

Revitalization of Fishing Village Tourism

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Fishing villages and oceans offer various resources and include excellent natural environments and unique cultures that can make such villages attractive spaces to meet the health, culture, and environmental needs of individuals. However, as society has developed and the environment has changed, the catch, which is the major source of income in fishing villages, has declined significantly worldwide, making it difficult to address regional economic issues. Fishing villages that have lost their ability to survive are gradually facing extinction, and there are real problems linked to the survival of fishing communities. Rural areas, in a similar manner to fishing villages, are incorporating tourism in regional development in an attempt to solve the crisis of agriculture, which has itself lost the ability to support entire villages. As a result, tourism has come to be recognized as a representative means of revitalizing rural areas.

sustainable tourism

fishing village tourism

analytic hierarchy process (AHP)

A'WOT

hierarchical decision-making

1. Background

Community-based tourism (CBT) in rural areas can improve the quality of life of residents in those areas ^{[1][2]}. It also increases respect for local cultures and maintains biodiversity ^{[3][4][5]}. In the same vein as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the United Nations' global goal is to preserve and promote local culture ^[6]. Just as rural areas have found vitality through tourism development, it is time for active discussion about introducing tourism as a means of revitalizing fishing villages. The links between fishing villages and tourism are actively being sought as part of a strategy to address the serious problems caused by the loss of income, which mainly comes from fishing, as well as the outflow of young people due to urbanization ^{[7][8][9]}.

Korea is a peninsula, meaning three of its sides are surrounded by the sea, and it has suitable conditions for supporting various tourism activities along the coast. Since Korean fishing villages are richly unique in terms of scenery, culture, and fisheries resources, it is highly expected that regional development through tourism will regenerate the underdeveloped conditions and help the local economy. As a result, the government has implemented tourism policies in fishing villages based on government projects called the 3rd Basic Plan for Development of Fishing Villages & Fishery Harbor 2020–2024 and the Fishing Village New-Deal 300 Project. Through these projects, the government has tried to improve tourism conditions in fishing villages. However, most of the fishing village tourism projects are planned to improve the basic lives of the local residents, so infrastructure continues to be created that is irrelevant to the purpose of the project, which is to emphasize the specialization of

fishing villages. Therefore, to maximize the effectiveness of the development of fishing village tourism, it is necessary to both expand infrastructure and discover unique assets such as natural landscapes, cultural heritage sites, and local specialties. In addition, for fishing village tourism to serve as a sustainable means of revitalizing the region, it is essential to have systematic diagnosis and strategies to verify the environmental analysis and development direction ^[10]. In academic fields, prior studies on fishing village tourism have mainly focused on the characteristics and experiences of tourists, with a recent focus on topics such as residents' attitudes and environmental issues ^{[11][12][13]}; however, factors affecting the sustainable economic and community development of fishing villages and their application methods have scantily been discussed.

2. Sustainable Fishing Village Tourism

The United Nations presented the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a set of common goals for the international community to achieve together. These goals include elements of sound economic growth, social engagement, and sustainable development, and they emphasize central values such as harmony between humans and the environment, dignity, and equality. Among them, 'Decent Work and Economic Growth' (Goal 8), 'Responsible Consumption and Production' (Goal 12), and 'Preservation and sustainable use of ocean, sea and marine resources' (Goal 14) are directly related to tourism ^{[14][15]}. Accordingly, the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has applied the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to tourism to encourage sustainable tourism, fair tourism, green tourism, etc. ^[16]. According to the UNWTO, sustainable tourism is tourism that fully considers its own current, social, and environmental impacts, such as meeting the needs of visitors and communities, preserving natural cultural resources, and minimizing environmental damage ^[17].

It is important for the local communities to be involved in sustainable tourism. This is because the independent participation of residents in decision making related to the tourism development process plays a role in controlling the positive and negative impacts on the local community. To this end, CBT has been proposed to overcome the problems of large-scale tourism development in which communities were excluded; as a sustainable tourism practice, it emphasizes community participation in the development process ^{[18][19]}. CBT refers to the development of tourism in a way that is harmless to the local culture, tradition, and daily life while satisfying the needs of the community, rather than emphasizing economic aspects alone.

In fishing villages, the subject of this study, fishery income has been gradually decreasing over the past few decades due to various factors, such as urbanization, climate change, pollution of coastal fisheries, overfishing, and reduced catch. Combined with accelerated fishing and the aging population, traditional fishing communities are on the verge of extinction ^{[20][21]}. As the majority of fishing communities which previously led this traditional lifestyle can no longer rely on fishing activities as their primary industry, there is a growing movement to seek additional income-generating measures other than fishing ^{[22][23][24]}. A fishing village also serves as a cultural heritage location ^[25] in that it has a unique natural environment and a rich fishing village traditional culture. In other words, fishing heritage can be used as a tourist product by combining nature with the traditional coastal culture ^[26]. Combining fishing and tourism in this context is an important way to ensure the viability of fishing communities and to promote fishing culture and enhance the sustainability of the traditional culture ^{[27][28]}.

The Korean government can also push for changes in the 3rd Basic Plan for Development of Fishing Villages & Fishery Harbor 2020–2024 and the Fishing Village New-Deal 300 Project to revitalize fishing villages as attractive spaces [10][29].

However, these policies are not being systematically implemented with a long-term perspective. It is difficult to proceed in a continuous and collective manner due to the existence of individual business-oriented policies, and the top-down policies do not reflect regional characteristics because they rely on a uniform central government policy [29]. In addition, supporting policies are not implemented properly despite the abundance of natural and cultural resources in fishing villages, due to the aging population, exclusivity of fishing village residents, restrictions on fishing and marine resource utilization, and a general lack of understanding [30][31][32]. If the policies continue to be implemented in this way, support from the central and local governments is likely to become useless.

3. Hierarchical Decision-Making Approach A'WOT

One of the Multi-Criteria Decision-Making (MCDM) methods [33], A'WOT (SWOT/AHP), which is a hierarchical decision-making technique, is a practical decision-making tool that combines SWOT and AHP to complement each of their shortcomings [34][35][36].

SWOT analysis has limitations, such as the fact that each factor cannot be quantitatively measured but combining it with AHP allows for a more purpose-appropriate strategy presentation [37][38]. The A'WOT analysis used in this work has the advantage of being able to simultaneously address both the qualitative characteristics of SWOT and the qualitative characteristics of AHP. The A'WOT analysis is largely conducted in three stages: the first step aims to identify the direction of strategy establishment or the factors that affect the decision making that researcher want to propose through their research. In the second step, the factors selected by SWOT analysis are analyzed using the AHP method. The analysis then proceeds by structuring a hierarchy and calculating the relative weights through pairwise comparison. As a final step, the weights of the four factors of SWOT produced during the second phase are multiplied by the weights of Strengths (S), Weaknesses (W), Opportunities (O), and Threats (T) to ultimately produce the final priority [39].

The existing studies that have applied A'WOT analysis have mainly used it to develop feasibility studies or competitiveness strategies to make efficient decisions, and they have not been limited to specific topics [40][41][42]. Kurttila (2000) was the first researcher to present an analysis of the final importance of factors by group using SWOT and AHP. Kurttila developed the scientific framework of A'WOT while focusing on the case of the Runni Center in Finland in a study on forest certification [37]. Since then, Pesonen, Kurttila, Kangas, Kajanus, and Heinonen have named the existing SWOT-AHP analysis A'WOT, and they have applied this research approach to various fields [39]. In 2004, local tourism experts expanded the scope of the analysis to tourism to promote rural tourism in the Kassel region of Germany and the Ylasavo region of Finland [43]. Wickramasinghe and Takano (2009) used A'WOT analysis to systematically establish strategies to boost the travel industry [44]. In addition, the A'WOT analysis approach is actively used as a research method to explore strategies for sustainable tourism. For example, Moharramnejad, Rahnamai, and Dorbeiki (2017) used the A'WOT approach to establish the best strategy

for the long-term management of national parks [45], and Kişi (2019) used A'WOT analysis to derive strategic approaches to sustainable tourism development in Zonguldak, Turkey [46]. This range of tourism studies shows that the A'WOT analysis approach can be actively applied to determine the priorities of qualitative alternatives that are difficult to translate simply into quantitative figures, and that the approach can ultimately lead to more systematic and feasible decisions.

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