

# Research on the Foundation, Current Situation, and Countermeasures of Rural Tourism Development under the Background of Rural Revitalization: A Case Study of Tantou Village in Wuyi County

Yingyi Wu, Ting Li

School of Marxism, Zhejiang Normal University, Jinhua, China

**Abstract:** Against the backdrop of the rural revitalization strategy, the modern rural tourism industry advocating a return to pastoral life has gradually gained popularity. This article takes Tantou Village as an example to explore the construction and development of modern rural tourism. The paper expounds and analyzes the foundation and current development status of rural tourism industry in Tantou Village, revealing deficiencies in promotion, innovation, renovation, and talent. Based on the current development status of rural tourism industry in Tantou Village, targeted and practical countermeasures are proposed, including diversified and systematic promotion, creation of distinctive tourism features, improvement of ancient building restoration, coordinated management of tourism development, and the adoption of a "service-driven model." These measures aim to facilitate new development in Tantou Village's tourism industry and expand its impact from a specific context to a broader scope, providing valuable strategies for the positive growth of rural tourism in the context of the rural revitalization strategy.

**Keywords:** Rural Revitalization, Rural Tourism, Tantou Village.

## 1. Introduction

Rural tourism is often described as a "poetic retreat." With the continuous improvement of living standards, modern rural tourism has become a unique and charming landscape in the tourism industry. In this context, we take Tantou Village in Wuyi County as an example to explore rural tourism development from the perspective of rural revitalization. Seizing the opportunity of rural revitalization, this region leverages its typical geographical and cultural resources, providing valuable references for the development of rural tourism in other areas.

## 2. The "Coupled Linkage" Relationship between Rural Revitalization and Rural Tourism Development

The rural revitalization strategy is a significant national initiative aimed at promoting rural development. It was first proposed by General Secretary Xi Jinping in the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in 2017, and in 2018, the Central Government issued Document No. 1, which provided a comprehensive arrangement for rural revitalization efforts. Rural revitalization primarily involves rejuvenating multiple aspects of rural life, including politics, economy, culture, society, and ecology, with the ultimate goal of making rural areas prosperous, ecologically livable, culturally refined, effectively governed, and prosperous places to live. The definition of rural tourism has not been fully unified in domestic and international academia. Currently, it is generally considered to encompass the following elements: tourism and leisure as the purpose, rural areas as the destination, and activities mainly focusing on experiencing rural culture, visiting rural attractions, and engaging in rural dining and accommodation.

Although rural revitalization and rural tourism are two distinct systems, both cover various aspects, such as ecology, economy, society, and culture, and are integrated systems. They are highly correlated and coupled, forming a mutually beneficial and harmonious relationship. Rural areas serve as the living space and the core of tourism activities in rural tourism, while rural revitalization provides strong economic support, stable social order, distinctive rural culture, a sound ecological environment, and improved public services for the development of rural tourism. Simultaneously, the vibrant development of rural tourism can also promote the process of rural revitalization. The development of rural tourism can create numerous job opportunities and economic income, facilitate rural industrial restructuring, contribute to rural cultural refinement, and foster a livable and suitable ecological environment, among other benefits. The achievements of rural revitalization can be maximized through the development and consolidation of rural tourism, and the benefits of rural tourism development can be utilized to advance the process of rural revitalization. Thus, the rural revitalization strategy provides a favorable opportunity for the healthy development of rural tourism. From a perspective of system coupling, this paper takes the tourism development in Tantou Village, Wuyi County, Zhejiang Province, as an example to explore the development of rural tourism under the coupled interaction between rural revitalization and rural tourism. It aims to provide theoretical guidance and reference significance for the coordinated and integrated development of both fields.

## 3. The Foundation of Tantou Village's Rural Tourism Development

### 3.1. Geographical and Environmental Resources

Tantou Village is situated in the subtropical monsoon

region, boasting a temperate climate and abundant sunlight. Located in the northwestern part of Wuyi County, the village enjoys a relatively flat terrain and a strategic geographical position. The Bai'e Creek flows around the eastern part of the village, while the Baiyangdu to Jinhua 18-mile highway passes through its western region, providing convenient transportation access. The village possesses a rich variety of forest vegetation and diverse tree species, along with abundant nursery resources, with a particular focus on the cultivation of osmanthus, which exhibits both significant economic and ornamental values.

### 3.2. Cultural Resources

Tantou Village's traditional culture exemplifies a microcosm of Chinese civilization, characterized by distinct local features, a long historical legacy, profound meanings, and rich traditional folklore. The village proudly preserves numerous valuable ancient buildings, exemplifying the architectural heritage of various historical periods. These buildings, designed in harmony with the local environment, often display a symmetrical layout. Notably, the village is also home to several provincial intangible cultural heritages, such as the Wuyue kiln, Tantou horse lantern, bullfighting, the Eight Immortals play, and oral storytelling. These intangible cultural heritages represent the authentic expressions of the region's indigenous culture, reflecting the production practices, lifestyle, folk customs, and aesthetic preferences of its inhabitants. Tantou Village's cultural resources vividly showcase its unique identity and cultural allure, serving as a continuous source of inspiration and empowerment for the local community's development and heritage preservation.

### 3.3. Government Support

In line with the requirements of the rural revitalization strategy and adhering to the theme of pragmatic implementation, Tantou Village has received significant support from various levels of government in terms of policies and funding for its tourism development. In terms of policies, in the first half of 2016, Jinhua City issued the "Management Measures for Special Funds for the Protection of Traditional Villages in Jinhua City," establishing a special fund allocation mechanism for the preservation of traditional villages and ancient buildings. In October 2017, the International Summit Forum on the Protection of Chinese Traditional Villages (Wuyi) held in Yu Yuan Village provided further direction for the protection and development of ancient villages. In terms of funding, in 2018, Tantou Village invested 7 million RMB to establish a core protection area of 18,000 square meters for the preservation of traditional culture and village heritage. Simultaneously, the provincial forestry department's competitive project, the provincial-level "Forest Villages," is actively being designed and planned, with a government total investment of 2 million RMB. In 2019, Tantou Village successfully became a tourist demonstration village, receiving a subsidy of 2.7 million RMB from the County Culture and Tourism Bureau. In the same year, the county government granted 1.17 million RMB for the construction of Tantou Village's county-level boutique village improvement project, which included the successful completion and utilization of parking lots, ancient house restorations, and road construction projects, significantly enhancing the appearance of the village. Thanks to the government's caring assistance, the rural revitalization work in Tantou Village has gained momentum and received solid

backing, fostering a climate of success and development.

## 4. Current Situation of Tantou Village's Tourism Development

### 4.1. Achievements in Tourism Development in Tantou Village

Against the backdrop of the current rural revitalization strategy, Tantou Village's tourism sector demonstrates significant potential and prospects for growth. In 2013, Tantou Village was included in the list of Beautiful Countryside Boutique Villages in Wuyi County. In 2017, it successfully applied for the national 3A-level tourist attraction status and became one of the first batch of traditional villages in Zhejiang Province. Within less than a year of receiving the 3A-level designation, Tantou Village was also named the "2018 Zhejiang Province Leisure Tourism Destination."

Riding on the popularity of rural tourism festivals, Tantou Village has organized various tourism events with distinct local characteristics. By leveraging local resources and integrating cultural and tourism elements, the village has hosted events such as the Wetland Cultural Festival, Mid-Autumn Poetry Meetings, and Wetland Photography Contests. Additionally, it has successfully attracted businesses like Tian Lu Cultural and Creative Park and Zhejiang Zangfeng Culture and Creativity Co., Ltd., laying a solid foundation for its growing reputation and increasing tourism revenue. The Secretary of the Village Party Branch, Lin Weiliang, mentioned that with the support from various levels of government and the community, Tantou Village has quickly gained recognition.

### 4.2. Challenges in Tantou Village's Tourism Development

#### 4.2.1. Insufficient Promotion, Low Awareness of Tantou Village's Tourism

The Italian National Tourism Board's Director, Mr. Moretti, once said, "Promotion is the locomotive driving the tourism industry forward." As an emerging featured village in rural tourism, Tantou Village is still in its early stages and urgently needs to enhance its promotion efforts and raise its profile. However, in the operation process, the tourism area of Tantou Village lacks strong promotional awareness and sufficient investment in promotion. It lacks a clear planning system and content strategy, and lacks professional new media promotion teams or talents for specialized and scientific management. As a result, the number of visitors mainly relies on nearby urban and rural residents, and Tantou Village's tourism brand is yet to be established.

#### 4.2.2. Insufficient Innovation, Leading to Homogenization Issues

As rural tourism continues to develop in various regions, the problem of homogenization has become increasingly prominent. Many rural tourism destinations simply copy successful models from other places, even if they make superficial changes. In essence, they lack true innovation and breakthroughs, and Tantou Village is no exception. While Tantou Village leverages artistic rural construction to support its rural revitalization and promotes rural tourism development through cultural and tourism integration, it is still limited by conservative marketing concepts, rudimentary infrastructure, and similar management structures. As a result,

the projects, products, and services lack distinctiveness and appeal, leading to low interest among tourists in revisiting Tantou Village, resulting in poor customer loyalty and a lack of core competitiveness in the fierce competition within the rural tourism industry.

#### **4.2.3. Insufficient Restoration, Hindering the Display of Historical Beauty of Ancient Buildings**

After several years of restoration, most of Tantou Village's ancient buildings have been preserved. However, during the restoration process, there was a lack of comprehensive research into the historical significance of Tantou Village's ancient architecture, making it challenging to showcase its unique cultural connotations, such as kiln culture, bullfighting culture, wetland culture, and filial piety culture. Currently, some traditional areas in the village still require urgent restoration, primarily for certain ancillary buildings and storage rooms, some of which are damaged and even abandoned. Furthermore, there are scattered modern buildings within the core protection area of the ancient village, which significantly damages the overall historical appearance of the village, weakening the inherent historical beauty of the architectural ensemble.

#### **4.2.4. Insufficient Talent, Lack of a Professional Management and Service System**

Improving the level of management and services poses a new and significant challenge for Tantou Village's tourism industry. The village adopts a lax management model, and most of the rural tourism practitioners are local villagers with relatively low levels of education. They have not undergone formal recruitment, tourism-specific training, or assessments. Additionally, some management personnel lack professional knowledge and managerial experience, resulting in fragmented development within different units, making it difficult to conduct systematic and coordinated planning. Consequently, the management and service of the tourism area are relatively chaotic.

## **5. Optimization Path for Tantou Village's Tourism Development**

### **5.1. Diversified and Systematic Promotion, Focusing on Building Tantou Village's Tourism Reputation**

To promote Tantou Village's tourism, it is essential to thoroughly explore and correctly position the village's tourism resources, targeting key attractions to attract tourists. This requires establishing a professional promotion team to develop a systematic promotion plan, conducting in-depth research, detailed classification, and scientific selection for the rural tourism market, ensuring precise and effective promotion. Various promotion methods should be pursued during the promotional process. Through literary means, Tantou Village can create catchy slogans that encapsulate its core features, or compile legends passed down through generations into story collections, arousing readers' strong desire to explore the village's history. Employing visual means, the village can produce unique promotional short films and documentaries, as well as conduct live broadcasts during large-scale cultural events, providing the public with an immersive experience. Utilizing advertising methods, Tantou Village can leverage various media channels such as the internet, newspapers, and outdoor advertisements to stimulate the visual and auditory senses of the audience,

emphasizing key points and creating special columns and sections dedicated to Tantou Village's tourism, ensuring attention-grabbing efforts. Additionally, the village can make use of invitation methods by capitalizing on celebrity effects. It can invite local TV hosts or other prominent figures to visit the village and participate in online and offline activities, maximizing the power of interpersonal communication.

### **5.2. In-Depth Cultural Exploration, Creating Distinctive Tourism**

Building a distinctive tourism brand based on its own foundation is vital for Tantou Village. The village possesses unique resources such as the picturesque Jiangnan-style architecture, Wuyue kiln culture, filial piety, Pan Wutan, pine forests, and wetland parks. It should position itself as "Preserving the Wuyue Kiln Heritage, Embracing Tantou's Watery Charm," and establish "Wuchuan poetry and painting, and leisurely songs at the waterfront" as the tourism theme, with an emphasis on creating a unique brand that showcases its regional cultural characteristics. Developing characteristic tourism projects and implementing functional zoning are crucial. Tantou Village's characteristic tourism projects can be developed and organized into three main functional zones. Firstly, a project centered on the cultural experience of the ancient village, actively guiding the formation of a tourist area with ancient village culture as its theme, offering activities like the Field Snail Girl Filial Piety Culture Study Tour and the Wetland Culture Festival. Secondly, projects related to rural countryside leisure, focusing on agricultural experiences, RV camping, mountain and forest greenways, and other leisure activities. Thirdly, projects that highlight the charm of the wetland, utilizing the excellent landscape resources of the Zhejiang Central Wetland Park to create the first stop for wetland sightseeing in the county.

### **5.3. Improving Restoration of Ancient Buildings to Enhance Tantou Village's Historical and Cultural Features**

The restoration of ancient buildings should follow the principles of integrity and authenticity, ensuring the maximum preservation of historical cultural heritage, street patterns, and historical cultural features within the core area of ancient buildings in Tantou Village. Professional personnel should analyze the damage to the ancient buildings in Tantou Village, the geographical environment, and building materials based on comprehensive historical data collection, and develop a scientifically sound restoration plan. Leveraging both professional knowledge and local craftsmanship, efforts should be made to restore the ancient appearance as much as possible. During the restoration process, attention should be given to the inheritance of cultural characteristics. Different cultural themes can be incorporated into different buildings, such as organizing photography exhibitions centered around wetland culture or establishing ceramic museums and experience halls with a focus on kiln culture. Strengthening the inheritance of cultural characteristics ensures the development of Tantou Village's historical culture and the distinctive features of tourism development. In terms of cultural relic preservation, the work should adhere to the principles of "protection first, rescue as a priority, rational utilization, and strengthened management." Based on the preservation condition of cultural relics, reasonable preservation goals should be objectively established to ensure the safety of cultural relics and avoid the loss of carriers of

heritage value. The classification of cultural heritage helps arrange the priority of protection in a hierarchical manner, which is conducive to preventing the loss of cultural value and maintaining an orderly and effective protection and management process.

#### **5.4. Implementing a "Service-Driven Model" and Coordinating Tourism Development and Management**

For effective tourism management in Tantou Village, unified planning and deployment are essential for addressing major issues. Local tourism management authorities should formulate unified rules and regulations and establish relevant departments for supervision to prevent excessive development of tourism resources from causing irreversible damage to the natural environment and to avoid blind and repetitive construction of tourism projects. In terms of service, adopting a "service-driven model" by providing high-quality services to satisfy tourists is essential. The aim should be to ensure that every tourist visiting the village returns home satisfied, creating a positive reputation and enhancing customer loyalty.

To elevate the management and service levels, it is necessary to set higher requirements for local tourism practitioners. Enhancing their management capabilities and service quality can be achieved through the following four aspects: Firstly, by recruiting specialized professionals with expertise and skills to further strengthen Tantou Village's tourism development with a solid foundation. Secondly, implementing regular on-the-job training programs to establish a tourism service team consisting of local villagers, enhancing their skills and knowledge to provide excellent service to tourists. Thirdly, recognizing and rewarding villagers who demonstrate integrity in their business practices and contribute constructive suggestions for rural tourism development, serving as role models for others to follow. Lastly, organizing periodic exchange meetings for tourism-related personnel to share experiences and best practices, fostering a culture of collaboration and mutual learning,

ultimately achieving mutual benefits and continuous improvement in the tourism sector. Through elevating the work quality of rural tourism practitioners, Tantou Village can drive the development of its rural tourism industry, ultimately achieving sustainable growth in its tourism sector.

## **6. Conclusion**

As a "poem at the doorstep and a distant journey," Tantou Village has achieved remarkable success in recent years, relying on its wetland and cultural resources for development. This paper, based on current research and field investigations, proposes four effective and powerful improvement measures, aiming to provide momentum and support for the continuous development of tourism in Tantou Village. In the prevailing context of rural revitalization, numerous "Tantou Villages" have emerged across the country. It is our hope that this paper serves as an example, guiding these rural areas to overcome challenges and embrace a new era of growth and recovery. May it provide valuable insights and illuminate a brighter path for the development of rural tourism in countless villages nationwide.

## **References**

- [1] Wu, H., & Jin, D. (2018). Research on Rural Tourism Development in Hainan from the Perspective of Beautiful Countryside Construction. *Tourism Review (Fortnightly)*, 24, 132-133.
- [2] Jiang, Z., & Hu, X. (2019). Research on Rural Tourism Development Strategies in Zhangzhou City, Fujian Province, under the Perspective of Rural Revitalization Strategy. *Architecture and Culture*, 8, 36-37.
- [3] Sun, Y. (2017). Research on Rural Tourism Development and Industrial Development Strategy in Henan Province. *China Agricultural Resources and Regional Planning*, 38(3), 208-213.
- [4] Li, Z. (2019). Research on the Coupling Mechanism and Coordinated Development of Rural Revitalization and Rural Tourism System: A Case Study of Fenghuang County, Hunan Province. *Geographical Research*, 38(3), 643-654.