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Zeng, Benxiang; Wang, Chenguang

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Research Progress in Corporate Social Responsibility in the Context of 'Tourism-Assisting the Poor' in China

Benxiang Zeng [a*], Chenguang Wang [b]

[a] The Northern Institute, Charles Darwin University, PO Box 795, Alice Springs, NT0871, Australia

[b] School of Tourism Management, Shandong University, 27 Shanda Nanlu, Jinan, China 250100

*Corresponding author: benxiang.zeng@cdu.edu.au

1. Introduction

Poverty is not simply an economic issue, but a social and environmental problem. In many cases it is an ethnic and political issue as well. Globally, many issues in the practice of poverty reduction, including government failure, market failure and the lack of local capacity, encourage other actors to participate in anti-poverty initiatives. Although a developing country, China has been fighting hard against poverty in rural China and achieved great success. Compared to poverty reduction, sustained livelihood improvements in rural poverty-stricken areas have seemed less successful, to a great extent because of the lack of sustainable poverty alleviation and gap-closing mechanisms. This is a real challenge for China, as well as for the rest of the world. In the Chinese context, sustained livelihoods improvement is the key to meet poverty reduction goals. If communities/households cannot find a mechanism to continue improving their livelihoods after being temporarily lifted out of poverty, they are threatened with falling back into poverty. Therefore, identifying and analysing such a mechanism is important for China decisively to win the battle against poverty.

There have been different models used in anti-poverty initiatives. Charities (NGOs) and governmental organisations (GOs) have been successful in lifting people out of poverty, through financial "blood-injection" models. However, to some extent, they fail to sustain these poverty-reduction achievements, as these models have been unable to account for economic needs such as job creation, employment and income earning. Compared to these models, purely business-based approaches are equally problematic, because generally they are not able adequately to address critical social dimensions.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has been advocated and practised in industries to encourage businesses to enhance their social, cultural and environmental commitments. CSR is a form of corporate self-regulation integrated into a business model. According to Aguinis (2011), CSR can be defined as "organisational actions and policies that take into account stakeholders' expectations and the triple bottom line of economic, social, and environmental performance" (p. 855). CSR policy functions as a self-regulatory mechanism

that a corporation monitors and ensures its active compliance with the spirit of the law, ethical standards and norms.

A special type of enterprise called a 'social enterprise' was first termed in the late 1970s, to describe those enterprises 'registered social as well as commercial aims and objectives and run co-operatively' (Spreckley, 1981, p.3). The 'social impact' or 'social mission' has been the most important signifier of a social enterprise. A social enterprise has been defined in different ways. For example, it can be "any private activity conducted in the public interest, organized with an entrepreneurial strategy, but whose main purpose is not the maximization of profit, but the attainment of certain economic and social goals." (OECD, 1999, p.10). It is an organisation with an economic, social, cultural, or environmental mission consistent with a public or community benefit, and which uses an entrepreneurial spirit and strategy to reach its objectives for the social benefit, and also reinvests surpluses to work towards its purpose (European Commission 2015; Barraket, *et al*. 2016). Virtue Ventures suggests a working definition: a social enterprise is "any business venture created for a social purpose–mitigating/reducing a social problem or a market failure–and to generate social value while operating with the financial discipline, innovation and determination of a private sector business" (Alter 2007, p. 12). Despite different definitions of social enterprise, it is agreed that its mission is for the 'common good' (Social Enterprise Alliance 2015).

There are differences between CSR and a social enterprise. In general, CSR is a practice that businesses can use to be conscious of the social and environmental impacts their activities make; while a social enterprise is an organisation that applies commercial strategies to 'maximise' improvements in human and environmental well-being. This may include 'maximising social impact' alongside profits for external shareholders (Parekh, 2015). An enterprise with a CSR strategy is not necessarily a social enterprise. Social enterprises put 'impact first' and place a lot of emphasis on external social responsibility as a result of their social objectives. So social impact is 'built into the organisation' (Cornelius, *et al.* 2008; Parekh, 2015). If impact is secondary, then they are an enterprise with a CSR practice that leverages the enterprise's resources and performance for charitable or social impact initiatives (Parekh, 2015).

Social enterprises aim to create social value. They purposefully mix social and economic objectives to respond to the multidimensional nature of poverty. Social enterprise is increasingly regarded a strong contender in poverty reduction, as it aims to respond to the many dimensions of poverty (Cooney, 2011; Galera, 2010), and 'might be the next great poverty-reduction movement" (Fotheringham and Saunders, 2014, p. 194).

Since the 1990s, tourism as an instrument to alleviate poverty has been both an important practice and research topic, particularly in developing countries. "Tourism-Assisting the Poor" (or TAP) （*扶贫旅游*）in rural China has been broadly studied and provided successful initiatives by many means (Zeng and Ryan, 2012). However, the previous study suggests that the conventional tourism development model fails to generate substantial benefits for the poorest people, and to some extent enlarges the gap between the poor and the rich in the community, which subsequently causes more social problems. To address this issue, different alternative models have been explored, such as "Pro-Poor Tourism" (or PPT) and

"Sustainable Tourism- Eliminating Poverty" (or ST-EP) (DFID., 1999; WTO., 2002; Zeng, 2008; Zeng, Ryan, Cui, and Chen, 2015).

There have been critiques concerning tourism's real capacity to reduce poverty (Gascón 2015), including: over-estimation and excessive expectations regarding the capacity of tourism to combat poverty (Spenceley and Meyer, 2012; Trau, 2012), external environmental impacts (Harrison, 2008; Nawijn, et al., 2008), as well as the unequal redistribution of tourism benefits (Mowforth and Munt, 2003; Hall, 2007; Scheyvens and Russell, 2012). Many of these critiques are centered on the practical implementation of the TAP method, rather than on its conceptualisation (Goodwin, 2008). Effective engagement and benefit-sharing with local communities are vital in the implementation of TAP.

CSR and social enterprises have been often practised in western countries and proved a successful approach to engage the community's participation in local development especially in the situation where local communities are at a disadvantage in terms of financial capitals. Generally CSR in tourism has been studied under the umbrella of sustainable tourism (Garrod and Fyall, 2000).

Related studies focusing on rural tourism and TAP in China have now commenced but are still extremely scarce. We have very little knowledge of it. This paper fills this gap by reviewing the related research progress in China, compared with the international literature. We aim to answer the questions: what do we know about CSR and social enterprises in the context of TAP in China? What can we learn from the international research? The paper will also point out the future research directions in this field. This review will contribute to a better understanding of the role of CSR and social enterprises in TAP, and facilitate the recognition and practice of the social-cultural value creation by tourism development in poverty reduction initiatives, especially in rural China.

2. Research methodology

A comprehensive literature review is our main method. We reviewed and compared Chinese literature and international (English) literature to identify the similarity and the difference, as well as the gap in practice and research in social enterprises and CSR in TAP between China and other countries.

There are many databases for such a literature search. Among other major databases, such as ScienceDirect, Scopus and EBSCOhost Databases, Web of Knowledge is one of the best literature search portals for social sciences and arts & humanities. It is a combined interface for Web of Science and Current Contents databases to allow searching across both, and provides seamless access to the Science Citation Expanded, Social Sciences Citation Index, and Arts & Humanities Citation Index.

For English literature, we searched "Web of Knowledge" (All Databases), on 13 April 2018. We understood that we would collect most of the published related literature uploaded to the databases before this date, but that, inevitably, would miss some publications included in the databases after that specific date. We searched the databases using: TOPIC: (poverty) AND TOPIC: (social enterprises OR social responsibility OR social entrepreneurship) Refined by: TOPIC: (touris*) Timespan: All years. Search language=Auto. In total 79 papers were

collected. Having carefully reviewed the abstracts, we excluded 11 publications (non-English or non-relevant). In the total of 68 publications including eight book chapters and 60 journal articles, only one paper (published in 2018) was collected. Among these, there were 10 publications studying China, which are reviewed as an important part of research progress in China.

We searched Chinese literature at "Wanfang Data" (万方数据知识服务平台) (www.wanfangdata.com.cn) on 10 May 2018, targeting only journal articles, theses and conference papers. When searched using the combination of topics 'poverty alleviation' (扶贫, *fu pin*), 'tourism' (旅游, *lv you*) and 'corporate social responsibility' (企业社会责任, *qi ye she hui ze ren*), only one result came out. Using the combination of topics 'poverty reduction', 'tourism' and 'social enterprise' (社会企业, *she hui qi ye*), none was exported from the search. Therefore, we broadened the search scope of topics using different topic combinations, and collected 322 publications in total.

We collected all these publications' abstracts and keywords to identify the topics and arguments of the publications. Based on reading the abstracts, we identified some key publications that were mostly associated with the purpose of this research for further intensive reading of the full paper. We also conducted the keywords analysis to grasp the big picture of all collected publications with regard to their research focuses. Having reviewed the research progress in China and globally, we made a comparative analysis of the Chinese and English language literature and identified the research gaps and issues, and further discussed the importance of related research and its future directions.

3. Bibliometric analysis

In our search, while there is limited English language literature, we could find only two journal papers in Chinese which directly addressed these combined topics. As reported in Table 1, after broadening the search topics, we got 55 results for 'social enterprise' and 'poverty reduction'; 82 for 'social enterprise' and 'tourism'; 73 for 'poverty reduction' and 'corporate social responsibility'; 189 for 'tourism' and 'corporate social responsibility'.

Table 1: Chinese database search results

检索式 Search formula	检索结果条数 Number of searched results	实际导出结果数 Number of exported publications	检索日期 Search date
主题:(扶贫)*主题:("社会企业") TOPIC: (poverty reduction) AND TOPIC: ('social enterprise')	Journal articles (46) Theses (18) Conference papers (3)	55	2018-05-10
主题:(扶贫)*主题:("企业社会责任") TOPIC: (poverty reduction) AND TOPIC: ('corporate social responsibility')	Journal articles (62) Theses (18) Conference papers (1)	73	2018-05-10
主题:(旅游)*主题:("企业社会责任") TOPIC: (tourism) AND TOPIC: ('corporate social responsibility')	Journal articles 148) Theses (53) Conference papers (6)	189	2018-05-10
主题:(旅游)*主题:("社会企业" TOPIC: (tourism) AND TOPIC: ('social enterprise')	Journal articles (68) Theses (14) Conference papers (3)	82	2018-05-10
主题:("企业社会责任")*主题:(旅游)*主	Journal articles (1)	1	2018-05-10

题:(扶贫) TOPIC: ('corporate social responsibility') AND TOPIC: (poverty reduction)			
主题:("社会企业")*主题:(旅游)*主题:(扶贫) TOPIC: ('social enterprise') AND TOPIC: (poverty reduction)	Journal articles (1)	0	2018-05-10
主题:(旅游)*主题:(扶贫) TOPIC: (tourism) AND TOPIC: (poverty reduction)	Journal articles (2863) Theses (359) Conference papers (70)	We did not export publications from this search	2018-05-10

These results suggest that there is a lot of literature about CSR in tourism, tourism social enterprise, and social enterprises participating in poverty reduction. Nevertheless, it is rare to locate literature dealing with these issues simultaneously, i.e. related to CSR and social enterprises in the context of TAP, no matter whether in China or internationally. Under the background of the broad practice of TAP in China and many developing countries, it is obvious that the CSR and social enterprise research in TAP has been relatively neglected.

In total, of 322 Chinese publications collected, there were 12 conference papers, 207 journal articles and 103 theses. Journal articles are dominated. However, there have not been many articles published in those journals that focus on poverty issues and tourism management. For example, out of 322 publications collected, only four articles are from '中国扶贫' (*zhong guo fu pin*) (China's Poverty Alleviation), four from '旅游学刊' *(lv you xue kan)* (Tourism Tribune), and three from '当代旅游' (*dang dai lv you*) (Tourism Today). To some extent, this data urges mainstream journals to pay more attention to these emerging topics. Many theses studied related issues in this field at different levels. This suggests that the related issues have been increasingly paid attention to by emerging scholars. This might facilitate a continuous growth in research interest in this field, which is helpful for CSR practice and research in TAP.

4. Brief summary of international research

The tackling of poverty in developing countries is a social obligation for governments, multinational corporations and multinational organisations at a national, intergovernmental and supra-national level. Tourism is a significant or growing economic sector in most countries with high levels of poverty on a global scale. Consequently, at the end of 20th and early 21th Century, tourism was actively promoted as a catalyst for development and poverty reduction in ex-colonial nations. Many previous studies have suggested that tourism enterprises could and should play an active role in reducing poverty. Notwithstanding that, many studies have argued that there have been many issues in the practice that compromised the expected results. For example, Koutra (2012) argues that tourism benefits in developing country "were distributed unequally, giving power to transnational corporations, and local elites thus further widening the gap between rich and poor" (p. 63). Medina-Munoz, Medina-Munoz and Gutierrez-Perez (2016) suggest that tourism enterprises' contribution to poverty alleviation is linked to voluntary social responsibility initiatives and the organisation's size.

Responding to these issues, CSR for tourism businesses involved in poverty reduction through tourism development has, in recent decades, been increasingly a hot topic. CSR is

an innovative way to engage with social and environmental issues (Henderson, 2007). Tourism businesses have increasingly sought to contribute to society through CSR initiatives. Some social problems, such as poverty and environmental degradation, have proved difficult to eliminate and have increased in size and scope in many countries. With the rise of CSR, more and more businesses have begun to realise that their businesses can have a role to play in addressing social problems. They do this by using their businesses both as a vehicle to make money and as a means to improve society (Vogel, 2005).

The research suggests that larger tourism organisations normally seek to institutionalise CSR under their corporate CSR policy and strategy (Smith and Ong, 2015). Hughes and Scheyvens (2016) agree that most large tourism businesses have CSR initiatives that advance environmental, economic and social sustainability. Existing research shows that initiatives often tend to be ad hoc, however, and linked to cost-savings and the reputation of the business. Therefore a CSR framework, that has a holistic, sustainable and people-centered focus and enables geographers and other social scientists to analyse the potential for initiatives to lead to positive, long-term development outcomes in different localities, is important and necessary. Most research focuses on large and medium businesses rather than small businesses. For example, there have been case studies in Africa and some Asian countries. However, few studies have focused on CSR at the micro level as indicated by Wells, Smith, Taheri, Manika, and McCowlen (2016), such as at the individual employee level within cultural heritage tourism (Wells, Manika, Smith, Taheri, and McCowlen, 2015).

Disadvantaged groups have been paid most attention, as they have difficulties in actively participating in tourism development that is proposed to reduce poverty and ease inequity in communities. Kwaramba, Lovett, Louw and Chipumuro (2012) investigate women participating in TAP development through running home-stay businesses in South Africa. They find that majority of these women were low in self and social awareness, self-management and social skills. These disadvantages led to absence of marketing strategies and subsequently to deficiencies in entrepreneurial steering to capitalise on opportunities for economic advancement. That paper concludes that, in order to achieve poverty reduction, especially through tourism, there is a need to focus on building the confidence and empowerment of the disadvantaged people, and not just their general business skills (Kwaramba et al., 2012). CSR will play a critical role in this process. LaPan, Morais, Wallace and Barbieri's (2016) study explores how cooperative forms of micro-entrepreneurship could influence women's self-determination. Their findings indicate that livelihood opportunities afforded under cooperative tourism micro-entrepreneurship offer women increased levels of self-determination, and that economic improvements alone are not sufficient in enhancing overall well-being. Therefore, whenever possible, micro-entrepreneurship models should be designed to enhance strong cooperative social structures (LaPan et al., 2016). Medina-Munoz et al. (2016) suggest that CSR can be considered with regards to increasing the contribution of enterprises to poverty alleviation. Picciotti (2017) highlights how social enterprise manages to create contexts of sustainable tourism development and resource management, and builds inter-organisational and inter-sectoral collaborative networks aimed at the activation of new paths for local development. The research suggests that a social enterprise is able to establish a number of coordination mechanisms by which interaction and collaboration between the resources of a public, market and community nature would be promoted (Picciotti, 2017).

Koutra (2012) explores the complex interaction between tourism development and poverty reduction, by examining reasons that might inhibit the sustainable delivery of developmental projects and the role of governments, their surrogates, and internal or external institutions in shaping development that benefits the local people. She applies theories of CSR to external developmental agencies, micro, small and medium intermediaries (such as tour operators), government institutions as well as communities themselves. She calls for tourism leaders and policy-makers to move beyond reliance on CSR toward a more integrated, cross-institutional approach (Koutra, 2010, 2012).

Culture has attracted attention in social enterprise practice in many case studies. von der Weppen and Cochrane's (2012) study investigates the determinants of success in balancing commercial and social/environmental objectives. They suggest that success of tourism social enterprises cannot be attributed to a single factor but to combinations of factors in the multiple dimensions of leadership, strategy and organisational culture. The most likely success factors are strong leadership, clear market orientation and organisational culture, which balance financial with social/environmental aims.

Bhattacharya's (2011) case study of Banglanatak.com, a social enterprise in India, investigates how this social enterprise can integrate local culture into the business to promise ways for safeguarding heritage and also for using a community's cultural capital as a financial asset. This suggests that a local culture-based approach could effectively mobilise local participation, with a sense of ownership of the business to achieve both heritage protection and financial benefits for the community. Bradley, Chakravarti and Rowan (2013) offer a case study of a social enterprise developing and marketing traditional art forms to generate sustainable livelihoods for poor communities in rural West Bengal. It explores how the relationships between those stakeholders involved in an art livelihood project, including the business professionals, local artists and the wider communities, would change positively as a result of the project's success (Bradley et al., 2013).

There have been discussions about the gap between CSR research in tourism and other industries. It is suggested that while CSR strategies are core to environmentally- and socially-responsible tourism (Caruana, Glozer, Crane, & McCabe, 2014), CSR tourism research is undeveloped (Coles, Fenclova, & Dinan, 2011; Coles, Fenclova, & Dinan, 2013), and lags behind mainstream CSR research (Ayuso, 2006). Inferences made about CSR in one organisation tend not to apply directly across similar organisations, let alone across industries (Dahlsrud, 2008). Further, CSR research in industries other than tourism is unlikely to be relevant to tourism. Thus, more needs to be done to understand CSR's role in the tourism industry, globally.

Wells, Manika, Smith, Taheri, and McCowlen (2015: p.400) proposed that, although some topics were explored regarding CSR in tourism, such as: the motivations for and barriers to CSR, CSR features in tourism, linkages between CSR and corporation's financial performance, and the role of CSR in reducing the negative impact of tourism, "the largest focus of CSR research within tourism has been in the accommodation sector". While stakeholder groups have been examined, with the most common being managers and tourists, it is less common to investigate the perspectives of some key stakeholders, such as the community and the government. Coles, Fenclova and Dinan (2013) further identify that CSR studies have primarily focused on implementation, the economic rationale for acting more

responsibility, and the social relations of CSR. Unfortunately, the literature studying CSR and social enterprises in TAP is still limited.

5. Research progress in China

In last two decades, the role of tourism in poverty alleviation has been recognised in China, and extensively studied, particularly with regard to its positive contribution to the local community's income growth. Nowadays, increasing attention is being paid to non-financial aspects and the long-term growth mechanisms of tourism.

5.1. Local poor are key stakeholders in TAP

Jin Wang and Zhou's (2016) case study of Che Tian village in China's Jiangxi Province claims that the poor are key stakeholders in TAP. To facilitate the local poor's effective participation in and benefit-sharing from TAP, they propose two support systems. The internal support system, centered on the targeted poor contributes to assure having community involvement, while an external support system is constituted mainly by social enterprises under the guidance of local government.

The key role of local leadership in practice is also being recognised and studied. Fan, Li, Wei and Luo's (2015) field work and questionnaire survey of rangeland tourism in 12 provinces in China reveals that it is critical that local people (herders) take leadership and even ownership in tourism development, but without abandoning traditional culture (pastoralism in this case). Through this approach, local-led practices can better integrate local traditional knowledge, herding culture for example, into the new development model and better engage local communities, eventually benefiting local communities in terms of financial income and cultural protection. Yu and Liu (2017) suggest that poor people must be the key element in any poverty reduction initiative. A case study at Yuanjiacun in Shaanxi Province reveals that village leader-led or elite-led development achieves endogenous and bottom-up development rather than a top-down arrangement (Gao & Wu, 2017). The study by Zeng (2018) on Taiwan's Smangus community also highlights the importance of local elite leader-ship.

5.2. Social enterprise and other models have been explored

Government-led poverty alleviation has been a dominant practice and plays a huge role in China. However, the problems of this model are obvious, especially when the current stage of poverty alleviation fights against the most entrenched element of poverty in the country. Current top-down and non-market approaches reduce the effectiveness of resource redistribution and discourage the participation of social forces, particularly of the poor themselves. These approaches, therefore, compromise the efficiency of government's efforts. Meanwhile, cost-effectiveness-oriented companies are often not keen on investing in poverty-stricken areas, where the input costs are high, and the market efficiency is minimal. To some extent, this reflects both government failure and market failure in poverty alleviation (J. Li, 2013). Within this back ground, the advantages of non-government organisations' participation in poverty alleviation, and the introduction of multiple models of TAP practices, especially in creating social values beyond financial benefits, have been increasingly explored and studied.

Since micro-credit initiatives have been introduced to China by Yunus in the early 2000s, 'social enterprise' has expanded and is becoming an emerging force as well as an important model in poverty alleviation practice. However, the concept of social enterprise is still vague. Related practice and research are still in their infancy. Liu (2013) revisits Yunus' classification of two types of social enterprises and suggests that the social enterprise whose ownership belongs to the poor, has long been practised in rural China (an example is the mutual aid fund targeting poor villages). This type of social enterprises (poor-led and/or poor-owned) can effectively organise the poor people and protect their dominant role in poverty alleviation efforts.

Zeng (2018) analyses the success of Smangus community in Taiwan, and suggests that Smangus model is a social enterprise practice – a cooperative model of tourism social enterprise, whose successful tourism development evolved from poverty mitigation towards a prosperous community. Social enterprises could be a vehicle to contribute to develop from pro-poor tourism towards sustainable human wellbeing. It is suggested that government support these at the early stage and foster the local community's engagement. For this to succeed, the active involvement of traditional culture and custom would be important and necessary. Local elites' commitment to community wellbeing has played a critical role. Zeng (2018) suggests that Smangus model could provide an example for other regions, but the contextual factors must be fully considered.

He (2016) analyses cases of rural tourism development in Guizhou Province and suggests that developing rural tourism social enterprises might be an alternative approach to engage external capital to participate in localised anti-poverty efforts. Y. Wang (2017) compares different types of poverty reduction models, and suggests that social enterprises tend to have a simultaneous emphasis on both socio-cultural value and economic benefit. Having revealed both government failure and market failure in China's rural poverty alleviation, J. Li (2013) suggests that the social enterprise can make up for government and market deficiencies. However, he notices that social enterprise development has faced obstacles and problems in poverty alleviation in rural areas, such as the lack of a legislative basis, unprepared human resources, no institutional arrangements and no existing best-practice examples. M. Wang (2016) argues that social enterprises are facing many practical difficulties in participating in poverty alleviation and development, such as, the lack of talents for social enterprises, insufficient social security protection for participation in poverty alleviation, plus the absence of internal and external supervision.

The 'cooperative' has been regarded another important model in TAP. Gao and Wu (2017) suggest that 'farmer cooperative' is a relatively equitable means of benefit distribution and community participation in China. Similarly, another case study of Yuhu Village in Yunnan Province in China observes the importance of accumulation and combination. X. Yang and Hung's (2014) case study suggests that resource integration and community empowerment are the main contributors to substantial improvements of the poor's livelihood. The tourism cooperative is proven to effectively integrate efficient resource use and positive community empowerment and to effectively alleviate the poverty of Yuhu villagers (X. Yang and Hung, 2014). C. Wang (2018) investigates two cases of successful rural tourism in China: Zhonghaoyu in Shandong Province and Yuanjiacun in Shaanxi Province. He conceptualises their practice as 'collective rural tourism development model'. He argues that this model

has the potential to be generalised as a 'Rural Tourism Development Model with Chinese Characteristics'.

Zeng (2018) highlights the important characteristics of the tourism social enterprise model at Smangus community. These include: the government's critical role at the initial stage, the local elite leader-ship, its communal operation, collective land management, co-ownership, socialism, mutual benefit and co-existence. Zeng (2018) also suggests that the integration and interaction of traditional culture, western religion, indigenous knowledge and contemporary scientific knowledge should be highly regarded as key factors of its success. Gao and Wu (2017) suggest that the success of Yuanjiacun revitalisation attributes to the effective pathway integrating material, social and spiritual dimension. Kong (2013) analyses the success of the Yilong County Rural Development Association of Sichuan Province, a social enterprise committed to poverty alleviation and development in rural areas. This study reveals that obtaining government support, adopting a business-oriented operation mode, and a strong and clear public welfare goal are the determinant factors, although it has been a long journey to have engaged the entire community to work together for its development (Kong, 2013).

5.3. CSR in tourism industry

Most research has focused on the social responsibilities of large enterprises, and relatively less on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). It is vital to strengthen research on SMEs' CSR, as SMEs are actively creating employment, participating in poverty alleviation and playing a strong social role (H. Li, Wu andLi, 2011). Xu (2016) finds that tourism SMEs are generally performing CSR not in an institutional way, but rather as a legal obligation. They are focusing on tourists and environment, rather than the local community and employees.

Research shows that CSR performance impacts on enterprise reputation and public perception on the enterprise. Ma's (2013) study of public response to travel agency's CSR confirms that, although there are differences among different public profiles, the overall public perception of travel agencies' CSR performance is positively correlated with public purchase intention. N. Wang's, (2014) research reveals that active tourism CSR strategies and behavioral choices are closely related to the positive responses of tourists. A study on three hotels in China shows that CSR positively affects perceived corporate reputation and customer satisfaction, which in turn, significantly affects customer commitment and behavioral responses (i.e., loyalty intentions and word-of-mouth) (Su, Pan and Chen, 2017). Another recent study reveals that, when tourism companies stop taking on social responsibilities, the public will build up a significant negative image of the company (Y. Li, 2016). A survey of 110 tourism companies in Nanjing confirms that different types of tourism enterprises have significant differences in the fulfillment of their CSR practices; however, there is a positive correlation for all between the CSR practice and the business performance (Zhang, 2011). Other studies also support this claim (e.g. X. Wang, 2014; Zhu, 2011).

C. Wang, Bai and Xu's (2014) study of small business owners in two heritage sites in ethnic areas in Guangxi in China finds that the fulfillment of the social responsibility of small tourism enterprises in heritage sites contributes to the sustainable management of

enterprises. This positive effect is manifested as a significant positive impact on the non-financial performance of small enterprises.

There has been research interest in the connection between politics and an enterprise's performance of CSR. Zhouyang (2016) and Ke (2014) argue that the government must play a leading role in facilitating enterprises performing CSR, by developing policies advocating social involvement, providing information, and establishing incentive mechanisms. Ni (2017) analyses the interaction between CSR and political ties of Chinese listed tourism enterprises, and concludes that enterprises with political affiliations perform CSR more actively; those with a high proportion of public ownership pay more attention to CSR issues.

5.4. Evaluation of CSR and social enterprises

Enormous efforts have been made in building up theories and evaluation systems which aim to serve better tourism social enterprise development and enterprise CSR practice in China.

Sha (2013) proposes a general evaluation index system for China's social enterprises. His evaluation system consists of multiple responsibilities: economic, legal, ethic, philanthropic, as well as social responsibilities. He then employs a secondary index (measurable indictors) to quantify these responsibilities. M. Wang (2017) provides a social responsibility framework of rural tourism, which integrates four components including tourists, practitioners, ecological environment and communities (and local culture). J. Wang (2013)'s analysis of the CSR of tourism enterprises focuses both upon the perspectives of stakeholders, including industries, communities, customers and local elites, as well as the interaction between environment, community and enterprise operation. N. Li (2017) suggests that a tourism company's CSR evaluation system should include multiple dimensions, including shareholders, employees, consumers, governments, creditors, suppliers, environment and communities. Wu (2014) builds an evaluation index system for dynamic capability in tourism social enterprises．The dynamic capability evaluation index system consists of four dimensions: environment perception, integration/coordination, learning, and reconstruction/transformation．

Guo (2010) analyses the social responsibility of rural tourism companies, and argues that employees, the government, tourists and the corporate culture are four major issues affecting CSR of rural tourism enterprises. Based on this argument, Guo (2010) then establishes a Tourism Enterprises' Social Responsibility Evaluation System. Case studies applying this evaluation system suggest that various issues such as shifts in social transformation values, conventional management ideology, government failure in policy development and the absence of industry standards have compromised the practice of CSR of tourism enterprises.

5.5. Research issues and research gaps

There have been lots of discussions about current issues and gaps in research and practice of CSR and social enterprises. A dominant argument is that, generally speaking, CSR has not been taken seriously in either research or in practice. Academic research and business practices are also relatively scarce (Guo, 2010; Y. Wang, Guan and Yin, 2016). N. Li (2017) indicates that an overall social responsibility management system is not established, there is

little broad awareness of CSR, and CSR practice needs to be much improved. L. Wang, Feng and Li (2017) ind that CSR in tourism industry is more important than in many other industries because of its broad stakeholder participation, the tourism industry has paid insufficient attention to CSR performance (X. Yang, 2017) when compared to some other industries such as the manufacturing industry (Y. Li and Fu, 2014).

In the past decade, research on social enterprises in China has mainly focused on the concept, type and governance of a social enterprise. But very little research has been done on social enterprise's practical mechanisms and models, laws, institutional arrangements, and the development pathway of China's social enterprises (Chen, 2014).

Many key issues for social enterprise development have been identified, such as the absence of legal and policy support, limited funding sources, the lack of social entrepreneurs, and the undesirable operational environment for the third sector (Dong, 2012). In China, CSR has been widely promoted by authorities. In many settings, it is a mandatory obligation for organisations to adopt CSR. Listed companies are required to practise CSR strategies (Chen, Huang and Wang, 2017). However, the related regulations and policies are yet to be well established. For example, social enterprises have not been an officially identified enterprise type. Without policy incentives and legal protection, businesses are prevented from fully adopting CSR and further practising their social missions. Liang (2017) has highlighted legal obstacles that hinder the development of social enterprises in China. China's law currently does not stipulate the organisational form of social enterprises. Social enterprises can be only established and survival as 'marginal' organisations that do not have a clear legal status to secure their NGO or enterprise identification. This has prevented them from accessing financial and policy supports from the government as well as from private foundations. Consequently, there is lack of incentive mechanisms and an incomplete supervision and management system. This significantly compromises the performance of its role in engaging local communities, and in seeking a balance between social and financial benefits for communities.

Jin (2016) finds that a lack of both academic knowledge and public awareness, incomplete institutional arrangements, and incompetence in market development are also key issues for the development of social enterprises in China. Jin (2016) therefore suggests that non-government actors (NGOs) need to play a more active and dominant role in social enterprise development.

6. Comparison between international and Chinese research

There are similarities and differences between international and Chinese studies in this field. We conducted a keywords analysis and compared the literature in Chinese and English.

In total there were 1072 keywords collected from the Chinese literature, while 313 were collected from the English literature. We categorised and clustered the similar (i.e. the same meaning in a general sense) keywords and calculated their frequencies based on their presence times among all keywords counts collected. Figure 1 shows the keywords with a frequency of higher than 1.0%.
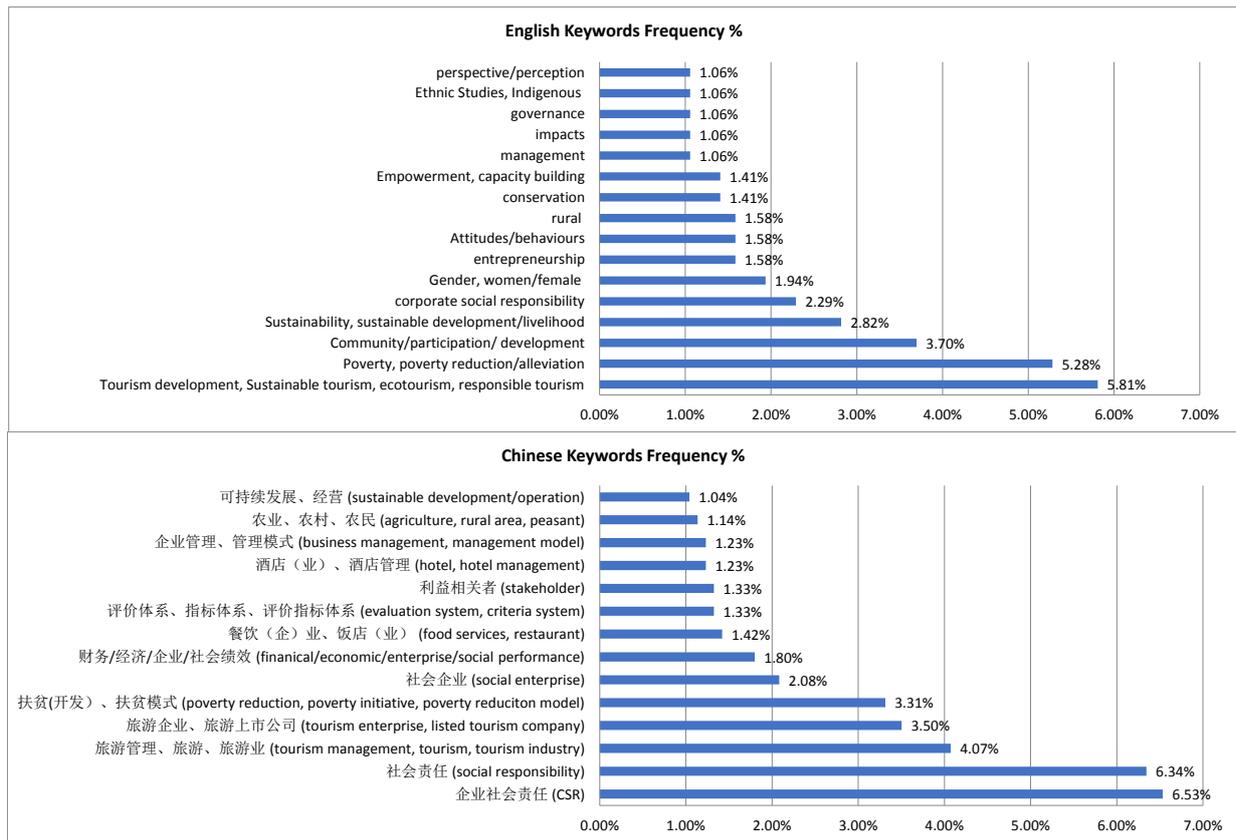
Figure 1: Keywords frequency

Then we removed from the list keywords like 'tourism', 'poverty' and social enterprise' and 'CSR', which refer directly to the research topic. We were able to compare the similarity and difference in keywords identified in Chinese and English literature (Table 2).

Table 2: Similarity and difference in keywords identified in Chinese and English literature

Chinese keywords frequency in Chinese literature			English keywords frequency in English literature		
Keywords	Frequency %	Rank	Frequency %	Rank	Keywords
财务/经济/企业/社会绩效 (financial/economic/enterprise/social performance)	1.80%	1			
餐饮(企)业、饭店业 (food services, restaurant)	1.42%	2			
评价（指标）体系、指标体系 (evaluation system, index system)	1.33%	3			
利益相关者 (stakeholder)	1.33%	4			
酒店(业)、酒店管理 (hotel, hotel management)	1.23%	5			
企业管理、管理模式 (business management, management model)	1.23%	6	1.06%	9	Management
农业/农村/农民 (agriculture/ rural areas/ peasants)	1.14%	7	1.58%	6	Rural
可持续发展/经营 (sustainable development/	1.04%	8	2.82%	2	Sustainability/Sustainable

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operation)					
			3.70%	1	Community participation/ development
			1.94%	3	Gender, women
			1.58%	4	Entrepreneurship
			1.58%	5	Attitudes/behaviours
			1.41%	7	Conservation
			1.41%	8	Empowerment, capacity building
			1.06%	10	Impacts
			1.06%	11	Governance
			1.06%	12	Ethnic Studies, Indigenous
			1.06%	13	Perspective/perception

Keywords analysis strongly suggests that there is some similarity in research topics, but the difference is obvious between the Chinese and the international literature. In total there were 18 keywords of which the frequency is higher than 1.0% in the literature identified in this review. Three of these were in both literatures, i.e.: 'sustainability/sustainable', 'rural' and 'management' (refer to Table 2).

In the English literature, 'Community (participation/development)', 'Gender, women/female', 'Entrepreneurship', 'Attitudes/behaviours', 'Conservation', 'Empowerment/capacity building', 'Impact', 'Governance', 'Ethnic/Indigenous' and 'Perspective/perception' dominated, while in the Chinese literature, more focus was on '(financial/enterprise/economic/social) performance', 'restaurant', 'evaluation index system', 'stakeholder' and 'hotel'.

This comparison provides a big picture view of differences between Chinese and international studies in this field. Combining the review of English and Chinese literature in Section 4 and 5, we summarised the similarities and differences in the following table (Table 3).

Table 3: Comparison of research focuses on tourism CSR and social enterprises between China and the globe

Research progress	China	International
Similarities:	Limited studies	Limited studies
	Some about CSR and poverty reduction, some about CSR and tourism, but little about CSR in TAP	
	Focusing on '三农 *san nong*'（rural areas, agriculture and peasants）	Rural focused to target integrated development of rural areas
	Discussing more about management, operation and governance	Management and operation, although more on governance
	Focusing on large size businesses	Focusing on large size businesses
	Lots of studies (degree theses) to link revenue and performance efficiency with CSR using listed companies as examples	Studying the economic rationale for acting more CSR
Differences:	Lack of specific case studies, but more	Many studies focus on case studies-

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	about general discussion or based on panel data. For example, listed company's revenues; or cited international cases (such as Grameen case)	SME and from stakeholders' perspectives, especially tourists, communities and disadvantaged groups
	No such legislation and law, some policies emerging, but a lack of detailed discussion about legislation and policy, although some general mention	Well-established legislation system and institutional arrangement about social enterprises
	Focusing more on CSR of travel agencies, hotels and restaurants (hospitality), but less on destination management businesses	Focusing mainly on the accommodation sector
	Many studies discussed the CSR's importance and SE is an alternative model, but not much in-depth research, such as institutional arrangements for such a model	Empowerment and capacity building have been paid great attention
	CSR Evaluation systems have been extensively studied	Conservation has been an important focus for related studies in CSR in the English language literature, but seems not enough attention paid to it in China
		Implementation focused

7. Discussion and conclusions

7.1. Research progress: What do we know about related research in China?

This literature review suggests that research into CSR and social enterprises in the context of TAP in China is in a very early stage. Although more and more researchers have paid attention to CSR in tourism and poverty alleviation practice, they seldom focus on TAP where CSR would play a significant role. Compared with the studies on CSR and social enterprises, the latter has attracted very limit attention. It is found that there is a significant lack of literature exploring social enterprises and corporate social responsibility in rural tourism development in China, particularly in TAP. Considering the increasing attention to social enterprises in practice in different sectors in China, research about related issues - either at theoretical and practical levels - seems to have been left behind. It is worthwhile to note that more and more attention has been paid to these issues by the academic community in China, as demonstrated by the increasing number of journal papers and theses published in recent years. Currently research into CSR in tourism mainly focuses on large scale enterprises, such as listed tourism companies, and very little on micro and small enterprises. Multiple models have been explored, including social enterprises and CSR in tourism and in poverty reduction. Although it is not totally convincing, the research finding that well-performed CSR would positively contribute to the social and economic efficiency of an enterprise is very encouraging. This will facilitate CSR practice and social enterprise and social entrepreneurship in TAP in China. It is important that research has confirmed that the poor people themselves are key stakeholders in tourism development and poverty reduction. The analysis of the success factors of CSR and social enterprises and the research

into evaluation systems provide important references to future practices. There are still gaps in other topics, such as exploring policies and legislation that support CSR practice in China, investigating the institutional change in CSR practice and social enterprise implementation, and studying related theoretical issues.

7.2. Research necessity: Do we need to study CSR and social enterprises in TAP in China?

China has an ambitious goal to wipe out absolute poverty by 2020. It would be wise for China to remember that, after 2020, the task of anti-poverty and anti-inequity will be still arduous, although in different forms. We will still need to address relative poverty and inequity, through a collaborative effort of key stakeholders including government, enterprises and communities. It is ever more important to establish and maintain social sustainable development mechanisms.

TAP has been an important means for mitigating poverty in rural China, and it will continue to be a critical long term vehicle for dealing with relative poverty and addressing inequity. It is extremely important to understand that this might be problematic for poverty stricken areas because: 1) the influx of external capital may deteriorate cultural and traditional systems in the long run, although it would likely contribute to general income growth in the short term; and 2) the nature of financial capital tends to drive tourism businesses to pursue the maximum profit; this profit-first motivation basically excludes the participation of disadvantaged groups such as the poor, women, aged and disabled people, as they generally have low capacity and less ability to participate efficiently. This is why tourism CSR and tourism social enterprises are encouraged and advocated in TAP practice, as they aim to contribute to the creation of social value, integration and interaction of material, social and spiritual dimensions (Gao and Wu, 2017; Kong, 2013; Zeng, 2018).

Research lagging behind practice, plus the research gap existing between China and the developed countries has its necessity. Rising tourism needs in China have been pushing the extraordinary expansion of tourism development. That includes rural tourism, in terms of its scale and quantity rather than its quality. A seller's market would not encourage tourism businesses to adopt CSR. Nowadays, having experienced fast economic growth development for more than 30 years, China (both governments and businesses as whole) has the capacity to take more social responsibility. It is able to feed back more benefits, not only economic but also social, cultural and environmental, to communities. This is particularly true for those in disadvantage, so as to facilitate social sustainability. CSR in TAP will be an important research field in the future, one which will contribute significantly to the success of poverty alleviation and rural tourism development in China.

7.3. Research directions: Should China have its own agenda? What can we learn from international research?

Poverty alleviation in different countries would have its general and common development laws, but also have its own particularities which will fit in the local context. Therefore, academic research on poverty alleviation in tourism must consider the influence of different cultural and social systems.

Compared with the international literature, we understand that studies on these topics have similarities and differences. Although the literature on CSR and social enterprises in TAP is limited in general both in China and globally, it has studied CSR in tourism and poverty reduction concerning rural development, business management and operation, and the economic rationale for acting CSR. This raises the opportunity for international exchange to share and integrate such knowledge across countries. This exchange could further facilitate CSR practice and theoretical innovation. From differences in research topics and focuses, we understand that research in China has its uniqueness but also some gaps compared to international studies. It is important for China to learn from international studies to enhance studies in institutional change, legislation, stakeholder relations, environmental conservation, and implementation. Importantly, TAP in China is unique when compared to that in other countries, especially western economies. To take TAP in rural China as an example: China has a socialist system, and the main body of the rural economy, land ownership in particular, belongs to the public. The issue of rural development and poverty alleviation has never been a simple market issue or social issue, but rather a political issue. This has determined that the solution to rural poverty alleviation cannot be simply copied from foreign experiences. Having been actually sacrificed during the long-lasting unbalanced development policies between urban and rural China, rural areas need to be re-focused on by the government. It is important to understand the institutional characteristics of China's rural economic system, where rural tourism and TAP develop. On the other hand, lower capacity in rural China, including lack of infrastructure and lower ability of local communities, would need more non-financial support and engagement from external forces; therefore, the external social responsibility practiced by tourism enterprises is ever more vital and even more urgent in China.

China needs its own research agenda with regard to CSR and social enterprise in TAP. This should align with its localised CSR practice and TAP development, especially within the local context of rural China. Practice has proved that the key issue of rural tourism and rural poverty in China at this stage is still the '三农问题 (*san nong wen ti)*' (a complex issue combining the rural area, agriculture and the peasant). There will be no continuous optimisation of the agricultural structure without the participation of peasants; rural tourism can't be endogenous development without concentration on the overall interest of the rural area. Research in CSR in TAP in rural China should be integrated into the whole range of rural tourism development and poverty alleviation strategies.

China needs to advocate strongly and publicly the CSR practice in industries, including the tourism industry. This is not simply a research issue but a policy issue. China urgently needs a legal basis for social enterprises and business CSR performance. This has to be based on comprehensive research closely engaging legal scholars, entrepreneurs and policy makers.

Although there are some good Chinese examples, these do not seem to have been well promoted. China needs successful models based on dedicated case studies of tourism CSR and tourism social enterprises in TAP. These should be not just descriptive but also quantitative research. TO tackle poverty, comprehensive case studies are necessary to identify the similarities and differences in CSR practice and social enterprise implementation. This applies especially to poverty reduction through tourism development in China and other countries. This approach would help to further develop theoretical frameworks which

suit China's special social, economic and political environments and provide theoretical support and guidance for practices.

Acknowledgements

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