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IDENTIFICATION OF FOCAL ACTORS IN THE TRANSLATION OF THE RURAL TOURISM ACTOR-NETWORK: A CASE IN CHINA

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Abstract

The construction of rural tourism actor-network is an innovative transformation process, which integrates natural, economic, social, and cultural focal actors of multi-functional agriculture in a rural area. The transformation process is a translation of these actors incorporated into a spatial distribution of landscape, which accelerates rural tourism through innovative integration. This study provides a method to measure and analyze the characteristics of focal actors in the translation process using actor-network perspectives. To identify focal actors in the translation process for the actor-network of rural tourism based on an actor-network perspective, face-to-face interviews and standardized questionnaire interviews are conducted with experts and scholars, tour operators, residents of local communities, and tourists. We examine the relationship between "in-closeness centrality" and "out-closeness centrality" of the actor-network in contrast with the actors themselves. The results show that Traditional food, Activity Participation, Leisure Services, and Protective Measures play the most important role in the actor-network. These are focal actors in building the foundation of innovation policy in the translation of rural tourism actor-network.

Key words: actor-network theory, rural tourism, social network analysis, translation process

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