

Analysis of the population displacement phenomenon under tourism economy development in Chinese historical areas: *Based on Social Exchange Theory*

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Abstract: In recent years, tourism's commercial exploitation of China's historical areas has been in full swing. However, the status quo of those historical sites is increasingly worrying due to their over-commercialization, the dissimilation of original lifestyles and, especially, the phenomenon of population displacement, with historical residents moving out and the non-native population flooding in, which directly gives rise to the loss of traditional culture. As per our investigation of Kulangsu, concerning its current population and culture situations, this paper aims to dig out the root cause of the population displacement, grasp the law and features of this phenomenon, analyze the significance and impacts it brings about and put forward optimization proposals for the sustainable development of Kulangsu Island.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research background

In recent years, the rise of commercial tourism in historical areas has vitalized the previously declining blocks with a new look in China. However, the development of historical and cultural blocks is worrying due to its deep commercial atmosphere and scarcity of primitive ecological life (Niu & Wang, 2015). Nowadays in China, there are a number of historical areas losing their original appearance of cultural connotations in many cities because of the emigration of existing residents, the immigration of new residents and migrant workers (Wu, 2008), and the conversion from residential to commercial functions (Xu, 2012). These phenomena also directly bring about the degradation of both the cultural value of historical blocks and their original residential functions, changes in social structure and the disappearance of the characteristics of traditional community life, thus triggering various potential social conflicts (Wu, 2008).

Our investigation focuses on the causes and characteristics of the population displacement phenomenon, which stems from tourism's exploitation of Chinese historical blocks, to explore potential solutions, to a certain degree, to keep the population of historical residents and traditional lifestyles, and to preserve the authenticity of life in historical areas. In regard to the research on population displacement, academia in China has hitherto placed emphasis on discussing urban gentrification under the backdrop of globalization, analyzing the phenomena of government-driven capital reinvestment and the immigration of the middle class in those old towns, and so forth (Chen & He, 2012; He, 2007, 2010; Zhu, Zhou, & Jin, 2004). Highlighting the phenomenon of population displacement induced by tourism, Mo (2013) analyzed the case of Old Town of Lijiang where it occurred that the indigenous peasants emigrated for adaption while the external industrial developers immigrated for commercial opportunities arising out of over-commercialization. However, the author did not dissect the causes of the social problems.

This paper introduces the case of Kulangsu in Xiamen Province, China, which is an island with an area of 1.88km². Kulangsu was originally an international settlement in the early 1900s and gradually became a unique international community due to the constant multicultural collision. Nowadays, there are still a considerable number of buildings from every era remaining. In recent years, Kulangsu has been found to embrace enormous economic and tourist values and thus has been exploited endlessly. As a tourism destination, the highest average number of visitors per day has been recorded as 60,000. This has led to tremendous shifts in its original residential social structure and the emergence of population displacement. Kulangsu can be regarded as a great introduction to Chinese historical areas being or having being over-exploited for tourism and commerce, that is, it is a historical area in miniature, which is teeming with multiple social problems after excessive tourism and commercial exploitation.

This paper will base its investigation on Social Exchange Theory and the chemical displacement reaction to figure out the inducements, processes and results of the population displacement in Kulangsu, analyze its law, characteristics, influence and significance, and put forward feasible suggestions to achieve sustainable development in Kulangsu.

1.2 Theoretical basis

Social Exchange Theory is a social theory which emerged and prevailed in the 1960s, advocating that all human activities related to social relations should be oriented by reward and remuneration based on the assumption of selfish humanity. Mainly there are two schools of Social Exchange Theory:

Table 1. Brief analysis of the two schools of Social Exchange Theory

Modern Social Exchange Theory	Theoretical features
Behaviorism Exchange Theory by Homans (1958)	Any human's activity can be explained as rational exchange behavior based on interest Possibility for the occurrence of behavior=value×rate
Structural Exchange Theory by Blau (1964)	Social exchange is caused by social attraction while social attraction is caused by economic motivation Basically all human communication modes are a process of attraction, competition, division and integration

There has been relevant research on urban social relationship analysis applying the two theories from Table 1, above, in Chinese academia. [Zhou \(2012\)](#) investigated the relationship between residents' individual benefits and their perceptions on tourism impacts based on Social Exchange Theory. [Yang \(2008\)](#) discussed the issue of community participation and the relationship between tourism income and cost yielded from the process of tourism development. [Zhang \(2010\)](#) applied Blau's Structural Exchange Theory (1964) to analyzing the problems of integration of rural migrant workers and urban society from the perspective of labor sources, social rewards and so on.

Both theories can be used to explain the reasons for population displacement in historical areas, especially in Kulangsu. Both primitive residents' emigration and migrant population immigration are rational behaviors guided by interest with a trend of attraction, competition and diversion shown during their collision. Thus, we are going to study and analyze the essential reasons for, trend and optimization of population displacement with Social Exchange Theory as the theoretical basis.

1.3 Definition of the concept

1.3.1 Population displacement

The population displacement studied in this paper refers to a phenomenon regarding the emigration of historical residents who have lived for over ten years, as well as the immigration of an external population who have lived for one year to ten years in a particular historical area.

In order to study the root reasons for population displacement as well as its development and optimization of the status quo, "displacement reaction", which in chemistry is used as a carrier with Social Exchange Theory, is going to be used as an analogy and for building the equation for population displacement (see *Figure 1*. Establishment of the equation for "population displacement") by the principles of displacement reaction and the deep principles of this reaction.

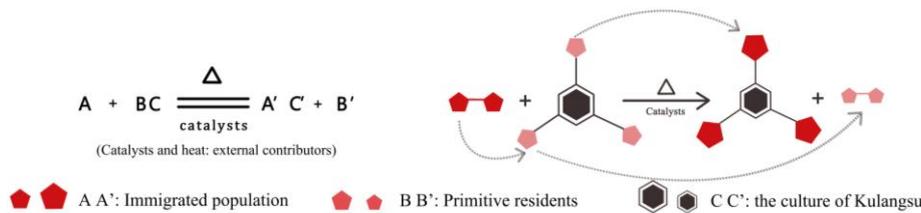


Figure 1. Establishment of the equation for "population displacement"

Under certain catalysis, as well as displacement reaction in different stages, the alienated immigrant population, historical residents, as well as the culture of Kulangsu are reproduced and referred to as A'B' and C', within which B' is isolated while A' and C' are combined together. Therefore, occurrence conditions as well as results of population displacement are problems to be discussed in this paper.

Table 2. Explanation for main concept definition of population displacement

A (immigrant population)	Immigrant population who have lived here for more than one year but below ten years due to vigorous development of commercial tourism in Kulangsu
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B (historical residents)	Residents who have lived on the island for more ten years
C (Kulangsu culture)	Multi-culture formed by history and transition in Kulangsu

1.3.2 Displacement activity

The conditions for a chemical displacement reaction is expressed as: activity of metal A is stronger than B, and then it can replace B. This principle is also adaptable to population displacement following a similar reaction principle. According to Homan's Social Exchange Theory, all human social interactive behaviors are exchanges based on interest. Therefore, we can contribute the reaction activities of A and B to the direct interest correlation of Kulangsu's overall development, including culture and commerce.

Table 3. Explanation for parameter definition of the population displacement reaction

Conditions for chemical displacement reactions	Chemical reaction activity $A > B$
Preconditions for population displacement reactions	Reaction activity of immigrant population A's social activity is stronger than the reaction activity of historical resident B's social activity
Displacement activity	Comprehensive index of subjective initiative and objective effect in protecting history and culture and developing commercial tourism in Kulangsu
Determine factors of displacement activity	Direct interest correlation with Kulangsu's overall development regarding culture and commerce

1.4 Research framework and purposes

The paper aims to firstly explore the stimuli for the population displacement phenomenon in Kulangsu, then, via field investigation and questionnaire interviews, we are able to select variables on each aspect of Kulangsu to master the law and characteristics of the displacement phenomenon, and figure out the effects and significance being exerted on the local situations. Eventually, several suggestions can be proposed for the sustainable development of Kulangsu under the wider background of tourism commercialization.

1.5 Study area

Kulangsu is a typical example of an historical area in China. Due to multiple factors, most historical residents of the island have moved out to other places while many immigrants have come for commercial activities with an increasing and uncontrolled growth trend. Kulangsu has become lonelier and lonelier with massive losses of historical residents. Population displacement has become an internal injury of Kulangsu.

In a bid to analyze the phenomenon of "population displacement" in Kulangsu, this research focuses on the whole island, situated to the southwest of Xiamen Island. Kulangsu mainly consists of two communities as well as typical historical blocks: Longtou and Neicuoao, both of which are partially selected as the samples and investigation areas for the research:

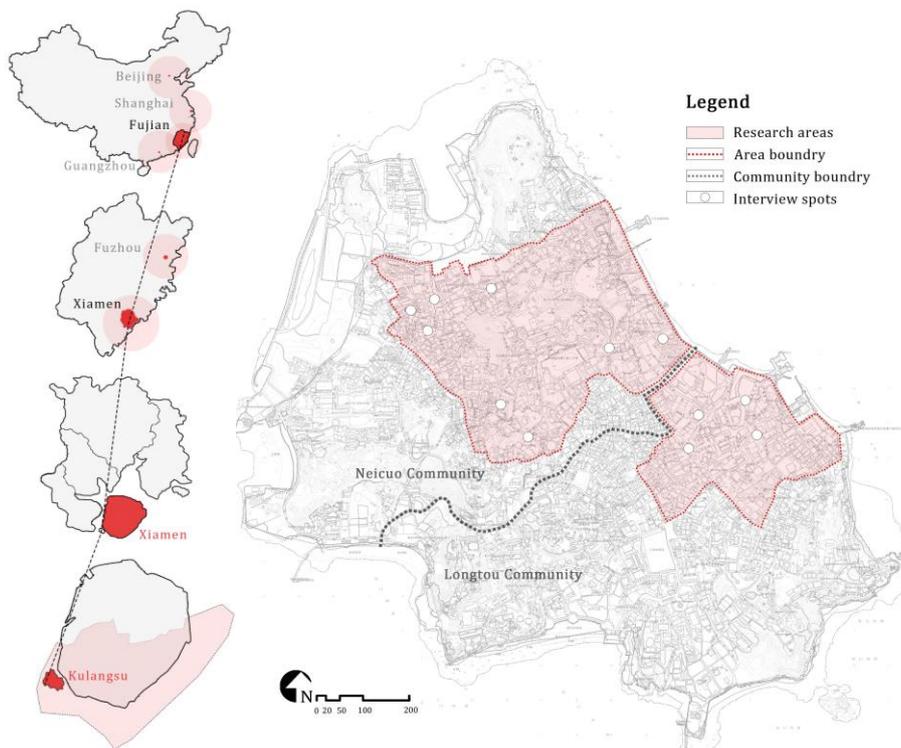


Figure 2. Location map of Kulangsu and illustrations for research areas and interview spots

2. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

2.1 The emergence and cause of population displacement

Kulangsu was once a wild oasis without human habitation, until the earliest human settlement appeared in the 1270s. With groups of people immigrating for initial construction, there were incremental resident populations living on the island.

Due to the country's loss during the Opium Wars, Kulangsu was partitioned and occupied by 13 other countries, which finally made the island an international settlement as well as one of the most intensive geographical units as a cultural melting pot in the world, with the population reaching 5000 in the early 1900s and peaking at 40,000 in 1941.

When the administrative area was determined in 1949, Kulangsu underwent a crucial period of development transition from a mixed residential community gradually to a tourism destination, and was listed as a national key scenic spot in 1988. Responding to the new plan for Kulangsu, the government of Amoy City implemented the policy of "population reduction" in 1993, by issuing a Contemporary Stipulation for Population Management in an urban area, this put more emphasis on the tourism development with little focus on other urban functions. The population gradually decreased to 20,000 around 2000 along with the removal of several factories and companies.

Having benefited a lot from tourism and commercial development, the island was oriented to continue strengthening the attributes of scenery and traveling while weakening its original attributes of residence and

community. Accordingly, Administrative Measures for Kulangsu, Xiamen were issued. Historical residents' lives were tremendously affected due to the emerging dual management of community and scenic spots, triggering a migration tide of residents for the second time. Meanwhile, however, people outside the island flew into Kulangsu constantly, induced by tourism and commercial development, who attempted to make maximum economic benefits by doing business and making a living on the island. In 2010, there were about 14,000 residents on Kulangsu Island, of which 6,000 were immigrant people and merely 8,000 were the historical residents, still facing a fast population loss rate.

Till now, Kulangsu has become better-known around the world just as a gorgeous and romantic tourist destination, while its original image as a mixed and multi-cultural residential community has gradually been destroyed and buried, which mirrors dramatically the unbalanced development between commercial tourism and protection of inheritance and traditional culture.

Therefore, according to the migration flows in the history of Kulangsu, "population displacement" can contribute to the "push-pull effect", which is analyzed in *Table 4* (i.e. the catalyst and heating conditions).

Table 4. Analysis on the contributing factors to population displacement

Contributions of "population displacement"	Essence	Effects
Propulsive force	Push out historical residents by government's mandatory development policies	Two migration tides: 1) "Population reduction" policy by Xiamen government in 1993; 2) Management Methods for Scenic Spots issued in 2005, resulting in a dual management by community and scenic spot managers. Side effects: Vicious circle of "population reduction--removal of companies" and "removal of schools and hospitals---population reduction".
Tensile force	Attraction to massive external labors because of the interest from tourism commercialization	Constant emigration of historical residents and immigration of external laborers attracted by tourism commercialization. Many impacts on primitive folk and culture have been made in Kulangsu while seeking development and interest.

2.2 The status quo and influence

2.2.1 The status of population

Basic demographic information is collected via official data and questionnaires, being statistically analyzed and shown in Figure 3.

It can be concluded from the chart that the immigrant population has a younger age structure than the historical/primitive with 68% of people under 30. As far as we know, most immigrant people (63%) are merchants from other places within Fujian while quite a few are from other provinces, and still 32% are local. Those immigrant people universally lack enough knowledge about Kulangsu's traditional culture and history due to their relatively short time living on the island (78% have lived here for only 1 to 5 years), which constitutes a great hindrance to community and cultural protection. For the historical residents, however, 82% of them have been

living here since childhood and are over 10 years, embracing their own religious belief and sense of belonging to the island. Thus most of them (70%), especially the seniors, are reluctant to move out since they think the environment in Kulangsu is still good for living, while younger people are willing to leave for better development.

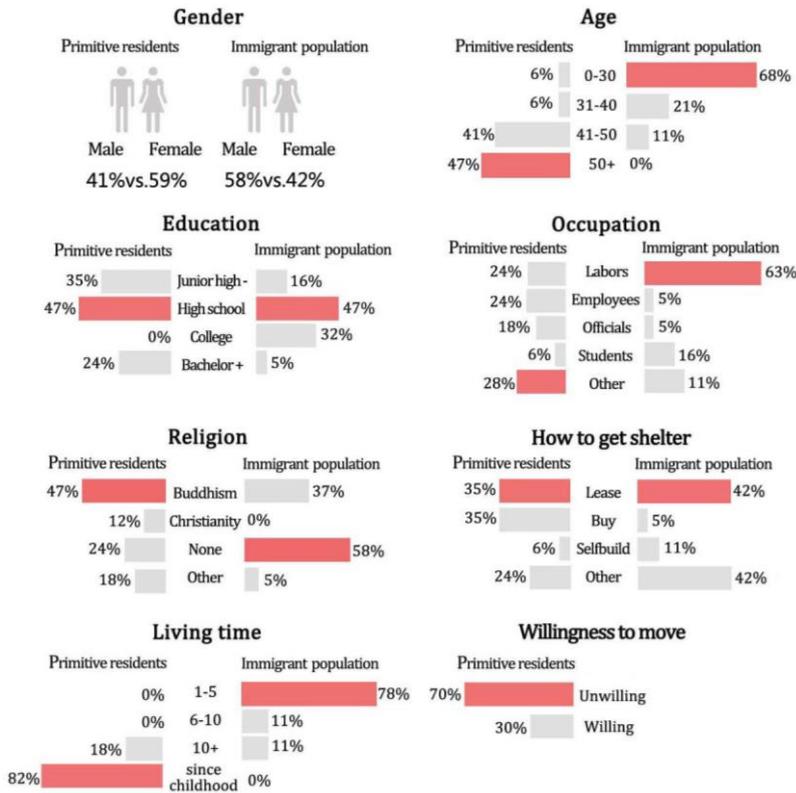


Figure 3. Statistical chart of basic demographic information in Kulangsu

2.2.2 Life and culture

For the investigations concerning life and culture, different opinions are given by historical residents and immigrant people addressing life and activity conditions in Kulangsu.

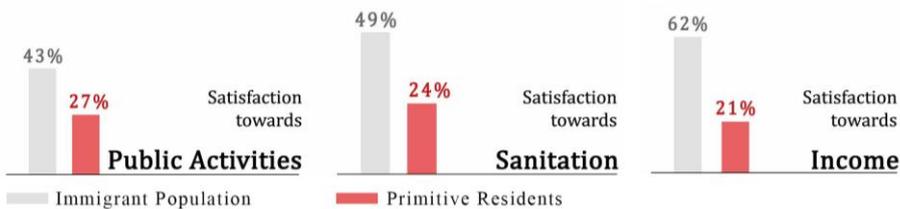


Figure 4. Difference of satisfaction towards public activities, sanitation and income

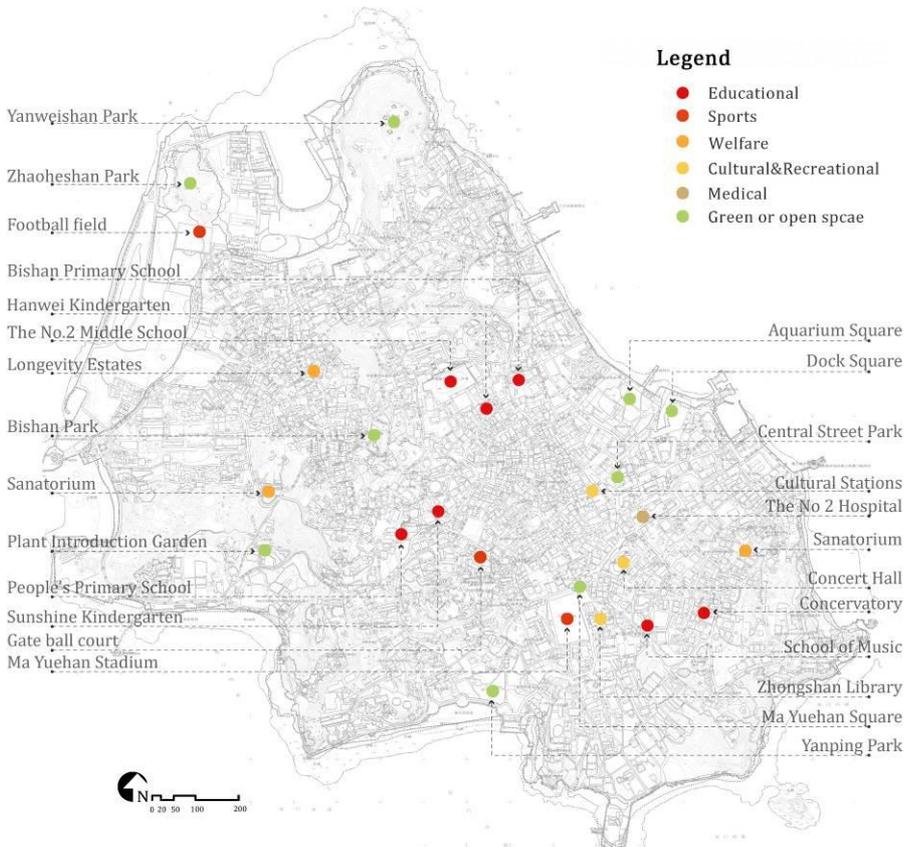
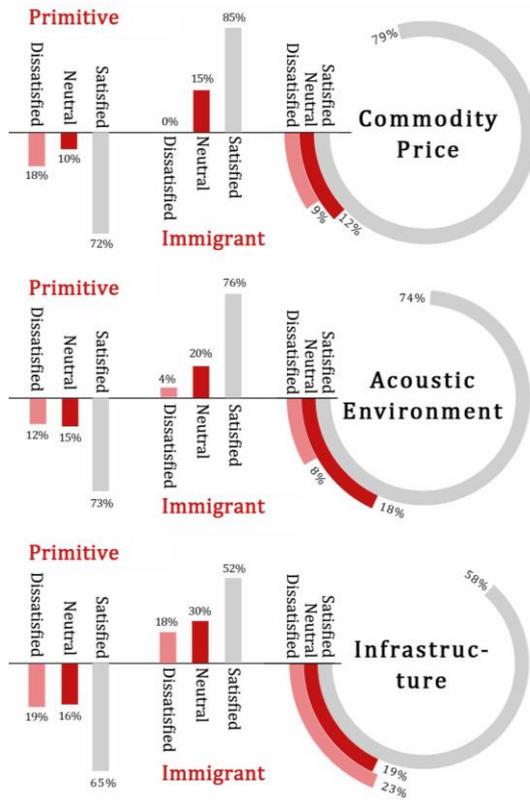


Figure 5. Satisfaction consensus of commodity price, acoustic environment and infrastructure, and distribution of current infrastructure

- 1) Primitive residents are universally dissatisfied with the health and environment, public activities and income level, while immigrant people are positive about these aspects.

As to public activities, immigrated residents seldom participate and they think improvement has been made for public activity facilities only with scenic spots and many parks in Kulangsu. For the primitive, although the government has built facilities for public activities, atmosphere for residents' participation in public activities no longer existed with a compression of activity space, since the immigrant population focus on commercial benefits without knowing the value of public activities.

When comes to health and environment, immigrated residents pay more attention to the beautiful natural scenery in Kulangsu without much more observation on public health and environment for their short residence here, while most primitive residents think that health conditions have become worse obviously with the development of commercial tourism as well as immigration of external people.

Additionally, the development of tourism and commerce has brought incremental income to immigrant people, who directly participate in these commercial activities. However, the majority of the primitive usually benefit little from the tourism.

- 2) Both historical residents and immigrant residents are dissatisfied with problems in Kulangsu like the shortage of infrastructure, noisy environment, rising prices, as well as complex staff.

According to the investigation, we find that prices for food and daily necessities have been raised by merchants, especially by those who run a dining business, and all residents' cost of living has been raised. With the development of commercial tourism, Kulangsu is no longer quiet due to the deep commercial atmosphere from merchants and visitors. Furthermore, the scarcity of infrastructure has become one of the main reasons for loss of the historical residents.

- 3) The two kinds of residents have no special inclination towards family relationships and neighborhood relationships which are varying from people to people.

Family relations is a relatively private problem which differs between people without any direct relation to population displacement in Kulangsu as found in the interview results.

On the whole, residents in Kulangsu have low satisfaction about life conditions here and according to Social Exchange Theory, it is mainly due to the pursuit for interest maximization. The deep commercial atmosphere of tourism in Kulangsu results in more pursuit for economic benefits from tourism development, but less attention on intangible values about life conditions by local residents, especially by immigrant people.

2.2.3 Architectural culture

Buildings in Kulangsu have diversified functions with many old buildings being transformed to stores for business. Both the historical and immigrant people permit the illegal construction and transformation of old buildings into stores or hotels.

We can see from *Figure 6* that many buildings have retained their living function with various matching public service facilities in the Neicuoao community, with an overall retaining of basic form and structure in the

living community; while in Longtou community, many buildings have been transformed to stores as hot areas for tourism and commerce.

As per building quality, buildings can be categorized into four classes. First-class includes public buildings as well as newly built houses with good quality; the second and third-class are houses for common people and partial stores; also there exist some slum-dwellers, illegal constructions as well as old dangerous decrepit houses with poor quality.

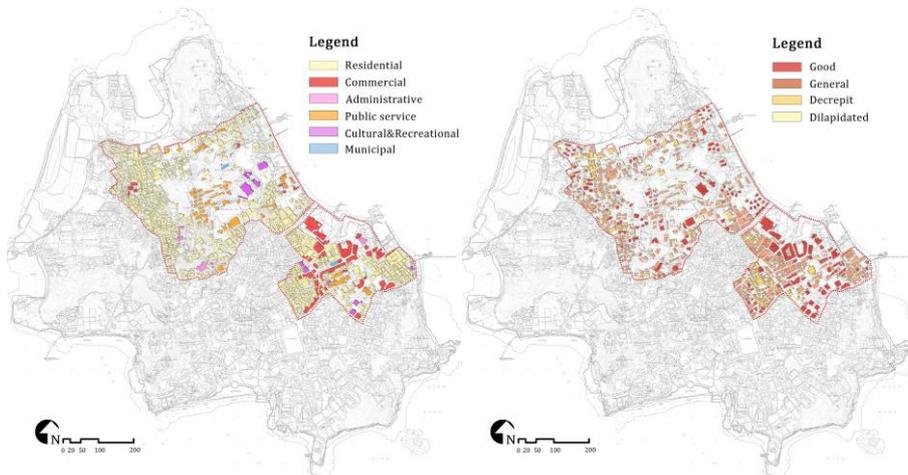


Figure 6. Current building function and quality in Kulangsu

2.2.4 Religious culture

The figure below shows us the situation of importance of traditional festivals to the historical residents, B.

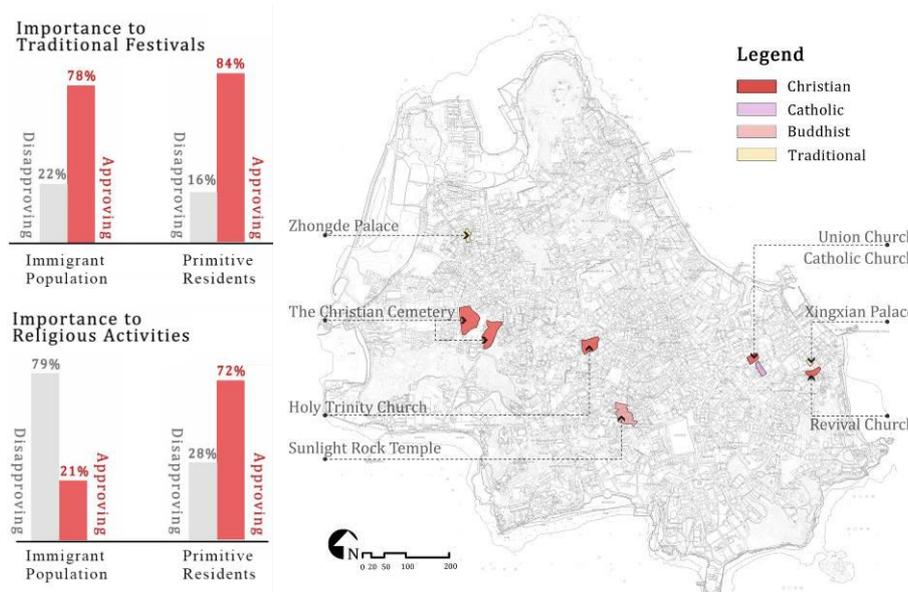


Figure 7. Importance to traditional festivals and religious activities and distribution of current religious and cultural facilities

2.2.5 Culture with characteristics

1) The family musical culture has become weak with low popularity of music and shortage of musical aesthetics.

Historical residents expressed their knowledge about Kulangsu’s history as a musical island, but they said the musical culture has been disappearing with the gradual removal of rich families. The remaining ones know little about musical theory due to their limited education and life conditions. Although some of them still keep musical instruments like pianos, they were played by young people before who are no longer living on the island.

But for migrant workers, they have less chance to make contact with music due to their low education level, busy work, and big life pressures, so most young migrant people did not know the characteristic culture of Kulangsu as a musical island when they first came. Therefore, characteristic musical culture is just a propaganda slogan without any practical scene of beautiful music around the island under the gradually deepening tourist commercialization. The musical island has become legend.

2) The Hokkien and Mandarin languages have become a fifty-fifty split, with Mandarin becoming more popular.

Most interviewees showed that Mandarin has become more and more common and popular. Communicating in Mandarin is more convenient for visitors since they come from different places under the background of developing tourist commercialization in Kulangsu, although the historical residents insist on speaking Hokkien. Hokkien, as the official language before, has been impacted by Mandarin for the pursuing of economic benefits under the tourism tide. Some historical residents of middle and old age even said their children and grandchildren cannot speak Hokkien anymore.

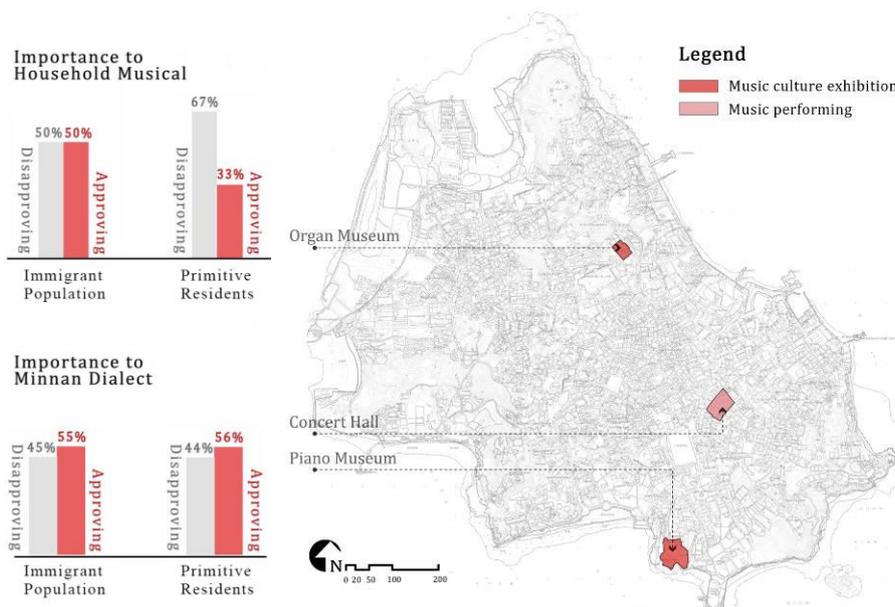


Figure 8. Identification of characteristic culture and distribution of current musical and cultural facilities

In summary, it can be found based on the investigation that neither historical residents nor immigrant residents are thoroughly satisfied with life and culture, especially the historical residents who are relatively more

dissatisfied with the living environment, income level, social relations, etc. As to architectural culture, both historical residents and immigrant residents think the same, that buildings have not been well protected. In addition, in terms of religion and language, as well as musical culture, both historical residents and immigrant residents agree to value and protect them.

3. FEATURES AND RULES OF POPULATION DISPLACEMENT

3.1 Summary for displacement stage

According to Social Exchange Theory by [Blau \(1964\)](#), the process of human communication modes mainly includes attraction, competition, division and integration, which also fits for population displacement. However, based on basic investigation, population displacement in Kulangsu may be secondary to division after diversification according to the current trend. The major four development stages for population displacement in Kulangsu are shown in Table 5:

Table 5. Parameters of displacement reactions in each stage

Reaction stages	A	B	A activity	B activity	Comparison of activity	The overall activity
Attraction	↗	-	↗	-	A<B	↗
Competition	↗	↘	↗	↘	A>B	↗
Diversification	-	↘	↗	↘	A>>B	↘
Division	-	↘	-	↘	A>>B	↘

* A – Immigrant population, B – Historical/Primitive residents

1) Attraction

In the beginning, some migrant workers came to Kulangsu under the government's vigorous promotion of tourism development. At that time, Kulangsu had a large demand for laborers since tourism development was in the primary stage and culture at that moment also remained in its primitive condition.

A (immigrant people): They had an increasingly stronger will to reform Kulangsu with higher activity. According to Social Exchange Theory, it is easy for migrant workers to get job opportunities and gain economic benefits from tourism commercialization directly since laborers are scarce during the initial stage of development.

B (historical/primitive residents): Compared to migrant workers, historical residents belong to laborers with higher cost, who are less likely to be hired by employers with less participation in commercial development without direct material benefits. B just keep a stand-by attitude towards such development with a low activity.

2) Competition

Cultural brands in Kulangsu have become gradually mature with the increase of benefits from commercial development; meanwhile A (immigrant people) have entered Kulangsu for benefits on a massive scale with constantly increasing activity. On the contrary, B (historical residents) began to leave Kulangsu because of the deteriorating environment, declining cultural atmosphere and rising prices impacted by commercial tourism development with a decreasing population. Most of those who have left are young and a strong labor force, so both subjective will and objective

capabilities are decreasing for historical residents with lower activity. Thus A has been growing gradually stronger than B in terms of activity.

Then the displacement action occurs at this moment, during which both commercial development and traditional culture protection have been developed with an increase of overall activity since migrant workers are coexisting with historical residents.

3) Diversification

As a famous tourist attraction, Kulangsu has matured under operation. The government was forced to remove historical residents from deteriorating environments and rising prices due to the massive inflow of benefit pursuers. Thus, A’s activity reached a peak while B’s activity decreased regardless of quantity and quality. The displacement reaction has developed into an incandescent state.

Kulangsu overall is under huge change accompanying the displacement reaction. Due to the incompatible proportion between traditional culture protection and commercial development, many problems have resulted such as environmental deterioration and a deep commercial atmosphere with a declining development activity for Kulangsu on the whole, which is also the status quo of Kulangsu we are researching.

4) Division (forecasting stage)

The population displacement will finally reach a division stage if the conditions continue to deteriorate as per the current trend. That is, all of B are removed with zero activity left and complete division of traditional culture and commercial development. Without support of traditional culture, Kulangsu will become a commercial island completely, which is unlikely to receive sound and sustainable development as such a pure commercial scenic spot. A’s benefits are also contemporary since Kulangsu will be finally in decline with the overall decrease of development activity.

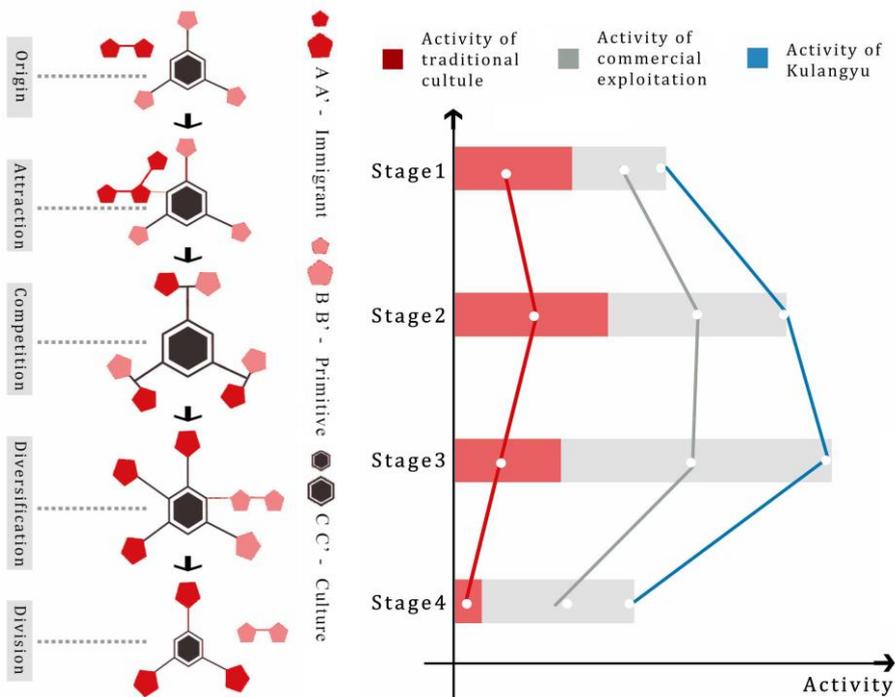


Figure 9. Summary of stages and law of population displacement in Kulangsu

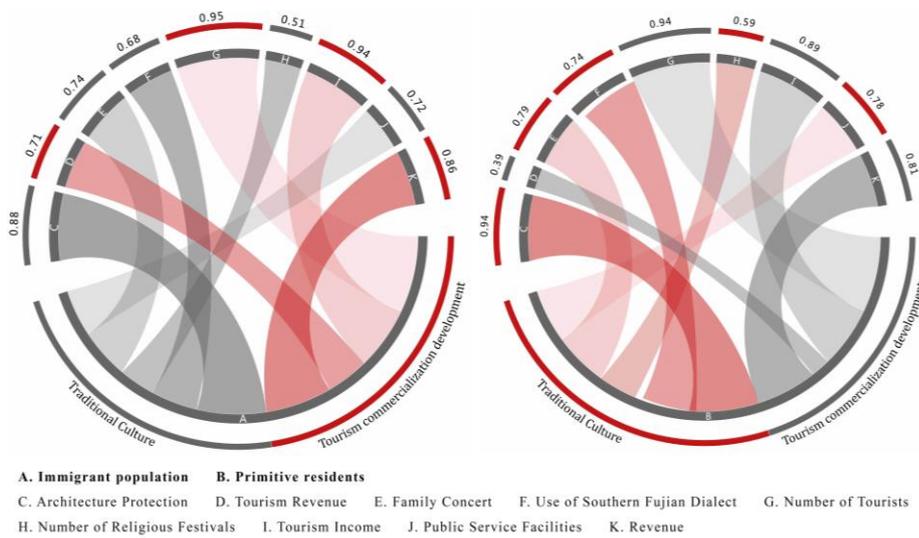
3.2 Analysis on correlation coefficients

To explore the correlation and relationships between traditional culture as well as commercial exploitation and the population of historical residents and the immigrants, we collect residents' demographic data and data concerning culture and commerce as variables over eight years (2006-2013) to perform an analysis of correlation coefficients. Since the variables are numerically far apart, data initialization should be done first.

Then, the correlation coefficient is calculated via the formula:

$$Correl(X, Y) = \frac{\sum (x - \bar{x})(y - \bar{y})}{\sqrt{\sum (x - \bar{x})^2 \sum (y - \bar{y})^2}}$$

where x , in this case, is the population of historical and immigrant residents, while y represents the figure for each selected variable. The results are shown as follows:



	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
A (Immigrant)	-0.87	0.71	-0.73	-0.67	0.94	-0.50	0.94	-0.72	0.86
B (Historical/ Primitive)	0.93	-0.38	0.79	0.74	-0.90	0.59	-0.89	0.78	-0.80

Figure 10. Calculation results of correlation coefficients

According to the results, basically, the population alteration trend of historical residents has highly positive relationships with the variables relating to traditional culture, while it has highly negative relationships with economic and commercial variables. However, the figure for the immigrant people embraces thoroughly opposite relationships with those factors.

A (immigrant people) have always gained direct economic benefits during the irreversible process of tourism commercialization. They are attached to commercial benefits without connections to cultural protection in Kulangsu. On the contrary, B (historical residents) are attached to cultural protection without gaining any direct benefit from tourist commercialization.

Therefore, only if we connect A's and B's benefits with tourist and commercial development and historical cultural protection during the displacement reaction, so that balance can be reached for A and B's activity

(C), can an optimal result for A, B and C's sustainable development be achieved.

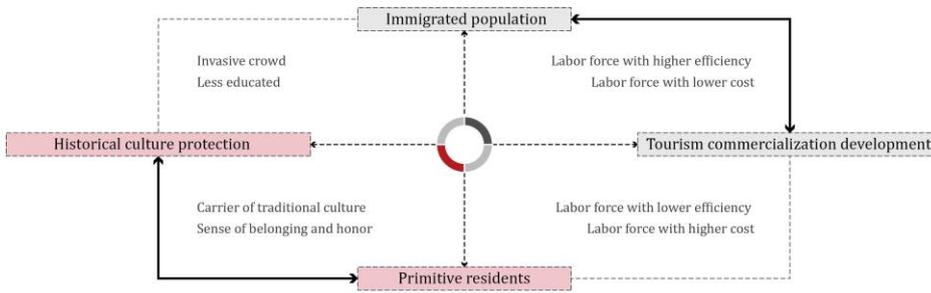


Figure 11. Illustrations of the current benefit correlations

4. SUGGESTIONS AND OPTIMIZATION

According to the theories above, suggestions are proposed in the following part to balance activity and implement benefit connections.

4.1 Prescriptive measures

Allowance: special allowance is abstracted from Kulangsu tourism taxes by government for primitive residents, which can refer to what one-card system has achieved, such as subsidized travel passes for taking public transport, entering museums and libraries, and enjoying public services and social benefits.

Update: Provide historical residents with life conveniences by updating facilities, and retaining and developing schools and hospitals to create a more vigorous community.

Creation: Create more space for neighborhood communication among historical residents and maintain traditional neighborhood relationships. For example, provide gathering areas for historical residents which should be restricted areas so as to create a relatively quiet community with authenticity.

Expected results: The historical residents' living environment can be improved while obtaining economic benefits with more acknowledgement about tourism.

4.2 Instructive measures

Tourism projects with characteristic culture — the government is suggested to develop tourism projects with characteristic Kulangsu culture, such as related cultural projects about celebrities, buildings, religions and music by inviting historical residents who understand Kulangsu culture deeply to participate, so as to obtain job opportunities and economic benefits with cultural regression.

Proposal for environmental protection — the government ought to strengthen promotion of the importance of environmental protection by formulating specific measures and policies so as to create sound living environments for Kulangsu residents.

Expected results: The sound development momentum of projects with characteristic culture will be surely popular among tourists; and residents as

well as tourists will be satisfied with the good environment so as to create business opportunities.

In order to better implement instructive measures by mastering traditional cultural values of Kulangsu, the distribution of lifestyle, religions as well as characteristic culture should be accounted for. We can see from *Figure 12*. Distributions of the comprehensive evaluations on traditional culture hotspots that there are several cultural hotspots in Kulangsu which can carry out tourism projects with characteristic culture one by one.

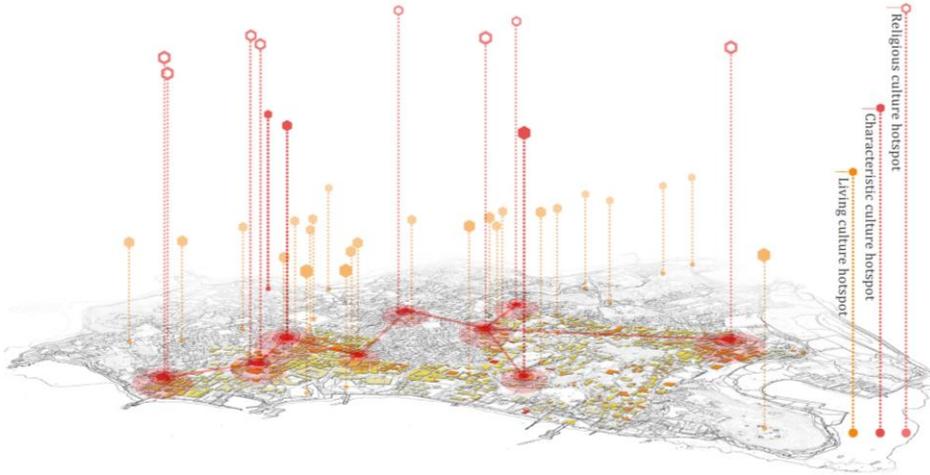


Figure 12. Distributions of the comprehensive evaluations on traditional culture hotspots

4.3 Spontaneous measures

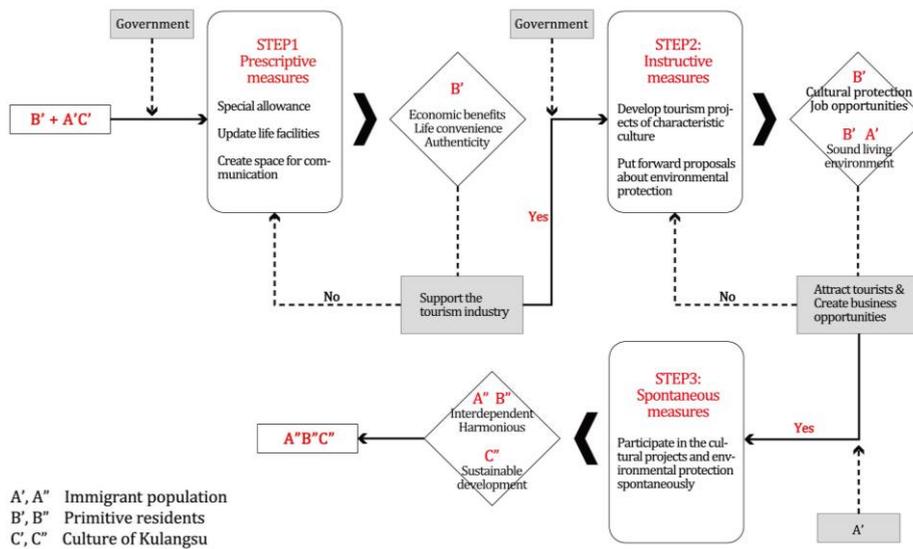


Figure 13. Flowchart of optimization strategies

Spontaneous participation — the immigrant population may organize similar activities spontaneously for benefits so that they can protect traditional culture and maintain the environment in Kulangsu voluntarily.

Expected results: Under the rational stipulation and sound guidance by government, together with the positive role of historical and immigrant

residents, traditional culture protection and environment protection as well as commercial development in Kulangsu can receive sustainable development simultaneously, which results in an interdependent and harmonious relationship between the historical residents and immigrant population.

Through these suggestions, we hope there will be further alternatives and combination reactions for Kulangsu’s status after displacement driven by interconnected benefits, and an activity balance so that current historical and immigrant residents can live in harmony to promote the sustainable development of Kulangsu, which was a famous historical and cultural place. The equation for the combination reaction is expressed below.

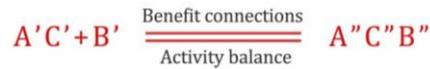


Figure 14. Visions for optimized results

5. CONCLUSION

By studying the population displacement in Kulangsu, we can see this phenomenon is a behavior of population exchange, driven by benefit during its transformation and development, where historical residents have been pushed out by government policies while external people have been pulled in for economic benefits. This is a common social phenomenon during the restructuring progress and development of historical blocks and old cities, but it usually goes toward an irreversible division condition after experiencing attraction, competition and diversification since it hasn’t attracted enough value from government and the society. In terms of development in historical blocks, economic benefits and development may be achieved by population displacement, but traditional charm and pure cultural spirit may be lost. Although commercial development of tourism in historical blocks has its own values, a series of conflicts and contradictions caused by population displacement under the wider background of commercialization should be solved so as to promote the sustainable development of traditional cultural blocks.

Based on Social Exchange Theory, this paper performs a dissection of the Kulangsu Island case study examining the phenomenon of population displacement between the historical residents and immigrant population emerging from the process of tourism development in Chinese historical areas. Through analyzing the stimuli, processes and results of the phenomenon, we opine that population displacement is one of the most crucial spurs to the over-commercialization in Chinese historical blocks and the loss of original lifestyle as well as the local cultural connotations. Furthermore, the research analyzes the law, characteristics, impacts and significance of the phenomenon, and, as a result, proposes some potential adjustment and development suggestions. What the investigation has done attempts to afford fresh waves of thinking and lessons that merit attention on more reasonable, feasible, sustainable and minimally-invasive ways to protect and develop Chinese historical areas.

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