

The public house in the rural community

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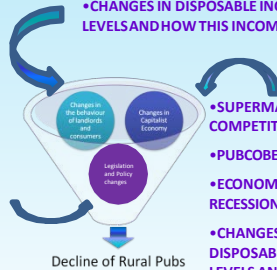
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Introduction

Decline in the number of village public houses across the country

Interrelated reasons for the decline in number of the village pub

- CHANGING TENDRE
- GREATER LEISURE CHOICES
- CHANGES IN DISPOSABLE INCOME LEVELS AND HOW THIS INCOME IS USED



- SUPERMARKET COMPETITION
- PUB CO BEHAVIOUR
- ECONOMIC RECESSIONS
- CHANGES IN DISPOSABLE INCOME LEVELS AND HOW THIS INCOME IS USED

- LICENSING ACTS
- DRINK DRIVE LAWS
- SMOKING BAN
- RISING BEER DUTY

How is the village pub seen? What is its function?

What does the decline in number actually mean?

Methodology

Grounded theory study, Glaserian (1978, 1992) approach

66 in-depth interviews (2010-2013)

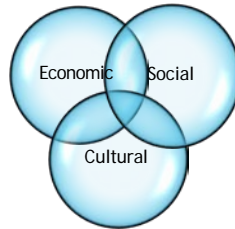
Study area - Lincolnshire (25 villages in total)

Interview sample range of people with connections to village pubs - e.g. residents, publicans

Just over half the sample were male (56%)

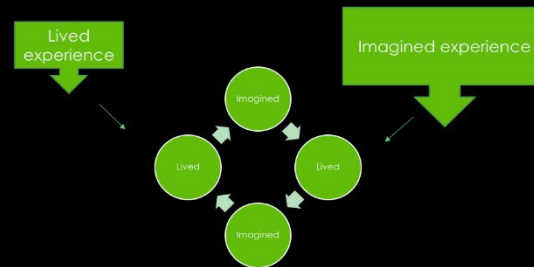
Youngest participant under 20, oldest was over 90

Perceptions and experiences of the village pub



Village pubs are seen and experienced as adding value of different kinds – economic, social, and cultural, different groups (longstanding residents, newcomer residents, publicans) attach different levels of importance to these kinds of value. Whilst the different kinds of value can work in the Bourdieusian interpretation as capital, and be self-expanding and inter-convertible, they can also work to undermine one another.

Types of experiences'



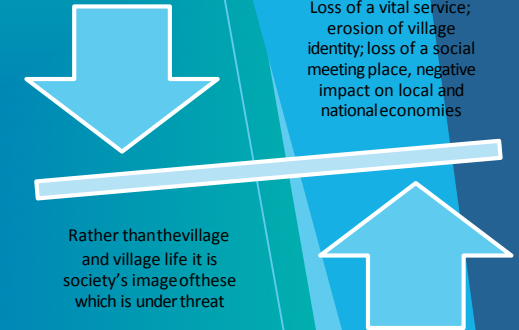
Lived experience, pub often viewed nostalgically, through experiences of yesteryear

Imagined experience located in the wider context of the rural idyll

Village pub images continue to offer customers representations of the rural and actual physical attributes of the village pub help to reinforce these images (cycle happening)

Village pub in danger of being stronger in the imagination than it is in reality

“When you have lost your inns, drown your empty selves, for you will have lost the last of England” (Belloc, 1943 cited in Hutt)



Loss of a vital service; erosion of village identity; loss of a social meeting place, negative impact on local and national economies

Conclusion and the future of the village pub

By showing how the village pub is seen through the lens of nostalgia and the rural idyll and that contradictions exist between how the village pub is remembered or imagined and how it 'really' is, my research contributes to rural studies and pub literature.

My research also offers a contribution to practice by imparting knowledge, to different groups, on the types (economic, social and cultural) of diversification that can be used to help sustain village pubs.

References:

- Glaser, B (1978) *Theoretical Sensitivity*, Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press
- Glaser, B (1992) *Basics of Grounded Theory Analysis*, Mill Valley, Sociology Press
- Hutt, C (1973) *The Death of the English Pub*, Arrow Books