

Research on Rural Tourism Development in Ganzi Tibetan Area under the Perspective of "Agriculture, Culture and Tourism" Integration

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Abstract

With its unique resource endowment, rural tourism in the Ganzi Tibetan region has developed rapidly. From the early stage of "big development, small integration" to "big integration, small development", it ultimately presents a new situation of "each with its own characteristics, fully blooming". When developing rural tourism, especially in the process of combining agriculture, culture, and tourism, the Ganzi Tibetan region faces many difficulties such as resource independence, single function, technological barriers, and market competition. To this end, efforts can be made to strengthen the integration of resources, functions, technologies, and markets in rural tourism in the Ganzi Tibetan region through regional linkage and mutual assistance, innovative integration forms, coordinated planning of industries, and improved market access, in order to promote the deep integration of agriculture, culture, and tourism in the Ganzi Tibetan region and drive the leapfrog development of rural tourism industry.

Keywords

Integration of Agriculture; Culture and Tourism; Rural Tourism; Ganzi Tibetan Area

1. Question raising

As the region with the most abundant top-level tourism resources in Sichuan Province, Ganzi Tibetan Area has over 36000 tourism resources that gather more than half of the undeveloped world-class tourism resources in the province, laying a solid foundation for the development of rural tourism. With the rapid development of transportation and the increase in popularity, rural tourism in the Ganzi Tibetan region has gradually become one of the important pillar industries of local economic development. Governments at all levels, from the central to local levels, have successively introduced various favorable policies for rural tourism. Between 2008 and 2019 alone, as many as 273 policy documents related to rural tourism were issued^[1]. Under the guidance of national policies, the governments at all levels in the Ganzi Tibetan region have conscientiously implemented the rural revitalization strategy, and issued a series of documents such as the "Implementation Plan for Prioritizing the Development of Tourism in Ganzi Prefecture" and the "14th Five Year Plan for the Development of Global Tourism in Ganzi Prefecture", providing a strong support for the development of rural tourism in the Ganzi Tibetan region.

Yang Zhenzhi, from a philosophical perspective and using methods such as phenomenological restoration, believes that the essence of tourism is "the poetic dwelling of human beings."^[2] As a subsystem of tourism, rural tourism has gained a more detailed understanding of the relationship between tourists and locals under the surface characteristics of rural and cultural characteristics. Its essence has been derived from the understanding of "poetic intersubjectivity"^[3], expanding a broader research perspective. Rural tourism is actually a spiritual necessity for people, and its motivation is nothing more than seeking diversity, that is,

the impulse to understand different cultures and the resulting spiritual needs. Ethnic areas are located in China's resource rich areas, water system source areas, ecological barrier areas, and cultural characteristic areas^[4]. The experience of ethnic culture and a good ecological environment attract tourists, so the development of rural tourism in ethnic areas is rapid. The "agricultural tourism+" rural tourism model, which integrates multiple industries such as Tibetan family music, characteristic villages, and folk customs experiences, is blooming everywhere, each with its own characteristics.

2. Typical pattern: The temporal pattern of rural tourism development in the Ganzi Tibetan region

According to the data, the development process of rural tourism in the Ganzi Tibetan region can be mainly divided into three stages: the first stage was from 1950 to 2000. With the increase in popularity of "Kangding Love Song", the Ganzi Tibetan region accumulated a mass base, leading to a stage of "big development and small integration" of rural tourism in the Tibetan region. The second stage was from 2001 to 2020, during which the infrastructure of road transportation, communication, and electricity in the Ganzi Tibetan region was improved, accelerating the integration and development of rural tourism with agriculture, cultural industries, and other industries, presenting the characteristics of initial "large integration and small development". The third stage is from 2021 to present. In 2021, with the explosive popularity of the Dingzhen phenomenon, the popularity and exposure of Ganzi Prefecture have been unprecedentedly improved^[5]. Tourists from all over the country have come to Ganzi for tourism, and the sharp increase in tourist numbers has sparked a wave of rural tourism development in the entire Ganzi Tibetan region. The integration of agriculture, culture, and tourism takes various forms, thus entering the stage of "each with its own characteristics, fully blooming". Specifically:

(1) Great development, small integration

At the end of the Qing Dynasty and the beginning of the Republic of China, the Ganzi Tibetan region, as the tea trade center on the southern road, formed a unique "Guozhuang economy"^[6]. Guozhuang is not only a major place for commercial transactions, but also promotes diversified exchanges between Tibet and Han. This business model also brings new insights to early rural tourism practitioners in the Ganzi Tibetan region - "Tibetan Family Fun". In the 1950s, after being recommended by UNESCO to the world, "Kangding Love Song" quickly gained global fame, and the popularity of Ganzi Prefecture was increased. In the 1980s, with the continuous development of rural tourism resources in Ganzi Prefecture, more and more private funds began to enter the tourism industry. Among them, Deng Zhu, a villager from Yingguan Village in Xinduqiao Town, has built the "First Tibetan Village" on the 318 line in Feifeiba, which is the first "Tibetan Family Fun" in the Ganzi Tibetan area, mainly providing tourists with services such as food, accommodation, and play. Afterwards, various regions in the Ganzi Tibetan region sparked a wave of developing homestay reception, promoting the rapid development of rural tourism in the Ganzi Tibetan region^[7]. However, there were few cases of rural tourism integrating with other industries at this stage.

(2) Large integration and small development

Since the beginning of this century, China's tourism market has developed rapidly, with an increasing number of tourist destinations^[8]. The Ganzi Tibetan region, seeking market competitiveness, has sparked a wave of construction and development. The Ganzi Tibetan region has seized the historical opportunity of the national implementation of the Western Development Strategy, and has developed rapidly in infrastructure construction such as water conservancy, electricity, communication, and roads, injecting strong momentum into the development of rural tourism. During this period, the integration of rural tourism with other industries has sharply increased. For example, the Hailuoguo Scenic Area promotes the

integration of agriculture, culture, and tourism at a deeper level and from multiple perspectives, resulting in a more complete tourism industry chain; Kowloon County has incorporated modern urban areas such as flower viewing, starry sky, and camping into rural tourism construction according to local conditions, embarking on a new path of integrating agriculture and tourism and promoting rural revitalization; In Boyangping Village, Moxi Town, through economic cooperation with villagers and village collectives, we aim to create a homestay industry and achieve sustained income growth. There are many similar project cases, and during this period, the rural tourism industry in the Ganzi Tibetan region showed a trend of "big integration and small development".

(3) Each with its own characteristics, fully blooming

In recent years, the local government of Ganzi has adhered to the principles of "promoting agriculture with quality, prioritizing efficiency, and being green oriented". By utilizing the characteristics of high-altitude land and climate, it has developed characteristic industries, attracted talented people from rural areas to return, and guided farmers and herdsmen to develop professional cooperatives. At the same time, the government has fully explored and refined folk culture, cultivated various rural tourism products such as rural tourism, ecological tourism, sightseeing tourism, leisure tourism, and agricultural experience tourism, extended the agricultural industry chain and value chain, and expanded the channels for increasing income for farmers and herdsmen^[9]. At the same time, we will create provincial-level characteristic tourism townships and boutique tourism villages, promote construction through evaluation, demonstration and guidance, and take multiple measures to promote the high-quality development of the county-level homestay industry. Overall, at this stage, the integration of "agriculture, culture, and tourism" in the Ganzi Tibetan region has unique characteristics and fully blossomed, promoting the vigorous development of rural tourism in the Ganzi Tibetan region and making contributions to local economic development and social progress.

3. Reflection on the Current Situation: The Realistic Dilemma of Rural Tourism Development in Ganzi Tibetan Area

(1) Resource independence and lack of linkage mechanism for agricultural, cultural and tourism industries

The Ganzi Tibetan region is facing a practical dilemma in the development of rural tourism: its abundant resources often show a relatively independent state, lacking effective integration and coordination between them, and failing to form a good interactive system. There are obvious shortcomings in the linkage mechanism of the agricultural, cultural, and tourism industries, specifically manifested in the lack of organic integration of the three major industrial sectors of agriculture, culture, and tourism, and insufficient correlation and synergy between them, making it difficult to fully leverage their respective advantages and form a joint force. Agricultural resources have not been deeply integrated with the tourism industry, and cannot be effectively transformed into tourism attractiveness and economic value; Cultural resources have not been fully integrated into various aspects of tourism, failing to demonstrate their rightful charm and influence, resulting in certain limitations on the inheritance and promotion of culture; At the same time, the tourism industry also lacks in-depth exploration and utilization of agricultural and cultural resources, making it difficult to create more distinctive and competitive tourism products and experiences, unable to meet the increasingly diverse and personalized needs of tourists, and to some extent hindering the further development and improvement of rural tourism in Tibet.

(2) Single function, fusion mode should not respond to market changes and demands

The development of rural tourism in the Ganzi Tibetan region is currently facing many practical difficulties, one of which is the single function, limited to simple sightseeing or a small number of experiential projects, lacking sufficient richness and diversity, making it difficult to attract the interest of tourists and retain them for a long time. The integration model of agriculture, culture, and tourism in the Ganzi Tibetan region appears relatively rigid and cannot flexibly adapt to market changes and demands. This model is often just a superficial combination, without truly delving into the internal connection and potential between local agriculture, culture, and tourism, and failing to create tourism products with unique charm and competitiveness. For example, the utilization of agricultural resources is not sufficient and has not been transformed into vivid, interesting, and participatory tourism experiences; The display of cultural connotations is not profound enough, and only superficial displays cannot truly touch the hearts of tourists. At the same time, due to the inability to keep up with the dynamic changes in the market in a timely manner, the existing integration model of agriculture, culture, and tourism becomes inadequate when the needs and preferences of tourists change. We cannot quickly adjust and optimize our own development strategies based on emerging market trends, such as the pursuit of personalization, deep experience, and ecological protection. This leads to a gradual loss of advantage in fierce market competition, making it difficult to attract more tourist resources and achieve sustainable development. Moreover, the lack of innovative models also makes it difficult to stimulate the enthusiasm and creativity of local residents, leading to a lack of intrinsic motivation and vitality in the development of rural tourism, and falling into a relatively passive situation, which seriously restricts the further improvement and growth of rural tourism in the Ganzi Tibetan region.

(3) Technical barriers and insufficient capacity for independent scientific research, innovation, and creativity

In the process of promoting the integration of agriculture, culture, and tourism, the Ganzi Tibetan region has a significant lack of ability in independent scientific research, innovation, and creation. Due to being located in a relatively remote area, obtaining technological resources is relatively difficult. For example, in using modern information technology to improve tourism services and management levels, there is a lack of corresponding technical support and professional talents, leading to lagging information construction and insufficient optimization of tourist experience. In the field of integrating agriculture, culture, and tourism, the weak ability of independent scientific research seriously restricts the depth and breadth of development. There is a lack of in-depth scientific research exploration and innovative attempts on how to better integrate agricultural characteristics and cultural elements with tourism projects. Unable to create unique and attractive tourism products and experiences through independent research and development, relying solely on traditional models makes it difficult to stand out in fierce market competition. Moreover, due to insufficient innovation and creativity, it is not possible to effectively utilize the abundant local resources for deep development. Some potential agricultural resources and cultural heritage have not been innovatively transformed through technological means, and their value cannot be fully realized. This not only affects the attractiveness of rural tourism, but also makes the entire industry development lack intrinsic driving force and sustainability. At the same time, technological barriers also limit the exchange and integration with advanced external technologies and concepts, making it difficult to absorb new knowledge and experience to improve its own development level, resulting in rural tourism in the Ganzi Tibetan region being relatively backward in terms of technology for a long time, greatly hindering its progress towards higher levels.

(4) Market competition, squeezing development space, Tibetan participation is inconsistent

In the increasingly competitive tourism market today, various forms and products of tourism emerge one after another, which poses great challenges to the development of rural tourism in the Ganzi Tibetan region. Other regions and types of tourism projects are constantly emerging, relying on their own characteristics and advantages to occupy a certain market share, thus forming a squeezing situation for the integrated development of agriculture, culture, and tourism in the Ganzi Tibetan region. This competition puts significant pressure on rural tourism in the Ganzi Tibetan region to attract tourists and expand the market, and the development space is limited to a certain extent. Meanwhile, in the process of promoting the integration of agriculture, culture, and tourism, the varying levels of Tibetan participation have become a prominent issue. Some Tibetans are able to actively participate in the development of rural tourism, utilizing their cultural characteristics and skills to participate in management and services. However, there are still some Tibetans who, due to various reasons, hold a wait-and-see attitude or have a low level of participation in tourism development. This leads to an overall imbalance in development, and the inability to fully leverage the power and advantages of the Tibetan community. Those Tibetan people with low participation may not be able to effectively integrate into tourism development due to a lack of awareness and understanding of tourism development, or due to limitations in their own conditions and concepts. This not only affects the comprehensiveness and depth of rural tourism development, but also makes resource integration and utilization insufficient, making it difficult to form a strong joint force to cope with fierce market competition. The imbalance in development and differences in participation levels further exacerbate the challenges faced by rural tourism in the Ganzi Tibetan region in competition, posing more obstacles and challenges for its breakthrough and improvement.

4. Benefit Enhancement: Integration and Sharing Strategies for Rural Tourism Development in Ganzi Tibetan Area

(1) Resource integration

a. Large area linkage and small area mutual assistance

The Ganzi Tibetan region has a vast territory, and different regions have their own unique resources and characteristics. Through regional linkage, these dispersed advantages can be integrated to form a stronger synergy. Break down administrative barriers between regions, strengthen communication and cooperation, and jointly plan and create influential tourism routes and products. For example, the ecological landscape area in the eastern part of Tibet can complement the cultural characteristic area in the western part, jointly launching a comprehensive tourism package that covers natural beauty and cultural experiences. This kind of linkage not only enriches the experience of tourists, but also achieves complementary resources and enhances the attractiveness of the entire region. At the same time, information sharing is also crucial in large-scale linkage. Different regions can timely share market trends, tourist demands, and other information in order to better adjust strategies and services and achieve collaborative development. Small regional mutual aid is a further refinement and deepening of the linkage between large regions. Within a smaller geographical range, adjacent villages or scenic spots can support and promote each other. They can jointly carry out marketing activities, share customer sources, and enhance visibility. For example, several neighboring villages can jointly hold characteristic cultural festivals to showcase their cultural elements and attract more tourists. Through this mutual aid model, every small area can benefit from development, avoiding the phenomenon of idle resources or uneven development

b Building a "one-stop" management service

Building a "one-stop" management service is an important guarantee for achieving resource integration. A unified and efficient management and service system is needed to support the early consultation of tourists, various services during the itinerary, and feedback processing in

the later stage. On the front-end, establish a professional consultation and booking platform to provide tourists with detailed and accurate information and convenient booking services. During the tourism process, ensure smooth connections between various links, including transportation, catering and accommodation arrangements, tour guide services, etc., so that tourists can feel meticulous care. At the same time, establish a sound complaint handling mechanism, timely respond to the demands and opinions of tourists, and continuously improve service quality. This "one-stop" management service can not only improve tourist satisfaction, but also enhance the brand image of rural tourism in the Ganzi Tibetan region, attracting more tourists to come. Moreover, through unified management services, various resources can be better integrated, avoiding resource waste and duplicate construction. Various departments and units can work together to form a joint force and jointly promote the development of rural tourism.

(2) Functional fusion

a. Enrich integration elements and adapt to market demand

In order to better promote the development of rural tourism, it is necessary to continuously enrich and integrate elements. This means that we not only need to rely on traditional natural tourism, but also need to deeply explore local agricultural resources, such as the cultivation of characteristic agricultural products, traditional agricultural culture, etc., and closely integrate them with cultural elements, such as Tibetan songs and dances, traditional handicrafts, etc. Through the integration of multiple elements, more diverse and attractive tourism products and experience projects can be created. For example, agricultural experience activities can be developed to allow tourists to participate in the agricultural production process firsthand. At the same time, combined with the display and performance of Tibetan culture, tourists can not only feel the joy of the countryside, but also appreciate the unique national charm while playing. Moreover, it is important to constantly monitor the dynamic changes in market demand. With the development of the times and the transformation of tourist consumption concepts, market demand is also constantly evolving. To maintain keen insight, adjust and enrich integration elements in a timely manner to adapt to new market trends. For example, with the increasing demand for ecological and environmental protection, health and wellness among people, these elements can be highlighted in the integration process, creating ecological agricultural sightseeing parks, health and cultural experience areas, etc., to meet the emerging needs of tourists.

b. Complementary functional advantages, close to consumer psychology

Agriculture, culture, and tourism each have unique functions and advantages, and combining them organically can generate strong synergistic effects. Agriculture provides rich experiential content and material foundation for tourism, while culture endows tourism with deeper connotations and spiritual value. Tourism provides a broad platform for the dissemination and development of agriculture and culture. For example, by utilizing the production functions of agriculture, activities such as picking and processing agricultural products can be carried out. At the same time, by leveraging the charm of culture, these activities can be given more meaning and stories, allowing tourists to not only gain material benefits but also spiritual satisfaction during the participation process. Being close to consumer psychology requires fully considering the needs and feelings of tourists in the process of functional integration. Understand the expectations of tourists for leisure and entertainment, cultural experience, social interaction, etc., and design and integrate functions accordingly. At the same time, attention should be paid to improving the quality of service and the experience of tourists. Through thoughtful service and comfortable environment, tourists can feel care and respect, thereby enhancing their sense of identification and satisfaction with rural tourism in the Ganzi Tibetan region. By complementing functional advantages, it is possible to create more unique tourism value,

attract more tourists, and leave profound and beautiful memories for tourists during the tourism process.

(3) Technology integration

a. Innovate and integrate new forms, popularize digital technology

In today's digital age, the development of technology is advancing rapidly. In order to promote the development of rural tourism in the Ganzi Tibetan region, it is necessary to actively introduce and apply the latest technological achievements. For example, using Internet of Things technology can achieve intelligent management and monitoring of tourism resources, improve resource utilization efficiency and service quality; With the help of big data analysis, it is possible to better understand the needs and behaviors of tourists, providing strong basis for the design and marketing of tourism products. Technology integration is not only about the application of technology, but also about the form of innovative integration. For example, developing an online tourism platform that allows tourists to learn about the information and characteristics of tourist destinations in advance through their mobile phones or computers, and make virtual tours and reservations; By utilizing augmented reality technology, tourists can access more cultural and historical information through their mobile phones or other devices during field trips. At the same time, it is necessary to strengthen the popularization and promotion of digital technology, so that more local residents and enterprises can master and apply these technologies.

b Cultivate localized talents and conduct regular training and assessment

Talents are the key factor in technological integration, and we should focus on cultivating a localized talent team. By collaborating with local universities and vocational training institutions to establish relevant majors and courses, we aim to cultivate a group of versatile talents who are both knowledgeable in tourism and proficient in technology. At the same time, it is necessary to regularly train and assess these talents to continuously improve their technical level and business capabilities. In addition, external technical talents and experts can be introduced to provide opportunities for local talents to learn and exchange, promoting the introduction and innovation of technology.

(4) Market integration

a. Overall planning and integration of industries, purifying market atmosphere

For the development of rural tourism in the Ganzi Tibetan region, it is necessary to carry out overall planning and layout, and organically combine industries such as agriculture, culture, and tourism. Through coordinated planning, it is possible to prevent duplicate construction and disorderly competition of resources, achieve optimal allocation of resources, and achieve coordinated development of industries. At the same time, it is necessary to strengthen market supervision, purify the market atmosphere, and crack down on unfair competition and illegal behavior. Establish a sound market supervision mechanism, strengthen the management and supervision of tourism enterprises and practitioners, standardize market order, and ensure that the legitimate rights and interests of tourists are protected.

b. Deepening Tibetan participation and balancing income inequality

Deepen the level of Tibetan participation and balance income inequality. Tibetans are important participants in the development of rural tourism in the Ganzi Tibetan region, and their level of participation directly affects the effectiveness and sustainability of tourism development. Therefore, measures should be taken to deepen the participation of Tibetans and enable them to gain more benefits and benefits in tourism development. By organizing training, providing technical support, and financial support, we can help Tibetan people improve their tourism management and service capabilities, and encourage them to participate in the tourism industry. At the same time, attention should be paid to balancing the income gap between different groups to avoid situations of wealth inequality and social instability.

c. Improve market access rules and guide integration and sharing

Improve market access rules and guide integration and sharing. In order to ensure the healthy development of rural tourism market in Ganzi Tibetan area, it is necessary to improve market access rules, strengthen the review and management of tourism enterprises and projects. Establish strict standards and regulations to evaluate and supervise the qualifications, management level, service quality, and other aspects of tourism enterprises. Only enterprises and projects that meet the requirements can enter the market, thereby improving the overall quality and competitiveness of the market. At the same time, it is necessary to guide tourism enterprises to establish the concept of integration and sharing, encourage them to cooperate with other enterprises and industries in the business process, and achieve resource sharing and complementary advantages.

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