

Strategies for the Preservation and Tourism Development of Traditional Villages in the Context of Rural Revitalization

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Abstract. The emergence and implementation of the national rural revitalization strategy have brought new opportunities for the protection and tourism development of traditional villages. The integration of rural traditional cultural characteristics with tourism development not only effectively protects the cultural heritage of traditional villages but also promotes the rapid development of regional tourism economy. This study aims to explore the strategy of traditional village protection and tourism development under the background of rural revitalization, elucidating the significance of traditional village protection and tourism development, the relationship between the two, and the implementation principles. Based on these understandings, an effective approach to implementing the protection and tourism development of traditional villages is proposed to promote their sustainable development.

Keywords: Traditional Villages; Preservation; Tourism Development; Strategies.

1. Introduction

Traditional villages have been defined as key centers for characteristic protection in the rural revitalization strategy. They play an important role in sustainable rural development, cultural preservation, and tourism development. The protection and tourism development of traditional villages can promote the economic development of rural areas, improve the living standards of villagers, and drive the comprehensive revitalization of rural areas. It can also improve the infrastructure, public services, and quality of life in rural areas, enhance the sense of happiness and gain of rural residents, and promote social harmony and stability in rural areas. Through reasonable planning and management, it can protect the natural resources and ecological environment of rural areas and promote the construction of rural ecological civilization. This can provide rich resources and attraction for rural tourism, enrich rural tourism products and experiences, promote the development of rural tourism, and drive the prosperity of the rural tourism industry. By innovating traditional cultural products and services, it can promote the inheritance and innovation of rural culture, improve the attractiveness and competitiveness of rural culture, and stimulate the vitality and creativity of rural culture[1].

2. The Interrelationship of Rural Revitalization with Traditional Village Preservation and Tourism Development

Traditional villages differ from ordinary rural areas, and it is necessary to clarify the relationship between traditional village protection and tourism development under the vision of rural revitalization. Rural revitalization provides an opportunity for the protection and tourism development of traditional villages. The protection and tourism development of traditional villages are dedicated to the inheritance and development of traditional villages, and serve as the realistic carrier and support for rural revitalization.

1. Rural revitalization can promote the protection and tourism development of villages. The implementation of the rural revitalization strategy aims to protect the original rural style, village sites, layout, environment, and traditional buildings. Reshaping the structure of traditional villages involves

many aspects. This requires the formation of a benign interaction between characteristic resource protection and village development during the tourism development process. This can make the economic, political, cultural, social, and ecological systems of traditional villages circulate and develop in a coordinated and balanced way.

The implementation of the rural revitalization strategy can stimulate the vitality of traditional villages, obtain strong financial support, and lay a strong material foundation. Through the vigorous development of agricultural economy, the development of cultural and tourism projects, and the improvement of the income and quality of life of farmers. Attracting the population of traditional villages to return to the village for construction, promoting the growth and circulation of the economy of traditional villages. While protecting traditional villages, it can enhance the economic and social benefits of traditional villages.

The implementation of the rural revitalization strategy provides legal guarantees for the protection and development of traditional villages and tourism. The "Rural Revitalization Promotion Law" stipulates the targets, measures, and scope of support for rural revitalization. The law puts forward specific requirements for the protection of traditional villages. It is not only a national requirement for development but also a practical need for rural construction. Furthermore, it serves as the legal basis for the protection and development of traditional villages and tourism.

2.The protection and development of traditional villages and tourism are ways to support rural development and implement the rural revitalization strategy. Enhancing their economic value through protection and tourism development is highly consistent with the overall requirements of the rural revitalization strategy[2]. The industrial value of traditional villages mainly lies in tourism methods including village architecture layout, folk customs, farmhouse-stays, cultural landscapes, leisure and entertainment, ethnic customs, etc.

Protecting traditional villages and developing tourism can fully display their cultural resource advantages, creating many cultural and tourism projects. For instance, themed rural homestays, traditional cultural experiences, handmade crafts, village performing arts groups, art creation bases, characteristic temple fairs, intangible cultural heritage learning bases, and specialty agricultural festivals. It can also help with poverty alleviation, serve people's livelihoods, innovate and promote rural revitalization.

The protection of traditional villages and the development of tourism are organically integrated. Protection includes not only physical objects such as buildings but also the preservation of cultural space, environment, and so on. Development is premised on protection while also considering the economic development of the village. Static protection without utilization and innovative development will result in the loss of original vitality and development potential. Development without protection will also lose regional characteristics and corresponding culture.

3. Fundamental Principles of Traditional Village Conservation and Tourism Development

The integration of traditional village conservation and tourism development can not only enhance the local cultural soft power but also contribute to the economic and cultural growth of the region. In order to achieve sustainable conservation and tourism development of traditional villages and enhance their cultural and tourist appeal, certain fundamental principles should be followed throughout the process of conservation and tourism development.

1.Authenticity Principle

Authenticity refers to preserving the true essence of cultural heritage. The authenticity of traditional village conservation and development is mainly reflected in the preservation of tangible heritage, such as traditional buildings represented by residential houses, the overall appearance of the village, and the layout of streets and alleys. For example, during the restoration of ancient buildings, the principle of "restoring old as old" should be followed, maintaining the original layout and using traditional materials and architectural forms. Local delicacies showcased to visitors should be

prepared using traditional methods and authentic ingredients. The introduction of the authenticity principle in traditional village conservation and development aims to resist the pursuit of short-term gains and prevent the sacrifice of traditional villages for the sake of deviating from their vitalization requirements. It also discourages blind development and excessive commercialization or amusement-oriented tendencies. By doing so, we can avoid diminishing the cultural value of traditional villages and losing their true essence.

2.Holistic Principle

Holistic protection requires not only the conservation of tangible cultural elements such as buildings and cultural relics within traditional villages but also the preservation of intangible cultural heritage such as the natural environment, customs, festive celebrations, and traditional dances. Only by protecting both material and non-material cultural legacies can we ensure the continuity of the historical and cultural significance of traditional villages. The holistic principle is proposed in response to the lack of comprehensive understanding of traditional villages, viewing them as dynamic systems. Previous research on cultural heritage conservation and development has often focused on protecting individual components without considering their surrounding environments. By taking a macroscopic approach and integrating all elements with a holistic perspective, we can protect and develop traditional villages while preserving their original authenticity and vitality.

3.Principle of Vitality

The primary focus of conserving traditional villages with vitality lies in the original residents within these villages. If the tangible cultural heritage within traditional villages is separated from the original residents, it loses its practical value. To revitalize traditional villages as a whole, it is essential to infuse vitality and create a normal living atmosphere, instilling a sense of belonging among villagers towards rural life. Various factors that appeal to sensory organs should be employed to preserve or recreate the perception of village memories, such as retaining the paths through farmlands and the old houses within the streets and alleys. Non-material cultural projects with distinct features in rural tourism need to be revitalized, encouraging visitor participation and satisfying their multifaceted needs for knowledge, thereby stimulating the overall vitality of traditional villages. Adopting the principle of vitality and development requires treating villages as dynamic and evolving systems.

4.Principle of Sustainable Development

Traditional villages possess significant social and economic benefits due to their rich historical, cultural, artistic, and scenic values. However, cultural heritage is also non-renewable, and excessive exploitation can lead to the destruction of its inherent value, resulting in a decline in economic worth. Emphasizing the principle of sustainable development in the development of traditional villages aims to avoid focusing solely on protection during the conservation and development process, neglecting overall progress, or pursuing economic interests without considering improvements in people's livelihoods and environmental protection. The core of preserving traditional villages and developing tourism lies in heritage inheritance, utilization, and sustainable development. Only by valuing the continuation of cultural heritage in traditional villages can we maintain sustainable development, achieving a win-win situation for both preservation and utilization.

4. Implementation Path of Traditional Village Protection

1.Improve the Information Archives of Traditional Villages Establishing and improving the basic information archives of traditional villages is a fundamental task for the preservation of traditional village culture. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct a comprehensive on-site investigation of traditional villages, clarify the number of traditional villages, and understand related information such as historical changes, cultural connotations, and regional characteristics. Through field research, survey the construction era, architectural style, usage status of residential buildings in the village, as well as the family genealogy, cultural level, and population status of each household. At the same time, pay attention to exploring the cultural heritage of the village, activate residents' memories of

their ancestral homes, and extend the cultural context. Truly implement one archive per village with records for every household. The improved village history archives not only record the history of the village but also help villagers find their roots, remember their hometown, and integrate into the community. The retention of historical data can be achieved through various forms of archives, books, and databases, including text, images, and video. Traditional villages should have unified signage for protected areas. Traditional villages with high historical and cultural value should be declared in a timely manner as provincial or national-level traditional villages.

2.Improve the Management Mechanism of Traditional Villages Standardizing the management of traditional villages is crucial for cultural preservation. Therefore, it is necessary to further improve the cultural protection plan for traditional villages. When formulating the plan, consideration should be given to the differences between rural and urban areas and the differences in functional settings. Fully consider the unique characteristics of rural areas, and avoid simply copying and applying urban development plans. Strike a balance between the preservation of historical cultural heritage and development. In the regulations for rural planning, construction, and management, the responsibility and obligation to protect traditional villages can be incorporated to curb large-scale demolition and relocation of traditional villages.

3.Efforts should be intensified to restore and protect the historical and well-preserved traditional architecture in traditional villages. This includes repairing old buildings and safeguarding traditional construction techniques and materials, preserving their original authenticity. Research and documentation of traditional culture in the villages, such as folk arts, customs, and traditional festivals, should be conducted, and their inheritance should be ensured through cultural activities, exhibitions, performances, and other forms. Encouraging the participation of village residents in cultural heritage not only provides employment opportunities but also cultivates their recognition and pride in traditional culture. The conservation of traditional villages must be scientifically planned based on a holistic approach. It should go beyond one-on-one protection and adopt a comprehensive regional strategy to ensure the dynamic inheritance of the villages. Collaboration among various parties, including volunteers, grassroots conservation groups, and the wider society, should be promoted. At the same time, villagers need to understand that the protection of traditional villages is a long-term endeavor that not only falls under the government's responsibility but also directly affects their own interests. They should consciously become inheritors and guardians of traditional culture.

4. Historically, inadequate emphasis has been placed on the preservation of intangible cultural heritage and traditional production methods within traditional villages.Conservation efforts should not simply maintain the status quo but rather integrate with modern life, igniting the intrinsic vitality of the villages. By guiding industries, the living environment of the villagers can be improved, enhancing their happiness index[3]. Every villager should personally experience the fruits of traditional village conservation and sustainable development, actively engaging in the process. Traditional villages are not static entities; they should adapt and evolve. A multi-level conservation and development model is crucial for breaking away from a monotonous approach and revitalizing traditional villages. It encompasses various aspects of village life, including vernacular architecture, production practices, environment, and cultural spaces. Its protection involves interdisciplinary collaboration among fields such as architecture, history, sociology, and folklore studies. Rescuing and conserving traditional villages is a social responsibility of universities. Therefore, partnering with local universities can be an effective approach to support and conduct cooperative research for successful conservation efforts.

5. Implementation Path for Traditional Village Tourism Development

1.Enhancing the Construction of Traditional Village Tourism Facilities

The foundation for the development of traditional village tourism lies in meeting the diverse needs of visitors, including accommodation, transportation, entertainment, and shopping. This requires the support of relevant facilities within the scenic area. In recent years, traditional village tourism has

seen some development with the support of government funding, but there are still deficiencies in the construction of basic service facilities. For example, the transportation routes within the scenic area are not smooth, and there is a lack of shuttle buses within the destination. Some villages suffer from insufficient electricity supply, resulting in malfunctioning air conditioning in guesthouses. Moreover, certain traditional villages have poor environmental hygiene and lack public trash bins, which adversely affect the overall image of the villages. Therefore, it is crucial for the scenic areas to actively communicate with local governments and design a transportation system that can meet the needs of both village traffic and tourist transportation from a comprehensive development perspective. By improving local transportation accessibility, the reputation of the region and attractions can be enhanced. Efforts should be made to upgrade public facilities related to water, electricity, transportation, environmental hygiene, cultural entertainment, and other aspects of the villages. Basic infrastructure within the scenic spots should also be continuously developed to improve visitor convenience, including information navigation, public facilities, and service centers, ensuring an optimal tourist experience.

2.Enriching the Range of Derivative Products in Traditional Village Tourism

Traditional villages possess a rich history and profound cultural heritage, encompassing a wealth of intangible cultural assets and folk arts. Under the guidance of relevant departments, these resources can be leveraged to develop a multi-industry tourism chain, creating economic value[4]. Traditional villages should be positioned as the core of development, with a focus on the development of folk culture and ecotourism, forming interconnected clusters along the rural areas that promote the coordinated development of traditional village agglomerations. Emphasizing the experience of diverse folk cultures, leveraging scenic resources, and integrating various cultural elements such as embroidery, folk customs, and yangko dance within the region, a cluster of leisure-oriented rural tourism industries can be established. Leveraging historical relics within the villages, historical and cultural elements should be fully utilized to provide exhibition venues for intangible cultural heritage. Improvements in village environments can be achieved through measures such as revamping streets and alleys, managing river channels, and greening roads, establishing a solid foundation for tourism development. Encouraging enterprises to develop derivative products related to intangible cultural heritage, extracting distinctive symbols from traditional culture, and designing cultural and creative products such as ornaments, bookmarks, cushions, and clothing, can effectively promote sales through village social media networks. By utilizing short videos, the cultural heritage can be showcased, expanding the scope of publicity and driving product sales.

3.Creating a New Image of Traditional Village Tourism

The development of traditional village tourism has been hindered by factors such as its remote geographical location, lack of functionality and poor marketing strategies, which have made it difficult to gain widespread attention and appreciation. Therefore, it is essential to work towards shaping the distinctive and unique tourism cultural image of traditional villages, broaden marketing channels, and develop tourism projects to enhance their visibility and influence in the tourism market. To achieve this goal, it is possible to utilize the characteristics of rural architecture and convert idle dwellings into new formats such as homestays and taverns, and integrate them with rural tourism through market-oriented operations, allowing old buildings to revitalize and prosper. In addition, taking advantage of the superiority of regional traditional village cultural resources, based on its cultural features and its own advantages, traditional village building houses, traditional folk culture, landscape ecology and other aspects could be used as entry points to carefully craft an integrated historical and cultural village brand, blending ecology, culture, and tourism. Folk culture and ancient architecture could be emphasized as the focal point of sightseeing, whereas ancient relics and modern historical sites could serve as the support, providing tourists with rich natural tourism experiences and necessary services. Utilizing government official tourism websites and social media platforms such as Weibo and WeChat, marketing campaigns can be designed to promote and attract tourists with the core elements and characteristic culture that the traditional village embodies, enhancing the image of traditional village tourism.

4. Enhancing the Management of Human Resources in Traditional Village Tourism

The development of the traditional village tourism industry demands a corresponding reservoir of talent; without it, even with abundant cultural tourism resources, it will not be able to fulfill its truest potential. Thus, strengthening talent cultivation and human resource management for tourism projects is of utmost importance. Hence governmental agencies should actively introduce favorable policies, strive to cultivate and attract relevant talents in venue design, tourism management, and smart system technology required in rural cultural tourism industry, and provide them with preferential benefits. Rural-management departments can collaborate with local colleges to enhance the professional skills and service abilities of current tourism practitioners and villagers through training classes, internships, and practical training. In addition, universities can dispatch their top-performing students to work as interns or employees in rural cultural tourism industries, driving the development of the local tourism industry. Traditional villages need to establish a comprehensive control system and regulate the development and utilization of tourism resources[5]. It is essential to develop a professional tourism development team, design and implement a complete tourism project by integrating resource utilization characteristics and tourism industry development goals. Through an integral layout, macroscopic regulation and coordination can be achieved, and a sound human resource management system can be established to stimulate creativity and ensure the sustainable operation of the project.

6. Conclusion

In this new historical era, the introduction and implementation of the national rural revitalization strategy have brought new opportunities and challenges to the conservation and tourism development of traditional villages. The inherent fusion of traditional village conservation and tourism development demonstrates significant potential and advantages. Not only does it promote the protection and inheritance of traditional cultural heritage, but it also drives the development of the tourism industry and regional economic growth. However, there is no fixed model for the conservation and tourism development of traditional villages. It is a long-term and complex process. Only through the concerted efforts and collaboration of relevant departments can we achieve the desired positive outcomes and realize a win-win situation for cultural preservation and economic development.

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