

Study on the Effect of Social Revitalization Policy on Narrowing the Gap between Urban and Rural Development

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Abstract:

Rural revitalization policy has become a key strategy to bridge the gap between urban and rural development has become increasingly important in China. This study reviews and summarizes the development process and implementation status of rural revitalization policy, and deeply discusses the role and mechanism of this policy in narrowing the urban-rural development gap through classified evaluation and case analysis. The study has revealed that, despite the rural revitalization policy achieving some success in enhancing the rural economy and upgrading infrastructure, there are still areas for improvement, still shortcomings in resource allocation and policy implementation. Based on the comprehensive empirical analysis of selected case areas, this paper proposes tailored policy recommendations to facilitate a more efficient urban-rural integration process. The findings from the study not only highlight the positive impact of rural revitalization policies in fostering rural growth and bridging the gap between urban and rural sectors, but also underscore their constraints and potential avenues for enhancement.

Keywords: rural revitalization policy, urban-rural development gap, policy evaluation, case analysis

1. Introduction

With China's economy booming, the gap between urban and rural development has become increasingly obvious. The swift progression of urban sectors starkly contrasts with the slower development in rural regions. This disparity not only undermines social harmony and stability but also poses a significant challenge to the economy's sustainable and robust

growth. To bridge this developmental divide and elevate the living standards and economic prosperity of rural areas is a paramount objective in China's current socio-economic agenda.

Many scholars have studied the rural revitalization policy and its impact on rural development. By studying specific villages, Shi Xiaoxiong drew the conclusion that rural revitalization policies have different effects in different environments and stages,

and summarized the factors that should be considered when implementing rural revitalization [1]. Wang Feixiang emphasized the importance of rural revitalization policies in stimulating the potential of farmers and improving the governance level of rural areas, so as to promote the long-term development of rural economy [2]. Lubo discusses the role of rural revitalization policies in enhancing the vitality and competitiveness of rural areas communities [3]. Wang Beibei, Liu Juanxiang, Yang Tiancheng analyzed the human resources data of rural revitalization policies, explored how incentive mechanisms in the process of agricultural modernization affected farmers' income and quality of life, and studied the relationship between them [4]. Xu Chunxiang, Liang Shuna, Wang Zijun analyzed the existing rural revitalization policies and proposed improvement measures from various aspects, aiming at strengthening the construction of rural talents [5]. Han used the survey data of rural areas to study the effect of rural revitalization policies on improving infrastructure and public services [6]. Liu Y, Zang Y, and Yang Y proposed that the government should improve the target system and financial incentive framework from multiple perspectives and optimize resource allocation, so as to enhance the incentive effect of the rural revitalization policy [7]. Chen Y introduced a successful case of rural revitalization in a certain place, and proposed problems and solutions based on effect analysis [8]. Wang H and Jiang F focused on the incentive mechanism in rural areas, described common methods and provided solutions to existing problems [9].

As a cornerstone of national strategy, the rural revitalization initiative strives to bolster rural economies, enhance farmers' well-being, and bridge the urban-rural divide through targeted measures. Since it was put forward, the policy has gone through many stages of development and achieved certain results, but it still faces many challenges and problems.

This inquiry delves into the impact of rural revitalization policies in bridging the developmental disparity between urban and rural sectors. It seeks to scrutinize and discern the tangible outcomes of these policies and their underlying influence mechanisms. This paper adopts the research methods of empirical analysis and policy evaluation, evaluates the actual effect of policy implementation and puts forward suggestions for optimization through collecting and analyzing literature.

The main body of the article is to study the effect of rural revitalization policies on narrowing the gap between urban and rural development, and specifically analyze the policy impact of farmers on agricultural modernization, infrastructure construction, economic diversification, social development and cultural inheritance and innovation.

Upon examining Taixing City's policy implementation through a case study approach, it becomes evident that transformative actions among farmers—such as enhanced agricultural productivity, upgraded infrastructure, and the rise of nascent industries—play a significant role in diminishing the urban-rural divide.

This exploration not only illuminates the tangible impact of rural revitalization policies in reducing urban-rural disparities but also furnishes policymakers with empirical insights and recommendations, thus holding both theoretical and practical value. Through rigorous analysis, this paper aspires to offer valuable references for the effective enactment of China's rural revitalization strategy. Hence, a thorough investigation into how social revitalization policies contribute to bridging the urban-rural divide, coupled with the identification and resolution of challenges in current policy execution, is paramount for fostering social equity, justice, and sustainable progress.

2. Introduction and Implementation Status of Rural Revitalization Policies

2.1 Policy Origin and Development

The rural revitalization strategy emerged from a nuanced recognition of the uneven and suboptimal development plaguing China's rural landscapes. Since its inception in the 2017 report of the 19th National Congress, this strategy has been integral to the nation's broader vision of constructing a contemporary economic system. At its heart, the rural revitalization initiative seeks to catalyze agricultural modernization, foster holistic rural advancement, and ensure the enduring growth of agriculture and rural realms.

2.2 Main Policy Contents and Measures

The rural revitalization policy covers many aspects, including promoting agricultural modernization, improving rural infrastructure, increasing farmers' income, and improving rural culture. Specific measures include strengthening agricultural science and technology support, promoting green production methods, improving rural living environment, and deepening rural reform. The policy underscores the significance of cultural continuity and innovation, alongside the modernization of governance frameworks and capabilities.

2.3 Implementation Status and Achievements

Since the initiation of the rural revitalization policy, China's countryside has witnessed notable advancements across various fronts. Agricultural practices have

transitioned towards scientific and large-scale methods, elevating both the caliber and repute of agricultural products. Infrastructural facets like transportation, water management, and energy supply have undergone substantial enhancements, leading to a marked improvement in the living standards and life quality of the rural populace. Concurrently, the policy has spurred the ascent of nascent sectors such as rural tourism, organic cuisine, and distinctive townships, thereby breathing new life into the rural economy.

However, in the process of implementation, it also faces many challenges, such as insufficient policy implementation in some regions, and unequal capital investment and resource allocation. The emergence of these challenges has, to some degree, impacted the holistic efficacy and depth of the rural revitalization initiative. Consequently, the paramount concerns now lie in optimizing resource distribution, enhancing implementation, and assuring extensive and profound policy effects within the current rural revitalization framework.

3. Effect of Rural Revitalization Policy

3.1 Agricultural Modernization

The rural revitalization policy has yielded significant strides in the realm of agricultural modernization. Leveraging scientific and technological innovations, alongside the refinement of cropping patterns, there has been a notable enhancement in agricultural productivity and produce quality. Concurrently, the government has bolstered its investments in agri-scientific research and development, disseminating advanced yet practical technologies. By offering technical training and advisory services to farmers, there has been an efficacious escalation in their capacity for scientific farming methods. However, there are still problems such as insufficient technology promotion and backward agricultural infrastructure in some regions [10].

3.2 Infrastructure Construction

Infrastructure development stands as a cornerstone for rural revitalization. The government has actively upgraded critical infrastructure like rural highways, hydrological systems, and electrical networks, thereby enhancing both the commuting convenience and the standard of living for the countryside inhabitants [11]. Initiatives such as the launch of new rural roadways, the execution of safe drinking water projects for rural communities, and the revamp of rural electric grids have substantially ameliorated both the agricultural production environments and residential conditions in these areas. Nevertheless, hurdles including

inadequate financial backing and variations in construction excellence persist.

3.3 Diversified Economic Development

The varied progression of the rural economy is a linchpin of the rural revitalization strategy. Emerging industries such as rural tourism and green food industry are booming, creating new economic growth points for rural areas. These industries not only increase farmers' income, but also promote local cultural inheritance and innovation [12]. However, problems such as unbalanced industrial development and weak market competitiveness need to be further addressed.

3.4 Development of Social Undertakings

The rural revitalization policy has likewise achieved commendable headway in fortifying public service systems, encompassing education, healthcare, and eldercare. Through enhancements to rural public amenities and elevation of service reach and caliber, disparities in urban-rural public services have diminished. Nevertheless, certain remote locales continue to confront issues like the scarcity of educational resources and underdeveloped medical infrastructures [13].

3.5 Cultural Inheritance and Innovation

The safeguarding and transference of rural heritage is an integral component of rural revitalization. The government promotes the diversity and innovative development of rural culture by exploring local cultural resources and holding cultural activities [14]. However, some traditional cultures are at risk of being marginalized, and there is an urgent need to strengthen protection and inheritance measures.

3.6 Modernization of Governance System and Capacity

The rural revitalization policy underscores the modernization of governance frameworks and capabilities, reinforcing the development of rural governance structures and enhancing administrative efficacy. The government should build a harmonious and stable rural social environment by establishing and improving village-level organizations and democratic decision-making mechanisms. However, the weak governance capacity and low participation of villagers in some areas still need to be further improved [15].

The effect of rural revitalization policy is different in different areas and regions. Overall, the policy has achieved positive results in promoting rural economic development, improving infrastructure, and raising farmers' living standards. However, there are also some problems and

challenges in the implementation process of the policy, which need to be further improved and solved. In order to ensure its continuous and effective implementation, it is necessary to comprehensively evaluate and reflect on the existing policies, constantly improve the policies and measures, and solve the existing problems and challenges. In the future, the government should continue to increase investment, optimize resource allocation, and strengthen implementation supervision to ensure greater success of the rural revitalization strategy [16].

4. Case Study

4.1 Case Selection and Background Introduction

In this study, Taixing City in Jiangsu Province on the east coast of China is selected as a typical case of rural revitalization policy. Taixing city, rich in agricultural resources and boasting a fairly advanced industrial economy, still grapples with a pronounced urban-rural divide. The city governs three subdistricts, thirteen towns, and one township, spanning 1,172.27 square kilometers, with a permanent population nearing 990,800. Situated midway through Jiangsu Province and along the northern bank of the Yangtze River's lower reaches, Taixing is part of the Yangtze River Delta's alluvial plain. Its topography elevates in the northeast and descends in the southwest, declining gradually from northeast to southwest. In 2023, Taixing reported a regional GDP of 143.499 billion yuan—an increase of 6.5% from the prior year. This included a primary industry value addition of 7.620 billion yuan (up by 4.1%), a secondary industry value addition of 71.558 billion yuan (up by 6.4%), and a tertiary industry value addition of 64.321 billion yuan (up by 6.8%). Such structural optimization and economic expansion underscore Taixing's dynamic shifts and robust developmental strides.

Despite Taixing's consistent economic growth and notable social advancements, recent development data and policy documents reveal persistent urban-rural disparities. Urban zones predominantly host secondary and tertiary sectors, whereas rural regions rely extensively on primary industries. Although Taixing's overall economic volume has steadily climbed, urban and rural areas have not kept pace equally; urban growth outstrips that of rural regions, further accentuating the economic rift. Urban transportation networks and public services are more developed, contrasting with the relatively lagging rural infrastructure. A significant gap also exists in fixed asset investments between urban and rural areas, favoring urban locales. Furthermore, urban schools generally surpass rural ones

in number and quality. Urban areas possess more medical institutions and high-caliber medical staff, while rural regions suffer from scant medical resources and lower service levels. The diversified industries and advanced economy of urban areas offer ample employment opportunities, unlike rural areas where the singular industrial makeup and limited job prospects drive many workers to seek employment elsewhere. To mitigate these disparities, Taixing has introduced targeted rural revitalization policies in recent years.

4.2 Analysis of Implementation Process

The rural revitalization policy of Taixing City mainly includes the following aspects: First, improve agricultural production efficiency through agricultural scientific and technological innovation and planting structure adjustment. Secondly, enhance rural infrastructure like highways, hydrology, and electrical networks. Thirdly, foster rural tourism and the green food sector to boost agrarian earnings. Moreover, it encompasses bettering public services including education, healthcare, and eldercare to elevate the standard of living for countryside denizens.

4.3 Effectiveness Evaluation

The enactment of these policies has markedly enhanced the economic standing and living standards in Taixing City's rural areas. Agricultural endeavors have transitioned towards scientific methods and larger scales, continually refining agricultural product quality and bolstering brand impact. Infrastructure advancements have drastically optimized the commuting and residential circumstances for rural inhabitants. The swift progression of rural tourism and the green food sector furnishes farmers with novel income channels. Betterment of the public service system has concurrently upgraded the standard of living in rural regions.

4.4 Discussion on Mechanism and Influencing Factors

The mechanism through which the rural revitalization policy diminishes the urban-rural development disparity is chiefly manifested in several aspects: Primarily, by enhancing agricultural productivity and product superiority, thereby escalating farmers' earnings. Secondly, infrastructural developments have elevated the standard of living in rural locales. Thirdly, the burgeoning of emerging industries infuses fresh momentum into the rural economy. Fourthly, refinements in the public service system have amended the life quality in rural communities. Nevertheless, the enforcement of these policies gets influenced by myriad factors, including financial backing, policy imple-

mentation rigor, and the zeal of local governments. In summary, Taixing's rural revitalization policy has effectively narrowed the urban-rural development gap. However, to ensure its sustained effectiveness, further optimization of policy measures and resolution of current issues and challenges are imperative.

5. Policy Suggestions

5.1 Strengthen Research and Development and Promotion of Agricultural Science and Technology

The government should escalate its funding for agricultural technological innovation, establishing and enhancing research and development hubs for agrarian science and technology. Such initiatives can hasten the creation and implementation of novel technologies. By offering technical training and consultancy services, these endeavors not only amplify farmers' capabilities in scientific agriculture but also foster the digitalization of farming, enhance agricultural productivity and product excellence, thereby bolstering the market competitiveness of agrarian products and propelling rural economic expansion.

5.2 Improving Rural Infrastructure

The government perpetuates its financial commitment to rural infrastructure, encompassing transportation, hydrology, and electricity networks. This not only ameliorates the living conditions in rural areas but also catalyzes the growth of tourism and other services. Robust infrastructure facilitates the efficient circulation of resources and human interactions, ushering in extensive development opportunities for rural regions and fostering balanced regional economic progression.

5.3 Promote Diversified Economic Development

The government advocates and backs the emergence of sectors like rural tourism and the green food industry. This burgeoning of industries does not solely generate more employment and elevate farmers' incomes but also stimulates the preservation and innovation of local cultures. Diversifying the economy renders rural communities more resistant to singular economic downturns and augments the sustainability of regional economies.

5.4 Improving Public Services

The government has augmented its financial commitment to education, healthcare, senior care, and other public services, enhancing the caliber and reach of these services to ensure rural inhabitants relish a standard of service akin

to their urban counterparts. Top-notch public services can not only ameliorate residents' standard of living but also foster social equity and diminish the disparity between urban and rural areas.

5.5 Optimize Financial Support and Incentive Mechanism

The government should provide more financial support, set up special funds for rural revitalization projects, and encourage local governments and farmers to actively participate in rural revitalization activities through incentives. Such financial support and incentive mechanism can effectively mobilize the enthusiasm of all parties, ensure the smooth implementation of policies, and form a good development environment.

5.6 Strengthening Supervision of Policy Implementation

The government will strengthen supervision and inspection of the implementation of rural revitalization policies to ensure that policies and measures are effectively implemented and to prevent the waste of resources and ineffective implementation of policies. Strengthening supervision can identify problems in time and adjust strategies to ensure the maximum effect of policies.

5.7 Focus on Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development

While promoting rural revitalization, the government pays attention to ecological protection and sustainable use of resources to avoid environmental damage caused by overdevelopment. Protecting the natural environment helps to maintain ecological balance, promote long-term sustainable development, and leave valuable natural resources to future generations.

By actualizing the aforementioned recommendations, the government can efficaciously propel the profound progression of the rural revitalization policy, realizing the holistic rejuvenation and sustainable growth of rural regions.

6. Conclusion

As an integral segment of China's overarching objective to construct a contemporary socialist nation, the rural revitalization policy endeavors to condense the developmental divide between urban and rural territories, enhancing the economy and living standards in rural locales. Through the categorized assessment and review of rural revitalization policies, coupled with the case analysis of specific regions such as Taixing City, Jiangsu Province, this study arrives at the subsequent conclusions.

The rural revitalization policy has notched up notable achievements in spurring agricultural modernization, upgrading infrastructure, and fostering diverse economic advancement. These policies have proficiently elevated agricultural production efficiency, augmented farmers' income, and bettered the quality of life for rural inhabitants. The mechanism behind the rural revitalization policy predominantly manifests itself in elevating agricultural production efficiency, enhancing infrastructure, nurturing emerging sectors, and improving public service standards. These measures are poised to bridge the developmental gap between urban and rural zones and promote social equality and harmony.

The enactment of the rural revitalization policy also encounters numerous obstacles and quandaries, including insufficient capital investment, lackluster policy implementation, and uneven regional development. The presence of these issues has somewhat affected the policy's overall efficacy and depth.

In response to these quandaries, this study presents a series of policy recommendations, encompassing bolstering research, development, and dissemination of agricultural science and technology, upgrading rural infrastructure, fostering varied economic expansion, enhancing public service standards, refining financial backing and incentive structures, tightening policy implementation supervision, and prioritizing environmental conservation and sustainable advancement. These proposals aim to provide a reference for the continual refinement and betterment of rural revitalization policies.

In summary, the rural revitalization policy has played a crucial role in bridging the developmental divide between urban and rural zones, achieving commendable outcomes. Nonetheless, to assure its perpetual effective execution, policy measures necessitate further enhancement, and prevailing issues and challenges demand addressing. Through relentless amendments and improvements to the rural revitalization policy, it is anticipated to realize the comprehensive rejuvenation and sustained advancement of rural regions, contributing towards the realization of the grand Chinese dream—the great renaissance of the Chinese nation.

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