

Implementation of Rural Revitalization Strategy for Poverty Alleviation- Taking Xinyang City as an Example

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Abstract: The report of the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) has put forward the strategy of rural revitalization, which is taken as a new concept of rural development and deemed as one of the important contents of building a modernized economic system, fully reflecting that the Party's understanding towards agriculture, rural areas and farmers has reached a new height [1]. On March 8, 2019, General Secretary Xi Jinping put forward specific requirements on implementing the strategy of rural revitalization and the work on agriculture, rural areas and farmers while attending the deliberation of Henan delegation in the second session of the 13th National People's Congress. Xinyang, located in the southernmost of Henan Province, is a major traditional agricultural city with abundant agricultural products. According to the data in Xinyang Statistical Bulletin on National Economic and Social Development in 2018, the added value of Xinyang's primary industry reached RMB 44.628 billion in 2018, increased by 3.0%. Xinyang, as an old revolutionary base area, has the jurisdiction over eight counties which were all poor counties before 2016. By May 2019, 52,000 people in 6 counties had been lifted out of poverty. Therefore, taking Xinyang City as an example, this paper puts forward feasible countermeasures and suggestions on how to continue to earnestly implement the rural revitalization strategy for poverty alleviation.

1. Introduction

On October 18, 2017, the report to the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China mentioned the rural revitalization strategy for the first time, and listed it as one of the seven strategies to be firmly implemented to build a moderately prosperous society in all respects. After the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, "rural revitalization" has become a hot topic. The CPC Central Committee, with Xi Jinping at its core, has made a major new strategic plan based on the new era and situation. It is a major measure and core strategy for China's development, and provides an important direction to carry out works related to the agriculture, rural areas and farmers. Eradicating absolute poverty and achieving a well-off life is a basic requirement of the rural revitalization strategy and an important symbol of completing the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects. However, due to unbalanced and inadequate development, the large gap between urban and rural areas in China remains, and the backward development of agriculture and rural areas is still prominent. So to say, to finish building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, the most arduous task lies in rural areas. Therefore, the rural revitalization strategy emerged at the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, which is of great significance to develop the rural economy, increase farmers' income and improve modern rural social governance, solving the rural pressing problem at present[2].

2. Research significance

Xinyang, as large agricultural city, has large rural area and population, with high proportion of agriculture and generally low income of rural residents. The period of "the 13th five-year plan" is a decisive period for building a moderately prosperous society in all respects. On September 17, 2019, General Secretary Xi Jinping made an in-depth investigation of oil tea camellia gardens and rural areas in Guangshan County, Xinyang. This will be a period with the concentrated embodiment of development opportunities of Xinyang and a key period of agricultural and rural development in our

city. Therefore, Xinyang promotes the transformation and upgrading of traditional agriculture to green agriculture and drives the agriculture from production increase to quality improvement in response to policies according to local conditions and the rural revitalization strategy put forward by the country, thus to further accelerate the agricultural and rural modernization and ensure the building of a well-off society, with important and practical significance.

3. Practice and effect of Xinyang rural revitalization strategy -- taking Haotang Village as an example

3.1 Economic development

Nanshan District of Haotang Village is a typical mountain village where is rich in natural resources and agricultural crops such as rice, tea, chestnut and vegetation, with an excellent ecological environment[3]. Moreover, the village has convenient transportation, clusters of ancient trees, small bridges and flowing water, and the traditional villages are well preserved. As early as 2013, Haotang Village was listed as one of the first pilot villages of “beautiful village” in China. Therefore, Haotang Village has vigorously developed the rural tourism, and provided certain jobs based on the development of the tourism industry concerning tea, chestnut and catering industry, driving the virtuous circle of local economy. During national holiday in 2018, featured villages such as Haotang Village in Pingqiao District and Taiyangpo in Shihe District were crowded with visitors, of which, Haotang Village received 506,000 person-times of tourists, accounting for 60.9% of the total number of tourists in the city. This provides an opportunity for local farmers' employment and economic development.

3.2 Leisure tourism

In the process of construction and transformation, Haotang Village was planned and designed in advance under the premise of respecting the laws of nature and the will of farmers. Finally, it presents an ecological and civilized leisure village integrating courtyard, tea garden, lotus pond and landscape to show the features of Haotang Village, including original rural landscape, rivers, villages and tea gardens. Meanwhile, leisure single (double) bicycles are provided for tourists, which also attract a large number of tourists from both inside and outside the province to experience the rural culture and the slow-paced life. The leisure atmosphere and environment here make tourists reminisce their childhood memories.

3.3 Ecological environment

In the initial construction process, adhering to the design concept of “constructing the village of more rural style, the houses maintained the original appearance as far as possible, and original ecological environment were not destroyed[4], only with internal modification, which comprehensively restored the rural features of the village. The design focuses on the combination of modern and traditional, that is, to retain the traditional rural characteristics, while not losing modern, elegant and comfortable essence.

3.4 Humanistic education

Human landscape is built in Haotang Village. Both sides of the highway are planted with trees, and there is a pavilion a few steps away. Hence, vehicles can be parked under trees and visitors can have some rest there, with satisfaction and joy. The bamboo forest in southern Henan style is preserved in the village as well, and recreational places such as lotus pond and fishing pond are also built in the village for the leisure and entertainment of tourists. The energy conservation and emission reduction measures, such as garbage classification and the biogas and sewage treatment system in the village, are all adapted to local conditions. The participation of the villagers reflects the collective wisdom and the protection of the ecological environment.

4. Problems in implementing rural revitalization strategy in Xinyang

4.1 Serious phenomenon of “Hollow Village”

With the development of industrialization and the promotion of new urbanization, a large number of young and middle-aged villagers go out for work, which leads to the wasteland of rural land, the decline of rural social structure, industrial resources and public services, and the loss of vitality of rural development. As a large city of labor export, Xinyang has a stable population of about 2.4 million of migrant workers all year round. In the future, the phenomenon of “hollow village” will become much more intense as the young people who cannot or will not farm land become the main body of social development [5].

4.2 Backward industrial production and management mode

In terms of agriculture, most rural agricultural production survives at the mercy of the elements, and the traditional agricultural production mode still exists. Industrial integration is not thorough, and agricultural production structure diversification is insufficient. The mode of “Internet” + agricultural and rural e-commerce was emerged but not popular enough, and the modern industrial chain has not yet taken shape. In terms of industry, the production and management mode of Xinyang township enterprises is extensive with low technical content, which makes it difficult to adapt to consumption upgrading. In terms of tourism, the rapid development of rural tourism industry in Xinyang greatly promotes the development of rural economy, but most of the tourism industry has a single form, with poor creativity in scenic spot construction. The services need to be improved and transformation and upgrading are still required.

4.3 Talent shortage for rural development

It can be said that without talents, rural revitalization cannot be truly achieved even with great investment and good construction. At present, due to a shortage of educational resources in rural areas and lack of talent attraction, the phenomenon of “hollow villages” has led to an influx of young and middle-aged workers into the cities, and some college students from the villages are reluctant to return because of the tough conditions, except for the grass-roots civil servants recruitment. Even though, it is hard to retain talents due to the poor basic conditions. In addition, the overall working ability and innovation of grassroots Party members and cadres are insufficient, which makes the rural development lack of endogenous power, and talents restrict the implementation of the rural revitalization strategy.

4.4 Necessary construction of new rural value system

The rural value system is impacted by the mass migration of population and the disintegration of the original social structure. Especially in the rural areas of Henan, unhealthy ways and customs are deep-rooted. For example, weddings and funerals are made in high profile, and it is a common scene that people blatantly stop a wedding car to ask for red envelope. The value of “Materiality” is spreading in the countryside. As for rural entertainment, gambling and “lottery buying” become the main ethos, lacking spiritual-level contents. Many young and middle-aged villagers are not willing to get rich by working, wishing reap without sowing. In terms of rural children education, as Xinyang has a large number of migrant workers and profound rural traditional concepts, the phenomenon of left-behind children in rural areas is common, and elderly people take care of those children only in daily life. Thus, family education and social education are seriously insufficient. In conclusion, the construction of new rural value system is extremely urgent, if to make the rural customs civilized.

5. Countermeasure analysis on rural revitalization strategy for poverty alleviation

5.1 Transformation of agricultural development pattern and promotion of integrated rural industries development

First, rural development shall be combined with urbanization. On the one hand, the geographical location overall competitiveness of Xinyang shall continue to be improved and industrial upgrading

shall be accelerated to accumulate external conditions for rural revitalization, promote the combination of rural resources and external market, and lay a good foundation for rural revitalization. On the other hand, the full play shall be given to the role of driving population agglomeration and urban and rural development, to cultivate small towns with specialized features such as agricultural products logistics, ecological agriculture and revolutionary tourism. Second, new and innovative formats in rural areas shall be developed, including tourism formats such as leisure and sightseeing, experience agriculture, healthcare and old-age services, and entrepreneurial agriculture, as well as new formats, such as “Internet +” such as rural e-commerce and agricultural product customization[6]. Third, the rural tourism realizes the integration of multiple industries and formats. The original mode of production and life, idyllic scenery and rich local culture in rural areas have made villages become another choice for urban residents to get close to nature and experience life, thus giving birth to rural tourism. In 2018, 75 rural tourism demonstration villages including Xinzhenglonghu Town were designated in Henan province, most of which are in Xinyang City (12 villages) basically covering all counties and towns, including Hejiachong Village of Tiepu Town, Luoshan County and Haotang Village in Pingqiao District. The government has invested a large amount of funds to improve rural infrastructure construction, which is conducive to the development of rural tourism in the city, thus promoting the growth of local economy.

5.2 Call for talent supports for rural revitalization

First, according to the needs of rural development, vocational education and training in rural areas should be strengthened, and efforts should be made to cultivate three types of professional farmers, namely, agricultural production type, professional technology type and professional service type. Local colleges and universities should actively respond to the call of rural revitalization and give play to the endogenous power of talents, and help the talent development of rural revitalization through various forms such as science and technology commissioners, village cadres and training. Second, in recent years, the state has introduced a large number of policies to support private capital and entrepreneurship of young entrepreneurs returning home in an all-round way and invest in the construction of a modern new village. Policies give the support for rural land reform, create conditions for urban capital to go to the village, and encourage and guide people to return home to set up new types of agricultural business entities in accordance with laws, regulations and policies.

5.3 Innovation of rural financial financing methods

First, e-commerce platforms can be used to support the internet finance. Because of its superior geographical location, rural e-commerce develops rapidly. Several well-known domestic e-commerce platforms have set up service stations in rural areas. With the help of the massive passenger flow of e-commerce platforms, credit loans can be made without collateral, which can quickly solve the difficulty of loans for agriculture, rural areas and farmers. Second, some financial institutions are also oriented to the villages to carry out such financial business. Based on the credibility of farmers, they issue loans without mortgage or guarantee to eligible farmers, which is also an important mode of activating private financial capitals.

5.4 Exploration of new rural governance model under new form

Rural governance is a huge and complex project, which requires the participation of the government, villagers and the market. On the one hand, adhering to the villagers' autonomy as the core is the main means to mobilize villagers to participate in rural affairs. Rural governance can be established on the basis of “soft” governance in rural acquaintance society, with the restriction generated by inner emotion and the legal system complementing each other. The full play shall be given to the leading role of village sages, who are highly recognized by the masses in the village. Village elites can be taken as a bridge connecting the government and villagers, through which, the governance efficiency can be improved with half the effort. On the other hand, it is necessary to introduce market factors. The government will introduce private capital into some public services through various forms such as bidding and directional commissioning, carry out market-oriented operation, and improve service quality and efficiency. For example, efforts are made to encourage

villagers in Haotang Village of Xinyang to participate in science and technology training, “dewdrop project” and so on, make local villagers and poor households able to grasp a practical technology, fully mobilize multiple main bodies to participate in rural governance, and enhance the level of self-employment.

5.5 Guidance by rural civilization for industrial poverty alleviation

First, the agricultural culture shall be continued, and the outstanding agricultural cultural heritage shall be provided with necessary protection, so that the agricultural cultural heritage can be reasonably and appropriately used[7]. On the one hand, the in-depth experience of agricultural culture can be innovated through tourism and integrated into the recreation, entertainment, clothing, food, housing and transportation of modern people. On the other hand, agricultural culture museums can be built, which will provide more opportunities and ways for ordinary citizens to participate in and experience agricultural culture, deepen their understanding of Chinese agricultural culture, enhance their interest and deepen the impression. Second, it is necessary to strengthen the scientific and ideological education in rural areas, continue to organize and carry out cultural activities in the countryside to stimulate the cultural identity and confidence of rural social members, so as to enrich the cultural life of the masses and facilitate the mastery of advanced technology and methods. As a saying goes, it is better to teach people to fish than to give them fish. Hence, poor people can be helped to get rid of poverty by developing industries through aforementioned ways.

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