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Original Paper

The Difficulties and Breakthrough Paths in Consolidating the Connection between Poverty Alleviation and Rural Revitalization in Ganzi Prefecture—An Empirical Study Based on the Perspective of Poverty Alleviation in D County

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Abstract

Facilitating the effective transition from poverty alleviation to rural revitalization is a pivotal issue for high-quality development in ethnic regions. This study focuses on D County in Ganzi Prefecture, systematically analyzing the practical challenges it faces in consolidating poverty eradication achievements and bridging the gap with rural revitalization, while exploring corresponding breakthrough strategies. The research identifies four core challenges in D County's transition process: 1) Weak grassroots governance capacity and policy implementation deviations; 2) Outdated public mindsets with persistent dependency mentality of "waiting, relying, and demanding"; 3) Single industrial structure with short supply chains and low value-added; 4) Significant constraints from natural environment limitations and notable deficiencies in infrastructure and human capital. To address these issues, the study proposes targeted solutions including enhancing grassroots governance capabilities, promoting public mindset transformation, and establishing an ecological industrial development system. This research aims to provide practical guidance for D County's effective transition from poverty alleviation to rural revitalization, while offering replicable models for ethnic regions facing similar challenges.

Keywords

County D, poverty alleviation, rural revitalization, effective linkage

1. Introduction of the Problem

The Chinese government prioritizes the effective integration of poverty alleviation and rural revitalization, positioning it as a core strategy to drive rural modernization and promote shared prosperity. As a key region in Sichuan Province tasked with consolidating poverty eradication achievements and bridging them with rural revitalization, Ganzi Prefecture has achieved a historic elimination of absolute poverty through systematic implementation of poverty alleviation strategies. Following the attainment of poverty eradication goals, the rural revitalization strategy has become a pivotal engine for transforming regional development paradigms, while the effective connection between the two has emerged as a critical issue in the development of ethnic regions in the new era. D County, a typical plateau county in northern Ganzi Prefecture, exhibits dual characteristics of unique ethnic culture and fragile ecological environment, making its challenges during the integration process particularly representative. During the poverty alleviation phase, the county achieved dynamic zero poverty rate through policies like relocation and industrial support. However, ongoing challenges remain in grassroots governance capacity, outdated public mindsets, single industrial structure, and prominent constraints from natural environments, all of which urgently require systematic research and solutions.

Current theoretical research on the integration of poverty alleviation and rural revitalization demonstrates substantial achievements, primarily focusing on its value implications, internal logic, theoretical frameworks, development models, practical challenges, and institutional mechanisms (Li & Huang, 2020; Jia & Yin, 2020; Chen, 2024; Feng et al., 2025; Qiu & Liu, 2024; Kuang, 2023; Wang & Lu, 2022). However, existing studies predominantly concentrate on regions such as Inner Mongolia, Hunan-Hubei-Chongqing-Guizhou, Henan, Guizhou, and Chongqing (Xiang, 2024; Bai, Bili, & Zhao, 2023; Chen, 2024; Lu & Zhang, 2023), while systematic research on ethnic minority areas in Sichuan—particularly Ganzi Prefecture—remains relatively scarce. This study specifically examines D County to address gaps in geographical coverage and empirical depth, aiming to provide theoretical references and practical pathways for effectively integrating poverty alleviation with rural revitalization in ethnic minority regions.

2. Key Measures for Effective Transition from Poverty Alleviation to Rural Revitalization in Ganzi Prefecture and D County

2.1 Strengthening Organizational Support and Responsibility Implementation

First, strengthen the leadership mechanism. Implement a county-level leadership accountability system, adopting a management framework that combines responsibility systems, task lists, and time-bound completion protocols to ensure accountability at county, township, and village levels. Second, refine the evaluation system. Integrate consolidation and transition efforts into the rural revitalization strategy assessment, directly linking them to cadre performance evaluations and promotions, while enhancing supervision and accountability mechanisms. Third, bolster grassroots organizations. Promote a collaborative model involving “First Secretaries + resident team members + village cadres + farmer Party

members," leveraging the "Party Members on Demand +" platform to improve grassroots governance efficiency.

2.2 Building a Sustainable Income Growth System

First, strengthen the poverty prevention monitoring mechanism: Establish a regular grid monitoring system to dynamically track 444 households (1,876 individuals), eliminating poverty risks through development-oriented and safety-net support measures. Second, expand employment channels. Develop public welfare positions through village collective economies, and create job opportunities via major projects and counterpart support programs. In 2023, these initiatives helped 754 people increase their income by 2.57 million yuan. Third, implement policy safeguards: Allocate 38.577 million yuan in various relief funds to ensure the sustained consolidation of core indicators for "no worries about food and clothing, and guarantees of compulsory education, basic medical care, and housing safety" as well as drinking water safety.

2.3 Promoting the Quality and Efficiency of Special Industries

First, optimize the industrial layout. Focusing on the "1+4" industrial development strategy, 182 million yuan in matching funds were invested to implement 12 industrial projects and build 6 model villages for rural revitalization. Second, improve the interest linkage mechanism. For 244 industrial projects from 2013 to 2023, a standardized collective economic interest linkage mechanism was established to ensure "accurate, stable, and long-term guidance." Third, cultivate distinctive brands: The Dahuang and Zangmuxiang industries in Maisu Town were recognized as national "One Village, One Product" model villages, successfully creating China's "summer retreat tourism destination," achieving a comprehensive tourism revenue of 640 million yuan in 2023.

2.4 Improving Infrastructure and Public Services

First, address infrastructure gaps. Advance the rural toilet revolution by extending roads, water and electricity supply, and communication networks to grassroots communities. Second, enhance public services. Strengthen equitable distribution of educational and medical resources, innovate the "Ethnic Unity in Families" program, and consolidate the "Six 100% Achievements" in dropout prevention and education retention. Third, promote eco-friendly living. Regularly implement the "Zero Waste in All Areas" campaign, and integrate the protection of ancient trees with eco-tourism development.

2.5 Innovative Project Management and Financial Support

First, rigorously evaluate project feasibility. Implement a "dual review, dual commitment, dual signature" mechanism to strengthen preliminary feasibility studies. Second, standardize fund utilization. Ensure over 60% of central fiscal transfer funds are allocated to industrial development, while improving asset management and post-implementation maintenance systems. Third, deepen problem rectification. Apply the "consolidate, upgrade, revitalize, or restart" classification principle to comprehensively enhance the effectiveness of assistance projects.

3. D County's Challenges in Consolidating Poverty Alleviation and Rural Revitalization

3.1 The Dilemma of Grassroots Governance

3.1.1 Multidimensional Manifestations of Competency Deficiencies

First, there are significant shortcomings in policy implementation capabilities. Regarding policy comprehension, field survey data shows that approximately 65% of village cadres only understand the surface-level content of policy documents, lacking sufficient awareness of the institutional logic and underlying objectives behind the policies. For instance, during the implementation of targeted assistance policies, the scope of national assistance was poorly defined, resulting in an identification deviation rate exceeding 10%. This led to some ineligible households being mistakenly included in assistance programs while actual needy families remained unaddressed. In terms of policy communication, there was a noticeable "funnel effect" during village-level dissemination, with information attenuation rates reaching 40%. Consequently, villagers' awareness of key policies like photovoltaic poverty alleviation and microcredit programs fell below 50%, severely impacting the precision and effectiveness of policy implementation. Taking X Village as an example, its governance situation exemplifies dual deficiencies in both "capacity" and "motivation." The village Party branch secretary, with only primary school education, struggled to accurately understand the standards for creating model villages for rural revitalization, leading to repeated revisions of application materials. In industrial project management, the 2021 yak breeding project suffered 30% mortality among calves due to inadequate epidemic prevention measures. Additionally, the cadre team exhibited severe instability, with the village chief being replaced twice within three years, causing significant gaps in policy execution and undermining the continuity and effectiveness of village governance. Second, development planning capabilities remain limited to experience-based decision-making. In terms of industrial selection, 80% of villages still adhere to traditional agricultural and pastoral paths, lacking exploration of local climate-adaptive industries such as medicinal herb cultivation and plateau edible mushroom cultivation. In 2022, a village blindly followed the trend of developing fragrant pig farming. Due to the lack of cold chain logistics infrastructure, the mortality rate reached 25% at slaughter, resulting in a collective economic loss of 120,000 yuan. This "experience-based decision-making" rather than "scientific decision-making" model reflects the inadequacy of village cadres 'capabilities in market analysis and risk assessment. Third, organizational coordination skills struggle to adapt to complex governance scenarios. In projects involving cross-village interests, such as river basin management and pasture resource allocation, the coordination efficiency of village cadres significantly declines. For instance, an irrigation project involving water distribution across three villages took over six months to coordinate, far exceeding the original three-month schedule. At the level of villager self-governance, the average attendance rate of the Villagers' Congress was only 58%, and the democratic decision-making process for major matters became a mere formality, undermining the construction of governance legitimacy.

3.1.2 Backward Ideological Concepts of Grassroots Village Cadres

First, information access channels remain limited. 45% of village cadres primarily obtain external information through meetings, with internet usage efficiency below 30%, resulting in superficial understanding of rural revitalization strategies that remains at the policy slogan level. Second, learning motivation is insufficient. 62% of cadres have not actively participated in systematic training, lacking awareness of new concepts like modern agricultural entities and digital villages. Third, path dependence is evident, with a tendency to rely on administrative command-style governance while showing low acceptance of modern concepts such as consultative democracy and participatory governance. This lag has generated multidimensional negative impacts: In industrial development, it leads to "path locking" effects, where a village repeatedly applied for barley cultivation projects for three consecutive years without adjusting structures according to market changes; in governance methods, it forms a passive response model of "officials responding to public demands," demonstrating weak proactive service awareness; in public service provision, it fails to accurately identify villagers 'needs, resulting in resource misallocation where "built facilities are unused while needed ones remain unconstructed." For example, a village's cultural square has an underutilization rate of less than 30%, while urgently needed cold chain storage facilities were not included in planning.

3.2 The Difficulties of the Grassroots People's Ideological Concepts

Misconceptions about intergenerational transmission of educational values persist. Some parents hold distorted views of "education being useless", believing that "free-range farming and literacy are sufficient", leading to occasional school dropouts among children aged 12-15. In career choices, there's a preference for "system-based positions", with 70% of young people prioritizing civil service or public institutions over entrepreneurship or skilled trades, hindering labor market diversification. Secondly, the transformation of production concepts lags behind technological progress. In agriculture, 55% of farmers still adhere to the traditional "weather-dependent farming" model, refusing to adopt yield-enhancing techniques like soil testing and mulching. A barley cultivation demonstration zone achieved a 35% yield increase through technology promotion, but adoption rates among neighboring farmers remain below 20%. In livestock production, 80% of breeders reject scientific disease prevention, believing "yak illnesses are natural selection", resulting in an annual mortality rate of 8%. Thirdly, the transmission effect of lack of participatory agency. Public enthusiasm for rural revitalization exhibits "policy temperature dependence". In environmental improvement projects, 62% of farmers view "this as government responsibility", showing low cooperation in waste sorting and toilet renovations, leading to shorter-than-expected effectiveness cycles. In industrial development, there's a tendency toward "excessive risk aversion". During the establishment of a fragrant pig cooperative, only 25% joined the initial phase, with most farmers adopting a wait-and-see attitude due to concerns about capital loss. Fourthly, technical acceptance faces dual barriers of capability gaps and psychological barriers. In the promotion of e-commerce poverty alleviation projects, smartphone usage among individuals aged 55 and above remains below 15%. Even after training, 40% of trainees abandon the devices due to complex

operation. In one village, barley processing equipment with complicated operational procedures has a 60% idle rate, reflecting structural contradictions between technological compatibility and public acceptance. Fifth, the mentality of "waiting, relying, and demanding" persists. Post-poverty dependency manifests in new forms: shifting from "passively awaiting assistance" to "actively seeking support." During industrial project applications, some villagers demand "full government investment" while refusing to bear any risks. In public welfare positions, there's a phenomenon of "unjustified priority requests." This mindset weakens endogenous development momentum. A village's collective economic project, due to low villager participation, was forced to be handled by village cadres, creating a governance dilemma of "cadres working while villagers watch." This stems from three main issues: attribution bias of development responsibility (attributing poverty alleviation achievements entirely to external assistance), risk perception bias (overestimating market risks while ignoring development opportunities), and value judgment bias (viewing collective affairs as "additional burdens" rather than "shared responsibilities").

3.3 Structural Defects of Industrial System

First, the industrial structure exhibits three low characteristics. The agricultural and pastoral sectors account for an excessively high proportion; the supply chain is short, with 80% of agricultural products sold as raw materials; and the added value is low, with only 20% of agricultural products undergoing processing, far below the provincial average of 58%. Second, the modernization level of agriculture and animal husbandry lags behind. Barley cultivation still relies on traditional farming methods, with a mechanization rate below 30%; yak breeding remains in a crude state of "summer fattening, autumn fattening, winter thinning," and standardized breeding coverage is only 15%. The industrial organization level is low, with less than 40% of farmers' professional cooperatives functioning effectively, most being "shell companies" that fail to serve as bridges connecting small farmers with large markets. Third, the integration of culture and tourism is in its early stages. Tourism products are primarily sightseeing-oriented, lacking experiential and immersive offerings; the ability to convert cultural resources into products is weak, with low brand premium capacity for cultural products and a lack of design innovation; supporting facilities are inadequate, with only two three-star or higher hotels within the county, hindering the development of high-end tourism markets (Kuang, 2023).

4. Strategies and Recommendations for Overcoming Difficulties

4.1 Grassroots Governance Capacity Enhancement Project

4.1.1 Establish a Tiered and Categorized Training System

First, establish a "1+3+N" training framework. The "1" denotes the core curriculum system coordinated at the prefectural level, covering mandatory content such as policies, regulations, and industrial development. The "3" refers to three specialized modules offered at the county level: interpretation of ethnic policies, plateau ecological conservation, and bilingual communication. The "N" represents practical training at the village level. The training combines online and offline approaches, with micro-

courses distributed through various platforms and on-site activities like field observations and case studies. Second, implement “targeted training.” For insufficient policy execution capabilities, enhance understanding through scenario simulations. For weak industrial development capabilities, organize field trips to modern agricultural parks and cultural-tourism integration demonstration villages. For inadequate organizational coordination skills, conduct practical exercises such as “village council simulation drills.” The annual training duration should be no less than 80 hours to ensure effectiveness.

4.1.2 Innovation Incentive and Evaluation Mechanism

First, establish a compensation system combining “basic salary + performance incentives + collective economic dividends”, raising village officials’ benefits to 1.5 times the local per capita disposable income. Create an “Outstanding Village Cadres Development Fund” to provide entrepreneurship support or educational funding for high-performing individuals. Expand promotion channels by setting up “village cadre special positions” in civil service recruitment, accounting for no less than 10% of total positions. Third, develop a “four-dimensional evaluation system”: public feedback (40% weighting), work performance (30%), ecological conservation (20%), and cultural heritage preservation (10%). Implement a “quarterly inspections + annual evaluations + three-year comprehensive assessments” mechanism, directly linking results to compensation and promotions. Establish a tolerance and correction mechanism to accommodate mistakes in innovative exploration while protecting work enthusiasm. Fourth, optimize talent attraction and cultivation mechanisms. Launch the “Local Talent Return Program”, offering 50,000-200,000 yuan startup subsidies and free venue support for college graduates and veterans returning to start businesses. Create a long-term “County-Town Cadres Village Assistance” mechanism, assigning outstanding cadres as “First Secretaries” for at least two years. Initiate the “Silver Age Talent Support Initiative”, inviting retired cadres, teachers, and doctors to provide technical guidance and intellectual support in villages. Establish a “Local Expert Database”, selecting experienced farmers and folk artists as technical advisors to leverage the expertise of “local experts” and “field scholars”.

4.2 Implementation of the Public Ideological Transformation Program

4.2.1 Innovating Public Education and Awareness Methods

First, establish a “new media + traditional platforms” publicity matrix: Launch a “Rural Revitalization Micro-Class” on WeChat Official Accounts to deliver weekly policy analyses and success stories; utilize village loudspeakers for regular development updates; produce promotional brochures and murals to embed new ideas into daily life. Second, organize “Role Models Around Us” events by forming a lecture team comprising poverty-alleviation pioneers and returning entrepreneurs, who share their journey through personal narratives, with no fewer than 20 annual sessions. Host “Rural Development Forums” to facilitate face-to-face exchanges between experts, scholars, and villagers, addressing development challenges.

4.2.2 Implementation of the Demonstration and Promotion Project

First, cultivate three categories of exemplary households: industrial development model households (10%), civilized new trends model households (10%), and skill inheritance model households (5%).

These households will receive official recognition and material rewards. Villagers will be organized to visit these model households for learning, allowing them to witness firsthand the developmental changes driven by mindset transformation. Second, establish "Rural Revitalization Model Villages" by concentrating resources to create 2-3 exemplary villages that influence surrounding communities through visible progress. The construction of these model villages emphasizes community participation, with villagers involved in the entire process of planning, implementation, and management to foster a sense of ownership.

4.2.3 Enhancing Education and Skill Levels

First, implement the "Education Quality Enhancement Program" to improve school facilities through new construction and expansion, while strengthening teacher training by organizing annual study tours to Zhejiang and Chengdu. Establish a "one-to-one" support mechanism to ensure dropout rates remain below 1%, and conduct no fewer than four annual "Parent Schools" sessions to shift educational mindsets. Second, develop an "order-based" skills training system: offer specialized courses like yak breeding, Thangka painting, and rural tourism tailored to industry needs. Collaborate with enterprises for "work-study integration" programs where trainees acquire practical skills through hands-on experience. Create a training-employment-entrepreneurship service chain to boost conversion rates, with annual training for at least 1,000 participants and employment rates maintained above 80%.

4.3 Strategies for Ecological Development of Industries

4.3.1 Special Industry Cultivation Project

First, develop the "organic agriculture + cultural value-added" model. In the barley industry, establish 50,000 mu (approximately 3,333 hectares) of organic cultivation bases and introduce processing enterprises to produce barley biscuits and health products, extending the industrial chain. For the yak industry, promote the "pasture-photovoltaic complementarity" model by constructing three standardized breeding bases, developing yak jerky and yogurt products, and creating the regional brand "D County Yak." Second, advance the integration of "culture + tourism + technology": deeply develop printing academy cultural resources by building a digital scripture museum for digital display of ancient texts; create a Gesar cultural experience zone featuring epic performances and hero hometown tours; upgrade tourism facilities with 20 new boutique homestays and train 100 tourism professionals. Third, cultivate ethnic handicraft industry clusters: establish a Thangka art park integrating creation, exhibition, and sales; collaborate with universities on design innovation to develop modern aesthetic cultural products; establish a craftsman training base to cultivate 50 inheritors annually, enhancing industrial competitiveness.

4.3.2 Upgrading Infrastructure

First, advance the "Digital Village" initiative. Achieve full 4G network coverage with 5G deployment in priority areas; establish 20 village-level e-commerce service stations and train 50 e-commerce professionals; implement smart agriculture technologies by installing IoT devices in barley cultivation zones for precision farming. Second, enhance ecological infrastructure. Construct 15 small-scale water

conservancy projects to address irrigation challenges; promote solar-powered streetlights and heating systems to reduce traditional energy consumption; and establish an ecological monitoring system to protect biodiversity.

4.3.3 Establishing a Collaborative Development Mechanism

First, establish an interest-sharing mechanism involving "government + enterprises + cooperatives + farmers": The government provides planning guidance and policy support; enterprises supply capital, technology, and market access; cooperatives organize production and coordinate services; farmers participate in production and share profits. Through shareholding cooperatives and contract farming models, all parties ensure shared benefits and risk-sharing. Second, implement the "flying land economy" model: Collaborate with Zhejiang and Chengdu to build the "Dege Specialty Products Exhibition Center" to address local market limitations; establish investment liaison offices in coastal areas to attract corporate investments; partner with universities and research institutes to establish R&D centers for overcoming technical challenges. Third, promote "regional coordinated development": Jointly develop tourism routes with neighboring counties to achieve resource sharing; collaboratively create a "cultural tourism corridor" to build brand synergy; establish a talent exchange mechanism for annual mutual dispatch of officials and technical personnel to enhance overall development levels.

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