Responding to the Rural Revitalization Strategy with the "Folklore and Cultural Tourism" Model: A Research Report on Chiniuwa Village in Jia County

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Abstract. Cultural prosperity leads to national prosperity, and cultural strength leads to rural strength. The revitalization of rural areas cannot be achieved without the flourishing of culture. Rural revitalization requires both shaping and nurturing the soul. The 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China proposed the comprehensive promotion of rural revitalization, providing broad space and good opportunities for the cultural industry to play an important role in rural revitalization. With the implementation of the rural revitalization strategy, more and more villages are exploring their own paths to revitalization. The establishment of characteristic tourism, combining existing resources and cultural strengths, has become an important approach to rural revitalization. This paper explores the advantages of creating characteristic cultural and tourism villages through on-site investigations in Chiniuwa Village, Jia County, and summarizes the basic experiences in developing characteristic cultural and tourism industries. At the same time, it proposes corresponding strategies and suggestions to address the challenges faced by the development of characteristic cultural and tourism in Chiniuwa Village.

Keywords: rural revitalization, rural culture in northern Shaanxi, Chiniuwa Village, characteristic cultural and tourism.

Cultural revitalization lays a solid foundation for rural revitalization. As the saying goes, "To grow a tree tall, one must first strengthen its roots." Among the five aspects of rural revitalization, cultural revitalization can be regarded as the solid foundation of rural revitalization, providing a continuous source of cultural strength in the fertile land of rural areas. Rural revitalization is a necessary condition for realizing agricultural strength, and cultural revitalization is the inevitable choice for rural revitalization, leading and driving comprehensive rural revitalization through cultural revitalization.

1. Revitalization Needs of Rural Culture in Northern Shaanxi

(1) Characteristics of Rural Culture in Northern Shaanxi

Northern Shaanxi is a famous revolutionary base in China with a rich historical and cultural heritage. The characteristics of rural culture in Northern Shaanxi are primarily manifested in the following aspects:

Firstly, rural culture in Northern Shaanxi has a strong revolutionary atmosphere. The region was once one of the revolutionary strongholds led by the Communist Party of China and served as the cradle of the Chinese revolution.

Secondly, rural culture in Northern Shaanxi exhibits rich folk customs. Being a region with a diverse ethnic mix, different ethnic cultures blend and collide here, resulting in a diverse range of folk customs.

Thirdly, rural culture in Northern Shaanxi boasts abundant historical relics. Northern Shaanxi has been an important historical node in China since ancient times, and it is home to numerous historical relics and ancient buildings.

Lastly, rural culture in Northern Shaanxi has a deep-rooted tradition of agricultural civilization. Northern Shaanxi is a major agricultural region in China, and agricultural civilization has a long history here. It encompasses traditional knowledge and skills related to farming, animal husbandry,
and the production of agricultural tools, reflecting farmers' love for the land and their wisdom in agriculture.

(2) The Relationship between the Revitalization Needs of Rural Culture in Northern Shaanxi and Rural Revitalization

The revitalization needs of rural culture in Northern Shaanxi are closely related to rural revitalization. "Rural culture is generated in a familiar society, and blood ties, regional ties, and family are the carriers of rural culture. Human sentiments, ritual governance, face, morality, and village rules and conventions maintain rural order. Rural culture in rural society includes both material and spiritual aspects." \[1\] Rural revitalization is an important current strategy in China aimed at achieving comprehensive rural revitalization and the all-round development of farmers. The revitalization of rural culture is an integral part of rural revitalization and provides vital support for it.

Firstly, the revitalization needs of rural culture in Northern Shaanxi are consistent with the goals of rural revitalization. The goals of rural revitalization are to achieve rural economic prosperity, improve the ecological environment, and ensure the well-being of farmers. The revitalization of rural culture is precisely carried out to achieve these goals. Secondly, the revitalization needs of rural culture in Northern Shaanxi align with the pathways of rural revitalization. The pathways of rural revitalization involve implementing agricultural and rural modernization, promoting the upgrading of rural industries, and strengthening rural infrastructure construction. The revitalization of rural culture also needs to be realized through these pathways.

Lastly, the revitalization needs of rural culture in Northern Shaanxi coincide with the policies of rural revitalization. The policies of rural revitalization encourage rural development, support the development of rural industries, and provide financial and policy support. The revitalization of rural culture in Northern Shaanxi can also receive support and encouragement from these policies.

The revitalization needs of rural culture in Northern Shaanxi are closely intertwined with rural revitalization. As the object of rural cultural revitalization, rural culture carries the roots of the evolution of Chinese civilization. The revitalization of rural culture can promote the achievement of the goals of rural revitalization, and the pathways and policies of rural revitalization can also support the revitalization of rural culture. Therefore, the revitalization of rural culture in Northern Shaanxi is one of the important tasks of rural revitalization.

2. Advantages of Rural Cultural Revitalization in Chiniuwa Village

This chapter will introduce the folk cultural characteristics of Chiniuwa Village in Jia County. As an important representative of rural areas in Northern Shaanxi, Chiniuwa Village has a long history and rich and colorful folk activities. It has also achieved certain accomplishments in cultural inheritance and innovation. Through in-depth research on Chiniuwa Village, we can better understand new ideas for cultural revitalization under the background of rural revitalization and provide references and inspiration for the protection and inheritance of rural culture in other regions.

(1) Origin of Chiniuwa Village

Chiniuwa Village is a village with a long history located in Keng Town, Jia County, Shaanxi Province. It originated in the Yuan Dynasty and has a history of eight hundred years. It is a village with a long history and is situated in a mountainous area with beautiful surroundings and clear waters. The name of the village comes from its local geographical features. The village is surrounded by red soil, shaped like the back of a cow, hence the name "Chiniuwa," which means "red cow ridge" in Chinese. This village takes the cow as its totem, and cow sculptures can be seen everywhere. "The beginning of farming and the opening of civilization" - the cow also represents diligence, hard work, and persistence.

(2) Advantages of Creating a Characteristic Cultural and Tourism Village in Chiniuwa

Chiniuwa Village is located near the Yellow River, about 40 kilometers south of Jia County. It is a small mountain village in the hilly and gully area of Northern Shaanxi's Loess Plateau. The village
has 3,522 households and 1,008 residents, with 62 households and 162 people lifted out of poverty. The total area is 6 square kilometers, with 3,717 mu of arable land, including 2,100 mu of jujube orchards. There are 27 Party members in the village.

With the help of excavating more local cultural characteristics, Chiniuwa Village has achieved precise development of advantageous industries in rural areas, avoiding homogeneous competition with other rural and urban areas in the industrial chain, and establishing a unique cultural industry banner. In recent years, under the leadership of the village committee, the villagers of Chiniuwa Village have adapted to local conditions, seized opportunities, and adhered to the working ideology of "building a strong fortress to gather the people's hearts and developing industries to increase income." They have set the goal of building a "famous jujube village, a new tourist village, a beautiful rural village, and a cultural village." By creating a "Five Red Flag Village" as the starting point, they have continuously released the organizational energy of the Party and achieved leapfrog development. Currently, the village has improved infrastructure, clean living environment, beautiful village appearance, distinctive folk characteristics, and has successfully created a national AAA-level tourist attraction. A development model of "tourism+" industry has basically formed. It has won many honors, such as "Beautiful Rural Village in China," "Model Village for Rural Tourism in China," and "One of the First National Key Villages for Rural Tourism." It is also the only village in the county to simultaneously receive the "Five Red Flag" awards for grass-roots Party building, beautiful rural village, consolidation and expansion of poverty alleviation achievements, industrial development, and social governance in 2021, 2022, and 2023.

In terms of rural tourism development, the village focuses on the theme of Loess Plateau farming culture and traditional folk customs. It has built six exhibition halls with a total area of 16,800 square meters and 68 exhibition rooms, displaying over 150,000 exhibits. The village has meticulously created a large-scale original ecological live performance called "A Cow on the High Mountain," which is the first farmer-self-written, self-directed, and self-performed performance in China. It can be performed over 170 times a year. In 2022, it received over 280,000 visitors, achieving a comprehensive tourism income of 8.6 million yuan, with a collective income of 740,000 yuan and a per capita income of farmers reaching 15,000 yuan.

3. **Basic experience in the development of characteristic cultural tourism in Chiniuwa Village**

(I) Bringing in a good village worthy revitalizes the countryside.

Chiniuwa Village gave full play to the talent advantage, took the return of village worthies to start businesses as the driving force, combined introduction and training, and effectively solved the talent issue. The former deputy director of the Municipal People's Congress, Gao Yongdong, retired and returned to his hometown. He worked hard, participated in person, set an example, and exerted his broad vision, advanced concepts and other wisdom and advantages. Focusing on the nostalgic culture of the Loess Plateau, he made multi-dimensional plans and took multiple measures to promote construction. Firstly, he visited households door by door to earnestly communicate with fellow villagers, gradually changed the public's mindset, and reached a consensus on building a folk culture gene pool of the Loess Plateau. Secondly, he gave full play to the cultural potential and value of "old objects", "old cave dwellings" and "old farmers", mobilized villagers to collect cultural relics of the Loess culture by visiting every household, and unified the transformation of unused old cave dwellings in the village, building the first folk custom museum in Northern Shaanxi with over 100,000 exhibits and the "Cave Dwelling Potala Palace" with the unique characteristics of Northern Shaanxi. Thirdly, he insisted on unified planning, unified transformation, and unified management. The village groups and households worked together to formulate the beautiful countryside construction plan for Chiniuwa Village. Following the principle of "retaining its original state in repairs", the dilapidated houses and cave dwellings in the village were renovated and repaired in a "retaining its original state" approach, allowing the old cave dwellings to take on new look while inheriting historical memory.
Fourthly, he worked with Zhang Shengbao, a local director from Yulin, to create the first large-scale original ecological live-action show performed by farmers themselves in China - "An Ox on the High Mountain". Villagers acted as actors, farm tools as props, without luxurious stages or dazzling lights and shadows, authentically reproducing the farming scenes of Northern Shaanxi people's endless hard work.

(II) Rolling out a good model enriches villagers through rural tourism.

To revitalize the countryside, peasants are the main body. With museums and live shows, how to embed villagers into them is not only the starting point but also the focal point. Firstly, some villagers who have worked outside were organized and mobilized to jointly establish Yulin Damei Rural Tourism Co., Ltd. So far, more than 30 migrant workers have invested 15,000 yuan per household to acquire shares and participate in company operations and obtain fixed dividends. Secondly, the "village collective + company + peasant household" model was adopted. The integrated tourism resources in the village were packaged as a whole and contracted to Yulin Damei Rural Tourism Company for overall operation. Since the re-signing of the contract, the total contract amount has been 2.7 million yuan. The contract income is split 70/30. 70% is used for peasant dividends and 30% for village collective investment and development. In 2022, the per capita dividend was 350 yuan, and 16 million yuan of income was created for the collective economy of the village. Thirdly, villagers were guided to operate 26 farmhouses, 4 souvenir stalls, and 7 entertainment facilities, of which 17 were poor households. The annual income of farmhouse households is above 40,000 yuan, with the highest income reaching over 80,000 yuan. Fourthly, the live show "An Ox on the High Mountain" is fully performed by villagers, with more than 130 people participating in the performance. Each person can earn 25 yuan per show, with 260 shows annually, generating an extra income of over 6,000 yuan per year. Fifthly, the scenic spot has created 32 employment positions for villagers in logistics, sanitation, and temporary work, with an average annual salary of 15,000 yuan per person. Sixthly, rewards were used for subsidies, and investment in labor was rewarded with half the work. Chiniuwa Village insisted on unified planning and unified management. Village groups and households worked together to accelerate the construction of infrastructure and public service facilities. Over the years, Chiniuwa Village has invested more than 20 million yuan in village-level infrastructure and public service construction, guided and supported village collectives and farmers to take the initiative to organize and participate in project constructions that benefit villages directly. This has fully stimulated the villagers' sense of ownership, not only ensuring project quality, but also providing job opportunities for the village and increasing villagers' income. Through project advancement and resource integration, the synergistic effects of various projects have been maximized, and limited funds have been used on the "blade". At present, Chiniuwa Village has basically achieved one skill per person and one business per household. A new industrial pattern has been initially formed, with villagers as the main body and enterprises and village collective economic organizations participating together to promote development. 90% of households have participated in rural tourism in various forms. The average tourism income per household has reached more than 12,500 yuan, several times that of 10 years ago. Chiniuwa Village has become a well-known tourism village, well-off village, and revitalized village both near and far.

(III) Establishing a set of new mechanisms gathers youth to revitalize together.

To develop rural tourism, it is crucial to have a high-quality rural tourism management team. Firstly, an outstanding leading goose team was selected. Taking the village-level election as an opportunity, the first secretary residence policy was fully implemented to build an energetic and responsible village-level leading team. The average age of the new "two committees" team members is 5 years younger than the previous term, with further enhanced cohesion and combat effectiveness. Secondly, the party member team has been expanded and strengthened. In recent two years, 2 new party members have been developed and 8 activists have been trained, further enriching the reserve forces. The innovative "party building + tourism" model was launched, with 3 party member tourist guides and 2 model party member merchants set up. Chiniuwa Village has successfully created a "five-star red flag village" for three consecutive years in 2021, 2022 and 2023. Secondly, overseas
village talents were actively attracted back. The "hometown complex" card was fully played. With hometown complex as the emotional link to talents, express access was opened up. Party members built connections, deeply explored surrounding resources, established an information database of outstanding overseas talents through improved contact and service mechanisms, attracted local successful persons and "new village worthies" overseas to return and start businesses, and successfully attracted back dozens of returned youth entrepreneurs such as Gao Genqiang and Gao Xiangyang to support Chiniuwa's tourism industry development now and in the future. Thirdly, governance talents were carefully cultivated. The Chiniuwa Branch of Guzhen Library was actively built to innovatively open "Three Governances" ethics lectures, implement a credit-based schooling model, award meeting credits and cash bonuses for credits. With everyone's participation, the moral quality has been improved, building a good platform for fostering simple and honest folk customs. Publicity activities such as moving with the times and establishing civilized village norms have been actively carried out, educating over 2,000 person-times each year, comprehensively improving villagers' ideological and moral qualities while cultivating a group of outstanding talents to improve village governance. Fourthly, efforts were made to build e-commerce talents. Giving full play to the synergistic driving role of Chiniuwa Village Collective Economic Cooperation Society, relying fully on online platforms, an e-commerce talent team focusing on professional promotion has been built. Live broadcasts are conducted on online platforms during folk activity performances to publicize Northern Shaanxi culture and continuously enhance the popularity, reputation and influence of Chiniuwa Folk Culture Village.

4. Real Challenges in the Development of Chiniuwa Village's Cultural Tourism

Further Improvement Needed in the Recognition of Cultural Tourism Brand

Firstly, the recognition of the cultural tourism brand is a necessary aspect to consider in the development of the unique cultural tourism industry in Chiniuwa Village. Analyzing the particular situation of Chiniuwa Village, local cultural tourism products can enhance visitors' understanding and recognition of Chiniuwa Village. Simultaneously, a cultural tourism product is a crystallization of the wisdom of the villagers of Chiniuwa Village and is more a vision of a blissful life by the farmers of Chiniuwa Village. Finally, each unique cultural tourism product plays an essential role in future development planning for Chiniuwa Village, enhancing the unique competitive edge and development advantages of Chiniuwa Village's cultural tourism industry.

Brand Image: The development of the cultural tourism industry in Chiniuwa Village needs to focus on creating brand features, unifying the brand image, and enhancing brand influence. Chiniuwa Village can create unique cultural tourism products to attract visitors and enhance their first impression of Chiniuwa Village.

Brand Reputation: The development of Chiniuwa Village's cultural tourism industry can expand the brand's reputation by providing high-quality services and encouraging word-of-mouth communication.

Brand Communication: The development of the cultural tourism industry in Chiniuwa Village needs to strengthen the communication of the characteristic brand and enhance the communication effect of the cultural tourism brand. Measures can include:
- Utilizing social media: Use social media platforms, such as Weibo, WeChat, TikTok, etc., to release brand information and travel strategies, attracting more potential customers.
- Promotional cooperation: Cooperate with relevant industries, such as hotels, airlines, and online tourism platforms, for joint promotions to expand brand influence.

Further Improvement Needed in Village Layout Planning

Firstly, layout planning is important for regional development, and the factors affecting rural layout planning are multifaceted. We must consider the specific development planning of Chiniuwa Village. Chiniuwa Village has a long history, unique characteristics, and pleasant scenery. However,
the layout is scattered due to its age. According to the actual situation, concrete layout planning should be implemented to promote the development of Chiniuwa Village.

Utilization of Idle Land: Chiniuwa Village is located in the hilly gully area of the northern Shaanxi Loess Plateau, surrounded by mountains, which creates a well-arranged cave dwelling community. At the same time, some land is not effectively utilized. Chiniuwa Village can develop and use idle land, plant green vegetables and red dates, create vegetable and red date picking scenic spots, and provide visitors with opportunities to experience traditional folk life.

Integration of Tourism Resources: Although the village has built some tourist resources, the forms of tourist facilities are relatively single and scattered. Chiniuwa Village can integrate and plan tourism resources, improve tourism facilities, build modern tourism facilities and resources, and enhance the uniqueness of Chiniuwa Village's folk culture.

Further Strengthening of Farmers’ Main Status Needed

In the process of developing the characteristic cultural tourism industry, the main status of the farmers in Chiniuwa Village has been initially reflected. Villagers have obtained certain income sources by participating in the performance of "A Cow on the High Mountain" and serving as commentators in the Folk Museum and Niu Ling Mountain Cave Museum. At the same time, villagers also increase their income through various channels such as dividends from the tourism industry and sales of local products, which promotes the development of Chiniuwa Village's unique cultural tourism. However, there are still some problems to be solved in further strengthening the main status of farmers. Firstly, how to more effectively incorporate farmers into the tourism industry, allowing them to become major beneficiaries and participants in tourism development, is still a question to be explored. Secondly, how to better play the main role of farmers, allowing them to have more say and participation in tourism decision-making, tourism development, and tourism management, is also a matter of concern.

Difficulties Faced in the Inheritance of Historical Culture in Red Bull Village

The historical culture of Chiniuwa Village is a unique representation of cultural symbols and values in the northern Shaanxi region and an important embodiment of local cultural values in Chiniuwa Village. Nowadays, the inheritance of historical culture in Chiniuwa Village faces challenges, such as:

Lack of funds: Cultural inheritance requires certain financial support, including hiring professionals, purchasing necessary equipment and materials, and holding cultural activities. However, Chiniuwa Village may lack funds in this regard, limiting its cultural inheritance work.

Lack of professional talents: Cultural inheritance requires talents with relevant professional knowledge and skills, such as historians, cultural inheritors, and artists. However, Chiniuwa Village lacks these talents, making it difficult for cultural inheritance work to proceed effectively.

Changes in social environment: The rapid development of society and the influence of external culture have brought challenges to the inheritance and preservation of traditional culture in Chiniuwa Village. Younger generations might be more attracted to modern culture and less interested in traditional culture, which may result in a gap in cultural inheritance.

Therefore, the preservation of traditional culture should be incorporated into the development planning of Chiniuwa Village. It is necessary to encourage cultural inheritance, provide training and education to local residents, especially the younger generation, and create an environment conducive to cultural preservation.

Challenges in the Protection of Natural Environment

The development of cultural tourism in Chiniuwa Village also brings challenges to the local natural environment. The increase in tourist activities can lead to environmental pressures, such as:

Increased Pollution: The increased number of visitors can lead to a significant increase in waste, including food waste, single-use plastics, and other types of pollution. This can harm the local environment and degrade the quality of tourist attractions.
Degradation of Natural Resources: Large numbers of tourists can cause harm to natural resources, such as forests, wildlife, and water bodies. This can lead to biodiversity loss and degradation of the natural landscape, which are vital attractions for cultural tourism in Chiniuwa Village.

Traffic Congestion: The increased number of vehicles can cause traffic congestion and air pollution, which can affect the local community's quality of life and the overall tourist experience.

Therefore, it is crucial to incorporate environmental protection into the development planning of Chiniuwa Village's cultural tourism. Measures could include setting limits on the number of visitors, implementing strict waste management policies, promoting eco-friendly practices, and improving transportation planning.

In conclusion, the development of cultural tourism in Chiniuwa Village faces real challenges related to brand recognition, village layout planning, strengthening the role of farmers, the inheritance of historical culture, and the protection of the natural environment. However, with careful planning and effective management strategies, these challenges can be addressed, helping Chiniuwa Village to sustainably develop its cultural tourism industry and achieve long-term prosperity.

5. Suggestions for the Development of Cultural Tourism in Chiniuwa Village

Strengthen Cultural Protection and Inheritance

Chiniuwa Village has rich culture and history, which are precious assets of local people. However, with the acceleration of modernization and the impact of foreign cultures, local culture and traditions are at risk of disappearing. Therefore, we suggest strengthening the protection and inheritance of local culture. Specific measures include:

- Establishing cultural protection institutions responsible for managing and protecting local culture and historical heritage.
- Strengthening cultural inheritance, training local artists and cultural inheritors to better carry on and promote local culture and traditions.
- Building cultural museums or display centers to showcase local culture and historical heritage, allowing more people to understand and focus on local culture and traditions.

Strengthen Tourism Development and Management

Chiniuwa Village has unique cultural and tourism resources, which are important drivers for local development. However, local tourism development and management have some problems, such as single tourism products and low service quality. Therefore, we suggest strengthening tourism development and management. Specific measures include:

- Developing a variety of tourism products, such as cultural experiences, rural tourism, and eco-tourism, to meet the needs of different tourists.
- Improving the quality of tourism services, such as improving the construction of tourism facilities and the quality of tourism service personnel, so that tourists can enjoy better services.
- Strengthening tourism promotion and promotion, such as increasing publicity, developing characteristic tourism products, and enhancing the popularity and influence of Chiniuwa Village.

Strengthen Community Participation and Collaboration

The development of Chiniuwa Village requires the participation and cooperation of the local community. However, in practice, we find that the participation of the local community is not high and the awareness of cooperation is not strong. Therefore, we suggest strengthening community participation and cooperation. Specific measures include:

- Strengthening publicity and education to enhance the cultural awareness and participation of local residents.
- Establishing community organizations or associations responsible for managing and promoting local culture and tourism development.
- Strengthening communication and cooperation with local communities, respecting the opinions and suggestions of local residents, and allowing local residents to better participate in the development of the cultural village.
Strengthen Management and Supervision
The development of Chiniuwa Village requires strong management and supervision. However, in practice, we find that there are some problems in management and supervision, such as chaotic management and low service quality. Therefore, we suggest strengthening management and supervision. Specific measures include:
- Establishing a complete management system and management institutions to manage and supervise the development of the cultural village.
- Strengthening service quality supervision and management, such as establishing a service quality evaluation system, strengthening service personnel training, and improving service quality and level.
- Strengthening safety management and supervision, such as strengthening the construction of safety facilities and safety inspections to ensure the safety of tourists and local residents.

Strengthen Innovation and Development
The "soul" of rural revitalization lies in culture, and the "form" lies in industries that incorporate cultural concepts. "Cultural value is the inner soul of the development of rural cultural industries". Chiniuwa Village requires continuous innovation and development. However, in practice, we find that there are some problems in innovation and development, such as single products and lack of features. Therefore, we suggest strengthening innovation and development. Specific measures include:
- Developing new tourism products and services, such as developing cultural experiences, rural tourism, and eco-tourism new tourism products, providing more diverse and diverse services.
- Strengthening feature excavation and creation, such as deeply excavating local culture and historical heritage, creating a unique cultural brand, and enhancing the competitiveness and influence of Chiniuwa Village.
- Strengthening technological innovation and use, such as using modern technological means to improve the efficiency and quality of tourism services, providing tourists with more convenient and comfortable services.

References