but you can definitely survive... I think with the development of tourism, our level of quality of life is reduced, because we still earn the same amount of income, but the living cost has become much higher*.

## 5.7 Community identity and social interaction

Literature has suggested that community well-being and place attachment is one of the important QOL domains, including partnerships, developing/enhancing community pride and a sense of community belonging, linking communities, building group and place identity, value minorities and cross-cultural understanding, building sense of nostalgia, social inclusivity and balance, maintaining and revitalising traditions and local culture, enhancing local identity and place attachment, enhancing ethnic identity and highlighting popular culture (McKercher & Ho 2012). Different factors will be perceived at different community levels, from sub-local, local, national to international. This community spatial differentiation can be captured by the following definitions: (a) sub-local communities include sub-groups of a larger urban or rural region and incorporate ethnic minority groups, neighbourhoods, and the like; (b) local communities represent the aggregate community in a single urban or rural setting; (c) national communities refer to citizens and permanent residents from a single economy; and (d) international communities, include non-citizens of the country and economy (McKercher & Ho, 2012). In this section, the focus is on the first and second community spatial levels, namely sub-local and local communities. Concerning the definitions in this study, for an interviewee, the sub-local community is the county where they live or work. The local community refers to the aggregate community in Yangshuo Town as a whole.

These interviewees mostly expressed a sense of community and place attachment towards Yangshuo Town. They have developed community pride. One said that *when I travel to other places, people asked where I come from. I said, Yangshuo. Ei, everyone know it. I felt very proud. Sometimes, people ask me if Guilin belongs to Yangshuo. I always answer – yes. It means Yangshuo is more popular than Guilin.* They are proud of the beautiful natural resources in Yangshuo and the history of West Street as a popular street for foreign visitors. They identify themselves as “Yangshuo people”, who are contented, friendly and relaxed. However, at the sub-local level, the community identity was not as strong as the local community identity.

Tourism has apparently increased the value attributed to history and cultures in Yangshuo. The culture of the Zhuang minority ethnic group was promoted to visitors

by the Live Show Impression Sanjie Liu, and in the process, gained more recognition as a community identity of Yangshuo among the residents. Many events and activities have contributed to building Yangshuo's community identity, including local galleries and museums, craft markets, purpose-built attractions such as Totem Ancient Trail, and historical precincts and towns such as West Street, Xingping Fishing Village and Fuli Ancient Town.

Events and festivals also play a critical role in building community cohesion and fostering collaboration between residents, enterprises and local government authorities. In the process of event development, community cohesion and participation are enhanced. These interviewees were aware of most Yangshuo festivals, events and awards, which enhance their place attachment, community identity and community pride, although their participation willingness varies between types of events. At the county level, festivals and events are absent. One interviewee said that *I have been hoping that the government will organize events to attract more tourists to our county.* The major interest of residents working in tourism-related jobs in these festivals and events is linked to the growth of tourism. Another interviewee, who is not working in tourism, when asked if she went to any of festivals or events such as the Li River Fishing Light Festival, she said: *yes. If I didn't remember wrongly, I went there every year. With friends. Once or twice with my parents. But because the fireworks were very late after midnight, my parents went home straight after the show. Young people, however, like going as a group. Get there early, order some tea in the teahouse and watch the performance. The glass in the teahouse is transparent.* Young interviewees showed a higher interest in festivals and events, but they are still selective about which events to attend. For example, when asked if they paid attention to the Dashifu cooking competitions, one said: *at the beginning, it is sort of interesting. Winners won based on their real competence. But later on, it changes. Did you see all the awards handing on the streets? This reward, that reward...no one knows how they were selected. I don't care about these competitions anymore. Not sure who organizes them either.*

Social interaction is another key factor in residents' QOL. Family relationship has been already dealt with in Section 5.4. Other social interaction factors are discussed in this section. Before going into the findings, it could be useful to point out why social interaction and social relationship are important for residents' QOL, especially in

Yangshuo. As suggested by the literature review chapter, social interactions affect quality of life in a number of different ways. Besides the natural human need for socialising, social interactions are also associated with better health, reducing the incidence of crime in a neighbourhood and a higher likelihood of finding a job (Joseph et al. 2009). In Yangshuo, many jobs and positions are introduced and recruited via internal staff recommendation, as indicated by these interviewees. Residents with a higher level of social interactions could have more job opportunities. Additionally, positive social interactions influence perceived community safety. All residents indicated a level of satisfaction with safety in Yangshuo.

Social interactions in Yangshuo also include interactions between hosts, namely residents, and visitors. Most interviewees were satisfied with the interactions between themselves and visitors and found themselves much improved due to learning when they communicate with these visitors. One interviewee, who has one eye blind, owns a hotel. He started out with his own house of three rooms and ended up with a multiple level house with 20 bedrooms after six years. He said he received much good advice from visitors. We had a conversation:

*Interviewee: I like talking to visitors...in fact, I want to tell you because I don't have much education, and because I'm a disabled person [being one eye blinded], psychologically, to be honest, not well developed. Before I turned 20 years old, I didn't dare face strangers. I had psychological barriers. I didn't dare to talk to strangers.*

*Researcher: It's hard to image you were like that before. So...tourism made you become talkative now?*

*Interviewee: More or less. I feel I'm talkative now. I have little knowledge in every area, but when talking to people, although still challenging (很吃力), I'm willing and enjoying talking to visitors.*

In addition, as already mentioned in Section 5.4, residents doing tourism-related business partner with each other. For example, one interviewee is the owner of a hotel. Her brother works as a tour guide. He recommends the hotel to visitors he gets in touch with, and the hotel owner will recommend his tours to visitors. While collaboration exists, competition exists too. Interestingly, very few residents made negative comments about competition relationships between people. Residents who indicated a

lower satisfaction level towards social relationships referred to unfairness caused by government and income inequity.

## **5.8 Lifestyle and freedom**

As introduced at the beginning of Section 5.4, Yangshuo people prefer the leisurely, relaxed or laid-back lifestyle. Frequent leisure activities include drinking tea and chatting with friends, watching TV shows, playing cards, going to the library, walking along the river, swimming in the river, cycling, going to bars in West Street, and less frequently, gambling, and participating into local festivals and events. These elderly interviewees were generally satisfied with the current availability of leisure options, except that they were not happy about some places being developed as attractions.

## **5.9 Sense of security**

In Section 5.4, two relevant findings were presented regarding the empowerment of relatively vulnerable groups, such as women, the disabled, the elders and so on. The empowerment enhanced their sense of security and control of life. However, most interviewees expressed **a lack of sense of security** in Yangshuo. This lack of sense of security greatly decreased their quality of life.

The lack of sense of security was mainly linked to residents' capacity in engaging in tourism being influenced by the Yangshuo government. Tourism was originally developed in a spontaneous manner in Yangshuo, with little government intervention. Although opportunities were uneven, willing residents found their own ways to get involved in tourism, as already introduced in the earlier sections. However, since the Yangshuo government started to implement regulations and policies with the aim to normalise, develop and sustain the tourism industry in Yangshuo, many of the earlier ways that people engaged in tourism were disabled and considered illegal. A few examples are given below.

When tourism just began, one interviewee (female, 45-55 years old) opened a restaurant offering fresh fish meals on the river bank. The site chosen was temporary, next to a quay but not owned by the interviewee. There were no regulations at that time regarding

opening restaurants on the river bank. Her restaurant became fairly popular, attracting many visitors who came to enjoy the fish meals. The interviewee earned a fair amount of money and decided to build a multilevel property as the site for the restaurant near the quay. However, soon after the construction had been completed, the land along the river was sold to a large enterprise to develop a five-star resort. The new building constructed by the interviewee was thus demolished and removed by the government. The interviewee lost all the investment. She has since then opened a restaurant at home and set up a temporary site not far from the river. She mainly cooks food at the home restaurant but visitors can dine in the temporary site where tables and chairs are provided. However, she indicated that she is unsure how much longer she could run her business as there is now a regulation forbidding opening restaurants on the river bank. This uncertainty has made her worry and feel a lack of sense of achievement.

Another example was from a hotel owner (male, 50+). Prior to opening the hotel, he was running bamboo rafting trips. In the early times, his family was poor. So he borrowed money to buy the first raft. Soon after he had earned enough money, he purchased a few more rafts for own use and renting purposes. Then the new river rafting policies were set up allowing one raft per household to control the number of rafts in the Li River, and all the rafts would be owned and managed by a big company. The government purchased all his rafts. He applied to continue rafting but was not allocated a raft for his household. He was frustrated, especially as some other households had more than one raft. Losing his raft business had a big impact on his perceived quality of life.

Additionally, new plans, such as developing Ten-Mile Gallery as a ticketed-admission tourism destination, have caused concerns among residents in the destination. The Ten-Mile Gallery refers to areas along the road stretching from the Yangshuo Town to Moon Hill. It was a free access road in the past. The government implemented a new project to set up a gate at each end of the road to manage it as a ticketed destination. Private cars and tour buses need to park in the parking lot (paid parking). Visitors can hire bikes at a reasonably low price or use paid public tour shuttles to commute between attractions. Entry fee to the destination is charged on top of admission cost to individual attractions inside the Ten-Mile Gallery. The target of the project is to improve the

environmental and management quality inside the destination, to provide a better tourist experience.

One participant who has a family-run restaurant inside Ten-Mile Gallery shared her concern that once the project started, her business would be badly influenced. Although local residents are not restricted from free entrance or exit, many of her customers are repeat visitors, or residents living in other suburbs or counties. She believes that if they have to pay for an entry ticket to come to her restaurant, many of the customers will turn to other alternatives. Moreover, visitors need to use shuttle buses to travel within the destination. She was not sure if the stop would be close to her restaurant. If not, she had little faith in continuing her business. This business has been the major income source for her whole family, including her brothers. During the interview, I could see she was deeply worried about this change and her ongoing capacity to run her business, but there didn't seem to be much she could do.

The Ten-Mile Gallery destination plan also influenced residents from this area engaging tourism in other ways, including people who are selling tickets to visitors for different attractions and earning commission fees, and people who are renting bikes to visitors. Although most interviewees were not supportive of the plan, one interviewee, who runs a hotel in Ten-Mile Gallery, said that *I trust the government that the plan will improve tourists' experience in Ten-Mile Gallery. Now there are too many cars on the road. Riding bikes is dangerous, as well as makes you breathe in car emissions. These problems will be solved if cars are not allowed to drive in.* She already planned to ask someone to promote her hotel at the gates.



Figure 5.1: Tour map of Ten-Mile Gallery

A more general concern expressed by most interviewees engaging in tourism was the decreased number of arrivals and the increased business competition in Yangshuo. Although they were confident about the future tourism growth and development in Yangshuo, they were at the same time worried and uneasy about their individual income uncertainty. Only a few interviewees engaging in tourism held a good sense of security. They were aged less than 30 years and had been working or in business for a relatively short period of time (less than 3 years). Other residents were also not concerned about future uncertainty to the same degree as those working in non-tourism related professions, such as the sales manager of the telecommunication company. She said that she was holding an “iron rice bowl”; therefore, she was not concerned about unemployment.

In summary, the lack of sense of security arose as one of the key domains of QOL for residents who are engaging in tourism in Yangshuo. Uncertainty in their continuing capacity to maintain income from tourism is the major factor causing this lack of sense

of security. This is in line with the QOL literature, which suggests that freedom from anxiety and stress is crucial to high QOL.

### 5.10 Addressing the theoretical framework: Residents' QOL

This chapter focused on presenting themes and findings from interview data related to residents' QOL. As indicated below, QOL is defined by the extent to which one feels subjectively satisfied with various life domains and the extent to which one's needs are objectively fulfilled. A few life domains have been identified in the aforementioned sections and with most domains, a relatively high degree of satisfaction was perceived by most participants, including family and family culture, material and environmental changes, employment and income, community identity and social interaction, public service and safety, lifestyle and freedom. The interviews also revealed that only a few are satisfied with a sense of security and increasing living cost.

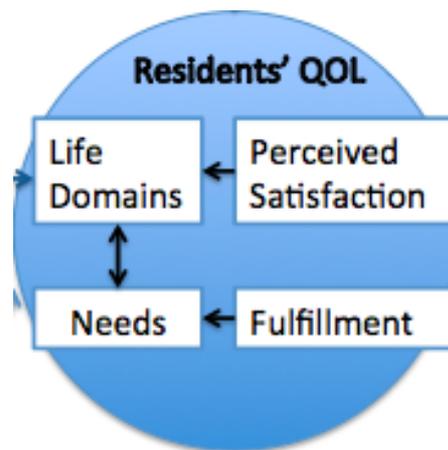


Figure 5.2: Extraction from the theoretical framework: Residents' QOL

The findings echoed the literature from Costanza et al. (2007) who argued that overall QOL could be defined by both the level of human needs met and the extent to which individuals are satisfied with that particular level, as well as opportunities to fulfil the needs. QOL is determined by the societal “supply” of living conditions and personal “demand” of various needs. In other words, good quality of life depends on the capability of society to offer what is needed for good living conditions. It also comprises individuals’ “personal judgement” of how their life quality is satisfied according to their criteria. Residents in Yangshuo were exposed to “outsider” values in the relatively early stage due to the spontaneous tourism growth in this place. They

have, as a result, developed their own personal judgement criteria of the quality of life they expect. The culture and environment also have an impact on these personal criteria standards. For example, lifestyle preference is shared by many and influences their attitude towards tourism jobs as being “unstable but more freedom”.

The next chapter explains how tourism impacts residents’ lives from the perspective of QOL, in which “personal judgement” being influenced by tourism is given more attention.

# Chapter 6 Tourism's influence on residents' QOL in Yangshuo

## 6.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provided a profile of the interviews conducted during the first stage. I identified key domains of residents' QOL, the change in their QOL over time (past versus now) and their definitions of good QOL, addressing the research sub-question of what residents' perceived QOL is. As explained in Chapter 5, the interviews also included another key question dealing with residents' perceptions of the impact of tourism on their lives.

In this chapter, I summarise the **perceived direct economic, socio-cultural and environmental impacts of tourism** by interviewees in relation to the literature and the tourism development context in Yangshuo, followed by a section presenting residents' **attitudes** towards further tourism development in Yangshuo. At the end of the chapter, I link the discussion in this chapter with the theoretical tourism and quality of time framework raised in Section 2.5.

As mentioned in Section 3.6.3, there may be a difference between residents' perceptions of impacts and the actual impacts. There are also differences among residents' perception of tourism impacts – one may see tourism as having a positive impact on one aspect where others think the opposite. Taking a constructivist paradigm, this study did not attempt to argue whose perception of the impact was more accurate or close to the fact, or to generate a picture of the actual tourism impacts on the local community; instead, this chapter presents the diversity of views from different residents. Therefore, in Table 6.1 below, one may observe opposite statements about the same perceived tourism impact. In the next chapter, elements that may have impacted residents' perceptions and bridges through which their perceptions were influenced and led to the differences are further discussed.

Additionally, there are differences in degrees of perceived tourism impacts between individual and community or collective level. The differences were demonstrated by

the way residents described how ‘Yangshuo’, ‘our county’ and ‘others’ versus ‘me’ and ‘my family’ were impacted. For example, regarding tourism income, some participants described ‘others’ as ‘have earned a lot of money’ while describing ‘myself’ as ‘have had some income’. In relation to professional ethics, some participants responded that ‘some other people’ were not very ethical and caused conflicts between visitors and residents. When referring to their own practice, no one described themselves as having ‘low ethics’ and believed their behaviours were rational and reasonable.

In summary, these participants were more likely to perceive tourism as having a positive impact on others or the wider community than themselves. ‘Others’ have access to more opportunities and receive more benefits from tourism. When talking about negative tourism impacts, the reverse happened. This perception difference was aligned with the literature about cognitive bias in social judgement in ‘self versus aggregate’ comparisons (Alicke, Dunning and Krueger 2005).

Bearing the abovementioned differences in mind, this chapter differentiates between residents’ perceptions of tourism impacts on the whole community and these impacts on themselves. These differences were noted when they were mentioned in the interviews. However, this study did not aim to discuss the perception differences among participants concerning tourism impacts or quality of life, and the study’s qualitative approach did not enable the researcher to quantify the difference nor assess the significance of the difference. The reason for presenting the perceptions of the impact of tourism on individuals and the communities is to provide a more comprehensive snapshot of residents’ perceptions of tourism impacts in Yangshuo.

In the next three sections, findings generated from thematic coding and analysing of interviews on tourism impacts perceived by residents are presented in three categories: economic, socio-cultural and environmental effects. Table 6.1 below provides an overview of tourism impacts perceived by participants in Yangshuo.

**Table 6.1: Summary of residents' positive and negative perceptions of tourism impacts in Yangshuo**

Aspects	Positive	Negative
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved living standard</li> <li>• Improved public infrastructure</li> <li>• Employment opportunities</li> <li>• Increased income for residents</li> <li>• Enhance the economic development in other sectors in Yangshuo</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased living costs</li> <li>• Frequently changed policies</li> <li>• Increased income inequality</li> </ul>
Socio-cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhancement of local pride</li> <li>• Enhancement of residents' interests in education (such as TAFE courses in tourism, foreign languages and management-related degrees)</li> <li>• Enhancement of residents' 'essential modern work skills' (such as speaking mandarin, communications, marketing)</li> <li>• Increased interests of residents in the international world</li> <li>• Change in residents' self-identity</li> <li>• Social exchange with visitors</li> <li>• Opportunities to upgrade local recreation facilities</li> <li>• Revitalising traditional culture</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traffic congestion</li> <li>• Overcrowding in public areas, especially around major tourist attractions</li> <li>• Increased social problems such as gambling and alcoholism</li> <li>• Increase crimes</li> <li>• Conflict between local government and residents</li> <li>• Decreased trust between people</li> <li>• Children's decreased motivation to study</li> <li>• Tension between residents and tourists</li> <li>• Culture exploiter and distortion</li> <li>• Disruption of traditional cultural structures and behavioural patterns</li> <li>• Increased difficulty in local day to day governance</li> <li>• Reputation risk</li> </ul>

Aspects	Positive	Negative
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reservation of traditional culture of the Zhuang minority ethnic group</li> <li>• Enhance cultural pride</li> <li>• Shift in residents' sense of democracy</li> <li>• Change in residents' lifestyle and concepts</li> <li>• Decrease political corruption</li> <li>• Enhance family relationships and</li> <li>• Empower women and people with disabilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Threaten to lifestyle that prefers peacefulness and isolation</li> </ul>
Environmental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved natural environment</li> <li>• Improved county environment</li> <li>• Increased awareness of the need to protect the environment</li> <li>• Local beautification (such as the cleanliness of the street)</li> <li>• Less pollution problems compared to other types of industries such as cigar mills</li> <li>• Better waste management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental pollution</li> <li>• Destruction of natural resources</li> <li>• Increased noise level</li> <li>• Increased littering</li> <li>• Inconvenience caused by construction sites</li> <li>• Less access to some natural resources</li> </ul>

## 6.2 Residents' perceptions of the economic impact on their QOL

### 6.2.1 Improved living standard

Tourism influences residents' living standards through a number of direct and indirect methods (Guo et al., 2014). In this section, living standards refer to the material living conditions that can be measured objectively. This is to avoid the confusion of living

standards with this study's key concept QOL which includes many life domains. In Section 5.5, I presented findings of residents' perceptions of material and environmental well-being from the perspective of QOL satisfaction. This section now focuses on how tourism plays a role in impacting on residents' living quality standards.

First, tourism has a positive impact on residents' material living standard through the increase of household income. This enables residents to invest in their houses and transport vehicles and essential daily expenses such as meals, clothes and so on. One participant (female, 40+, Xingping Town) said that since tourism increased in Yangshuo after 2003, the majority of the residents in her town renovated their houses or built new houses within five years because they had enough money. Many families bought a new motorbike or a car. According to the respondent, in the past, families would work hard and save money for many years (e.g. ten years) to renovate their house before their son's marriage. Other respondents expressed a similar opinion. The house and the car are important signals for residents' concept of living standards in Yangshuo.

Residents' ability to invest in renovating or building houses is also related to their willingness to spend money on such aspects, as suggested by a respondent. The respondent (male, 50+, hotel owner) used his town, Xingping, and the town of his wife, Baisha town, as an example to support his opinion that residents from major tourism towns were more willing to improve their house conditions than other towns where tourism resources are limited. Before tourism started, Baisha residents' average annual income was higher than Xingping residents as Baisha had more land for farming. When the participant got married to his wife, his wife's family had a larger house with better conditions than his own family's house. After Xingping became a popular tourism town, Xingping residents soon received more income from tourism than farming. Although Xingping at that time still had a lower average income than Baisha, many Xingping residents decided to renovate their houses. Within a few years, Xingping residents' average house conditions exceeded those of Baisha.

The participant explained that this change had two reasons: confidence in ongoing income and desire to attract more visitors. The participant believed that at least in the early times, Baisha residents were still richer than Xingping. However, because the growing tourism business gave Xingping residents confidence in having increased and

ongoing income from tourism, they were more willing to spend on different things. Additionally, with Xingping's proximity to the river, visitors tend to prefer to stay in Xiping than in other towns. Therefore, local residents renovated or extended their residential buildings to family-run hotels to accommodate visitors and attract more income.

Second, through interaction with visitors, residents gained a better understanding of modern housing needs and applied the same criteria to their own living standards. For example, in the past, traditional bathrooms and toilets were built outside the main building and in general close to the farmland or at the corner of the courtyard. Then foreign visitors came to West Street and built their own hotels with modern private bathrooms and toilets. Local residents learnt from them and applied the same design in their renovated or new houses. One hotel owner (female, 50+ years old) said that when she first completed building the private bathrooms and toilets on the second level of her house, many residents from her village came to visit the bathrooms and use the toilets. Then very soon it became a common practice in her village to build houses with bathrooms and toilets inside the building.

Third, the government took steps to invest in improving residents' living quality and environment to generate "new villages" to attract more visitors to stay overnight. This was based on the condition that the places chosen for new villages have seen many family-based or family-run hotels or restaurants. For example, in the "Li River Eastern Tourism Demonstration Zone" programme implemented by Guilin city, free house refurbishment offers were provided to residents living in the programme zone (Yangshuo Tourism Development Report 2015).

In addition to houses, tourism contributed to many other aspects of residents' material living standards, including increased diversity of food and consumables, convenience in transport and so on. They are the results of improved infrastructure and the economic growth in Yangshuo led by tourism development. For example, one resident (male, 70+) told me that when he was young, his family had pork once a month or a little bit more frequently at special festivals such as Chinese New Year. Now he could eat as much meat as he liked every day, although his teeth and appetite were not as good as before.

He said: *When I was 20, if someone told me that one day you would eat meat every day, I would not believe at all. I would call him “liar” and fight with him.*

### **6.2.2 Infrastructure and community facilities**

The strong relationship between tourism development and infrastructure has been documented in the literature (Adebayo & Iweka, 2014). On the one hand, tourism is a major driver for tourism and public infrastructure. On the other hand, tourism infrastructure is the basis for utilising the destination resources and growing tourism industry. It is stated that *“The importance of tourism infrastructure is reflected in the fact that it can contribute to increasing the efficiency of production and distribution of tourism services, and, in some cases, such as remote destinations, even increase the supply of tourism services”* (Jovanovic & Ilic, 2016, p.289).

Tourism has been a major driver for the accelerated construction and continuous improvement of public infrastructure in Yangshuo. This impact was not only recorded in the local government’s work reports and perceived by all participants but also evidenced in many of Yangshuo’s old photos. Particularly, in the areas of or around the core tourism attractions, local governments have paid much attention to enhance the construction of infrastructure. For example, in the Work Summary Report (first half of the year 2014) produced by Fuli Tourism Bureau, a major section is about the outcomes in tourism infrastructure investment and construction. The section (Fuli Tourism Bureau 2014) included: 1) Spent RMB 2.24 million in completing the cleaning and beautification of the façade of the buildings on both sides of the town facing the streets or rivers. 2) Invested RMB 0.61 million in hardening of roads surrounding the central markets of Fuli Town; 3) Invested RMB 0.4 million in hardening of roads at Xinglong Tourist Street; 4) Invested RMB 4.2 million in hardening the roads at 18 villages in Fuli Town, to rejuvenate their tourism development; and 5) Invested RMB 7.0 million in hardening of a new highway. From the report, it can be noted that transport infrastructure is the key focus for Fuli tourism infrastructure construction and improvement. Other components in tourism infrastructure-related government reports include: water, electricity, communication, lightening, public toilets and other environmental or service-related components such as greening tree ponds and banking facilities.

Residents living in the areas of or around the core tourism attractions perceived a positive tourism impact on infrastructure. Transportation and roads are the forms of public infrastructure most frequently mentioned by residents as benefiting from tourism development. Many participants recalled the conditions of roads before tourism developed as ‘muddy’, ‘poor condition’ or ‘there is no road’. One respondent also mentioned that *not only the roads were built; they are also maintained and continuously improved*. The respondent believed that if there was no tourism, the local government would still build the roads in compliance with the national rural policy, but would not necessarily monitor and maintain the conditions of the roads to the current degree.

Residents not living in the areas of the core tourism attractions perceived a negative impact of tourism on the construction of local infrastructure due to the unequal resource allocation. For example, one interviewee (female, 30+) living in a village in Baisha Town complained about the road in front of her house not being sealed. Every day she rides a motorbike from her house to Yangshuo Town to sell attraction admission tickets to visitors on the streets and earn commission fees. Along the route she follows every day, most roads are in good condition as the visitors use them frequently, but the road linking her house to the main roads is in poor condition. She said that in the past five years she had seen the major roads outside the village being sealed or renovated multiple times, but because no visitors used the road in her village, the local government did not invest in improving the condition of this road. She and other residents in the village who rely on this road for everyday commuting raised the issue with the village committee. However, no action was taken because the village committee did not have money and the village residents did not want to share the cost. She thought that it was unfair that the government spent money on building good roads for those villages that have tourism resources and ignored villages like hers.

The examples of gym facilities and the public hall and square provided in the previous chapter (Section 5.5) were also good examples that tourism infrastructure and facilities were given more priority than residents’ facilities. Facilities that can meet visitors’ needs were given more priority than facilities that mainly meet residents’ needs.

In addition to the construction of infrastructure, water and electricity supply were also influenced by tourism, as suggested by these participants. The overburden of infrastructure is discussed in the section on the perceived environmental impacts of tourism.

### **6.2.3 Employment and income**

Job opportunities and increased income comprise the most important economic tourism impact perceived by Yangshuo residents, as also stated in literature and most case studies (e.g., Guo et al. 2014; Wall & Mathieson 2006). Tourism creates a diversity of direct or indirect employment and business opportunities in different sectors. The frequently seen employment opportunities include accommodation, food and beverages, transportation services, travel agencies, tour operation companies, natural and cultural attraction sites and retails and souvenirs (Kido-Cruz, Kido-Cruz & Killough 2016; Saarinen 2003).

In Yangshuo, the direct employment opportunities identified by residents or tourism bureau officers include: hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, transportation services, ancient towns, over twenty tourist attractions, cruise lines, retail shops, making souvenirs, photography, sightseeing tours, freelance tour guides, farmhouses, show and performance actors and so on. There are also employment opportunities indirectly created by tourism in Yangshuo, such as banking services, food suppliers, construction companies that support tourism infrastructure, to name a few.

In Yangshuo, all my participants, regardless of their own financial dependence on the tourism industry, acknowledged that tourism had created diversified opportunities for employment and cash earnings, which then led to many positive changes in the community, including higher household income, increased economic activities, increased external investment, easier small loans so on. This positive impact was raised as the first tourism impact in almost all the interviews. Many interviewees also used words or phrases such as “of course” and “definitely” at the start of their statements, to emphasise how “obvious” this factor is. An example includes: *Of course, the benefits of tourism is that there are so many chances to earn money from visitors.*

On the other side, differences were noticed between residents' perception of tourism's impact on the general public of the community and on themselves, including the interviewee themselves and their close family. When they described job opportunities or income that tourism created for the community, or others, they perceived the impact as extensive and in-depth. Yet when I asked them about this impact on their own career or household income, their answers varied depending on their jobs. This suggests a difference in residents' perception of tourism impacts at the individual and community level.

Those participants who did not work in tourism said they believe it would be easy to find a job in tourism as the industry has provided numerous job opportunities and others benefit greatly from tourism employment, while they are not necessarily benefitting from tourism.

One interviewee (Age 50+ years old, Male) has worked as a community leader for over 30 years and is responsible for solving daily issues for residents living in one of the districts in Yangshuo Town. He said: *because of tourism, there should be no single one jobless person in my district.* He said he firmly believes that people who are unemployed in Yangshuo are those who are lazy, as many employment opportunities are provided by tourism directly or indirectly. He made a comment about the variety of job opportunities in tourism which do not necessarily need people to have many skills, such as communication skill: *Some people are not good at talking to people or their Mandarin is very poor, so they think they can't find a job in the tourism industry. I disagree! They can do jobs that don't need them to speak. Cleaners, shuttle drivers, gatekeepers, chefs in the restaurants...*

He also mentioned that tourism has led to an increase in jobs in the non-tourism sectors. As an example referred to the increase in bank jobs in his district in the past 30 years. When he first worked in this district, there was no bank. Local residents used to keep their cash at home or go to other districts for banking services. But now more than five banks have opened their branches in the district. The main reason for this change was visitors who come to his district for visiting, accommodation and dining. Visitors need bank services to withdraw cash, and they are clients of different banks. Many major

banks thus opened their branch in his district to meet visitors' needs, which created job opportunities in the banks for local residents living in the district.

We further discussed how job opportunities created by tourism had influenced his own career or household income. At first, he said that he did not benefit at all from tourism in this respect, as since a young age he has had a permanent position in the public sector. Instead, because of the increase in living costs, he had to spend more by living in Yangshuo. When the conversation continued, he later said that his family has two properties for renting in two less tourist-focused districts. His wife does not have a full-time job but is taking care of these two properties, including communicating with tenants. The tenants are not tourists, but the interviewee was unsure about the tenants' jobs.

The example illustrates that the participant perceived indirect economic benefits led by tourism differently regarding himself/his family and others. The interviewee did not perceive his property renting as an indirect benefit of tourism growth, but he perceived that the increase in bank jobs was an indirect benefit from visitors' increased demand for banking services.

Another female (30 years+) participant who worked in the telecommunication company expressed a similar opinion. She was born in Yangshuo county and went to Guilin for a business degree before she returned to Yangshuo to work in customer services. She did not think that tourism benefitted her in respect to employment or income, but she agreed that tourism brought many work opportunities for residents living in Yangshuo and the nearby towns. She also mentioned that her work focus was influenced by tourism. When she was working in a store in a tourist precinct, she mainly dealt with visitors and the questions asked were different from those of the local residents.

Other residents who work in tourism also agreed that tourism had created many job opportunities, but in contrast to those participants who were not engaged in tourism, participants who worked in the tourism industry perceived more challenges and issues in accessing job opportunities and tourism income.

Some participants suggested that employment opportunities and tourism income were distributed unevenly in Yangshuo. This aspect was already discussed in Section 5.6. Many factors contributed to this situation in Yangshuo. The tourism resources were not evenly distributed geographically. Residents who resided in and around Yangshuo County or the major tourism attractions could access business opportunities and tourism income more easily. Among them, people who own household lands at the major tourist precinct such as West Street, or next to the major roads benefitted more from renting and selling their lands or properties.

The literature suggests that employment in the tourism industry has some demerits, such as unstable employment, long working hours, low pay and low social status associated with some jobs (Aynalem, Birhanu & Tesefay 2016), which leads to a high staff turnover rate. This seemed to be the case perceived by some residents in Yangshuo. One restaurant manager (male, 20+) in West Street mentioned that he had to keep looking for waiters and waitresses for the restaurant as many staff did not stay for long after they had been recruited. On the other hand, a few interviewees said they have been working in the same role for over ten years, such as a female waitress working in a restaurant in Fuli.

A special group of respondents was the vulnerable group in Yangshuo. Their responses about the impact of tourism on employment and income generally focused on themselves. These respondents included single parents with children, people with disability, the elderly, and some women. An example of two elderly ladies was provided in the last chapter. This group of respondents indicated they most appreciate the impact of tourism on employment and income.

#### **6.2.4 Living cost**

While employment opportunities and household income increased in Yangshuo, the average living cost also increased, including property, food, goods and services. As mentioned in the last chapter, almost all interviewees, in particular residents who are not working in tourism-related jobs, emphasised the increasing living cost as the negative impact of tourism development on residents' QOL in Yangshuo. The increase in living costs in Yangshuo was identified as a concern for every participant.

Real estate price is one of the major concerns for residents who have not bought a property. One participant (female, 30+) who works as a civil servant said that *I have been working in my position for over seven years but still could not afford to buy an apartment in Yangshuo county*. She said that Yangshuo's real estate prices are double that of other counties in Guilin. The rentals are 'ridiculously high' for many tourism-central precincts too. The participant did not want to rent a property forever but still could not work out a way that could enable her to buy her own apartment. She said she likes Yangshuo and wants to stay here, but if she cannot buy her own apartment eventually, she would move to another city.

People who own their own properties said they were more concerned about the increase in the other daily expenditures. A respondent (female, 30+ years old) who works in the telecommunication company said that *...People who did tourism early earned a lot of money. Now, you can't be rich in Yangshuo, but you can definitely survive... I think with the development of tourism, our level of quality of life is reduced, because we still earn the same amount of income, but the living cost has become much higher*.

Some wages are increased as a consequence of increased living costs. One example provided by an interviewee is the wage for dish cleaners in the restaurant. The wage used to be RMB 960 per month in Yangshuo County. Many female residents would 'fight' for the position. Now the restaurant is unable to find a local resident to take the job if the wage is lower than RMB 1500 per month. This is because the living costs in Yangshuo are much higher than before. RMB 960 per month is not enough for living in Yangshuo.

However, in my interviews, I noticed that there were interviewees whose monthly salary was lower than RMB 1500 per month. These people were not local residents of Yangshuo Town but came from nearby towns and villages. Their employers offer them a free of charge place to stay in Yangshuo Town, so they do not need to pay rent. One young female waitress interviewed was offered a place to sleep on the top floor of the restaurant building, so she could also oversee the restaurant security at night. Her salary is 1450 Chinese RMB per month, including three meals a day plus a "Hong Bao" (red pocket or red envelope) at the end of the year. The value in the red pocket is dependent

on the turnover of the restaurant for the year. Once she received a big “Hong Bao” valued at 3888 Chinese RMB.

For some small business owners, the increased living costs have impacted their business profit margin. For example, a Chinese folding fan painting artist (male, 40+) who runs a fan shop in Fuli said that because of the rising living costs, he now has to pay his apprentices a higher wage, and the costs of plain fans (white folding fans that have no painting) have also increased dramatically in the last ten years. However, he cannot sell his fans at higher prices as this will reduce the number of visitors’ purchases. He is thus struggling with his business.

### **6.2.5 Economic development in Yangshuo**

In addition to the employment opportunities and increase in household income, residents also perceived a positive impact of tourism on other aspects of the economic development in Yangshuo in terms of increased investment opportunities and business activities.

A few respondents provided examples based on their own experiences. One interviewee (female, 20+ years old) from Baisha Town shared the positive impact of tourism on the sale and reputation of Baisha fruits. Baisha is known as the “hometown of fruits” for Yangshuo and famous for its kumquat, Shatian grapefruit and persimmon. The large number of visitors in Yangshuo creates a huge demand for fruits, which contributes to the growth of Baisha’s fruit industry and the enhancement of the branding of Baisha fruits. The resident said that as a result, many residents from Baisha including herself only have short-term work contracts in Yangshuo. They will return home to help their families during the busiest harvest periods every year.

Another interviewee (male, 20+) is the owner of a store selling building materials. He said that tourism had provided good business opportunities for his chosen industry. When his family renovated their house into a hotel, he had a chat with the construction workers and then got the idea of supplying building materials. His family then sponsored him to open the shop in Yangshuo. He also got a small business loan from the bank. In his view, the tourism development in Yangshuo represents a stable if not

increased market for construction and building materials, so he indicated he is optimistic about this business future.

### **6.3 Residents' perceptions of the socio-cultural impact on their QOL**

Residents had many perceptions of the socio-cultural impact of tourism on their quality of life. Interviews showed that the positive socio-cultural impacts of tourism development in Yangshuo included enhancement of local pride, enhancement of residents' interests in education (such as TAFE courses in tourism, foreign languages and management-related degrees), enhancement of residents' employability and work skills (such as speaking mandarin, communication, marketing), increased interest of residents in the international world, enhanced residents' self-identity, positive social exchange with visitors, opportunities to upgrade local recreation facilities, revitalising traditional culture, preservation of traditional culture of the Zhuang minority ethnic group, enhanced cultural pride, enhanced residents' sense of democracy, positive change in residents' lifestyle and concepts, decrease political corruption, enhance family relationships and the empowerment of women and people with disabilities. Most of these perceived socio-cultural impacts were commonly raised in studies on the impact of tourism (Mason 2015, Saarinen 2003).

The negative socio-cultural impacts perceived by interviewees included traffic congestion, overcrowding in public areas, especially around major tourist attractions, increased social problems such as gambling and alcoholism, increase in crimes, the conflict between local government and residents, decreased trust between people, decreased community cohesion, children's decreased motivation to study, the tension between residents and tourists, culture exploiter and distortion, disruption of traditional cultural structures and behavioural patterns, increased difficulty in local day-to-day governance, reputation risk and threats to the traditional lifestyle of peacefulness and isolation. Similar socio-cultural impacts were evidenced in existing studies (Jia & Wang 2015, Mason 2015).

To show the picture of tourism's social and cultural influences, this section presented the socio-cultural impacts perceived by residents in three groups: community level, family level and individual level. Based on these interviewees' input and examples, it is possible to make a distinction between these levels. However, it is important to note that the people experiences were felt simultaneously and the impacts interacted at different levels with each other. Sometimes, the perceived community impacts were based on the perceived impact on individuals.

Most residents agreed that the traditional culture and the community lifestyle were influenced by tourism in Yangshuo in many ways. This section starts with introducing these influences in detail.

### **6.3.1 Traditional culture and community lifestyle**

West Street was frequently used as the example of how tourism gradually shifted the mainstream culture in one area by attracting visitors and then businesses that were interested in clubbing and nightlife, which marginalised the previous culture and made residents move away from the area. As introduced in Chapter 3, West Street was one of the first and the most popular tourism attractions in Yangshuo Town (Yangshuo Yearbook 2012). It has a history of more than 1400 years and is one of the oldest streets in the county. But it was not famous for its preservation of the traditional culture. Instead, it started to shine in the early 1980s because of its growing western culture.

The interviewee who was the community leader of a district in Yangshuo Town recalled the history of West Street. Before foreign visitors came in 1976, the street was old, narrow and quiet. At first, the main international visitors were from Japan. They liked drinking and were passionate about the traditional handicrafts of the minority ethnic groups in Yangshuo Town, such as Zhuang brocade, embroidery, Miao costumes, handmade silver jewellery, wax printing and painted fans. The Japanese visitors spent a lot of money buying these products, stimulating the production and trade of traditional handicrafts. Around 1981, many residents living in West Street started their businesses in hosting the visitors at home and selling the handicrafts to them.

From 1991, the number of foreign visitors increased year by year and the majority of them were from the United States. Local government renovated the street and granted the licence to the first private hotel that could accommodate foreign delegates. In the next ten years, West Street gained increased popularity among foreign visitors. Many of them came to Yangshuo and decided to reside there to start a family or to open their own bars, cafes, hotels and restaurants. Because of this, West Street was also called “foreigner’s street” and “global village”. Local lifestyle was replaced by a nightlife culture. At night, the street came alive with tourists and locals drinking, chatting, singing and dancing in the bars and cafes.

West Street continued to attract an increasing number of both domestic and international visitors from 2000 onwards. Until now, West Street remains popular for its foreign culture and nightlife. But almost all businesses on the street nowadays are run by people who were not born in Yangshuo. Local residents moved away from West Street to other towns. One respondent said that no local people went to West Street anymore, unless there were special events, because of the noise and its over-commercialisation.

The example of West Street demonstrates the impact of tourism in changing the culture of tourism destination communities, although many other factors also led to this change. The drinking and nightlife culture of the earlier foreign visitors was different from the original local culture. When the number of visitors was less than that of residents, the perceived conflict caused by this difference was small. One participant said that he missed a lot of West Street as it was in early 2000. Another participant who used to run a hotel on West Street said that she liked to go to the club to listen to music. Only one resident did not like the change brought by tourism on West Street even at the early stage as he could not sleep at night due to the music in the club.

How previous residents decided to relocate to other places shows the resilience of the traditional culture and lifestyle in the community. Most participants during the interviews expressed their preference for a quiet, simple and relaxed lifestyle. For example, the fan painting artist in Fuli said that he never thought of moving his business to West Street although there could be more business opportunities, because the ancient

Fuli town delivers a sense of tranquillity and that is what he wants in his everyday life. However, he said ‘I do miss a lot of West Street in early 2000.’

### **Family**

Tourism has also caused disruption in the traditional family culture in Yangshuo in many respects. First, residents’ traditional marriage concepts were shaken by foreign visitors, through their marriages with local residents. The influence of parents in deciding the next generation’s marriage decreased, especially for young girls. One interviewee (female, 50–60 years old) recalled that when she was young, she and her friends were daydreaming about getting married to foreign visitors and then going to their countries to reside there. It was not unusual at that time that a local resident married a foreign visitor. Many foreign residents thus decided to stay permanently in Yangshuo. The interviewee said that *Back in those years, such marriages were not unusual in Yangshuo, but it was very rare in other places in China. The senior generations were still struggling to accept their grandchildren to marry someone from another ethnic group. Suddenly, they need to accept a grandchild in law who is not even Chinese.*

The traditional male-dominated family hierarchy has also been challenged by tourism, as women have become empowered through accessing jobs and bringing income to the family. This aspect was discussed in the last chapter and is not to be covered again in this section.

Another impact has been on residents’ way of celebrating traditional festivals, including the Spring Festival, Duanwu (Dragon-boat) Festival and Mid-Autumn Festival that are official public holidays in China, and the unique festivals for traditional minority ethnic groups. Residents spend less time with their family members during traditional festivals – an aspect which was raised by a few middle-aged and elderly interviewees. Residents who engage in tourism are faced with the busiest business seasons during these festivals, so instead of going home and staying with their families, they spend most of the festival days working and earning money. *I cannot remember when was the last time for my whole family to visit my father and brother on the lunar New Year's Day*, said one participant, whose father lives with her older brother in a different county. Her family runs a small restaurant in Gaotian. During the Chinese New Year, they only close their

business for half a day on New Year's Eve. One person expressed his worry that *the tradition of celebrating festivals with families can be gone. Now you celebrate festivals with strangers.*

Celebration of festivals has become commercialised. Frequency changed in these festivals.

It is worth mentioning that in Yangshuo, a high percentage of residents are from minority ethnic groups (Yangshuo Yearbook). When referring to traditional culture, I refer to the shared understanding of QOL-related aspects held by the majority of residents, while acknowledging the differences among ethnic groups and individuals. As the interviews focused on their quality of life perception, no one specifically pointed out the cultural differences among ethnic groups in Yangshuo.

### **6.3.2 Community trust and sense of safety**

Most Yangshuo residents had negative perceptions of the impact of tourism on people's trust in each other and the sense of safety in the community.

One participant (male, 50–60 years old) who works as the community leader shared in the interview how he perceives the change in the community atmosphere. In his view, before tourism started, local people were simple and honest, easy to be managed and governed. In the 90s, thieves appeared in Yangshuo Town to steal money from foreign visitors. The police then enhanced their local supervision and applied very strict punishment for thieves caught in the act. Then thieves almost disappeared. Since 2002, an increasing number of people from other cities or provinces, namely “outsiders” in the eyes of locals have come to Yangshuo to hunt for jobs or business opportunities in tourism, forming a large floating population that is hard to manage. Since then, the local atmosphere started to drop. In his district, he needs to deal with an increasing number of disputes and fights now, which was not the case 30 years ago.

The safety on West Street has been negatively affected by the nightlife culture introduced by tourism. In an informal interview, a resident (male, 20–30 years) who used to work as a policeman in Yangshuo said that there are frequent fights on West

Street in the evening between drunk tourists and locals. He called this the ‘social costs for alcohol revenue’.

One other interviewee said that the trust she has towards people from Yangshuo had not changed at all, but she would not trust visitors and outsiders. She distinguishes them by the way they speak Mandarin. She said that residents who speak a local dialect have a special accent when speaking Mandarin. She trusts local residents because Yangshuo is their hometown and their roots. Residents have their most important network here and they had a low tendency to risk their credit and family reputation. Outsiders and visitors are different in this regard. They know no one and they can leave Yangshuo anytime.

### **6.3.3 Community identity and social interaction**

Some people favour working “at home” as a better option than hunting for jobs in other cities. This view was supported by some young participants from their own perspectives and some middle-age participants from the parents’ perspective. One person explained his reason for running a home-based accommodation business instead of renting the property for approximately the same income. To protect children from becoming “bad” is one concern from the parents’ perspective. Another person said: *Although the wage of working in the local areas is lower, but you feel more relieved. The whole family stays together. They can at least live and cook together. There is no pressure on living and eating. In Guangdong, although the salary is higher, at least 3000 to 4000 RMB per month. However, after deducting for food and renting, not much is left. Therefore, in comparison, most people prefer to work in the local region.* From the young people’s own perspective, they indicated that they find staying at home to continue a family-run business or taking other tourism-related jobs in Yangshuo and surrounding counties allows them to take better care of their parents or other family members. One participant aged 20-25 years said that *there are many opportunities in Yangshuo. I think I can have a good future here. But, the most important thing is if I work as an assistant manager in this restaurant, I can go home and visit my family regularly during my breaks.’*

Literature has suggested that community well-being and place attachment is one of the important QOL domains, including partnerships, developing and enhancing community

pride, developing and enhancing a sense of community belonging, linking communities, building group and place identity, valuing minorities and cross-cultural understanding, building a sense of nostalgia, social inclusivity and balance, maintaining and revitalising traditions and local culture, enhancing local identity and place attachment, enhancing ethnic identity and highlighting popular culture (McKercher & Ho 2012).

Different factors will be perceived at different community levels, from sub-local and local to national and international. This community spatial differentiation can be captured by the following definitions: (a) sub-local communities include sub-groups of a larger urban or rural region and incorporate ethnic minority groups, neighbourhoods, and the like; (b) local communities represent the aggregate community in a single urban or rural setting; (c) national communities refer to citizens and permanent residents from a single economy; and (d) international communities, include non-citizens of the country and economy (McKercher & Ho, 2012). In this section, the focus is on the first and second community spatial levels, namely sub-local and local communities. Concerning the definitions in this study, for these interviewees, the sub-local community is the town where they live or work. The local community refers to the aggregate community in Yangshuo County as a whole.

My interviewees mostly expressed a sense of community and place attachment towards Yangshuo Town. They have developed community pride. One said that *when I travel to other places, people asked where I come from. I said, Yangshuo. Everyone knows it. I felt very proud. Sometimes, people ask me if Guilin belongs to Yangshuo. I always answer – yes.* It means Yangshuo is more popular than Guilin. They are proud of the beautiful natural resources in Yangshuo and the history of West Street as a popular street for foreign visitors. They identify themselves as “Yangshuo people”, who are contented, friendly and relaxed. However, at the sub-local level, the community identity is not as strong as the local community identity.

Tourism has apparently increased the value attributed to the history and cultures in Yangshuo. The culture of the Zhuang minority ethnic group has been promoted to visitors by the Live Show Impression Sanjie Liu, and in the process, gained more recognition as a community identity of Yangshuo among the residents. Many events and activities have contributed to building Yangshuo’s community identity, including

local galleries and museums, craft markets, purpose-built attractions such as Totem Ancient Trail, and historical precincts and towns such as West Street, Xingping Fishing Village and Fuli Ancient Town.

Tourism gave rise to many events and festivals in Yangshuo, which were celebrated in new forms (Yangshuo Annals 2012). Some interviewees said they are aware of most Yangshuo festivals, events and awards, which enhance their place attachment, community identity and community pride, although their participation willingness varies between types of events. At the county level, festivals and events are absent. One interviewee said that *I have been hoping that the government will organize events to attract more tourists to our county*. The major interest of residents working in tourism-related jobs in these festivals and events is linked with the growth of tourism. Another interviewee, who is not working in tourism, when asked if she went to any of festivals or events such as the Li River Fishing Light Festival, said: *Yes. If I didn't remember wrongly, I went there every year. With friends. Once or twice with my parents. But because the fireworks were very late after midnight, my parents went home straight after the show—young people, however, like going as a group. Get there early, order some tea in the teahouse and watch the performance. The glass in the teahouse is transparent*. Young interviewees showed a higher interest in festivals and events, but they are still selective about which events to attend. For example, when asked if they pay attention to the Dashifu cooking competitions, one said: *at the beginning, it is sort of interesting. Winners won based on their real competence. But later on, it changes. Did you see all the awards handing on the streets? This reward, that reward...no one knows how they were selected. I don't care about these competitions anymore. Not sure who organizes them either*.

Social interaction is another key factor in residents' QOL. The family relationship has been already mentioned in Section 5.4. Other social interaction factors are discussed in this section. Before going into the findings, it could be useful to point out why social interaction and social relationship are important for residents' QOL, especially in Yangshuo. As suggested by the literature review chapter, social interactions affect QOL in a number of different ways. Besides the natural human need for socialising, social interactions are also associated with better health, reducing the incidence of crime in neighbourhoods and a higher likelihood of finding a job (Joseph et al. 2009). In

Yangshuo, many jobs and positions are introduced and recruited via internal staff recommendation, as indicated by some interviewees. Residents with a higher level of social interactions could have more job opportunities. Additionally, positive social interactions influence perceived community safety. All residents indicated a level of satisfaction with safety in Yangshuo.

Social interactions in Yangshuo also include interactions between hosts, namely, residents, and visitors. Most interviewees were satisfied with the interactions between themselves and visitors and found themselves improved a lot from talking and learning from communicating with these visitors. One interviewee, who has one eye blind, owned a hotel. He started with his own house with three rooms and ended up with a multi-level property with 20 bedrooms after six years. He said he received much good advice from visitors. We had a conversation:

In addition, as mentioned in Section 5.4, residents doing tourism-related work or business partner with each other. For example, one interviewee is the owner of a hotel. Her brother works as a tour guide. He recommends the hotel to visitors he gets in touch with, and the hotel owner will recommend his tours to visitors. While collaboration exists, competition exists too. Interestingly, very few residents made negative comments about competition relationships between people. Residents who indicated a lower satisfaction level towards social relationships referred to unfairness caused by government and income inequity.

#### **6.3.4 Local pride, self identity and place attachment**

Residents' pride and belongingness to Yangshuo was enhanced by tourism development. Almost all participants were very proud of Yangshuo's natural views being attractive to foreign visitors and West Street becoming the first 'foreigner's street' in China. The appreciation and recognition of Yangshuo's beauty enhanced residents' pride and attachment to the place. One participant resident said that when he travelled to other cities, people asked him where he came from. When he replied "Yangshuo", other people often knew about the place. This made him very proud as Yangshuo is only a small county but more famous than many big cities.

How tourism has developed in Yangshuo also has an impact on residents' self-identity. Some participants used the following phrases to describe themselves or the county: "a resident in Yangshuo", "first county that had so many foreigners". Interaction with international visitors is an important part of their self-identity, in particular for those hotel owners who have international visitors – they are proud of themselves making friends with international guests.

### **6.3.5 Education and training**

Most respondents' perceptions were that tourism has a positive impact on the education environment in Yangshuo, through enhancing residents' willingness and intention to learn and providing opportunities for them to develop certain types of skills or learn foreign languages. One resident named these skills as "essential modern work skills", including speaking Mandarin, communication with strangers, marketing, bookkeeping and basic business management skills.

Income is the main drive. In the early times, the arrival of foreign tourists along with the business opportunities provided incentives to residents to learn basic foreign languages, so that they could communicate with visitors for business purposes. One interviewee (female, 40–50 years old) was among the first group of West Street residents who learnt English on her own for the purpose of doing business with international visitors. She said that it was not easy as she did not have money to buy books or dictionaries. In order to learn the language, she worked in a café owned by a foreigner for three years. There were not many Chinese visitors at that time; she helped to sell hamburgers for RMB 1.5 to visitors. She also provided free tour guiding to foreign visitors, so she had more opportunities to practise English. In 2001, she bought a hotel and started to run her own business. Her clients were mainly international visitors. There were only 20 rooms in the hotel and they were always fully booked. She said that her hotel was popular among foreign backpackers because she could speak English. This interviewee also encouraged other friends to participate in the tourism industry. The sentence she used most frequently at that time was '*Those who are willing to learn and brave to try will be rewarded by life.*' She believed that most of those residents who participated in tourism before 2000 made a good income.

Additionally, through working in the tourism industry, residents developed essential modern work skills. At the community level, increased demand in education and professional training gave rise to the opening of TAFE colleges providing courses such as tourism and hospitality and foreign languages.

### **6.3.6 Sense of safety**

One of the government officers said:

*We are very scared of negative news. We called them big problems. Safety is the key, because if something happened, it can easily get exposed in the social media, then became popular online...It introduced a negative impact for Yangshuo. Then, the next peak season, the number of visitors may drop dramatically.*

The government officer provided an example – there was a fight between two visitors and the boat driver, then the visitor fell into the water.

### **6.3.7 Lifestyle and freedom**

Yangshuo people prefer the leisurely, relaxed or laid-back lifestyle. Frequent leisure activities include drinking tea and chatting with friends, watching TV shows, playing cards, going to the library, walking along the river, swimming in the river, cycling, going to bars in West Street, and less frequently, gambling, and participating into local festivals and events. Some elderly interviewees said they are generally satisfied with the current availability of leisure options, except that they are not happy for some places to be developed as attractions. In contrast, some younger interviewees would like to have more options for leisure activities that help to improve health.

Many interviewees who are engaging in tourism said they prefer their current work than working in the company or government officers. One said: *freedom is extremely important for me. If there is another job with higher pay but no holiday, I will say no to it without any hesitation.*

## **6.4 Residents' perceptions of environmental impacts on their QOL**

Positive and negative environmental impacts were perceived by residents at both the individual level and the community level. I noted that environmental impacts were mentioned relatively early by many participants in the interview. This shows that residents in Yangshuo have a strong sense of environmental protection awareness, although they indicated that they perceive the environmental impacts differently from each other.

### **6.4.1 Natural environment**

Residents had more negative perceptions of the impact of tourism on the natural environment in Yangshuo, such as the air, water, river and mountains, but there were also opinions in contrast to this, supported by their own stories.

I heard different views regarding if the air quality is worse than before and why the air is polluted. One respondent (male, 30+) said he believes tourism development and activities contribute to air pollution. The “endless” construction of new tourism facilities such as hotels, restaurants, attractions as well infrastructure such as water, power supply, and bridges and roads has had a seriously negative impact on the air quality of Yangshuo. The construction also generates a lot of waste and noise. He also said that the number of cars that exceed the carrying capacity of Yangshuo not only create traffic jams but also generate pollutant emissions. He used to enjoy riding bicycles along the roads going through the Ten-Mile Gallery, but he would not do it anymore as there are too many cars. He said: *During peak seasons if you are riding a bike, the only thing you can breathe in vehicle exhaust.*

On the contrary, another interviewee (male, 50+ years old) believes that tourism has contributed to the improvement and sustainability of air quality in Yangshuo. He said that when he was young, people cut trees from the hills and burnt them for fire. It polluted the air as well as degraded the vegetation on the hills. The government tried to stop this from happening but achieved little effect. However, when tourism started, in order to attract more visitors and sustain the tourism industry, residents became more aware of environmental protection and stopped cutting trees from the hills and burning woods. The interviewee concluded that without tourism, local residents would not

cherish and protect the beautiful natural resources in Yangshuo as much as they do nowadays. In this view, tourism has a positive impact on Yangshuo's air quality.

His view was refuted by his friend (male, 50+) who joined the interview with him. The friend said that the reason people stopped cutting trees and burning wood was that the government promoted honeycomb coal briquettes which were more convenient to use. The briquettes can burn for a longer time and do not create as much smoke as burning wood. He said that the move from tree wood to honeycomb coal briquettes was not caused by tourism. Instead, it was led by technology advancement and policy change in energy use.

Regardless of their dispute in tourism's role in improving the air quality, both of them agreed that tourism development had enhanced Yangshuo residents' awareness of environment protection. This view was also supported by many other interviewees. One participant (female, 50+) said that *...every Yangshuo resident knows about the importance of protecting our mountains and rivers. As without them, there would be no tourist. There would be no tourism. There would be no future for our county.* She said that local residents do not welcome new projects that may cause pollution in Yangshuo.

On the other hand, residents believe that they have not done enough to protect the environment or to limit the negative impacts of tourism. One female participant (40+ years old) who lives not far from the Li River mentioned that the water quality of the Li River had deteriorated drastically in the past 20 years. This has been caused by a number of business activities in relation to tourism. Firstly, there was a period of time when many hotels and restaurants opened on both river banks. The waste produced by these hotels and restaurants went straight into the river and made the water very dirty. Now, this cause has been stopped by the local government's regulation. Illegal restaurants and hotels have been forced to be knocked down. Secondly, she said that pollution is caused by the rafts with engines which have replaced the old fashion bamboo rafts controlled by a long stick. Lastly, she also referred to construction work happening all year round. She once felt very frustrated seeing how the dirty and sandy water from a construction site flowed into the river on a very rainy day and changed the colour of the river. She was frustrated because she could not do anything.

One participant (female, 20–30 years old) who works in a four-star hotel as a sales manager however believes that tourism has not had any negative impact on the Li River. Instead, because of tourism, the local government has paid great attention to the regulation and protection of the natural environment in Yangshuo. This has helped to protect the Li River so its water condition has improved. She is supportive of many moves taken by the government to protect the environment, including the adoption of the licensed engine driven rafts, the upgrade of the Ten-Mile Gallery as a ticketed-admission tourism destination where visitor cars will not be allowed and the introduction of free bicycles for visitors to use. She said she hopes these actions would further improve the natural environment condition in Yangshuo. This participant told me that she used to travel to many other tourism destinations in China. In comparison with the places she visited, Yangshuo's natural environment is great and she is very proud of this.

More contrasting views were given concerning the tourism-related land beautification programmes in Yangshuo. The idea with the programmes is to plant flowers at the foot or on top of mountains facing the roads. For each area, only one or two types of flowers are chosen to be planted on a scale. Some residents have also turned their farmlands into gardens with flowers to attract visitors who need to pay a small fee to go into the gardens for photos. While this initiative was supported by some residents, it was perceived by one participant as deteriorating the natural environment. She said that in the past, people could see many native wildflowers or green vegetation at the foot of the mountains. But now they have all been replaced by the flowers that are not indigenous to Yangshuo and make Yangshuo's mountain view look much like other tourism destinations. She said: *I'm not sure how this would affect the native ecosystem in Yangshuo, but I know there is an influence. I like wildflowers. That's nature. That's authentic. That's the real Yangshuo. Those planted, in order flowers are so fake that they decolour the mountains and threaten our uniqueness of beauty.*



Image 6.1: Large scale cultivated rapeseed flowers



Image 6.2: Visitors' group photo in the blossoming rapeseed flowers (Source: Yangshuo Tourism Bureau)

In summary, more residents perceived tourism development as having a negative impact on the natural environment in Yangshuo, especially tourism-related construction works, while some residents believed that tourism contributes to the improvement of the natural environment. Age and travelling experience appear to be two variables that influenced residents' perception of the natural environment condition and its change in the past years. All participants agreed that tourism raises Yangshuo community's awareness of the need to preserve the environment.

#### **6.4.2 Built environment**

As mentioned in Section 6.4.1, tourism development has contributed to the construction of infrastructure in Yangshuo County. In other words, it plays an important role in supporting the construction of the built environment in the county.

Literature also suggests that tourism may have a negative impact on the built environment. These potential negative impacts are towards architectural facades, vanishing traditional constructions, change of land-use, overburdening of infrastructure, over-intensive urbanisation, illegal constructions, pollution, negative aesthetic changes and so on (Huang et al. 2015). In Yangshuo, most of these impacts were not raised by participants in the interviews but they did mention pollution, overburdening of infrastructure and illegal constructions, which are also related to land use.

### **6.4.3 Noise**

In addition to air pollution, the major pollution forms in the county are noise and waste. As mentioned in the above section, construction sites are perceived as a key negative impact of tourism on the natural environment. They are also the major source of noise pollution for residents. One participant who lives in Yangshuo Town was planning to move out of the town when there were a number of hotel buildings under construction at the same time.

Vehicles were perceived as another major source of noise for Yangshuo, specifically for the areas around the major streets that go through Yangshuo Town and connect it with the nearby towns. Residents believe that the noise pollution from constant honking is caused mainly by the chaotic nature of driving in Yangshuo. There are too many vehicles on the roads, especially during the peak tourism seasons. There are also too many types of vehicles on roads without designated lanes for each type of them. There are cars, motorbikes, bikes, hotel shuttle buses, tour coaches, public buses, manpower tricycles for passengers, manpower tricycles for goods, auto tricycles, trucks, minibuses and so on. These vehicles have different sizes and speeds and they all share the same roads, plus pedestrians who cross the roads, increasing the complexity of driving in Yangshuo. The heavy traffic increases drivers' impatience and the frequency of honking. Additionally, one respondent mentioned that many roads in Yangshuo are very narrow, making it hard to drive on when the roads are busy.

On the other hand, these respondents believe that some drivers who do not respect the rules or other road users should be blamed for both the traffic jams as well as the vehicle noise. A respondent (female, 20–25 years old) said that many visitors she encountered

were not good road users. For example, she has often noticed tourists riding their bicycles side by side on narrow roads, blocking the traffic behind them.

Another source of noise is in West Street – the noise of music and human voices from the bars and clubs, especially in the evenings. One participant who used to live in West Street moved away from the street because she could not bear the noise at night. She said that now local residents hardly go to West Street as it was over-commercialised and noisy.

#### **6.4.4 Waste**

Waste handling is a major concern in many tourism destinations, especially since improper waste treatment causes increased environmental deterioration (Dileep 2007). The forms of waste produced by tourism include solid waste, littering, the release of sewage (Dileep 2007). Yangshuo has a high concentration of tourist activities. Therefore, improper waste management and disposal can be a major threat to both the natural and the built environment, as well as a satisfactory visitor experience. In addition to the waste produced at tourist activities, construction of hotels, recreation facilities and tourism infrastructure created construction waste that needs to be disposed of.

Most participants indicated that they perceive waste in Yangshuo as not being well managed. A number of participants commented that West Street was unclean due to waste. Many of the bins in West Street were always full. My observation supported their statements. In my brief street observation, nine out of ten bins in West Street were full, with extra waste falling outside the bin.

For areas outside Yangshuo Town, timely waste handling is also a concern. The waste which is not removed in time causes unpleasant odours. One interviewee (male, 50–60 years old) runs a family hotel business in Fuli. His hotel is very close to the community waste collection spot. Nearby households in this area dispose of their waste in a big tank on this spot. The waste collection staff from local public service then collect and remove them for disposal. The interviewee said: *...rubbish was removed after a long period of time and it already stank and produced flies. If they come every day and*

*remove the rubbish every day, that's fine. But they come after one or two months. As his hotel is not far from the waste collection spot, the unpleasant smell reaches his hotel. He said that he regularly has to ring the public service officers to come and remove the waste in summer so that the smell does not affect his business.*

The waste that is not disposed timely also attracts many flies, which are annoying to both residents and visitors. I interviewed this participant in his hotel lobby. When we were talking, seven to eight flies were cycling around us and occasionally stopped on the edge of our teacups. We had to keep waving our hands to flap those flies away. However, my interviewee told me that this was not the worst scenario. He said: *...the flies today are not many. Normally we don't dare to open the door. Before, we don't have flies in this area. Be more specific, five years ago, there weren't flies. If there were, the number was neglectable.* He blamed the increased waste, resulting in many flies, on tourism development. Both he and most residents living in his area use their own renovated houses to provide accommodation to visitors. In peak season, all family hotels in this area are fully booked. This represents approximately 20 times more people staying in this area and 20 times more waste than usual being produced every day. This estimate does not include the excursionists who visit the area, have meals and leave without staying overnight.

In Yangshuo, the temperature is humid in summer times (Committee of Chorography of Yangshuo County 2013). During my time there, I noticed that most families do not use air conditioners unless their properties offer accommodation or dining services to visitors. Residents always prefer to keep the door or window open to let the fresh air come through. But due to the flies, they must keep the door and window shut. Their life quality is thus affected.

#### **6.4.5 Overburden of infrastructure**

Tourism growth can create pressure on the natural and built resources for its rapidly increasing consumption of resources, especially for destinations where resources are limited (Ap 1998), leading to the overburden of infrastructure in a tourism destination community. In the case of Yangshuo, residents believe that roads and water supply have

been overloaded and exceeded their capacity as a result of tourism, especially during the peak tourism seasons.

Traffic congestion is one of the consequences of the overburden of roads in Yangshuo. As discussed in the abovementioned section, the chaotic driving, the number and variety of vehicles on roads and the undisciplined or careless drivers could be the reasons causing the traffic jams. Additionally, residents feel that the poor quality of roads built and the lack of public transport also contribute to this problem.

One participant (female, 30–40 years old) who is a hotel shuttle driver commented that the traffic jams during peak tourism seasons are “disasters” and said that the road quality is questionable. She used the road linking Baisha and Putao to Guilin as an example. *...the construction of this road just completed. Then there were broken spots everywhere. How do you think other people who come to Yangshuo will feel? Broken roads - Such a poor first impression!* She believes that the poor quality of the roads cannot fully support the function of a large number of tourists travelling and local residents commuting every day.

The same participant also made a negative comment about the public transport service in Yangshuo. According to her, Yangshuo’s public bus system does not exist. She was frustrated about this as the other cities in Guilin have better public transport services for local residents. She believed that if there was a good public transport system, local residents would reduce the use of private vehicles. This could reduce traffic pressures.

This chapter has focused on the residents’ perceptions of tourism impacts; however, it may be worth mentioning here that Yangshuo Town had a public bus system in place when I did my data collection there. In the next chapter, responses from the transportation bureau regarding the public transport issue are provided.

Water use is another concern (Becken 2014). One resident (female, 30–40 years) who works in the four-star hotel mentioned that during peak tourism seasons, the water pressure drops in the hotel as well as at home. Tourists’ demand for clean, freshwater has created pressure on the local water supply, which will become an even more crucial

issue as there are new luxury resorts currently under construction in Yangshuo. When these resorts are open, the number of visitors will be expected to grow.

Becken (2014), in her recent study, compared tourism-related water use with municipal water use in 21 countries. She found that the significant disparity between these two groups existed in developing countries, including China, as one of the studied countries. In fact, regarding tourism-related water use, the study reported China as having the highest water use per overnight guest in hotels across all the studied countries. However, the municipal water use by residents in the destination deemed low in comparison with other countries. Water use disparity may cause tension between the tourism industry and local communities, especially in the hotel sector. Becken suggested that it was important to understand and address water challenges and provided an integrated approach to water management.

#### **6.4.6 Access to places**

Tourism in Yangshuo has contributed to the development of many new attractions, sites and events, enriching residents' leisure activities. For example, the Butterfly Spring scenic and the Totem Trail are two man-made attractions in the Ten Mile Gallery. When they first opened, many residents in Yangshuo came to visit the attractions during their spare time. One resident (female, 20–30 years old) was pleased about these new sites as she could bring her friends to more places when they visit her.

On the other hand, tourism has restricted locals from accessing places, especially natural scenic sites that they could access for free in the past. Big Banyan Tree is an example mentioned by some participants. Big Banyan Tree is also one of the scenic spots in Ten Mile Gallery, famous for the ancient banyan which has a graceful shape 17 meters high. The tree is more than 1 500 years old. It became popular as in the film Liu Sanjie, the scene when Liu Sanjie and Brother A Niu fell in love with each other was shot under this tree.

In the past, anyone could come to see the tree or sell food, drink and handcrafts under the tree. In order to protect the tree as well as to produce income for the local community, the Big Banyan Tree was fenced and turned into a ticketed scenic site, only

people who reside in the Big Banyan village can access the site for free and hire the pre-installed stalls for business. Residents of the nearby villages or towns need to buy tickets like visitors to get closer to the tree. They are prohibited from trading in the scenic site either.

Some residents believe that the tree should be open for free to all Yangshuo residents, as it is a natural heritage in Yangshuo. But they are not against the restriction of non-local villagers from trading on site. The two elderly interviewees (selling hemp shoes) who I mentioned before used to sell souvenirs under the tree. Now they have a place outside the site for their business.

## **6.5 Residents' attitude towards tourism development**

All participants interviewed were supportive of tourism development regardless of their perceived positive or negative impacts, although they had different expectations about the future of tourism in Yangshuo. They agreed that there are more benefits than disadvantages to further developing the tourism industry in Yangshuo. This is different from the literature which suggests that if residents' perception of a positive impact is stronger than negative impacts, they tend to support tourism development; otherwise it is the opposite (Lee 2013).

The aspects that led to residents' supportive attitudes towards tourism may be explained by the place attachment theory (Gu & Ryan 2008). Place attachment is a concept describing relationships between people and a place. The concept was adopted in tourism research to understand residents' emotional links with their community (e.g. Gu & Ryan 2008) as well as visitors' emotional links developed towards places that they have visited (e.g., Tsai 2012). Residents' place attachment towards their community is formed through their place identity and place dependence developed towards their community, namely how they see the community being important in their self-identity and how the community can satisfy their needs for living and working.

My interviews in Yangshuo show that there is a consensus that the community is highly dependent on tourism. Yangshuo has been a tourism destination for over 40 years and residents have depended on tourism for income at the personal or family level.

Residents who were interviewed perceived tourism as the main drive for Yangshuo's development and growth. As one interviewee said: *No matter you 'do' tourism or not, you know something about it as people talk about it, as it is the most important thing for Yangshuo. Eevery Yangshuo-er know that tourism is the business card for Yangshuo.*

As a result, tourism, through shaping Yangshuo in many different aspects, has become an identity for Yangshuo and thus of Yangshuo residents' self-identity. As presented in the earlier sections, many participants are proud of Yangshuo being the most famous tourism destination in Guilin. People experience negative emotional reactions when their community identity is threatened. If tourism disappeared in Yangshuo, residents would experience negative emotions, because their self-identity as *a resident living in one of the most popular tourism destination Yangshuo* is threatened. Due to this, residents in Yangshuo would not wish tourism to decline or stop in their community. They are supportive of further tourism development.

While all participants expressed their willingness, and hope to see that tourism continues to grow, there was a difference among their attitudes, especially in their interest and intention in participating in the tourism business. They also have different levels of confidence in and expectation of the future of tourism. Based on their confidence level and their current level of participation or intent to participate in tourism, I classify these participants into three types of "tourism supporters" in the following sections.

### **6.5.1 Support and optimistic**

Residents expressed high levels of support and confidence towards tourism growth in Yangshuo and said they intend to actively participate in the process. Many young interviewees (20–30 years old) engaged with tourism fall into this category. Good examples are the hotel owner (female, 20–30 years) who owns a hotel in Ten Miles Gallery and the manager (male, 20–30 years) who works in a restaurant in West Street. They hope that Yangshuo can attract more investment and "become better".

### **6.5.2 Concerned and worried**

When residents complained about tourism's negative impacts, their concerns were not only related to their own quality of life but also the future of tourism growth in Yangshuo. One said: *This is a very competitive environment in China's tourism market, for example, Sichuang, Yunnan, Hunan....Their natural scenic views are also very beautiful. Yangshuo is unique, but visitors may not know. We also have so many problems...The government needs to do something.*

Residents in this category have been engaged in tourism for over 20 years and have a stronger perception of the problems faced by further tourism development in Yangshuo. They expect the local government to solve the issues. On the other side, they are concerned about the current local government's practice in regulating the tourism industry. Good examples are the restaurant owner (female, 40–50 years old) in Ten Mile Gallery and the folding fan drawing artist (male, 40–50 years old) who runs a fan business in Fuli Town. They hope that the local government will take effective actions to solve the problems in tourism development in Yangshuo or their towns, such as holding events to increase Yangshuo's competitiveness in the domestic tourism market.

### **6.5.3 Bystander**

Some residents perceived both positive and negative impacts of tourism and indicated they are supportive of Yangshuo's continuous development of tourism as its pillar industry, but they do not intend to engage in tourism employment or business activities. For example, the female participant (30–40 years old) who works in the public sector said that *...we need a change in Yangshuo. Those who participant in tourism need to change first.* Residents who are not engaged in tourism fall into this category, and expressed the expectation that “they” – those inside the tourism sector – should bring a positive change to Yangshuo's tourism future, such as more high-end visitors.

## **6.6 Addressing the theoretical framework: Tourism impacts**

Studies on the residents' perceptions and attitudes toward tourism destinations have been an ongoing research topic in tourism (e.g. Ap 1992, Nunkoo, Smith & Ramkissoon 2013). This chapter presented results in relation to Yangshuo residents' perceived

tourism impacts based on interviews with over 25 residents at different ages and from different professions.

This chapter focused on the left circle in the theoretical framework of this study, namely the economic, socio-cultural and environmental impacts on tourism as perceived by local residents in Yangshuo. It presents a snapshot of residents' perception of the impact of tourism from the perspective of quality of life.



Figure 6.1: Extraction from the theoretical framework: Residents' QOL

Impacts interact with each other. For example, as one of the most important impacts of tourism, the economic impact sets the basis for many other positive changes in residents' life quality. Yangshuo witnessed higher household income, more economic activities, more external investment, easier loans, more job opportunities and so on. Overall, most residents felt satisfied with the long-term impacts of tourism on Yangshuo and how tourism has shaped Yangshuo to be what it was today.

There are some personal level factors that have influenced residents' perceptions. A recent review article (Ji et al. 2017) suggests that residents' perceptions of and attitudes towards tourism development are influenced by many factors. These influencing factors can be divided into: personal level factors and non-personal factors. Among them, personal factors mainly include gender, age, education level, income, residents' economic dependence on tourism and length of stay in the community. Non-personal factors mainly include the community's economic dependence on tourism, stage of tourism development, distance from the centre of the scenic spots and so on. There is mixed evidence of many of these factors in existing studies.

Many comparative studies on different tourism communities' perceptions and attitudes have been conducted to analyse the factors that lead to the perception differences between communities. For example, Peng et al. (2015) did a comparison study between two tourism destinations in China and suggested that different community characteristics may contribute to the difference between residents' perceptions towards tourism impacts. These community characteristics include destination characteristics, the community's dependence on the tourism industry, economic development level, territorial structure, heritage protection, tourism management mechanism and host-guest cultural difference and so on.

The results of the interviews in Yangshuo showed that personal level factors that may have influenced individual residents' perception of tourism impacts include: *age, gender, length of time for the family in participating in tourism, household income's dependence on tourism, place of residency* and *type of jobs* (especially for people working in the tourism industry). Without a quantitative approach, this study did not intend to quantify the degree of the influence of these factors. Instead, a narrative snapshot of the influence of these factors is provided below.

### **6.6.1 Age and length of time participating in tourism**

Age had an influence on the perceptions of most participating residents in relation to the tourism impacts in all environmental, economic and socio-cultural dimensions. For example, residents who are more senior would be more likely to agree that the water quality in the Li River is poorer than before, that tourism has had a huge positive impact on the infrastructure development in Yangshuo and that the culture on West Street has been shifted by visitors.

One reason may be that residents who are older experienced more changes in tourism in the past 40 years, including its fastest growths and declines. Their benchmarks in many aspects are different from young people, such as the standard for living and the standard of water quality. Therefore, they indicated that they had perceived a strong positive economic impact and a stronger negative environmental impact than young residents. This is aligned with some existing studies (Husbands 1989).

Residents' length of time in participating in tourism has an influence on their perceptions of the impact of tourism through a similar mechanism. Residents who are in the tourism industry have a better sense of change in income, costs or opportunities. This has made their reaction towards tourism development in Yangshuo different from people who are newly engaged in tourism. For example, one resident (female, 30–40 years old) who has worked in the hotel industry for over eight years said that the number of visitors had remained the same in the recent years, but the number of hotels has increased, causing more competition in the market. Therefore, it has become more challenging to work in the sales department of the hotel. She thus plans to move to another department of the hotel or change jobs to work at the tourism attractions. Because she has had experience in the sector, she understands the problems in the industry more clearly.

### **6.6.2 Gender**

There was mixed evidence in the literature about the influence of gender on residents' perceptions of tourism impacts. Different views include: (1) men and women have different motivations to support tourism development; (2) Women are more sensitive to the negative impact of tourism development, such as noise, pollution. Therefore women's attitude towards tourism development is relatively negative. Women's support for tourism is lower than that of men; (3) Gender does not have an obvious influence on residents' perceptions of tourism impacts (Ji et al. 2017).

In this study, gender did not appear to have a strong influence on residents' perception of tourism impacts directly. However, this factor is associated with another factor that may have influenced residents' perceptions, namely the types of jobs residents do in Yangshuo. Through observation as well as the interviews with the tourism bureau officers, I noticed that the employment of some tourism jobs or business activities are gender-biased. For example, the majority of restaurant waitress and souvenir retailers are females, while the majority of the security guards and the raft drivers are males. This is not surprising as indicated in the article by Cave and Kilic (2010) that “in the tourism industry, the percentage of women who work in the industry is high, but their function is dominated by unskilled, low-paid jobs” (Cave & Cilic 2010, p.1).

It is worth mentioning that although Cave and Kilic's (2010) statement is correct in describing jobs such as waitress, ticket seller and souvenir retailer being done mainly by females, female residents in Yangshuo are also actively involved in jobs that require skills. For example, among my interviewees, there were female restaurant owners, hotel managers, tour guides and drivers.

Another influence of gender is on residents' perception of empowerment. More female residents than males felt that they had been empowered by tourism development in terms of accessing opportunities to make income for the family and learning from interaction with visitors. Many female participants expressed their gratitude in the employment opportunities tourism has created for them, allowing them to earn money while staying close with their families.

### **6.6.3 Types of jobs**

The literature suggests residents with tourism-related jobs are more likely to perceive more positive and less negative impacts of tourism and have a positive attitude toward tourism development (Kuvan & Akan 2005).

This may be because of the types of jobs, tourism-related or not, determine the way that residents interact with visitors or the way they get involved in the tourism industry. The host-guest interaction influences residents' perception of tourists. For example, among my interviewees, residents who are hotel owners said they have had more positive experiences with visitors than residents who sell attraction admission tickets on the roads. The latter job has experienced more rejection and fewer opportunities to have intensive conversations with visitors.

Types of jobs also influence residents' sense of security. This applies especially to those whose jobs have been regulated by the newly implemented policies in the past few years as they were more sensitive about relevant issues and problems in tourism development. For example, the participant whose income is from renting bicycles to other participants was against the plan of providing free bicycles to visitors to use and perceived the safety issues more strongly than those who work at attractions.

Further, types of jobs determine the length and flexibility of working hours of residents, which in turn determines their time availability and willingness to engage in other events of tourism. For example, participants who work in the telecommunication company and public services consider joining local tourism events or do some outdoor exercises over the weekends, while other participants who own a family hotel business need to work seven days a week. The former group of people are more likely to develop a negative perception of the overburden of infrastructure.

#### **6.6.4 Extent of household reliance on the tourism industry**

As discussed in Section 6.5, this study, in contrast to most studies, found the extent of household reliance on tourism did not influence the residents' overall attitude towards tourism development in Yangshuo (Lee 2013).

However, this factor influenced residents' perceptions of the impact of tourism. Residents whose household income relies completely on tourism are more informed of and sensitive about tourism growth and issues in the industry.

#### **6.6.5 Place of residency**

Place of residency determines the distance from an individual's residence to the central tourism zone as well as the possibility of their household income options.

The role of the distance from tourist zones and its perceived impact on tourism has been investigated in a few existing studies (Haley et al. 2005, Jurowski & Gursoy 2004). Their results suggested that residents who live closer to the tourist zone will be more likely to develop a negative perception of tourism development. This is reflected in my interviews with residents who reside in Yangshuo Town, Xiping Town or Fuli Town and whose properties are close to the major tourism precincts – they provided more examples about their experiences of the negative impact of tourism.

Regarding the possibilities of household income, Baisha residents are a good example. Baisha's fruit industry is well established and many Baisha families have their own orchards. Baisha residents will return home to help with harvesting in harvest seasons. Therefore, they have a higher sense of security than residents who rely completely on

tourism, which in turn influences their sensitivity to tourism development issues and impacts.

In summary, as this study did not apply a quantitative approach, it did not intend to quantify the influences of the above factors and test their significance levels. The influence of these factors on residents' perceptions of tourism impacts was derived from the interview data, which was based on whether people talked about or ignored an impact, the way they described the impact, and the examples they raised to support their opinions.

In the next chapter, bridges that link perceived tourism impacts and residents' QOL are identified and discussed. Some of the abovementioned personal level factors are further analysed.

# **Chapter 7 Linking tourism and residents' QOL: Bridges and opportunities**

## **7.1 Introduction**

In the last chapter, the QOL related tourism impacts perceived by Yangshuo residents were illustrated. This chapter presents findings that relate to bridges linking tourism and residents' QOL, as well as opportunities that tourism has provided to residents in Yangshuo.

Bridges between tourism and residents' QOL can be understood as the channels, agencies, events, mediations or platforms which transfer the impacts of tourism to local residents in a tourism destination. In the physical world, a bridge is a structure carrying a road, path or railway across a river, road, or other obstacles to allow people or vehicles to across from one side to the other (Cambridge Dictionary 2011). In this study, bridges connect tourism with residents' QOL. Various tourism impacts are the "passengers" who move across the bridges and move into residents' lives and influence their perceptions.

A traditional Chinese philosophical framework was adopted to show the three dimensions of the bridges. They are Tian (Time), Di (Places) and Ren (People). This framework. Section 7.2 starts with an illustration of the triple bridges between tourism and residents' quality of life.

The following Section 7.3 provides a discussion about opportunities and associated policies and stakeholders. Tourism can indirectly affect how residents' needs are fulfilled by influencing opportunities to meet human needs (Costanza et al. 2007). Policy and other stakeholders can affect people's opportunities to meet their needs. Then this chapter concludes with a discussion in relation to the conceptual framework of the thesis.

## **7.2 Triple bridges: Tian (Time), Di (Places), Ren (People)**

As mentioned above, in this study, bridges between tourism and residents' QOL refer to the channels or platforms which transfer the impacts of tourism to local residents' QOL in a tourism destination. The concept can be used to assist in the understanding of the difference between tourism destinations in terms of their impacts on the local community. Different destinations have different bridges due to the characteristics of its destination, tourism development and community. Tourism will only start to make an impact on residents' quality of life when certain bridges exist.

Additionally, the concept also helps to explain different residents' perceptions of the impact of tourism on their QOL. The same tourism fact or impact can be perceived differently by different residents. For example, some interviewees made more positive comments about visitors than other interviewees, as their level of interaction with visitors differed. The host-visitor interaction thus serves as a bridge between tourism and residents' social interaction QOL domain.

In Yangshuo, a number of bridges were identified from interviews and classified according to a Confucian framework of Tian, Di and Ren (namely, time, place and people. Section 7.2.1 starts with an explanation of this philosophical framework, followed by elaborations and findings of the three types of bridges. The last part of this section is about how bridges interrelate with each other.

### **7.2.1 The Confucian philosophy of Tian (Time), Di (Places) and Ren (People)**

The traditional Confucian philosophical framework of Tian (Time), Di (Places), Ren (People) is generally used to understand and explain the natural occurring of something and the success of an event (Shun 1997). It indicates that things happen when there is the right time, the right place and the right people. This philosophy was first proposed by Mencius in his work Xunzi Wang-Pa to explain the three crucial components of winning a war (Shun 1997).

This philosophical framework has been frequently used in Chinese literature, guiding research in education, agriculture, social policy, management and so on (e.g., Cao & Su 2019). It was also applied in some recent studies in the Chinese context published

in English (Teng & Barton 2009; Yu & Tse 2012). For example, Yu & Tse's (2012) study applied the Tian, Di and Ren framework to explain the success of a famous dumpling shop in Taiwan. Their case study found that favourable timing, favourite location (composed of spatial, cultural, social norms and traditional folklores) and the right people are critical to business success. The right people refer to not only the entrepreneurs who can seize opportunities in relation to the timing when it comes, but also involve a harmonious social network and good personal relationship, namely "Guanxi" in the Chinese language. By maintaining a harmonious Guanxi with staff members, partners, customers, and suppliers, entrepreneurs can "get things done."

Although this framework has not been applied in tourism-related studies, it is suitable as the three elements in the framework are crucial to tourism impacts, and getting them right is critical to the success and the sustainability of tourism development in a destination. In this thesis, the Tian, Di and Ren framework provides a three-dimensional umbrella for the bridges between tourism and residents' QOL: timing related, destination related and people related. The perceived tourism impacts on residents' QOL are influenced by the bridges.

The following sections present bridges linking tourism and residents in Yangshuo that emerged from interviews with participants. We will start with the Ren Bridge: People.

### **7.2.2 Ren bridges: People**

Ren, the people, is the last but not the least dimension of bridges connecting tourism and destinations in terms of impacts on residents' quality of life. This dimension also plays a key role in influencing the Timing and Place bridges (Yu & Tse 2012).

This dimension contains bridges that are associated with people's interactions, including both insiders, namely residents who originate in Yangshuo, and outsiders, namely people who come to Yangshuo from places outside Yangshuo for different purposes. Outsiders refer not only to visitors, but also to people who come to Yangshuo for employment, business and investment opportunities as a result of tourism. Residents perceive an impact of tourism on their quality of life through direct or indirect interactions with different insiders and outsiders.

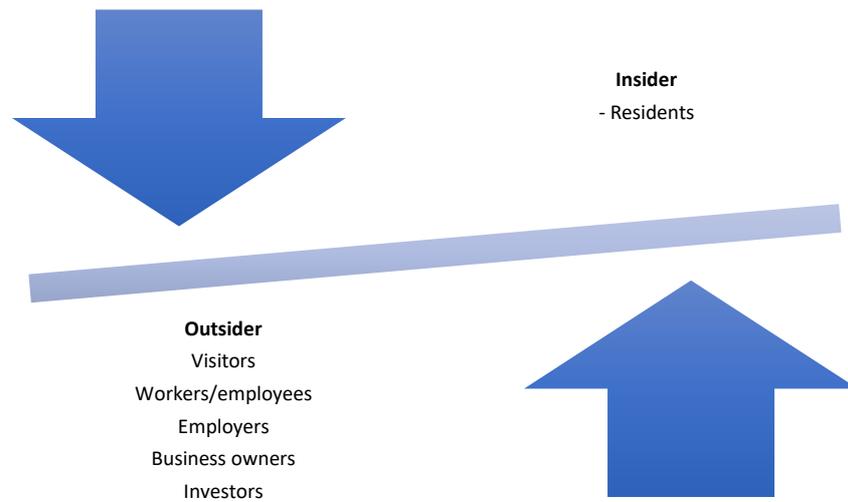


Figure 7.1: Insiders and outsiders who impact residents

### 7.2.2.1 Resident – resident interaction bridges

The insider and insider interaction bridges tourism’s social impact and residents’ perceived change of community cohesion life domains. The resident – resident interaction bridges that emerged from the interviews include: comparison, collaboration, conflicts and competition.

#### Comparison

When interviewees were asked about community change, many compared how they interacted with neighbours in their villages or towns in the past with their interactions nowadays. There were both positive and negative comments about the community change, based on their perception of interactions with their neighbours.

Some said they believe that tourism has enlarged the gaps between people’s level of household income and their level of thinking, which has led to an increased differentiation between residents. This has also increased the distance between people living in the same neighbourhood and decreased community cohesion. One resident said:

*I should say I miss the old days. I still remember...before, although I had a poor living standard, every neighbor in our village hung out together. We hung out*

*together every night. We had a good time. No comparison, no pressure at all. Everyone was just as poor....*

*Now, there is no pressure in livelihood, but it is a bit stressful to socialize and communicate with other neighbors, as there are petty and narrow-minded ones...There is definitely an obstacle to communication. Because many times, what people think and what people say is not the same anymore. It used to be the same. Everyone used to be at the same level of thinking. When the gap between the rich and the poor is large, there must be such a phenomenon (male, 50+ years old, hotel owner).*

准确地说，我应该挺怀念以前那种。我还记得我以前，虽然生活水平很差很差，那时候我们村里面的同邻，大家都一起玩，每天晚上一起玩，玩得很开心，**没有比较，一点压力都没有**。不过说实在，说实话，说现在的压力，你是指哪一方面。生活方面肯定是没压力，但是交流起来，确实现现在有点压力了。因为好多都有一点.....小肚鸡肠的人都有一点。以前我们玩的话根本没有比较，大家都是一样穷。但是现在肯定，有了差距，交流起来肯定就有一点点障碍了。因为好多时候，想的东西、说的东西有点不一致。以前很一致，大家都是一样的，都是一个水平，一个层次的。贫富差距大了，这种现象肯定有。

Another participant (female, 30+ years old, telecommunication company officer) provided a similar view, by saying that neighbours were “too polite” now and not as close as before. She said:

*...Those whose developments are not very good may be a little inferior. Thus, they have a sense of distance from others.*

这个我觉得怎么说呢？（想了很久）**应该说是觉得比较客气了**。没以前随意了。可能是陌生了也可以是距离拉远了。我小时候的时候感觉和邻居都还蛮随意的...那些发展不太好的，可能会有点自卑。所以就有距离感了。

These phenomena echoed the existing finding of the social impacts of tourism on destination neighbourhoods. Tourism development has led to a significant expansion of the gap between the rich and poor and social comparison leads to interpersonal alienation (Ying 2016), which in turn has decreased residents' community cohesion life domain.

### **Collaboration**

On the other hand, some other participants said they believe that their interactions with the other neighbours were better than before and they were satisfied with the community cohesion QOL domain. One participant (female, 20+ years old, hotel owner) said that in her village, Zhudouzhai, every family has turned their houses into small hotels, but they do not feel a sense of competition among the neighbours. The reason is that all those hotels have limited rooms available and the owners often recommend customers to each other. She was pleased about the harmony in the village: *Doing business should be like this. Everyone takes care of each other.*

Not only hotel owners collaborated. In many interviews, participants shared examples about residents in the same villages who have introduced customers or business to each other. One interviewee (female, 40+ years old) sells attraction admissions to visitors on the bridge or at regional coach terminals. She told me that she uses every opportunity to recommend visitors to have accommodation in her village. If visitors take her advice, she also assists them in commuting to the hotels in her village using her motorbike. The hotel owners then pay her a small amount of cash as commission.

Similar examples were provided by participants who drive hotel shuttle buses, tricycles, river rafts and motorbikes for tourists. They make recommendations to visitors about accommodation, bike hire, restaurants, tour guides, places to buy discounted attraction admissions, souvenirs and transport options. Some of the drivers are more proactive than others. One hotel shuttle driver said:

*As a driver, every day I have many opportunities to talk to visitors while driving them between the hotel to West Street. I ask them "what is your plan?" "Have you been to the Ten Miles Gallery?" "Do you want to hire a bicycle?" Then I recommend my relatives or friends' business to them.*

*My passengers know that I work for the hotel. I cannot run away. Thus, they all trust me. The places I recommended knew it was me that made the recommendation. They would also provide high-quality services. So, it's a win-win situation. My friends and the visitors are all happy (female, 40+ years old).*

Her colleague, another driver (male, 40+ years old) who also drives shuttles for the hotel, said he never starts a conversation with visitors. Only when visitors ask him for suggestions, does he make recommendations. His sister has a hotel and restaurant and his nephew is a tour guide. He always gives priority to his relatives.

It is noted that collaboration occurs mainly in two groups, hotel owners from the same village, and residents conducting different types of business, such as tour guiding or bus drivers and hotel owners. The government officials from the Bureau of Price Management said that the positive collaborative interactions between residents working in tourism are based on the low operational costs for residents to engage in tourism business opportunities. For example, most hotels are residents' own houses and their own family members are the staff at the hotel. Therefore, they do not need to bear the pressure of costs. They are more willing to collaborate.

This explains why collaboration between residents was seen more frequently in the past by these interviewees. The rising living costs, increasing competition and uncertainty about tourism policies have decreased many residents' sense of income security. There is now a tendency for more competition and conflicts are perceived, whereas collaboration existed during the development of tourism development.

### **Conflicts**

While collaboration did exist and enhanced residents' satisfaction with their social life domain, conflicts have since occurred in residents' interactions when some people disagree with other people's way of earning income. One good example is residents' opposition to some other residents charging parking fees in Xingping Town. The major attraction in Xingping Town is the Yulong River which attracts many self-driving visitors. In particular, there are a few spots along the river where visitors can take photos of iconic views. To get close to these spots, visitors can drive through the main road in

the village. Residents in the village set up signs at different sections on the road or next to these photo-taking spots to charge drivers fees under the name of parking fees. Visitors can easily get confused about these fees and many are charged multiple times.

My own experience is a good example. When I first visited this village and drove in, a villager put a fence at the entry of the road and asked me to pay RMB 10 for parking. I paid for it, with the assumption that it was for the whole attraction. Then after driving for another 200 meters, I arrived at the river pier and saw a sign 'Parking' on an open space. I parked my car, and someone came and asked for another RMB 10 as parking fee. I told him that we had already paid at the entry gate. He told us that the first RMB 10 was for the parking space at the entrance point of the road, and has nothing to do with his parking space here. When I left, I paid special attention to the entry point of the road. There was a space next to the road which allowed two cars to park. The fence was supposed to be used for this parking space. However, for a visitor coming to the village for the first time, it would be very hard to tell.

Some participants in the village running hotels and restaurants said they were annoyed by these charges for parking fees. They have received complaints from their customers who became confused because they had paid fees multiple times and were upset. One said: *This charge is not reasonable, although it is small money. But it makes visitors feel bad.* There were a few arguments between those who charge parking fees and those who run hotels. Two participants who mentioned this situation said they are disappointed that the government has done nothing to stop these parking fee charges.

Responses from the interview with the Bureau of Price Management provided a different view. The interviewee said that those parking fee charge activities are not against the regulation, as the residents turned their own lands into parking space and it is reasonable for them to charge visitors fees for parking on the space, although some charges are higher than the market price. Additionally, Yangshuo is under pressure to provide sufficient parking facilities for tourists, given its limited land resources. Small size, private parking lots provided by farmers using their own lands has helped to ease the tension between supply and demand of parking space. The interviewee said: *If you ban these private parking charges, there will be a big impact on the traffic order and*

*the overall tourism transportation issue. Yangshuo is in the transition period. These behaviours...although not so formal, are helpful for Yangshuo's transformation.*

Similar conflicts were shared by residents in other places. For example, there used to be a small conflict between some young residents who wanted to fence the gate and charge tourists an entry fee to the Fuli Ancient Town and those who sold souvenirs or opened restaurants and did not agree with entry tickets. They eventually resolved the problem at a village meeting. The interviewee who was a fan painter in Fuli said: *We understand that everyone wants to earn money to survive. But you cannot use the public resources to fill your own pocket.* He described those young residents' behaviour as 'naive'.

Another example was the conflict between business owners on West Street and the company that provides battery power electric tourist passenger cars in Yangshuo, shared by the participant (male, 35+ years old, tour guide) in Yangshuo Town. According to him, at that time, the battery power electric car company had a monopoly. They picked up visitors from the pier and drove straight to the scenic spots without stopping on West Street. Residents who ran a business on West Street were upset and had a stroke. All of them closed their business until the government intervened and the conflict was resolved.

From the example cases, it can be seen that conflicts occur when the ways some residents make their income cause a negative impact on other residents' business opportunities. Most participants indicated they believe that the government should play a role in resolving conflicts, but some villages have managed to resolve the conflicts by a collective effort in the community. Conflicts between residents in Yangshuo, unsurprisingly, has led to a decrease in residents' satisfaction with the social cohesion domain.

### **Competition**

It is not surprising that competition forms an important part of resident-resident interactions in Yangshuo in relation to tourism, especially in the later years when more residents participate in or engage with the tourism industry. Existing studies have

documented the competition among residents and local tourism industry stakeholders (e.g., Huang, Qu & Montgomery 2016).

In Yangshuo, an intensive competition was perceived mainly among tour guides, bike or car rentals, and attraction admission ticket sellers. Generally, people do all three things together. One participant (male, 35+ years old) who is a tour guide, provides a bike renting service and also sells entry admission tickets, said that people who like him would use the platform for car or bike hiring to get contact with visitors. When visitors decide to hire a bike, he offers them a package including a free bike to use, coming with them and showing them ways to different attractions, discounted entrance admission tickets and if they like, paid guiding service.

He described the intensive competition among residents doing this type of combined business as “unpleasant”. He said that before 2003 there were only 20–30 tour guides, but now the number exceeds 800 (The reported number in the Yangshuo Tourism Development Report 2015 was 1100). Tour guides in the past earned their income through guiding fees. Now they rely on the commission fees of selling entrance tickets. This has caused the price war among the group, leading to a low-profit margin for people doing such business. He gave two examples. The first one was about selling attraction admission tickets:

*If the admission ticket to an attraction was RMB 170. We got the tickets from the tour agency at RMB 140. I can then sell them to visitors at RMB 150, but I can't do RMB 145...If earning too little, I would rather not do it.*

The second example was about bike hire, from which it can be seen that the price competition in this industry is intensive:

*In the past, a bicycle cost RMB 200. You can rent it out for RMB 20 per day. Now it takes RMB 700-800 to get a bicycle, but renting it out for a day only charges RMB 10 or RMB 8.*

The competition among residents in engaging in tourism has reduced their satisfaction with the community cohesion.

## **Summary**

Based on the four aforementioned bridges, it can be seen that after tourism developed, new changes in resident-resident interactions were largely driven by economic interests, similar to other rural destinations in China (Huang, Qu & Montgomery 2016). In Yangshuo, the interviews showed that most residents are still satisfied with their community cohesion and are willing to collaborate with other residents, although social comparison, conflicts and competition exist. This is because the cost to engage in tourism used to be relatively low. Therefore, this community cohesion is under threat due to increasing living costs.

The interviews also pointed out another factor behind this community cohesion. Most residents said they feel that the local government does not play its role properly in maintaining the community cohesion, such as reducing conflicts by implementing policies about parking fee charges. Instead, it contributes to increasing social comparison by processes that lacked transparency. The government attracted most of the residents' attention and was blamed for problems.

Residents indicated they believe that many of the resident – resident interactions issues have been caused by poor local governance, including unfairness, not transparent selection criteria, and ignorance.

### ***7.2.2.2 Host – visitor interaction***

Host-tourist interactions impacting residents' quality of life has received some attention in the past by authors such as Valene Smith (1977, 1989, 1992, 2001, 2012), Erik Cohen (1984); Pearce, Moscardo & Ross (1991 and 1996) amongst others. However, in recent years the number of journal articles published in this area has increased (e.g., Bimonte & Punzo 2016; Carneiro & Eusébio 2015). Host-tourist interaction can be defined as the personal encounter that occurs between tourist and residents through three types of social contact: when visitors purchase services or products from residents; when visitors and residents use the same place or facility; and when they have conversations and exchange information. The literature suggests that due to the characteristics of travel behaviour, social interaction between residents and visitors is 'brief, temporary

and non-repetitive, open to deceit and exploitation, superficial, formal and commercial and asymmetric in terms of meaning for both actors (visitors and hosts)' (Carneiro & Eusébio 2015, p.1).

### **Learning**

In Yangshuo, in-depth host-visitor interactions were found to have bridged many positive tourism impacts and enhanced residents' life quality through improving their abilities and changing their mind-sets, especially in the earlier tourism development stages. Residents learnt various things from exchanging information and ideas with visitors, which influenced their ability to gain tourism income as well as their perception of what was good QOL. Residents working in family hotels or as tour guides were exposed to such interactions more frequently.

Some residents interacted with visitors and learnt their business knowledge and skills from those visitors. One participant (Male, a family hotel owner, 50 years old+) said that his whole business was driven and shaped by visitors' recommendations. His house was not far from the walking trail along the river. Earlier in 2000, there were visitors knocking his door asking for water, so he started selling water and fruits in front of his house. Then he received advice from visitors to provide meals and accommodation. At first, he only had three bedrooms for rent. Visitors who lived in his place became his friends and "consultants". Some of them re-visited Yangshuo and stayed in his place every time. The participant said *all my visitors were so nice...I was a farmer, I knew nothing about business. But they taught me how to do business, what services to offer, how much I should charge, how to renovate the rooms...I learnt everything from my visitors.*

Additionally, residents shared stories about learning foreign languages from international visitors. One participant (Female, hotel owner, 50 years old+) said that she was among one of the earliest foreign tour guides in Yangshuo, and her English was largely taught and learnt from foreign visitors.

### **Sharing of space**

On the other hand, superficial host-visitor interaction that took place on the street or at the attractions were found to have bridged the negative tourism impacts and residents'

unsatisfied life domains. The key example is the traffic congestion perceived by residents. For residents not engaged in tourism, traffic jams are the main channel for them to interact with visitors.

One female participant (Female, 30 years old+) who works in the public service office said that she found visitors on roads ‘disturbing’ as they ‘ignore the traffic rules and other road users’. She gave examples including three bicycles moving ahead side by side, blocking the vehicles behind; visitors parking on spots that were not allowed for parking; visitors driving on the wrong side of the road and so on. Thus, she perceived tourism as negatively influencing the living environment in Yangshuo, which was an important QOL domain for her.

### **Brief communication**

The social contact that took place when visitors purchased products or services from residents bridged both positive and negative impacts on residents’ perceived QOL. Residents’ community identity and pride were enhanced when interacting with visitors who showed a high level of satisfaction with Yangshuo. One shuttle driver said that he was pleased to hear positive comments from residents: *I’m very proud when they liked Yangshuo and they said the trip had been worthwhile. It made my day.*

Other residents perceived this differently. One resident who sells tickets to tourism attractions (Female, 40 years old) stated that her everyday mood depended on her daily social interaction with visitors. For most of the time, she was frustrated for being rejected by visitors to buy her tickets or have a conversation with her. She said: *the most frequent word I received every day from visitors is no. Sometimes, I saw them standing still on the bridge, so I walked towards them to ask if I could help. But they thought I wanted to sell tickets to them and said no to me before I started to say a word. It was very frustrating.* Similar thoughts were provided by other residents who sell products to visitors.

### **Transformation**

In Yangshuo, the interaction between international visitors and residents has bridged a long-lasting, subtle influence on the change and transformation in culture and social norm in Yangshuo. For example, the shift in the traditional marriage concept from

getting married to people from the same minority ethnic groups only to any cultural background occurred as a result of local residents seeing what happened in the community. When talking about this point, these interviewees referred to examples of stories they experienced or heard from others in which residents got married with foreign visitors.

The social contact between residents and visitors bridged a tourism impact on residents' perceived self and community identity when the visitor were famous people, such as government delegations from other countries, political leaders in China, famous actors and so on. As mentioned in Chapter 4.2.1, Yangshuo as one of the first tourism destinations open to foreign visitors made it special in the old days to greet foreign delegations who visited China. The opportunities to have social contact with these people empowered residents in a political sense through enhancing their self-identity that is "I saw the world" (jian guo shi mian/见过世面). One resident who was an owner of the hotel made a comment which well represented such influence. He said *Residents who live in Yangshuo for over 20 years more or less had experience greeting, hosting or talking to many "big names" in person...the president of this country or that country; the senior leaders from this or that department of the Chinese central government. People like me even could not remember how many important people from the governments I have ever seen. Therefore, the residents here are very tough, with no fear of local government. If you check the administrative rankings, the highest level for the local government in Yangshuo County is nothing in comparison with those famous visitors. Therefore no local resident cares about them.*

### **7.2.2.3 Resident – external employees, business owner and investors**

Besides visitors, outsiders who come to a tourism destination can be classified into four groups based on their visiting purposes: study, investment, employment and visiting friends and relatives (Wang, Li & Ma 2010). External employers, investors and employees' interaction with residents in a tourism destination also bridges tourism impacts and residents' QOL, particularly through information and knowledge exchange as well as competition and conflicts.

First, similar to visitors, external employers', investors' and employees' interaction with residents provided opportunities for residents to learn from outsiders and improve their business skills. For example, as mentioned in Section 6.2.1, residents in Yangshuo learnt about new style multilevel house with bathrooms and toilets included inside the house from the earlier foreign hotel managers.

External business owners or investors increased the level of competition in the tourism industry. Most participants believed that the majority of external business owners or entrepreneurs were more experienced than local business owners. For example, one participant said that after external investors started to invest in hotels, their hotels brought great pressure on hotels run by local residents, especially for those hotels converted from residential buildings. She said *these external business people are so professional. Just look at the decoration of their hotels...At first glance you can tell that it is a high-class hotel, very different from those run by the villagers. If I am a visitor, this one (pointing to the externally operated hotel is only a little bit more expensive than that one (pointing to the locally operated hotel), why would I choose the one run by farmers?*

The increased competition forced local residents to invest in their facilities and services, which thus led to higher costs and lower profit margins. Examples not only included local hotel operators who had to spend more in property renovation but also included residents who rent bikes had to buy new bikes, restaurants had to provide disinfecting tableware.

Additionally, there were increased competitions among residents and external employees who came to Yangshuo for work. Local residents believed that the external employees were preferred by external business owners, because those external employees accepted lower wages. However, interviews of hotel managers suggested that four stars and five stars hotels' recruitment paid more attention to skills, qualities and attitudes of employees. One said: *we welcome both local employees and external employees. We select employees based on what we need and what they can offer, not on where do they come from.* Saying this, the interviewee admitted that most middle to senior management positions were provided to external applicants. She said there was a labour skill shortage in this area in Yangshuo.

In addition to the competition, there were also conflicts and tension. Yang, Ryan & Zhang (2013) suggested that tensions could be identified as being based on beliefs, resources and power. In Yangshuo, lack of trust was seen as a major element in tension and conflicts between residents and outsiders who came to Yangshuo for economic benefits. Lack of trust does not mean that local residents do not trust outsiders. It only suggests that local residents did not have the same level of trust towards outsiders. One explained that she trusts local residents because Yangshuo is their hometown and their roots. Residents have their most important network here and they had a low tendency to risk their credit and family reputation. Outsiders and visitors are different in this regard. They know no one and they can leave Yangshuo anytime.

In summary, resident-outsider interaction bridges both positive and negative impacts and local residents' QO, in particular exchange of information, competition and conflict and tension related to community trust.

### **7.2.3 Tian bridge: Timing of tourism development**

Tian bridges, the timing dimension, refer to the timing of tourism development and the participation of different stakeholders in the development cycle of tourism. Timing represents the second category of bridges that influence how tourism impacts are perceived by the residents and transferred into the resident communities.

Time as a factor influencing tourism development has been discussed in the existing tourism literature in relation to many aspects. Karlheinz Woehler (2004) explored the formation of leisure time and vacation time and how it contributed to modern tourism development. Ridderstaat and Nijkamp (2015) compared monetary and non-monetary indicators of tourism seasonality and found important differences in the timing of the seasonal factors. Tadahiro Okuyama (2018) presented the optimal timing of tourism demand recovery policies from the natural disaster.

Existing research has also investigated the impacts of the timing of policies on their effectiveness. Agiomigianakis, Serenis and Tsounis (2016) analysed Singapore's

quarterly tourism data between 2005 to 2014 and identified the timing of different factors affecting international tourism flows. Their findings suggested that per capita income of the visitors' origin countries, improvement in the competitiveness of Singapore in the tourism market and weather conditions had a positive impact on tourist arrival numbers within a different timeframe. For example, tourists' income has its highest time impact in a period of four to six months before travelling abroad. Competitiveness of the tourist industry in Singapore affects effectively tourist travelling to this country, within a seven to nine months' time interval before the actual travel. Weather conditions, namely, the increase in temperature differences between Singapore and visitors' origin countries, have their highest impact within a seven to nine months' time interval before the actual travel. On the other hand, Exchange Rate Volatility affected negatively on tourist arrivals. Based on these findings, the authors highlighted the importance of timely implementation of tourism policies before or after the changes that occurred in different factors.

It can be noted that most of these existing studies investigated the timing of certain factors in explaining the change in tourism industry-related numbers, such as tourist arrivals. In this presented study, the timing dimension is discussed at the destination, the stakeholders and the individual residents' levels with a focus on the impacts of tourism on the local community's QOL.

Based on the interview and observation data, three types of Tian bridges were identified: the timing of the start of tourism development, the timing of government intervention in tourism, and the timing of residents' participation in tourism. The following subsections will introduce these bridges in detail.

### ***7.2.3.1 Timing of the start of tourism development***

A tourism destination develops over time. Patrick Brouder, Salvador Anton Clave, Alison Gill and Dimitri Loannides (2016) introduced over 20 tourism destination evolution frameworks in their edited book. One of the most frequently applied model, Butler (1980)'s Tourism Area Life Cycle has been discussed in Section 2.3.2.3. Literature reveals that many factors can drive the development of tourism and its linking impacts on the local community, including visitor demands, enacting human

agencies, urbanisation and many more (Brouder et al. 2016). However, when and how tourism starts in a destination plays a unique role in its evolutionary trajectory.

In Yangshuo, through the interviews of the government officers, I found that the timing of the start of tourism development in this destination was crucial to its development and evolution. As introduced in Section 4.2.1, Yangshuo was one of the first rural towns that opened up for tourism in China in the late 1970s (Committee of Chorography of Yangshuo County 2007a). This timing presented a few advantages in Yangshuo's tourism growth and linked a number of special tourism impacts with residents' QOL, as suggested by many interviewees.

First, Yangshuo offered one of the few opportunities for foreign tourists to visit China in the late 1970s, and thus gained popularity among international visitors from many countries rapidly. Those earlier foreign backpackers were attracted to Yangshuo and decided to stay (Committee of Chorography of Yangshuo County 2007a). They resided along West Street and ran their small business, which then turned the street into one of the key attractions in Yangshuo, famous for its western features. West Street then started to gain its popularity among domestic visitors as Yangshuo offered opportunities for them to get close to foreign visitors. As a result, Yangshuo experienced rapid growth in its earlier development stage in both reputation and tourist arrival numbers.

Residents in Yangshuo had opportunities to socialise and live with migrants from other countries, which was considered very rare at that time. This created a sense of pride for residents in Yangshuo. One participant (male, 60 years old+) in my interview said: *Foreigner used to be as rare as pandas in the old days in Guangxi, but I was neighboured to a foreigner back in the 1970s. Why people from other parts of China came to the West Street of Yangshuo? They came to look at those western people. But at that time, no one spoke English. So people came and stood from a distance to look at those foreigners. Then they approached me to ask questions about those foreigners because I lived next door to the foreigner. So many people wanted to talk to me. It made me feel like I was famous.* Local residents also developed a shared sense of community identity for Yangshuo's western features.

Second, Yangshuo's popularity among foreign visitors attracted attention from governments in China and other countries. When leaders of foreign countries visited China, they often paid a trip to Yangshuo. As mentioned in Section 4.2.1, since the first Yangshuo yearbook published in 2001, there has been a list of foreign leaders' visits to Yangshuo under the Key Events section in every issue of the yearbook. Residents in Yangshuo, particularly those residing in Yangshuo Town, were used to greeting important leaders from the central government or other countries. Such experiences reduced the psychological distance between themselves and political leaders from China and other countries, and thus reduced their perceptions of the difference of power between themselves and the local government. Local government officers in Yangshuo are much more cautious about local governance and tension between themselves and residents than in other counties. My interviews showed that local government officers believed that residents in Yangshuo did not respect them as much as those living in other counties. One government officer said: *I personally dare not to offend those residents working in the tourism industry. They have more chances than me to see those important people with "big names" in person.*

Yangshuo residents' earlier uncommon experience of living with foreigners and greeting foreign leaders not only led to their unique sense of self and community identity but also affected their values and cultures. These tourism impacts have been discussed in more detailed in Section 6.3, so I would not repeat those findings.

However, it is important to point out that all these impacts were affected by the timing of the start of Yangshuo's tourism. The key feature of this timing is "one of the first" open-up places in the 1970s, which was influenced by the broader political and economic environment in China. This timing made Yangshuo a unique destination as one of the windows for the world to see China and for China's domestic visitors to see foreigners in person and enabled the county to maintain its competitiveness for many years. In other words, the timing influenced Yangshuo's destination evolution trajectory, which in turn influenced how local residents were impacted by tourism development in Yangshuo.

There were other examples of the importance of timing in tourism destination evolution, especially linked to mega-events. For example, Yanping Kang and Zhongjun Zhou

(2018) explored the impacts of Olympics timing in driving sports tourism development in China. They suggested that the 2022 Winter Olympics would provide good opportunities for rural areas in Northern China to start their tourism development in winter sports.

In summary, the timing of tourism destination evolution, especially the start of tourism development in a place plays a key role in bridging tourism impacts and residents QOL. The “right time” for a place to start tourism is determined by the socio-political and economic environment, domestic and international tourism markets, mega-events and the modernisation and urbanisation process in the place (Kang and Zhou 2018). The unique timing of the start of tourism in Yangshuo gave it unique destination competitiveness and bridged some special tourism impacts on residents’ QOL, including residents’ sense of identity, attitudes towards power differences and other values.

#### ***7.2.3.2 Timing of government intervention in tourism***

After tourism begins in a place, tourism stakeholders play important roles in shaping the destination (Brouder et al. 2016). David Weaver (2017) described three evolutionary paths towards sustainable mass tourism, which he considered as the ‘desired and impending outcome for most destinations’ (p.1030). The three paths are the market-driven organic path, regulation-driven incremental path and the hybrid induced path. Each of them requires distinct management strategies that involve the participation of different tourism stakeholders. According to Weaver (2017), taking different paths meant that the community in the destination would need to be reinvigorated, empowered or reinvented with correct policies being in place.

Weaver’s article highlights the importance of policymakers’ intervention in tourism development, which has been discussed intensively in many studies (Cooper and Flehr 2006; Shone et al. 2016). Although governments had been found to engage in corrupt practices in tourism development and planning in some case studies, lack of government intervention was found to create serious problems such as conflicts in land use and dishonest competition (Unalan, 2013).

In addition to the degree of government intervention in tourism management in a destination, my interviews showed that the timing of government intervention is essential for influencing residents' perceived QOL concerning tourism development. As indicated by a few residents, the local government in Yangshuo did not intervene in the tourism industry in the early days, except building infrastructure and granting licences to hotels that permitted them to host international visitors. One interviewee who owned one of the first private hotels with the permit said: *The only things the local government did were granting permits and building roads. I agree that building roads was important and helpful. But granting permits was not necessary. I had to pay for the permit at that time. It was not cheap, and it was not easy to get the permit even you could afford it. Then, after a few years, the permit system was cancelled.*

The tourism officer I interviewed commented on the necessity of the permit system. He said that the focus of the local government in the early days was maintaining good relationships with foreign visitors. In the beginning, the local government only hosted foreign visitors, especially international delegations at the government-owned hotels. However, because of the fast-growing number of foreign visitors, the government had to allow private hotels to host international delegations to meet the demands. He said: *We considered carefully private hotels' eligibility in terms of their services and the hotel environments to ensure the quality of the accommodation was satisfied. However, there were more and more foreign backpackers who liked to stay with local residents instead of hotels. So, in the end, we had to make it open to all residents by cancelling the permit system.*

The recent 10-15 years then witnessed increased government intervention in regulating the tourism industry in Yangshuo, which caused conflicts between residents and the local government. Many residents I interviewed believed that the government played little role in the past in developing the destination, but now they wanted to 'rob the benefits from local residents' after tourism grew to its current size.

As presented in Section 5.9, the key negative impact of government intervention, especially in regulating the tourism business, was residents' decreased sense of security. This could be seen as the consequence of the timing of Yangshuo government's participation in tourism development. In the past, where there was little government

intervention, the development of the tourism industry followed the organic path described by Weaver (2017). Residents found their own ways to get involved in tourism. The growth of the industry was driven by the market.

However, since the Yangshuo government started to intervene in the tourism industry and its development, many of the earlier ways that people engaged in tourism were not accepted under the new regulation. Examples included forbidding operating restaurants on the river bank, restricting the number of bamboo rafts and plans to offer free shared bikes. One resident who lost her restaurant on the river bank shared her story and felt of the “unexpected loss” and described the process as “unfair”. These examples will be further elaborated in the policy section.

From the interviews, it was clear that the frustration was a result of “losing”. Residents expressed worries and a lack of sense of security due to the loss of or the potential to lose their access to opportunities in tourism due to government intervention. This was partially due to the absence of regulations in the earlier stage of tourism development in Yangshuo. When the government started to regulate the industry, they disrupted the industry structure and opportunities formed under the organic path. As the government officials indicated, the government had successfully introduced more employment opportunities through the intervention and achieved better income equality. However, this did not exclude the negative impacts on residents’ QOL due to a lack of sense of security.

In contrast with Yangshuo, destinations that followed a regulation-driven, incremental path described by Weaver (2017) were less likely to witness such negative tourism impacts on local residents’ QOL due to loss of previously owned opportunities. For example, case studies in Zhangjiajie City showed that residents living in the Zhangjiajie National Forest Park were satisfied with the tourism policies and experience a sense of security (Ouyang & Wang 2007). Zhangjiajie National Forest Park was a highly regulated and planned destination since it was turned from a conservation area into a tourism destination. Residents living in the national park who were farmers before were offered opportunities to work in the tourism industry. Those job opportunities were created by the government since the start.

The timing impact of government intervention could also be evidenced by residents' experience in less touristic towns such as Baisha Town. Most residents from Baisha Town either stayed at home to grow fruits or worked for other residents in Yangshuo and other towns. Only in the last few years, has the government started to drive tourism growth in Baisha with new policies to improve the infrastructure and attract investments. Baisha residents' income opportunities were enhanced by the government intervention, and thus they reported less concern about their sense of security.

From the aforementioned interviews and literature, it can be argued that the timing of government intervention bridges positive and negative tourism impacts and relevant residents' QOL, especially their perceived sense of security. What differentiates whether the timing of government intervention is the "right time" in terms of residents' QOL relates to residents' perception of gaining new opportunities versus losing opportunities previously owned by them. This finding could also apply to other stakeholders, such as external investors or attraction operators. The timing of their participation in tourism development in Yangshuo also influenced residents' perceived QOL concerning tourism impacts. For example, residents showed a generally positive attitude towards new tourism projects that were introduced to Yangshuo, as they believed that those new attractors could attract more tourists to Yangshuo. However, when the new project presented a threat to their current income opportunities, they stood against the proposal. The Ten Mile Gallery is a good example, which will be detailed in Section 7.3.

### ***7.2.3.3 Timing of residents' participation in tourism***

The timing of residents' participation in tourism contributes to the difference in tourism impacts on residents' QOL at the individual or household level, as already indicated on Section 6.6.1. This was further evidenced by comparing the interviews with residents who participated in tourism at different times.

Residents were classified into two groups based on their own perception of the timing of their participation in tourism. For people who described themselves as "one of the first", "one of the earliest" or "the first in my town" in engaging in tourism or stated that they started to work in tourism before 1990, they were grouped as "early tourism

participants”. The rest were grouped as “late tourism participants”, including interviewees who were younger than 30 years old.

Through comparing the interviews of these two groups, the following discoveries were identified. First, early tourism participants had enjoyed more advantages than late tourism participants in having benefited from tourism. These advantages included higher profit when there was less competition in the market. A few residents mentioned that it was much easier to make money in the early days when only a small number of early tourism participants and their business or products were available in the market. For those who chose to invest what they had earned in increasing the scale of their business, they reinforced their competitiveness among residents. As a result, early tourism participants perceived more positive economic impacts than late participants in the early times. With the income generated from tourism, early tourism participants brought substantial changes to their life quality, especially improved living standards.

Additionally, early tourism participants, especially those who were considered the first generation of local entrepreneurs in Yangshuo, were more exposed to media. They received interviews from journalists, and their success stories were reported on the local newspapers or TV channels. One participant (Female, hotel owner, 50 years old+) who was among one of the earliest foreign tour guides in Yangshuo told me that she had been interviewed many times by different media agencies. She said: *I came from a poor family, and when I started to work as a tour guide, no one supported me. When I was interviewed for the first time, I was humble and said I was lucky. Then the journalist asked me why other people were not as lucky as me. Then I said to myself – he was right. I was the one who made myself lucky. Since then, when I was interviewed, I told the journalists that I made my own success a reality.* Early tourism participants gained their confidence through the success of their business, and their confidence and self-esteem were further enhanced by media interviews, which shaped their images as business role models in Yangshuo’s tourism.

Second, early tourism participants have increased the level of late tourism participants’ expectation in terms of anticipated income and business performance. Late tourism participants compared their own business performance with that of early tourism participants and expected the same profit return. However, when they entered the

industry, the competition was more intensive, and their business performance was not as good as early tourism participants. One resident (female, 50+ years old) who was working as a waitress in the restaurant thus concluded that she was not suitable for running her own business: *I was not as smart as those who started their own business early*. However, there were also late tourism participants who ran good business in the tourism industry, especially those young residents who learnt experience from early tourism participants and external investors in Yangshuo.

Third, early tourism participants had a better sense of change in income, costs or opportunities. This has made their reaction towards tourism development in Yangshuo different from people who are newly engaged in tourism. For example, early tourism participants were more likely to be influenced by government intervention discussed in the above Section 7.2.3.3.

In summary, this section presented bridges between tourism impacts and residents' QOL under the Tian dimension, including the timing of the start of tourism development in Yangshuo, the timing of government interventions and the timing of residents' participation in Yangshuo's tourism. When the concept of Tian was discussed in the Chinese traditional philosophical framework, it referred to the "best time", the "right moment", which people need to capture to enable the success of an event (Shun 1997). In this study, the focus was not about identifying the best time for tourism development but on the understanding of how timing plays a crucial role in influencing Yangshuo's destination competitiveness and evolution and residents' perception of tourism impacts on their life quality. The timing bridges provide a perspective to explain the differences between destinations and among individual residents in terms of tourism impacts on residents' QOL.

#### **7.2.4 Di bridge: Place**

The Di bridge, the place dimension can be understood at two levels, the destination level and individual resident's level. The former refers to the destination characteristics as the bridges linking tourism impacts and local residents' QOL. The latter mainly

refers to residents' place of residency as the bridge between tourism impacts and local residents' perceptions.

A tourism destination has its own landscape characteristics, which support and restrain the tourism development in a place simultaneously (Rickly, Knudsen & Braverman 2014). Landscapes provide natural and cultural assets which for tourism development in a place (Stoffelen & Vanneste 2014).

The landscape characteristics of Yangshuo were provided in Section 3.2 and 3.3. In Yangshuo, the mountains and rivers offered unique attractiveness to visitors and had a central position in its tourism development. More broadly, the mountains and rivers characterised Guilin City as a destination and distinguished it from other tourism destinations in China.

These landscape characteristics enabled tourism to be developed at a fast pace in Yangshuo since it was open to foreign visitors. They also made residents attentive and sensitive to the natural environment in Yangshuo, especially the water quality in the river.

On the other hand, destination landscapes were constantly shaped by tourism development, with its destination image being constructed by both the marketing efforts of the destination and visitors' perceptions (Stoffelen & Vanneste 2014). In Yangshuo, many new tourism attractions were explored or built to enrich the tourism resources in the tourism destination, such as the Totem Trail and Butterfly Spring Scenic. However, the size of these attractions was small.

In the interviews, many residents had high expectations of more new tourism projects to be established in the destination, which they believed could bring in more job opportunities, more high-end visitors and longer stay of visitors in Yangshuo. In particular, they hoped there could be one or two large scale tourism projects. One said: *We do have many tourism sites in Yangshuo now, but they are too small. Many of them are not must-see places. If we can have a huge tourism attraction in Yangshuo, such as an amusement park with rides over and down the mountains, I am confident that many*

*visitors will stay longer in Yangshuo. No other places can have such rides as they don't have such mountains.*

Based on residents' expectations, I interviewed the government officers and the industry stakeholders to see if residents' expectations are achievable. With concerns raised about land issues, all of them believed that it would be challenging to attract a huge tourism project such as an amusement park. The land issues identified and shared by interviewees from the government and industry perspectives include:

1. Limited available lands in Yangshuo for development;
2. Insufficient land approved for tourism development under the current land use guideline and policy;
3. Most tourism projects have a high demand for land use, especially large projects such as amusement parks; and
4. The approval process for land use is complicated, leading to Yangshuo missing out of some external investment opportunities for large tourism projects.

As discussed in Section 6.6, place of residency determines the distance from an individual's residence to the central tourism zone as well as the possibility of their household income options. The role of the distance from tourist zones and its perceived impact on tourism has been investigated in several studies (e.g. Haley et al. 2005, Jurowski & Gursoy 2004). Their results suggested that the closer that the residents live to the tourist zone, the more negative their perceptions toward tourism development may be.

In Yangshuo, interviewed residents who reside in Yangshuo Town, Xiping Town or Fuli Town and whose properties are close to the major tourism precincts provided more examples about their experiences of the negative impact of tourism.

In summary, at the destination level, it can be stated that the tourism destination characteristics have a central role in tourism development, including its original attractiveness and the newly built attractions. These bridge the tourism impacts on residents' relevant QOL perceptions. For example, residents were more sensitive and

attentive to water quality in Yangshuo. For destinations where rivers were not the major attraction, residents would be less likely to perceive such an impact.

At the individual level, the distance between residents' place of residency and the core tourism attractions influenced their perception of tourism impacts.

### **7.3 Opportunities, policies and stakeholders**

Costanza et al. (2007) used the term “opportunities” to capture individual ability to satisfy their basic needs by utilising available resources of the environment. In this thesis, this term refers to the link between QOL levels and available resources. It highlights the importance of both supply and demand sides – the ability of the environment to satisfy individual needs and the ability of individuals to access and interact with relevant resources to meet their needs.

Tourism empowers local communities by enabling them to access and interact with relevant resources to meet their needs. Scheyvens (1999) suggested a community empowerment framework consisted of four levels of empowerment: economic empowerment, psychological empowerment, social empowerment, and political empowerment. Among them, economic empowerment refers to not only the opportunities provided by tourism employment and business, but also the nature of the economic benefits. For example, one may ask questions such as are the economic gains periodic, do they provide a reliable income, or are they equally shared among residents in the community.

The ability of humans to satisfy their basic needs comes from the opportunities available and constructed from social, built, human and natural capital (and time). Policy and culture help to allocate the four types of capital as a means for providing these opportunities. In Costanza et al.'s studies (2007; 1997), the researchers have well-argued and demonstrated the importance of these capitals as inputs to the satisfiers of the various human needs. For example, built capital is a primary satisfier of the need for subsistence (via, for example, shelter), but natural capital is also a primary satisfier of subsistence (via, for example, clean air and water), and human and social capital are also important (via, for example, healthcare). Likewise, the need for participation can

be satisfied by involvement in social life (social capital) or meaningful use of one's talents (human capital). The inherent nature of the capitals will help to guide policy and decision making in regards to meeting human needs. For example, social capital and information (a component of human capital) improve through use. This is how our social networks and scientific knowledge generally grow. Built capital and the labour element of human capital wear out through use, following the second law of thermodynamics. Some aspects of natural capital improve through use and repair themselves through solar energy capture. Careful understanding of the nature of these capitals will help to most efficiently provide opportunities to meet human needs.

- Built capital is defined as manufactured goods such as tools, equipment, buildings.
- Human capital refers to the knowledge and information stored in our brains, as well as our labour.
- Social capital is understood as those networks and norms that facilitate cooperative action.
- Natural capital is defined as the renewable and non-renewable goods and services provided by ecosystems (Costanza & Daly 1992).

The tourism development in Yangshuo has offered opportunities to residents and thus empower them. In Section 5.4, findings were presented regarding the empowerment of relatively vulnerable groups, such as women, the disabled, the elders and so on. The empowerment enhanced their sense of security and control of life.

However, the implementation of new regulations reduced opportunities for some residents, leading to their reduced sense of security (see Section 5.5). Residents' capacity for engaging in tourism was influenced by Yangshuo government's interventions. Tourism was originally developed in a spontaneous manner in Yangshuo, with little government intervention. Although opportunities were uneven, willing residents found their own ways to get involved in tourism, as already introduced in the earlier sections. However, since the Yangshuo government started to implement regulations and policies with the aim to normalise, develop and sustain the tourism

industry in Yangshuo, many of the earlier ways that people engaged in tourism were disabled and considered illegal. A few examples are given below.

When tourism initially began, one interviewee (female, 45-55 years old) opened a restaurant offering fresh fish meals on the river bank. The site chosen was temporary, next to a quay but not owned by the interviewee. There were no regulations at that time regarding opening restaurants on the river bank. Her restaurant became fairly popular, attracting many visitors who came to enjoy the fish meals. The interviewee earned a fair amount of money and decided to build a multilevel property as the site for the restaurant near the quay. However, soon after the construction had been completed, the land along the river was sold to a large enterprise to develop a five-star resort. The new building constructed by the interviewee was thus demolished and removed by the government. The interviewee lost all the investment. She has since then opened a restaurant at home and set up a temporary site not far from the river. She mainly cooks food at the home restaurant but visitors can dine in the temporary site where tables and chairs are provided. However, she indicated that she is unsure how much longer she could run her business as there is now a regulation forbidding opening restaurants on the river bank. This uncertainty has made her worry and feel a lack of sense of achievement.

Another example was from a hotel owner (male, 50+). Prior to opening the hotel, he was running bamboo rafting trips. In the early times, his family was poor. So he borrowed money to buy the first raft. Soon after he had earned enough money, he purchased a few more rafts for own use and renting purposes. Then the new river rafting policies were set up allowing one raft per household to control the number of rafts in the Li River, and all the rafts would be owned and managed by a big company. The government purchased all his rafts. He applied to continue rafting but was not allocated a raft for his household. He was frustrated, especially as some other households had more than one raft. Losing his raft business had a big impact on his perceived quality of life.

Additionally, new plans, such as developing Ten-Mile Gallery as a ticketed-admission tourism destination, have caused concerns among residents in the destination. The Ten-Mile Gallery refers to areas along the road stretching from the Yangshuo Town to Moon

Hill. It was a free access road in the past. The government implemented a new project to set up a gate at each end of the road to manage it as a ticketed destination. Private cars and tour buses need to park in the parking lot (paid parking). Visitors can hire bikes at a reasonably low price or use paid public tour shuttles to commute between attractions. Entry fee to the destination is charged on top of admission cost to individual attractions inside the Ten-Mile Gallery. The target of the project is to improve the environmental and management quality inside the destination, to provide a better tourist experience.

One participant who has a family-run restaurant inside the Ten-Mile Gallery shared her concern that once the project started, her business would be badly influenced. Although local residents are not restricted from free entrance or exit, many of her customers are repeat visitors, or residents living in other suburbs or counties. She believes that if they have to pay for an entry ticket to come to her restaurant, many of the customers will turn to other alternatives. Moreover, visitors need to use shuttle buses to travel within the destination. She was not sure if the stop would be close to her restaurant. If not, she had little faith in continuing her business. This business has been the major income source for her whole family, including her brothers. During the interview, I could see she was deeply worried about this change and her ongoing capacity to run her business, but there didn't seem to be much she could do.

The Ten-Mile Gallery destination plan also influenced residents from this area engaging tourism in other ways, including people who are selling tickets to visitors for different attractions and earning commission fees, and people who are renting bikes to visitors. Although most interviewees were not supportive of the plan, one interviewee, who runs a hotel in Ten-Mile Gallery, said that *I trust the government that the plan will improve tourists' experience in Ten-Mile Gallery. Now there are too many cars on the road. Riding bikes is dangerous, as well as makes you breathe in car emissions. These problems will be solved if cars are not allowed to drive in.* She already planned to ask someone to promote her hotel at the gates.

A more general concern expressed by most interviewees engaging in tourism was the decreased number of arrivals and the increased business competition in Yangshuo. Although they were confident about the future tourism growth and development in

Yangshuo, they were at the same time worried and uneasy about their individual income uncertainty. Only a few interviewees engaging in tourism held a good sense of security. They were aged less than 30 years and had been working or in business for a relatively short period of time (less than three years). Other residents were also not concerned about future uncertainty to the same degree as those working in non-tourism related professions, such as the sales manager of the telecommunication company. She said that she was holding an “iron rice bowl”; therefore, she was not concerned about unemployment.

In conclusion, in Yangshuo, tourism has provided opportunities to residents in the earlier stages in an uneven manner. When the government started to intervene in tourism development, their interventions influenced some residents’ ability to access opportunities they had access before. This caused a significant, negative impact on residents’ perceived QOL.

#### **7.4 Addressing the theoretical framework**

This chapter has examined the links between tourism and residents’ QOL, namely, the central parts of the theoretical framework shown below, including the bridges and opportunities.

The triple bridges concept composed of Tian, Di and Ren was discussed in detail. Ren, the people dimension covered people related bridges, including the resident-resident interaction, host-visitor interaction and resident-outsider (except visitors) bridges. Tian, the timing of tourism development, was strongly related to opportunities tourism can provide to residents. Yangshuo as a destination which was one of the first Chinese places opened to the world for tourism had its advantages in rapid development in the past. Di, the destination characteristics and place of residency related bridges defined the existence of tourism impacts and residents’ perceptions of these impacts.

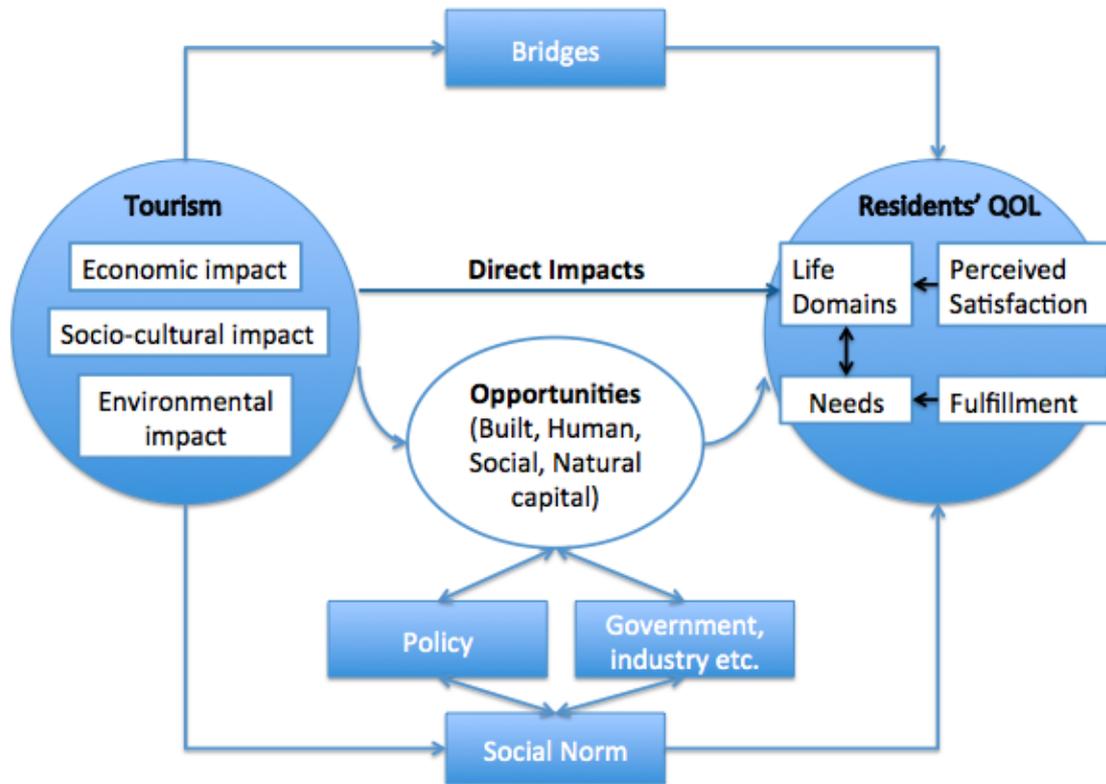


Figure 7.2: Conceptual framework

Opportunities Yangshuo tourism provided to residents were also elaborated. This link is critical to residents' QOL. The intervention of government changed residents' capability to access opportunities, leading to decreased QOL levels, especially in the sense of income security life domain.

One link that was not discussed in this chapter is the social norm that connects tourism impacts with residents' perceived QOL. Social norms can be defined as collective representations of acceptable group conduct and individual perceptions of particular group conduct. They can be viewed as cultural products such as values, customs, and traditions that represent individuals' basic knowledge of what others do and think that they should do (Lapinski and Rimal 2005).

Social norms were not discussed in detail in this chapter, as the data collected in this study did not support an in-depth understanding of this dimension. It was not the core concept for the purpose of this study. However, it is important to keep in mind that

social norms influence the weights residents give to different QOL domains or needs. Different cultures affected by different social norms, thus see differences in QOL definitions between their communities. Social norms also influence policy decisions in relation to social investments in enhancing opportunities. While policy and other stakeholders affect opportunities for one to meet one's needs, social norm influences one's value and is influenced by tourism development.

## **Chapter 8 Discussion and conclusion**

### **8.1 Overview of the study**

Tourism, as an instrument to eliminate poverty in rural communities globally, has attracted great academic attention for over a decade. One of the key topics in tourism impact research is how tourism influences local residents' quality of life, which has been studied intensively using a quantitative approach. However, while correlations between tourism impacts and residents' quality of life were evidenced by numerous case studies, our understanding of what influences the links between the two remains limited. This gap restrains the effectiveness of using tourism to improve residents' quality of life in the process of developing the economy in the destination community.

To address the need to understand the factors 'bridging' tourism impacts and residents' quality of life, this study conducted a case study in the first tourism destination that opened to international visitors in China. The aim of the study was to identify the important domains of quality of life among residents in Yangshuo, explore the relationships between residents' quality of life and tourism development from different perspectives of various tourism stakeholders, and to understand residents' expectation of improved quality of life and tourism development in the long term. Four research questions were asked:

1. What are the important domains of QOL identified by the residents of the destination community in China?
2. What are the positive and negative impacts of tourism perceived by residents in relation to their quality of life domains?
3. What are the links between tourism and residents' QOL?
4. What are the key challenges that prevent tourism development in enhancing residents' QOL in a sustainable way in the community?

A qualitative case study methodology was applied. Over 45 residents, government representatives and tourism stakeholders participated in this study between June and July 2015. Based on these findings, a theoretical framework was developed to describe

tourism impacts and perceived quality of life through bridges, opportunities and factors influencing opportunities. The implications of the findings and the conceptual framework to a broader community, limitations and future research recommendation were provided.

## **8.2 Key findings: Review of the research questions and research objectives**

### **8.2.1 Research objective one**

This objective was to identify the important domains of QOL among residents of destination communities in China through the framework of QOL.

Yangshuo residents' perceived quality of life domains include family and family culture, material and environmental well-being, employment, income and living cost, community identity and social interaction, public service and safety, lifestyle and freedom and sense of security. Tourism was perceived to contribute to the enhancement of residents' quality of life throughout the years, especially in the material and environmental well-being and employment and income life domains. Current tourism in Yangshuo negatively influenced residents' quality of life through reducing their sense of security.

### **8.2.2 Research objective two**

This objective was to explore the relationships between residents' QOL and tourism development from different perspectives of various tourism stakeholders.

The perceived economic, socio-cultural and environmental impacts of tourism in Yangshuo were similar to existing case studies. More positive economic impacts were perceived while more negative environmental impacts were identified. There were diverse views in some impacts, influenced by personal level factors. However, different from what literature suggests, residents were supportive of tourism development in Yangshuo regardless of their household dependence on the tourism industry, which was explained by the theory of place attachment.

### **8.2.3 Research objective three**

This objective was to understand residents' expectation of improved QOL and tourism development in the future/in the long term

### **8.2.4 Research objective four**

This objective was to evaluate the feasibility of tourism development, tourism policies and destination management in addressing residents' expectations and to propose practical suggestions on tourism policies and development strategies for the studied destinations.

In addition to direct tourism impacts, triple "bridges" composed of Tian (Timing), Di (Place), Ren (People) and opportunities to enhance residents' built, human, environmental and social capitals were identified as links between tourism and residents' quality of life. The declining residents' quality of life was primarily associated with the decrease in opportunities to access these capitals. The policy change was the principal cause. However, from the government's and other stakeholders' perspectives, the re-structure of opportunities in Yangshuo was key to its sustainable tourism development.

## **8.3 Framework of tourism development and residents' QOL**

The conceptual framework of this study has four key components. Firstly, QOL is defined by the extent to which one feels subjectively satisfied with various life domains and the extent to which one's needs are objectively fulfilled. The life domains and needs are interrelated. Residents have different needs under different life domains.

Secondly, tourism can affect domains of residents' QOL through various Tian (time), Di (place) and Ren (people) bridges. Each of them has unchangeable bridges that are associated with destination characteristics. By understanding these bridges, we accept the advantages and limitations of a tourism destination in developing its tourism. The other bridges show how tourism transfers its various impacts on residents' quality of life domains. While residents' perception of both tourism impacts and their QOL

domains are subjective, local government can change the bridges that affect residents' cognition and perceptions.

Thirdly, tourism can indirectly affect how residents' needs are fulfilled by influencing opportunities to meet human needs. These opportunities include built, human, social, and natural capitals (Costanza et al. 2007).

Lastly, policy and other stakeholders affect opportunities for one to meet one's needs. Social norm influences one's value and is influenced by tourism development.

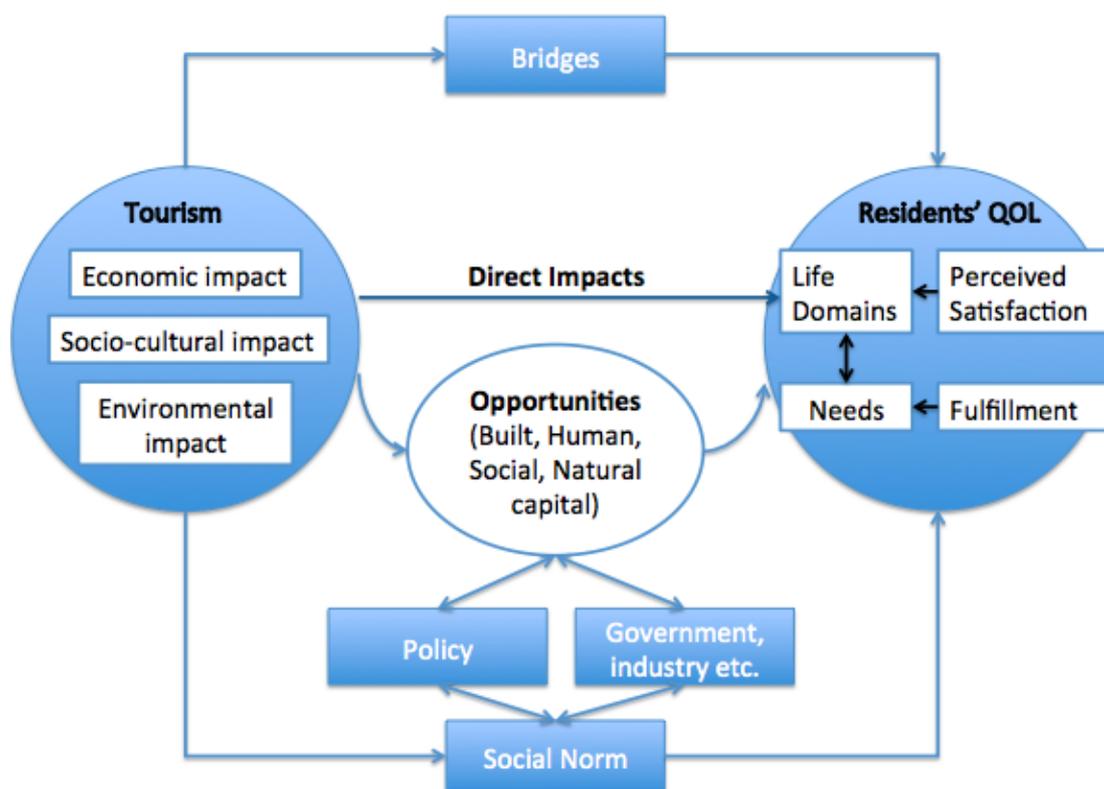


Figure 8.1: Conceptual framework

## 8.4 Contribution to knowledge

This research has made original theoretical and practical contributions to knowledge. These contributions are presented in the following sections.

#### **8.4.1 Theoretical contribution**

This research has developed a theoretical framework to link tourism impacts and several residents' QOL models together to present a holistic picture of tourism-related QOL. In particular, rather than taking the "impacts on QOL" for granted, it identified bridges through which tourism's impacts were transferred or functioned on residents' QOL. As a result, this study has contributed to knowledge by enhancing the theoretical understanding of residents' QOL related to tourism in China.

In addition, the study has provided a snapshot of tourism's impacts on local communities in the Chinese cultural and political context. Yangshuo, as one of the first tourism destinations in China opened up to the world, its tourism development is the epitome of China's international tourism development. This uniqueness made Yangshuo a good case study location, in which residents could perceive the tourism impacts clearly. By bringing Yangshuo and China's scenario into the international conversations of tourism impacts and destination communities' life quality, this study has enriched the knowledge in this area.

#### **8.4.2 Practical contribution**

From this study, practical contributions are made, which could potentially assist the Yangshuo government and policymakers involved in tourism development to plan and develop tourism in Yangshuo better, which will further enhance residents' QOL.

The enhancement can happen in two ways. The first one is to address the current problems and issues and the negative tourism impacts perceived by residents. Bearing in mind the destination characteristics that restrict the number of possible solutions in resolving some of the issues, the Yangshuo government can focus on bridges that can be changed. This can be done, for example, by taking the resident-resident bridges that link tourism impacts and residents' social cohesion life domain. The resident-resident bridges feature collaboration, conflict, competition and social comparison. Through regulations and transparency of policy, the government can reduce the conflict and social comparison among residents.

The framework developed in this study can also be used to interpret how tourism development links to the enhancement of residents' quality of life in a destination in China. By paying attention to the bridges between tourism and residents' quality of life domains in other communities, local government, policymakers and other tourism stakeholders can take effective actions to influence the perception of residents in relation to tourism, which in turn largely determines their attitudes towards tourism development.

## **8.5 Limitations and suggestions for future research**

Restraint by the time and resources available for this project and the methodology applied, it is acknowledged that there are limitations in this study. This study took a qualitative case study approach. Many of the theoretical and practical contributions identified in this study have limited applicability, given that the data collection process was confined to one case study location. This study only represents the population of residents in Yangshuo. It does not intend to represent the whole population of China's tourism community, and the study mainly focused on selected towns where tourism has a stronger impact, these participants are more engaged and there are more natural resources. Therefore, the findings on residents' perceptions may not be generalisable to other regions in China.

Despite the abovementioned shortcomings, the findings on residents' QOL related to tourism confirm and extend previous research in tourism. The themes in relation to residents' perceived QOL and tourism impacts confirmed existing study while providing more insights into the process of how the perceptions were formed. The findings and knowledge contribution on bridges that link tourism impacts and residents' QOL could be extended with caution to other tourism destinations in China. This presented study did not aim to provide a concrete answer. Instead, it aimed to provide an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of tourism related QOL. In particular, it provides a framework to understand the links between tourism impacts and residents' QOL through bridges and opportunities related to different individuals and communities.

There is still a need for a deeper understanding of the bridges through which the impacts of tourism transfer to individuals in the community and to overcome many of the limitations discussed above. Therefore, this section outlines some of the potential future research themes and topics that will further expand the current study.

### **8.5.1 Further research on residents' QOL in other locations in China**

The presented study undertook its data collection in Yangshuo and only represented the population of residents in Yangshuo. It would be valuable to replicate this research using the theoretical framework developed in this study in other destinations in China. In particular, one may see distinguishing results in relation to the triple bridge dimensions, as the tourism development progress, the destination characteristics and local culture and residents' profiles living in those locations could be different. Accordingly, residents' perceptions of needs and QOL domains in each community could vary. Future research is also suggested on destinations that experience great tourism growth in a relatively short period of time, in which the contrast and change in residents' QOL perceptions and criteria can be observed more easily. Such comparison study will enable researchers to explore similarities and differences in the findings and provide insights with applicability.

### **8.5.2 Further research on residents' individual QOL structure**

It could also be useful to identify typical QOL structures that individuals have given that QOL is a highly-personalised preference. In the original proposal of this study, Q-methodology was proposed, which aims to identify patterns of residents' QOL perceptions. The research design plan changed due to unexpected reasons, but I still think this methodology can help to understand whether residents experiencing and engaging in tourism in a place will develop similar or diverse QOL standards and expectations. This understanding will give rise to a better understanding of factors that influence residents' QOL satisfaction levels too.

### **8.5.3 Further research on tourism-QOL bridges**

The findings of this study suggest that tourism impacts link to residents' QOL through three bridges. Therefore, future research is suggested to understand how to improve the

bridges which would allow more opportunities to individuals and improve residents' QOL further.

Comparative studies in different tourism destinations should also be encouraged, which can help to understand the destination community and natural environments' impact on people's life quality and happiness. Through the comparison studies, clusters of tourism destinations may be developed. Destinations within the same or similar clusters can learn from others.

#### **8.5.4 Further research on overtourism's impact on residents' QOL**

Overtourism is increasingly a global phenomenon and has been observed in destinations in many countries, including China (UNWTO 2018). Yangshuo receives over ten million visitors every year since 2012. The issue of overtourism could be a potential factor influencing residents' QOL and their attitudes towards tourism. Further research needs to be undertaken in examining the impact of overtourism on residents' QOL in rural destinations in China.

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## **Appendix A:**

### **Systematic Literature Review**

A systematic literature review is a means of selecting, evaluating and interpreting available research relating to a topic. Generally, it answers one or more defined research question(s) by collecting and summarising all existing empirical evidence that fits pre-specified eligibility criteria, following an explicit literature search and selection strategy. It was first proposed in health science in the 1970s and is commonly used in this domain to examine the effectiveness of a healthcare intervention to inform medicine and health-related practice and policy (e.g. Ozawa & Sripad 2013). This approach has also gained attention in areas such as criminal justice, education, international development, social welfare (The Campbell Collaboration 2015), and more recently, software engineering (e.g. Brereton et al. 2007), environment and sustainability (e.g. Liqueste et al. 2013), management (e.g. Johnsen, Miemczyk & Howard 2017) and so on, due to increasing ‘recognition of the importance of evidence-based practice to inform policy decisions and professional practice’ (Ridley 2012, p. 189).

A systematic literature review has not yet been applied extensively in tourism research. A few examples of the use of systematic literature review included Carter et al.’s (2015) review of sustainable tourism research in Cambodia; Assaf and Josiassen’s (2016) summary of frontier studies in the tourism literature; Peng et al.’s (2015) study examining international tourism demand elasticities; and Loulanski and Loulanski’s (2011) synthesis of cultural heritage and tourism research.

Performing a systematic literature review involves a number of discrete steps and the process has been introduced in detail in many guidelines. For example, the process generally includes: (i) framing questions for a review; (ii) identifying relevant reference; (iii) assessing the quality of the studies; (iv) summarising the evidence; and (v) interpreting the findings (Khan et al. 2003). During the summarising phase, particular methods, named meta-analysis or meta-synthesis (or narrative synthesis), are selectively employed to synthesise quantitative or qualitative data. The former refers to

the use of statistical techniques to integrating similar, individual quantitative findings, while the latter focuses on examining qualitative studies and providing a narrative synthesis (Ridley 2012).

Different from general traditional reviews, a systematic literature review is designed to be replicable by clearly detailing the review objectives, the literature searching strategy (e.g. time frame, terms searched), the precise inclusion and/or exclusion criteria for references and the evaluation or synthesis methods (Cronin et al. 2008). This also allows the readers to assess the reliability and validity of the review. Additionally, a systematic review aims to include as complete a list as possible of available studies on a particular topic to provide a comprehensive understanding of the topic. As indicated by Ridley (2012), it is usually “in itself a research study, addressing research questions and using the literature as data to be coded, analysed and synthesised to reach overall conclusions” (Ridley 2012, p.190).

There are different motivating factors for carrying out a systematic review in different fields. In health science, the main purpose is to rigorously and systematically aggregate empirical studies to inform clinic practice and healthcare policy. In software engineering, the key advocator, Kitchenham and his colleagues (2004; 2007), stated that systematic review can help to identify current gaps, new framework, future topic and novel hypothesis and “provide the means by which current best evidence from research can be integrated with practical experience and human values in the decision making process regarding the development and maintenance of software”.

The motivation for the current study to apply a systematic literature review was to gain a holistic and comprehensive understanding of tourism and destination residents’ quality of life in China. Reasons to focus exclusively on the Chinese literature are: (1) this research examined tourism-related quality of life in China; (2) few studies on tourism-related QOL in China were reported in English literature. Therefore, this systematic review has included relevant studies available in Chinese to address the question: What do we already know about how tourism influences residents’ quality of life in China?

As the systematic literature review here is part of the overall literature review of this study and its result was mainly used to inform the conceptual framework and the data analysis of the study, the researcher simplified the steps provided in the guideline described by Petticrew and Roberts (2006) to conduct the systematic review:

1. define the research questions;
2. identify inclusion and exclusion criteria;
3. carry out the literature search;
4. extract the data from included studies;
5. consider quality of included studies;
6. synthesis included studies.

### **Define research questions**

As mentioned in the preceding section, the systematic review was undertaken to address the question of what we already know about how tourism influences residents' quality of life in China. Several more specific sub-questions were proposed:

- Q1. What are the dimensions of residents' QOL in China?
- Q2. What are the tourism impacts relating to residents' QOL in China?
- Q3. What are the relationships between tourism and residents' QOL in China?
- Q4. What are the factors that affect the relationships?
- Q5. What are the key challenges and barriers of the research field?

### **Inclusion and exclusion criteria**

The purpose of setting up the criteria of inclusion and exclusion is to make sure that the review only uses researches that are relevant to the research questions. Additionally, it offers an opportunity for the readers to understand the scope of the review. Journal articles, conference proceedings and books/book chapters in the Chinese language, published from January 1915 to June 2016 in digital databases with full-text access were considered. The reason for excluding theses is the big number of them in this area with many not being accessible online. It also eliminated editorials, prefaces, poster sessions, panels and tutorial summaries. The starting year of 1915 was chosen because this is the earliest year that could be selected in all three major Chinese databases. The review eliminated works that do not clearly relate to the proposed research questions.

Further, when different versions of a study reporting same findings exist, which may appear as a book chapter, a conference or journal article, the first preference was given to published journal articles. The second preference is that only the complete version of the article is included and the others are excluded. Table 2.2 below shows a summary of these criteria. A study included must not satisfy any criteria of the exclusion and must satisfy all criteria of the inclusion.

Inclusion	Exclusion
Full-text Published between 1915-2016 Discussed tourism Discussed residents' QOL In the form of journal articles, conference proceedings and book/book chapters In Chinese language In the China context	Full-text not available Not related to our research questions From duplicated studies Outside search time span Focused on visitors' perspective Only mentioned QOL as a tourism outcome in less than ten sentences In the form of theses, editorials, prefaces, poster sessions, panels and tutorial summaries Review articles of studies in other countries

### The literature search process

The three main databases for academic works in the Chinese language are CNKI (China National Knowledge Infrastructure) ([www.cnki.net](http://www.cnki.net)), Wanfang Data ([www.wanfangdata.com](http://www.wanfangdata.com)) and Weipu Database of China ([www.cqvip.com](http://www.cqvip.com)). I used CNKI as the key database for the primary literature search and used the other two databases to search for complementary articles.

After the preliminary search in CNKI, the search for “quality of life (sheng huo zhi liang)” and “tourism (lv you)” in themes returned 142,243 hits; when adding “quality of life” and “tourism” in abstract, 1,323 studies were returned, including 389 dissertations and 934 journal articles. The journal articles were first checked against the criteria of inclusion and exclusion upon screening their titles, abstracts and keywords. One problem appeared in this process as some abstracts were very short and didn't enable me to identify their relevance. Thirty-three articles were left. Then I performed the same search in the other two databases and four articles were added.

In the second round, I searched for terms that have a meaning similar/close to QOL, including “Happiness (xing fu gan)”, “Well-being (fu li)”, with “Tourism (lv uou)” in abstract/keywords/titles of the three databases. A total of 109 relevant articles were found. After the screening process, 10 articles were added. After the first and second round of searching, 47 articles were included in the systematic review (e.g., Chen et al. 2009; Gao 2012a, 2012b; Hu et al. 2014; Li 2009; Zhang 2014; Zhao 2014;). A few review articles were then checked for missing references.

According to the quick screening, it was noted that in the current literature, there are more conceptual or theoretical discussions than empirical studies. Guo and her colleagues were one of the first teams that conducted QOL assessment in relation to tourism. In 2007, Guo et al. (2007b) reported an empirical study in Zhouzhuang on residents’ perceived tourism development, quality of life, residents’ attitudes and the correlations between these constructs. Likert scales with multiple questions were used to assess these subjective indicators. The results yielded a very complicated model showing correlations between impacts of tourism and domains of QOL.

In Guo et al.’s (2007b) empirical study, QOL was represented using eight domains: family life, lifestyle, social interaction, social identity, social safety, living facilities, expenditure structure and entertainment spending. Eight dimensions for perceived tourism impacts were created: cultural perception, community perception, environmental perception, benefits perception, employment perception, policy perception, general price perception and confidentiality perception. Thirty-one lines of associations between these dimensions were found. Among them, strong relationships were observed in residents’ perceived quality of their family lives and perceived general cost and confidentiality influenced by tourism, as well as lifestyle – perceived tourism’s impact on community attachment, belongingness, environmental awareness etc.

More recently, Guo, Kim and Chen (2014) conducted a survey among residents in Shanghai using a questionnaire containing 34 QOL-related items and 34 impact-related items. Respectively, eight domains of QOL and nine domains of tourism impacts were generated as a result of factor analysis. The QOL domains are: public security, leisure time, family cohesion, community construction, society’s atmosphere, economic margin, and living cost. The study presented a complex result about the correlations

between different tourism impact domains and QOL domains, but overall the finding is in accordance with previous studies illustrating a positive relationship between positive tourism impacts and related QOL domains.

# Appendix B:

## Ethical Approval Letter

Quest Ethics Notification - Application Process Finalised - Application Approved

quest.noreply@vu.edu.au

Fri 21/08/2015, 12:10 PM

[terry.delacy@vu.edu.au](mailto:terry.delacy@vu.edu.au); [li.he1@live.vu.edu.au](mailto:li.he1@live.vu.edu.au); [Min.Jiang@vu.edu.au](mailto:Min.Jiang@vu.edu.au); [he1502@126.com](mailto:he1502@126.com)

Dear DR TERRY DE LACY,

Your ethics application has been formally reviewed and finalised.

- » Application ID: HRE15-179
- » Chief Investigator: DR TERRY DE LACY
- » Other Investigators: PROF Xiaorong He, DR MIN JIANG, MS Li He
- » Application Title: An integrated framework of tourism development and residents' quality of life in tourism destinations in transition in China
- » Form Version: 13-07

The application has been accepted and deemed to meet the requirements of the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) 'National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007)' by the Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee. Approval has been granted for two (2) years from the approval date; 21/08/2015.

Continued approval of this research project by the Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee (VUHREC) is conditional upon the provision of a report within 12 months of the above approval date or upon the completion of the project (if earlier). A report proforma may be downloaded from the Office for Research website at: <http://research.vu.edu.au/hrec.php>.

Please note that the Human Research Ethics Committee must be informed of the following: any changes to the approved research protocol, project timelines, any serious events or adverse and/or unforeseen events that may affect continued ethical acceptability of the project. In these unlikely events, researchers must immediately cease all data collection until the Committee has approved the changes. Researchers are also reminded of the need to notify the approving HREC of changes to personnel in research projects via a request for a minor amendment. It should also be noted that it is the Chief Investigators' responsibility to ensure the research project is conducted in line with the recommendations outlined in the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) 'National

Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007).'

On behalf of the Committee, I wish you all the best for the conduct of the project.

Secretary, Human Research Ethics Committee

Phone: 9919 4781 or 9919 4461

Email: [researchethics@vu.edu.au](mailto:researchethics@vu.edu.au)

## Appendix C:

### Information to Participants

#### INFORMATION TO PARTICIPANTS INVOLVED IN RESEARCH

#### 研究参与说明资料页 A - Yangshuo/ Interviews

##### You are invited to participate 邀请项目

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You are invited to participate in a research project entitled **An integrated framework of tourism development and residents' quality of life in tourism destinations in transition in China**. This project is being conducted by a student researcher *Li He* as part of a PhD study at Victoria University under the supervision of *Prof. Terry DeLacy* and *Dr. Min Jiang* from College of Business, Victoria University, and *Prof. Xiaorong He* from College of Tourism, Hunan Normal University.

我们诚邀您参加题为《中国转型期旅游目的地旅游发展与居民生活质量的综合性模型研究》博士调研课题。本研究由我校博士生贺黎，在其导师特瑞·德兰斯教授（澳大利亚维多利亚大学商学院），江旻博士（澳大利亚维多利亚大学商学院），以及贺小荣教授（湖南师范大学旅游学院）的共同指导下进行。

##### Project explanation 课题简介

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This study is about the impacts of tourism on community development. It is recognised that a destination community will be influenced by tourism development. This research aims to explore what the key domains of residents' perception of quality of life are and how they are influenced by tourism development in the communities. This research will generate a greater understanding of tourism development and residents' quality of life with implications for a better tourism destination management. The research will be conducted at 2 destinations, respectively in Yangshuo, Guangxi and Fenghuang, Hunan. 本课题围绕旅游对本地社区发展的影响展开。已有研究证明旅游目的地社区受到了旅游发展的广泛影响，而本课题旨在探索旅游目的地居民如何看待他们生活质量的不同方面以及这些方面如何受到旅游的影响。本研究会为我们理解旅

游发展和居民生活水平之间的关系，以及更好的管理旅游目的地提供理论基础。本课题将在 2 个旅游目的地展开数据收集，分别为广西阳朔以及湖南凤凰。

### **What will I be asked to do? 如何参与?**

---

At different stages of the data collection, you may be invited to participate in one or all of the below procedures. Prior to your participation, we will need you to fill the consent form.

在本课题数据收集的不同阶段，你可能会被邀请参加下方列出的一个或多个环节。在您正式参与之前，我们需要您填写参与同意书。

- Interviews (audio recorded) regarding tourism development and residents' quality of life in Yangshuo - anticipated 20-40 minutes  
围绕旅游发展和阳朔居民生活质量进行的深入访谈（采访过程会被录音），预计 15~30 分钟
- Offering and/or discussing archival or personal-owned photos about tourism development and quality of life in Yangshuo – anticipated 15~40 minutes  
提供及/或讨论有关阳朔旅游发展和生活质量的档案或个人所有的照片，预计 15~40 分钟
- Sorting and ranking 15-50 photos/statements according to the criteria provided by the researcher (photo of the sorting/ranking result will be taken), taking approximately 5~20 minutes  
根据研究者指示对 15-50 张照片/词条进行排序和分类（排序分类结果将拍照保留），预计 5~20 分钟
- A follow-up interview (audio recorded) regarding the photo sorting/ranking stage and demographic information, taking 30 minutes  
随后的围绕照片分类排序及人口统计特征等背景信息展开的访谈（采访过程会被录音），预计 30 分钟
- Focus group discussion (audio recorded and photos taken) – more details are in the Information Sheet B  
焦点组讨论（讨论过程会录音及拍照）—更多信息参考资料页 B

### **What will I gain from participating? 您能得到什么?**

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Your participation will contribute to the development of knowledge about residents' quality of life in the context of tourism and also to improving the management of Yangshuo tourism development. Through participation, you will also be able to understand yourself more in terms of what are the most important aspects in your life.

您的参与将为旅游影响及居民生活领域的知识发展做出贡献，并为阳朔旅游管理的改进添砖加瓦。通过参与研究本身，您将有机会更加了解自己如何看待生活的不同方面。

Additionally, with your agreement, your name and contact will be recorded and enter a lucky draw. Small gifts will be posted from Australia later to winners to thank you for your participation.

此外，如果您感兴趣，留下您的名字和联络方式便可以参与我们为感谢各位参与者准备的幸运抽奖。获奖者将收到我们从澳大利亚发出的纪念品作为答谢礼物。

### **How will the information I give be used? 您提供的信息会被如何使用?**

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The information that participants provide will be analysed and used to complete the PhD thesis. The information will also be used to develop academic publications. Before the interview information is used, if you give us your email address, you will be provided an opportunity to review the transcripts and decide whether you want to have it withdraw from the research.

所有参与者提供的信息经分析后将用于完成本课题的博士论文，及国际学术著作。在我们正式使用您提供的信息之前，如果您提供您的电子邮件地址，您将有机会对采访的文字纪录进行阅读并决定是否继续参与课题。

### **What are the potential risks of participation? 您的参与有风险吗?**

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There are no expected risks from participation. The information you provide will be kept confidential at all stages of the project. No individual responses will be identified in resulting publications. Please feel free to withdraw from the research at any stage. We will respect your decision.

参与过程中没有任何预期风险。您提供的信息将在整个研究过程中被保密，本项目产生的相关学术著作中也不会披露各参与者的信息。您还可以随时要求退出本研究。我们会尊重您的选择。

### **Who is conducting the study? 谁是研究者?**

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Professor Terry DeLacy (Principal Researcher)

**特瑞·德兰斯教授（主要研究者）**

Professorial Fellow, College of Business, Victoria University  
澳大利亚维多利亚大学商学院教授

Mail 邮箱: PO Box 14428 MC Melbourne 8001

Phone 澳洲联系电话: +61 3 9919 5349  
Email 电子邮箱: [terry.delacy@vu.edu.au](mailto:terry.delacy@vu.edu.au)

Dr. Min Jiang (Co-investigator)

江旻博士 (协助调研者)

Research Fellow, College of Business, Victoria University  
澳大利亚维多利亚大学商学院研究员

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Phone 澳洲联系电话: +61 3 9919 5269

Email 电子邮箱: [Min.Jiang@vu.edu.au](mailto:Min.Jiang@vu.edu.au)

Ms. Li He (Student Researcher)

贺黎 (博士生研究者 / 课题实施人)

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Email 电子邮箱: [li.he1@live.vu.edu.au](mailto:li.he1@live.vu.edu.au)

Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to the researchers listed above.

任何有关本项目的参与都可以联系上方列出的研究者。

If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Ethics Secretary, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee, Office for Research, Victoria University, PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC, 8001, email [researchethics@vu.edu.au](mailto:researchethics@vu.edu.au) or phone (03) 9919 4781 or 4461.

如果您对您在参与过程中被对待的方式有疑问或投诉，您可以联系维多利亚大学研究办公室人类研究伦理委员会伦理秘书长，邮件联系地址为 PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC, 8001；电子邮件可发送至：[researchethics@vu.edu.au](mailto:researchethics@vu.edu.au)；电话为 +61 (03) 9919 4781 或 4461。

Thank you for your participation.

感谢您的参与。

## Appendix D: Consent form

### CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

### 研究参与同意书

We would like to invite you to be a part of a research about tourism and community development that aims to explore the impacts of tourism on local residents' life quality. In this research, photos and interviews will be used to understand participants' perception of their quality of life in Yangshuo after tourism has developed. There are no expected risks from participation.

我们诚邀您参加一个围绕旅游和社区发展探索旅游对居民生活质量的影  
响的研究。我们将借助照片和采  
访的方式了解阳朔旅游发展后参与  
者对自己生活质量的感知。参与本  
研究无任何预期风险。

## CERTIFICATION BY SUBJECT 参与者确认

I 我, \_\_\_\_\_, the undersigned 署名人,

certify that I am at least 18 years old and that I am voluntarily giving my consent to participate in the study *An integrated framework of tourism development and residents' quality of life in tourism destinations in transition in China* being conducted at Victoria University by Professor Terry DeLacy, Dr. Min Jiang, Professor Xiaorong He and Ms. Li He.

证实我已年满 18 周岁并志愿同意参加题为《中国转型期旅游目的地旅游发展与居民生活质量的综合性模型研究》的澳大利亚维多利亚大学课题，研究团队成员包括特瑞·德兰斯教授、江旻博士、贺小荣教授以及贺黎女士。

I certify that the objectives of the study, together with any risks and safeguards associated with the procedures listed hereunder to be carried out in the research, have been fully explained to me by Ms. Li He, and that I freely consent to participation involving the below procedures that were ticked:

我证实本课题的目标及和下方列出的研究流程相关的可能风险 / 保护措施都已由贺黎女士进行了全面解释，我志愿同意参与到下面打钩的环节：

- Interviews (audio recorded) regarding tourism development and residents' quality of life in Yangshuo 围绕旅游发展和阳朔居民生活质量进行的深入访谈（采访过程会被录音）
- Offering and/or discussing archival or personal-owned photos about tourism development and quality of life in Yangshuo 提供及/或讨论有关阳朔旅游发展和生活质量的档案或个人所有的照片
- Sorting and ranking 15-50 photos/statements according to the criteria provided by the researcher (photo of the sorting/ranking result will be taken) 根据研究者指示对15-50 张照片/词条进行排序和分类（排序分类结果将拍照保留）
- A follow-up interview (audio recorded) regarding the photo sorting/ranking stage and demographic information 随后的围绕照片分类排序及人口统计特征等背景信息展开的访谈（采访过程会被录音）
- Focus group discussion (audio recorded and photos taken) 焦点组讨论（讨论过程会录音及拍照）

I *certify* that I have had the opportunity to have any questions answered and that I understand that I can withdraw from this study at any time and that this withdrawal will not jeopardise me in any way. I have also been informed that the information I provide will be kept confidential.

我证实我有提问的机会，并且我的提问都得到了答复；我明白我可以随时退出本研究，并不会因为退出受到任何形式的不良影响。我已经被告知我提供的所有信息都会被保密处理。

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Name of Participant 参与者姓名

Signature 签名

Date 日期

\*Email address for reviewing interview transcription 邮箱（查看访谈转录后的文字内容）\_\_\_\_\_

\*Contact information to enter the lucky draw 联系方式（参与抽奖）\_\_\_\_\_

Any queries about your participation in this project may be directed to the researcher Professor Terry DeLacy, phone: +61 3 9919 5349 or Email: [terry.delacy@vu.edu.au](mailto:terry.delacy@vu.edu.au). 任何有关本项目的参与都可以联系本课题研究者特瑞·德兰斯教授（电话 +61 3 9919 5349 / 电子邮件: [terry.delacy@vu.edu.au](mailto:terry.delacy@vu.edu.au)）。

If you have any queries or complaints about the way you have been treated, you may contact the Ethics Secretary, Victoria University Human Research Ethics Committee, Office for Research, Victoria University, PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC, 8001, email [Researchethics@vu.edu.au](mailto:Researchethics@vu.edu.au) or phone (03) 9919 4781 or 4461. 如果您对您在参与过程中被对待的方式有疑问或投诉，您可以联系维多利亚大学研究办公室人类研究伦理委员会伦理秘书长，邮件联系地址为 PO Box 14428, Melbourne, VIC, 8001；电子邮件可发送至: [researchethics@vu.edu.au](mailto:researchethics@vu.edu.au)；电话为+61 (03) 9919 4781 或 4461。

# Appendix E:

## Interview sheet

旅游影响 Actual Tourism Impact	旅游影响感知 Perceived tourism Impact	感知桥梁 Perception Bridge		生活质量要素 Considered QOL element	生活质量 QOL dimensions
		Events/Facts	relevant / irrelevant		
经济 Economy					满意 / 信心 Satisfaction/ Confidence
就业 Employment		旅游获奖(中国最美古城 / 最适宜居住) Tourism awards (e.g. The Most Beautiful Ancient Town in China/ The Most Livable city in China)	让我非常骄傲 / 很看重 / 无所谓 / 喜欢 I feel honoured/ I care for it very much/ I don't care/ I like it		社会治安 / 文明 Social security/ civilization
个人利益 Self interest		宣传活动 (啤酒鱼大赛 / 宣传片拍摄等) Promotional activities (Beer Fish Cooking Competition/ Filming)	如果与我有关, 我很喜欢参加 / 不参加的原因 If it's relevant with me, I will join/ why not participate		城市环境 Urban environment
政策 Policy		旅游节日 (元宵节的西街联欢晚会 / 渔火节) Tourism Festivals (Festival of Lanterns Celebration Evening/ Fishing and Light Festival)	我很喜欢和家人朋友一起去 I love to go with my family members		经济商业 / 物价 Economics/ prices
物价 Price		旅游景区 (遇龙河 / 西街 / 公园 / 攀岩活动) Tourism attractions (Yulong River/ West Street/ Garden/ Rock Climbing)	有时间的时候, 我平时经常参加 / 喜欢参加 I participate to it when I have spare time/ I love joining it		自然环境 Natural Environment
		景区乱象 (拉客 / 抢客 / 宰客) Illegal Situations in Attractions (Dragging Tourists/ Robbing tourists from others/ Over charging visitors)	我听了很不高兴 / 理解欺客宰客的现象 I am angry with it/ I understand why it happens		生活便利度 Life convenience
文化 Culture		旅游治理 Tourism Governance	听到景区治安变好让我很高兴		城市口碑 Reputation of Cities

民俗 Folk-custom	旅游培训 / 教育课程 Tourism Training/ Education courses	I'm excited to hear the safety is getting better at the attractions. 如果有时间, 我很乐意参加 If I have time, I'm glad to join	交通 / 通讯 Transportation/ Communication
活动 Event	基础设施 / 城建 (景区 / 公路 / 绿化 / 干净) Infrastructure/ Urban development (Attractions/ Roads/ Greening work/ cleanness)	旅游改善了 Tourism does make an improvement	遗产 / 文化 Heritage/ Culture
文化遗迹 Cultural heritage	交通 (日常 / 高峰期 / 出现方便程度) Traffic (Daily/ Peak seasons/ Travelling convenience)		社会保障 / 就业 Social Welfare/ Employment
社会 Society	旅游生意 / 旅游相关职业 / 工作 Tourism business/ Tourism relevant professionals/ work)	对家庭重要性 / 更多选择 It's important for my family/ more choices	社区认同 Community Recognition
治安 Security	旅游项目 (酒店 / 工作机会 / 刺激消费 / 环境) Tourism projects (Hotels/ work opportunities/ stimulating expenses/ environments)	大型酒店项目, 这让城市显得更高端大气 Big hotel projects make the town more modern	邻里人际关系 Neighbourhood interpersonal relations
文明风气 Civilization	旅游项目征地 Land acquisition for tourism projects	我得到了分红 I earn commission	个人 / 家庭地位 Personal/ Family role
	上亿投资大型规划项目 (游乐场 / 千人会议) Billion Investment Large-scale projects (Theme parks/ Thousands Conference Room)	我也想去看一看 I also want to go and have a look	物质条件 Physical condition
	旅游人数波动 Fluctuation of visitor numbers	竞争更激烈 More competitive	收入 / 工作 Income/ work
社区 Community	名人来访 Famous people visiting		娱乐休闲 Leisure/ entertainment
自然环境 Natural Environment	与游客的接触 (工作场合 / 非工作场合) Contacting with visitors (In work occasions / casual occasions)		健康 Health
基础设施 Infrastructure			家庭 / 子女发展 Family/ Children development
人际关系			消费 / 购物

Interpersonal Relationships					Spending/ Shopping  舒适度 Comfortableness  自由度 Freedom  安全感 / 压力 Sense of security/ Pressure  充实 Fulfilment  被认可度 Sense of recognition  幸福感 Happiness
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### Interview procedure and questions:

The interview sheet was developed to assist me capturing participants' responses in their own orders. The tourism impact and QOL dimensions listed on the interview sheet were selected from the existing literature. The events and facts in the middle column were developed from the interviews with the tourism bureau officers. Space was provided to record other events raised by these interviewees.

My interviews could start with either side of columns on the interview sheet. I used open questions such as "Can you share with me any change in your life in the past 10 years?", "How do you describe your current life?" and "what's important for you?" to start the conversation. Participants would mention different life domains in their own order and described different influential factors. When they stopped, I asked open questions such as "how do find the impact of tourism on your life?". Special attention was given to their ways of describing their perceived tourism impacts

and their indicated life domains. When they stopped again, I asked questions related to the following aspects that were not covered in their previous responses.

The interview ended with questions asking about their expectations of their lives and tourism development in Yangshuo in the future.

**Financial aspects: can you perceive any change in your financial status?**

- 收入比以前更高 higher income than before
- 本地经济活动种类更多了 increased diversity of economic activities
- 外来的投资更多了 increased external investments
- 更容易贷款或寻找到资金来源 easier to get loans and find other fund sources
- 本地人的工作机会更多了 more work opportunities for local residents
- 不担心找不到工作 I don't need to worry about unemployment.
- 担心收入波动性 I worry about income fluctuation.
- 觉得自己的收入还可以进一步提高 I'm expecting more income.
- 职业发展有前景 My career is promising.

**Family aspect:**

- 与家人之间的关系比以前更和睦 better family relationships
- 与家人日常联系比以前更紧密 closer daily interaction within the family
- 对家庭生活总体上更为满意 more satisfied with my family life overall
- 比以前有更多时间出外旅游 more time for travel

**Health:**

- 健康状况总体上比以前更好了 / 现在生活方式更健康 Health condition better than before/ more healthier lifestyle
- 家人都买了保险 All family members have bought insurance.

### **Psychological aspect (closely related to income and health)**

- 生活有了更多轻松和欢乐 Life has more joy and happiness
- 安全感比以前高了 Higher sense of security
- 工作压力比以前大了 More work pressure
- 和别人相比我的生活还不错 Comparing with others, I think my current life is not bad
- 和以前相比我对现在的生活更满意 Comparing with before I am satisfied with my current life
- 我大部分时候都觉得自己心情还不错 For most of the time I have a good mood
- 幸福感 Happiness

### **Lifestyle (closely related to work nature)**

- 比以前有更多时间参加朋友聚会 More time to gather with friends
- 有更多的机会参加休闲娱乐活动或文化活动 More time to join leisure or cultural activities
- 主动交往的人比以前更多了 I am actively socialising with more people now than before
- 花费在教育培训上的支出比以前更高了 higher expenditure in education and training
- 我的灵活度和自由度比以前高了很多 higher time flexibility and freedom
- 得到的信息更加的丰富 access more information

### **Social network and status**

- 社会关系网比以前更宽广了 wider social network
- 社会关系比以前更融洽了 better social relationship
- 和当地亲朋好友相处的时间比以前更多了 more time to social with local friends and relatives
- 在当地生活下去日子会越来越好 Local life will become better
- 有更多机会和不同文化背景的人交流 More opportunities to communicate with people with different cultural backgrounds
- 社会地位得到了认可 Recognition of social status

### **Community identity**

- 身为当地人比以前更有自豪感了 I feel more proud than before as a local
- 生活在这里很自豪 living here makes me feel proud
- 在这样的旅游地生活比以前更舒服了 Lives in this tourism destination is more comfortable than before.
- 前来的游客可以更不用担心安全问题 Visitors coming to here do not need to worry about their safety
- 文化和遗产得到了保护 Culture and heritage are under good protection
- 游客很看重这里 Tourists care about Yangshuo

### **Community environment**

- 当地治安环境比以前更安全了 The community is safer than before
- 人身财产安全比以前得到了更好的保护 Personal property is under better protection than before
- 当地的犯罪现象比以前减少了 Less criminal activities
- 生活地方很安静 The community is quiet.
- 生活地方有很多人很多交通堵塞 Too many people and traffic congestion.
- 自然环境更好了 Better natural environment
- 本地环境污染 Pollution

### **Infrastructure and public services**

- 当地的生活服务设施(如邮局、水电等)更齐全了 Local living facilities (such as post office, water and electricity, etc.) are complete
- 家庭的生活设备(如电脑、空调等)更齐全和先进了 Furniture and household items (such as computers, air conditioners, etc.) is complete
- 居住条件比以前好多了 Better living condition
- 有更多的餐馆和其他商店 More restaurants and other shops
- 比以前有更多时间收看广播电视 More time to watch television
- 当地的蔬菜食品供应比以前更充足了 More supply on food and vegetables
- 交通设施比以前更方便了 Better transport infrastructure

### **Living cost**

- 房价和地价都上升了 **Rising prices in real estate**
- 当地房地产的价格比以前降低了 **Lower prices in real estate**
- 花费在生活必需品(吃、穿等)上的支出比以前少了 **Higher expenditure in essential living items (e.g., food, clothes)**

### **Leisure**

- 花费在休闲娱乐上的支出比以前更高了 **Higher expenditure in leisure activities**
- 比以前有了更多的娱乐方式 **More types of leisure activities**

## Appendix F:

### Letter from VU to external organisations

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/2015

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Business Administration/ Tourism Bureau of Yangshuo County

阳朔县旅游局

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

尊敬的\_\_\_\_\_，

We would like to ask your organization for permission and support to conduct a research project in Yangshuo.

我们希望在阳朔开展的一个学术调研项目能得到贵单位的许可与协助。

This research project is about tourism and community development and is part of a PhD project titled “An integrated framework of tourism development and residents' quality of life in tourism destinations in transition in China”. This project is being conducted by a student researcher Li He, under the supervision of Professor Terry DeLacy and Dr. Min Jiang from Victoria University, Australia, and Professor Xiaorong He from Hunan Normal University, China.

本科研项目有关旅游和社区发展，是课题《中国转型期旅游目的地旅游发展与居民生活质量的综合性模型研究》的一部分。本研究由我校博士生贺黎，在其导师特瑞·德兰斯教授（澳大利亚维多利亚大学商学院），江旻博士（澳大利亚维多利亚大学商学院），以及贺小荣教授（湖南师范大学旅游学院）的共同指导下进行。

#### **Project explanation 项目简介:**

Tourism has been frequently used as a strategy to eliminate poverty in poor communities. Evidence of improvement in local economic indicators has been observed in numerous case studies; yet, there is still limited understanding of how residents' quality of life in such communities changes as a result of tourism development in the Chinese context. This study aims to explore how tourism has changed a community from a quality of life perspective using a qualitative approach. Quality of life can be broadly defined as how people view or feel about their lives. This research will generate a greater understanding of residents' quality of life in relation to tourism development with implications for sustainable tourism destination management.

旅游作为贫困地区的重要扶贫战略工具之一，其改善当地社区经济指标的有效性在许多案例研究中得到了证明，然而，很少有研究涉及旅游如何影响并改变当地居民的生活质量水平和观念。本科研

项目旨在从“生活质量”的角度探索贫困地区在通过旅游发展脱贫的转变期间，旅游如何影响其社区发展。生活质量（Quality of life）在此被定义为人们对他们生活不同方面的看法和感受。本研究将增强我们对旅游发展下居民生活质量的理解，并为旅游目的地可持续发展管理提供相关可行性分析及建议。

### **Methodology 研究方法:**

This research adopts a new approach to explore residents' perceptions and views, named Q-methodology. It involves three stages: (i) second-hand data and photograph collection; (ii) pilot study to validate photos; (iii) interviewing residents using selected photos; and (iii) focus group discussion. We would like to seek support from your organization regarding the collection of second hand data about Yangshuo's development to set up the context for the research, as well as the photographs that were recorded before and after tourism developed in Yangshuo. Additionally, your assistance regarding organizing the interviews and focus groups will be much appreciated, such as a recommendation letter or the list of local tourism enterprises.

本课题采取了一种最新的研究方法，Q-方法论，来探索居民的感知和观点。它包括三个阶段：(i) 收集有关阳朔的二手数据资料及照片；(ii) 对选择的照片进行可信度预测试；(iii) 借助选取的照片对居民展开采访调研；以及 (iv) 针对居民的回复开展焦点组讨论及深入访谈。我们希望在有关阳朔的二手数据以及阳朔发展前后的社区照片收集上得到贵单位的支持。此外，我们还希望贵单位可以协助我们选取采访居民以及组织焦点讨论组，例如，开具推荐信及推荐适合企业名单。

### **Residents' Participation 居民参与:**

This study's main data collection stage involves participants sorting and ranking a number of photos according to sorting tables and providing explanations of their preferences. Participants will be firstly asked to place photos in pre-structured tables, which will likely take 15-30 minutes, based on their perceived importance and satisfaction of the life domains represented by the photos. Then the researcher will conduct follow-up interviews with the participants regarding residents' comments and reflections on their preferences and how tourism is related to their perceptions of quality of life. The interviews will likely take 30-45 minutes. An information sheet and consent form will be presented to participants before their participation. The information that participants provide will be analysed for the purpose of completing the PhD thesis and developing scholarly publications.

本调研项目的核心数据收集包括参与者在调研者的协助下对一系列图片进行分类和排序，以及针对排序结果进行说明的两个环节。在环节一中，我们会提供给参与者一些象征着生活质量不同纬度的图片，并请他们根据“重要性”和“满意度”两个指标对照片进行分类和排序，预计所用时间约为 15—30 分钟。紧接着研究会针对排序结果对参与者进行为期约为 30—45 分钟的采访，收集参与者的想法，以及了解他们如何看待旅游对其生活质量的影响。课题资料页及参与同意书会在调研开始前提供给参与者。收集到的数据将被进行分析并用于博士课题的完成和学术作品的发表。

Any queries about this project, participation in the project or any human research ethics consideration may be directed to the Principal Researcher listed below. Your permission to conduct the research in the community (during an agreed period in July) and your extra assistance would be much appreciated and greatly support this data collection stage. The return of this letter with your signature below will be taken as permission for the student researcher, Ms. Li He, to conduct interviews in a non-intrusive manner in the Yangshuo

community. The research is also guided by the Victoria University Human Research Ethics principles with great respect to each participant and the community culture.

任何有关该研究内容、参与过程及伦理考量的问题，都可以联系下方列出的主要研究者进行询问。我们衷心希望本科研项目于商议好的时间段内（例如：七月）开展时能得到贵单位的允许，并诚恳感谢您及贵单位在此我们调研过程中给予我们支持和协助。您对于本信件的签名回复将视为您对贺黎女士在阳朔开展本次调研活动的许可。我们会严格遵守澳大利亚维多利亚大学人文社会学科研究伦理规范开展本次调研工作，并保证在此过程中尊重每一名参与者的意愿及隐私权。

We look forward to receiving your reply. Thank you very much.

期待收到您的回信。谢谢。

**Professor Terry DeLacy (Principal Researcher)**

特瑞·德兰斯教授（主要研究者）

Professorial Fellow, College of Business

Footscray Park Campus

Victoria University, Australia

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**Ms. Li He (Student Researcher)**

贺黎（博士生研究者 / 课题实施人）

PhD Candidate, College of Business

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Email 电子邮箱: li.he1@live.vu.edu.au

**Declaration 同意回函**

Signature\_\_\_\_\_ on behalf of\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_

签字 代表单位 日期

# Appendix G:

## Questions to tourism officer staff

Interviews: Yangshuo Tourism Bureau, Mr./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_

Date & Time: \_\_\_\_\_

1. 请按照影响力、知名度、宣传力度、认可度等情况对下方活动或奖项进行排名:

Please rank the following events or awards based on influences, popularity, degree of public promotion, degree of recognition:

奖项 Awards	排序 Order
“中国十大文化休闲基地” “Ten Best Culture and Leisure Destination in China”	
2011 广东人最喜爱的旅游目的地 “2011 Most Favourite Tourism Destination in Guangzhou”	
首批全国旅游标准化示范县 First Batch of Demonstration Town for National Tourism Standardisation”	
全球 15 条旅游最美河流（漓江） / 美国 CNN “The 15 Most Beautiful Rivers (Li River)” By the USA CNN	
杨堤浪石、葡萄峰林奇观、遇龙河风光入选《世界遗产名录》	

Yangdi Rock, Grape Needle Karst, Yulong River included into the “World Heritage List”	
中国最美十大古城（阳朔古城） “The 10 most beautiful ancient towns in China (Yangshuo Ancient Town)”	
2011 中国最具幸福感的休闲旅游城市（县级） “2011 Happiest Leisure Tourism Cities (Town class)”	
“中国最美 40 个景点” / 美国有线电视新闻网 “The 40 most beautiful attractions” By the USA TV network	
亚洲金旅奖·十大自然生态旅游休闲名县 “Asian Golden Tourism Award – the 10 Popular Natural Tourism Towns”	
最佳自驾车旅游目的地 / 携程网 Best Self-driving Tourism Destination Ranked by Ctrip	

中国最美五大实景山水演出 (《印象·刘三姐》) “The Five Most Beautiful Live Mountain and River Show in China (“Impressive Sanjie Liu”)”	
最美秀城秀领天下奖 / 中国城市研究会 The Best Award for Beautiful Cities by China City Research Centre	
等: Others:	

“West Street Ambassador” visiting tourism attractions in Yangshuo	
旅游可持续发展观测点揭牌 Ceremony of Unveiling Nameplate for the Tourism Sustainable Development Observation Station	
漓江渔火节 11.23~29 Li River Fishing and Light Festival between 23 <sup>rd</sup> November and 29 <sup>th</sup> November	
啤酒鱼大赛 Beer Fish Cooking Competition	
《漓江风光宣传片》等宣传片拍摄 Shooting “Li River Scenery” promotional film	
央视《走遍中国》拍摄 7 集专题片 / 中央电视台 The 7 <sup>th</sup> Episode of Wander Through China by China CCTV	
俄罗斯、《莫斯科真理》杂志等国际媒体采访拍摄 Russian Magazine shooting “Moscow Truth”	
等: Others:	

2. 请按照影响力、知名度、参与度、宣传力度等情况对下方活动（推广 / 科研 / 节庆）进行排名或提名：

Please rank the following activities based on influences, popularity, degree of public promotion, degree of recognition:

活动 Activities	排序 Order
元宵节联欢晚会（西街举行） Celebration Night for Festival of Lanterns in West Street	
第 1000 万游客欢迎仪式 Welcome Ceremony for the 10 <sup>th</sup> Million Visitor	
“西街形象大使”走读阳朔旅游景点景区活动	

3. 您认为的本地人参与最多、最受他们欢迎的旅游活动为：\_\_\_\_\_ (1~3)

Which tourism events do you think are most popular or most frequently participated among

local residents? Please list 1~3 events:

4. 请按照受旅游综合影响大小、居民参与旅游人数比例、旅游资源丰富程度对下列各镇乡进行排序（1~9）：

Please rank the following counties (1 to 9) based on degrees of influence, rate of residents participating tourism, richness of tourism resources

---

Fuli County			
金宝乡 Jinbao County			
普益乡 Puyi County			
杨堤乡 Yangdi County			

乡镇 County	旅游综合影响 Combined influence of tourism	居民参与旅游 Rate of residents joining tourism	旅游资源 Tourism resources
阳朔镇 Yangshuo County			
高田镇 Gaotian County			
兴坪镇 Xingping County			
白沙镇 Baisha County			
葡萄镇 Putao County			
福利镇			

5. 请圈出下方您所知道的受本地人欢迎、本地人参观程度高的景点 / 景区：

Please circle the most popular or visited tourism attractions among local residents from the following table:

西街 West Street	阳朔公园 Yangshuo Park	碧莲峰 Green Lotus Peak	西朗山 Xilang Mountain
徐悲鸿故居 Beihong Xu Old House	印象·刘三姐 Impressive Sanjie Liu	文化古迹山水园 Cultural Heritage Mountain and River Garden	孙中山演讲处 Yat-sen Sun Speech Station
书童山 Shutong Mountain	九马画山 Nine Horse	渔村 Fishing Village	莲花岩 Lotus Rock

	Painting Hill		
大河背风光 Dahebei Scenery	兴坪古镇 Xingping Ancient Town	东朗山 Donglang Mountain	福利古镇 Fuli Ancient Town
图腾古道 一聚龙潭 Tuteng Ancient Road –	蝴蝶泉 Butterfly Spring	鉴山寺 Jianshan Temple	大榕树 Big Banyan

Julong Lake			
月亮山 Moon Hill	遇龙河	世外桃源	古石城
百里新村 旅游带 10 Miles New Village Tourism Zone	Yulong River	Land of Idyllic Beauty	Ancient Rock City

6. 请圈出下方您认为旅游管理有待加强的景区:

Please circle attractions of which the tourism management needs to be enhanced from the following table:

西街 West Street	阳朔公园 Yangshuo Park	碧莲峰 Green Lotus Peak	西朗山 Xilang Mountain
徐悲鸿故居 Beihong Xu Old House	印象·刘三姐 Impressive Sanjie Liu	文化古迹山水园 Cultural Heritage Mountain and River Garden	孙中山演讲处 Yat-sen Sun Speech Station
书童山 Shutong Mountain	九马画山 Nine Horse Painting Hill	渔村 Fishing Village	莲花岩 Lotus Rock
大河背风光 Dahebei Scenery	兴坪古镇 Xingping Ancient Town	东朗山 Donglang Mountain	福利古镇 Fuli Ancient Town
图腾古道 一聚龙潭	蝴蝶泉	鉴山寺	大榕树

Tuteng Ancient Road – Julong Lake	Butterfly Spring	Jianshan Temple	Big Banyan
月亮山 Moon Hill	遇龙河	世外桃源	古石城
百里新村 旅游带 10 Miles New Village Tourism Zone	Yulong River	Land of Idyllic Beauty	Ancient Rock City

7. 请圈出下方因其发展给所在地基础设施带来显著改善的景点: Please circle attractions of which the development has brought positive impacts to local infrastructure:

西街 West Street	阳朔公园 Yangshuo Park	碧莲峰 Green Lotus Peak	西朗山 Xilang Mountain
徐悲鸿故居 Beihong Xu Old House	印象·刘三姐 Impressive Sanjie Liu	文化古迹山水园 Cultural Heritage	孙中山演讲处 Yat-sen Sun

		Mountain and River Garden	Speech Station
书童山 Shutong Mountain	九马画山 Nine Horse Painting Hill	渔村 Fishing Village	莲花岩 Lotus Rock
大河背风光 Dahebei Scenery	兴坪古镇 Xingping Ancient Town	东朗山 Donglang Mountain	福利古镇 Fuli Ancient Town
图腾古道—聚龙潭 Tuteng Ancient Road – Julong Lake	蝴蝶泉 Butterfly Spring	鉴山寺 Jianshan Temple	大榕树 Big Banyan
月亮山 Moon Hill	遇龙河	世外桃源	古石城
百里新村旅游带 10 Miles New Village Tourism Zone	Yulong River	Land of Idyllic Beauty	Ancient Rock City

**8. 阳朔影响力较大、较为出名的本土公司？**

What are the popular and influential local companies in Yangshuo?

酒店类 <b>Hotels</b>	
餐饮类 <b>Catering</b>	
景区类	

<b>Attractions</b>	
娱乐类 <b>Entertainment</b>	
购物点 <b>Shopping</b>	

**9. 阳朔规模大的旅游项目有哪些？您觉得它对阳朔的主要影响有哪些？**

**What are the large scaled tourism projects in Yangshuo? What do you think are the major impacts of them on Yangshuo?**

例如：十里画廊、瑞盛、弘尚圣景、新西街国际大酒店、香樟华萍、河畔度假酒店、丽水旅游度假、相思湖漂流、县城神山路—东桃—樟贵—白沙镇蕉芭林—古板全长 30 公里的生态农业旅游观光带

For example: Ten-miles Scenic Path, Ruisheng, Honggshang-Shengjing, New West Street International Hotel, Xiangzhang-Huaping, Riverside Holiday Resort, Lishui Holiday Resort, Xiangsi Lake drifting, 30 Kilometers Eco-agricultural tourism zone (Shenshan Road – Dongtao – Zhanggui – Baisha County Musaceae Forest – Guban) and so on

1	
2	
3	

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10	

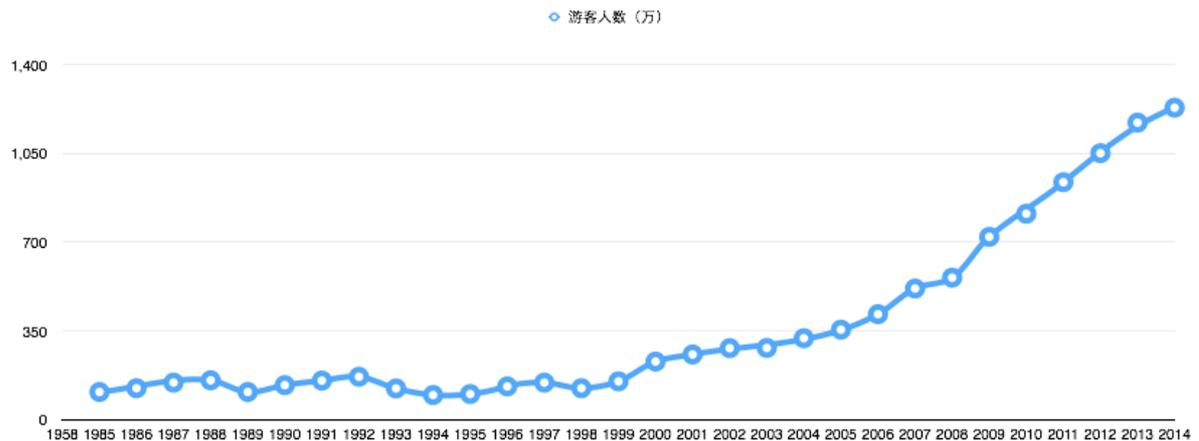
**10. 在建或即将引进的重要旅游项目有哪些？引进它们的主要原因为什么？**

What are the large-scale tourism projects that are currently being built or planned to be built in short future? What are the main reasons for them to be brought into Yangshuo?

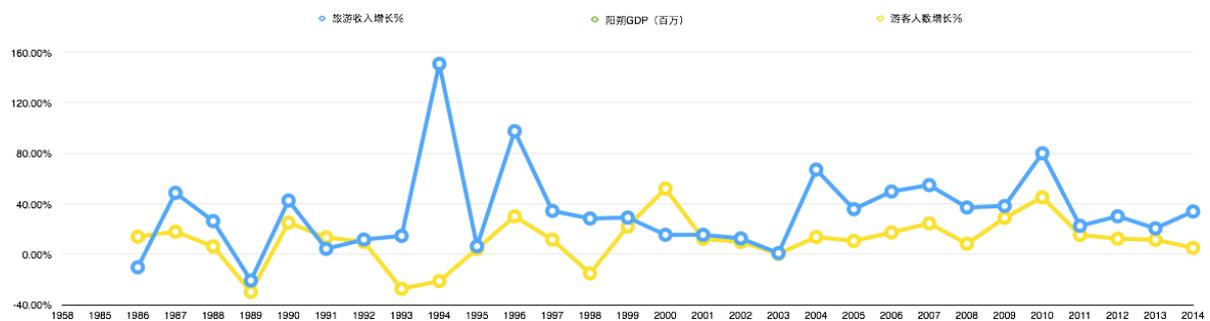
<p>1.新世纪成功集团：游客集散中心</p> <p>New Centaury Success Group: Tourism Distribution Centre</p>	
<p>2.悦榕休闲度假酒店</p> <p>Yuerong Holiday Resort</p>	
<p>3.瑞盛旅游休闲世界项目</p> <p>Ruisheng Tourism Entertainment World Project</p>	
<p>4.阳朔火车站建设项目</p> <p>Yangshuo Station</p>	
<p>5.Please list any other items</p>	
<p>6.Please list any other items</p>	

## 11. 阳朔旅游划分的阶段 Classification of Yangshuo Tourism stages

- 你觉得阳朔旅游的关键转折点有哪些?  
What do you think are the turning points for Yangshuo tourism development?
- 什么原因促使您认为这是关键转折点的呢?  
Why do you think these are the turning points?
- 你觉得阳朔目前的旅游发展状况如何?  
How do you comment on the current tourism development conditions in Yangshuo?



### Number of visitors (10,000)



### Increase in tourism income (%)

### Increase in number of visitors (%)

## **Appendix H:**

### **List of identified tourism hotels, projects, attractions and events**

	<b>Enterprises</b>
Hotels	Green Lotus Hotel (Bi Lian Jiang Jing), Gui Fu Hotel, New West Street Hotel, Jun Hao Hotel, Wu Yue Hotel, Gui Fu Hotel
Restaurants	Da Shifu Beer Fish Restaurant
Attraction operators	Yulong River Shuoyuan Company, Longjing River Kayaking Operator, Ten-Mile Gallery (Shili Hualang)
Entertainment sites	n/a
Retails	Le Le Lai Supermarket, the shopping square of West Street

## Appendix I:

### Key attributes of interviewed residents in Yangshuo

ID	Age Group	Income reliance on tourism industry	Occupation	Gender	Town of birth	Town of residence	Sampling method
R1	30-40	none	Working in telecommunication	Female	Baisha County	Yangshuo County	Snowball
R2	30-40	none	Government officer	Female	Guilin City	Yangshuo County	Recommended
R3	20-30	High	Hotel owner	Female	Yangshuo County	Gaotian County	Recommended
R4	50-60	High	Hotel owner	Male	Xingping County	Xingping County	Recommended
R5	50-60	High	Hotel owner	Female	Yangshuo County	Yangshuo County	Snowball
R6	20-30	Median	Hotel customer service	Female	Yangshuo County	Yangshuo County	Convenience Sampling
R7	40-50	Median	Hotel security	Group	Baisha County	Yangshuo County	Purposive Sampling
R8	40-60	Median	Restaurant owner	Female	Gaotian County	Gaotian County	Snowball
R9	30-40	Median	Restaurant owner	Couple	Baisha County	Yangshuo County	Snowball
R10	20-30	Median	Hotel customer service	Female	Yangshuo County	Yangshuo County	Convenience Sampling
R11	30-40	Median	Hotel customer service	Female	Other	Yangshuo County	Convenience Sampling
R12	40-50	Low	Electronic Car Driver	Female	Yangshuo County	Fuli County	Convenience Sampling
R13	60-70	Low	Electronic Car Driver	Male	Yangshuo County	Fuli County	Snowball
R14	30-40	High	Hotel manager	Male	Yangshuo County	Yangshuo County	Purposive sampling
R15	40-60	Median	Restaurant waitress	Female	Fuli County	Fuli County	Recommended
R16	40-60	High	Retail	Male	Yangshuo County	Fuli County	Recommended

R17	50-60	High	Hotel owner	Female	Yangshuo County	Yangshuo County	Purposive sampling
R18	60-80	Median	Retail	Female	Gaotian County	Gaotian County	Recommended
R19	70-80	High	Retail	Female	Yangshuo County	Gaotian County	Recommended
R20	70-90	High	Retail	Group	Gaotian County	Gaotian County	Recommended
R21	30-50	High	Tour guide	Group	Yangshuo County	Gaotian County	Purposive Sampling
R22	50-60	Median	Driver	Male	Yangshuo County	Yangshuo County	Convenience Sampling
R23	20-30	Median	Restaurant manager	Male	Yangshuo County	Yangshuo County	Purposive Sampling
R24	40-50	Median	Farmer	Group	Yangshuo County	Yangshuo County	Purposive Sampling
R25	40-50	Low	Tourism Attraction Security	Male	Yangshuo County	Yangshuo County	Purposive Sampling