

An exploration of the path of rural e-commerce to boost rural revitalization in poverty-stricken areas-- A case study of Dawu County, Hubei Province

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Keywords: Rural Revitalization, Rural e-commerce, Path Research

Abstract: Rural e-commerce plays a significant role in promoting the development of poverty alleviation areas. While it is conducive to consolidating and expanding the achievements of poverty alleviation and effectively linking with rural revitalization, it can also promote Chinese path to modernization with agricultural and rural modernization. In order to further study the effective measures of using rural e-commerce to consolidate and expand the achievements of poverty alleviation and promote rural revitalization in poverty alleviation areas, Dawu County, Hubei Province, is taken as an example to analyze its advantages and obstacles in developing rural e-commerce, and specific targeted measures are proposed based on the development idea of consolidating advantages and weaknesses. So as to provide reference for other poverty relief areas.

1. Realistic Significance of Developing Rural E-commerce for Rural Revitalization

Rural e-commerce, as an important starting point for the success of poverty alleviation, should continue to play a significant role after entering a new stage of rural revitalization. On the one hand, rural e-commerce plays a positive role in consolidating and expanding the achievements of poverty alleviation and promoting the effective connection between poverty alleviation and rural revitalization. On the other hand, the development of rural e-commerce is also conducive to the in-depth implementation and implementation of the rural revitalization strategy, helping to better create a new countryside with thriving industries, livable ecology, civilized rural style, effective governance and affluent life, and promoting Chinese path to modernization with agricultural and rural modernization.

1.1. Rural E-commerce is Conducive to Consolidating and Expanding the Success of Poverty Alleviation

As a new economic development model derived from the information age, rural e-commerce can promote economic income and talent harvest. In the process of poverty eradication, Dawu County took rural e-commerce as the starting point, actively promoted the combination of e-commerce and traditional agriculture, and effectively promoted the completion of the task of poverty eradication. Although it is very important to get rid of poverty, it is more important to keep the fruits of the

victory of poverty alleviation. During the overlapping period of tasks of consolidating and expanding the achievements of poverty alleviation and effectively connecting with the rural revitalization, continue to give play to the advantages of rural e-commerce, and creatively explore a new model that closely combines e-commerce with rural development, which will undoubtedly help consolidate and expand the successful fruits of poverty alleviation in Dawu County.

1.2. Rural E-commerce Promotes Chinese Path to Modernization with Agricultural and Rural Modernization

As a new economic development model, rural e-commerce can effectively integrate rural characteristic resources and realize the interconnection between the buyer's market and the seller's market. In the process of developing rural e-commerce, with the increasingly improved infrastructure construction, the gathering of professional and technical talents, and the inclined guidance of national policies, the realization of agricultural and rural modernization is just around the corner. The report of the 20th CPC National Congress pointed out that the central task of our party is to realize the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation with Chinese path to modernization.[1] As a big agricultural country, China cannot achieve Chinese path to modernization without agricultural and rural modernization. With its unique advantages, rural e-commerce can drive agricultural and rural modernization in the process of development, thus realizing Chinese path to modernization, and finally realizing the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.

2. Case Analysis of Rural E-commerce Development in Dawu County

Under the jurisdiction of Xiaogan City, Hubei Province, Dawu County is located at the border between Hubei and Henan and the southwest section of Dabie Mountains. It is densely covered with hills. Affected by the geographical environment and historical traditions, Dawu County's economic development is extremely backward. As early as 1986, Dawu County was included in 331 state-level poverty-stricken counties. It was not until 2020 that Dawu County took off the title of "poverty-stricken county". It can be seen that the task of poverty eradication in Dawu County took many years and was extremely difficult. Although Dawu County has obvious characteristics and advantages, its disadvantages are also obvious, seriously hindering the effectiveness of rural e-commerce.

2.1. Advantage basis

2.1.1. Resource Advantages

Dawu County, relying on its unique geographical environment and historical evolution, has developed a number of well-known agricultural products according to local conditions. Dawu peanuts are characterized by small, fruity, complete and crispy grains. In 1957, Dawu County was awarded the title of Peanut Hometown and the first batch of peanut base counties in China by the Ministry of Agriculture. In 2012, Dawu peanuts were approved as China's national geographical indication products. In 2021, the county's peanut planting area will reach 282989 mu, and 50938 tons of peanuts will be produced, an increase of 1.3% over the previous year. This has greatly helped Dawu County people increase their income. In addition to peanuts, Dawu County also has rich forest products, which have good resource support for the development of rural e-commerce.[2] As shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Output of characteristic agricultural and forestry products in Dawu County in 2021

Crop name	Output (ton)	Year on year growth rate
Tea	7139	9%
Chinese chestnut	40623	2%
Tung oil seed	2650	2.4%
Chinese tallow tree	9968	0.8%
Ginkgo	985	10.2%
Oil-tea camellia	14559	7.4%

Dawu County also has unique red culture tourism resources. Dawu County, as an old revolutionary base area, is one of the top ten general counties in China. In this red land, more than 100 senior generals of the Republic have emerged, nurtured a thick red culture and formed a distinctive red gene. Dawu County has many red revolutionary memorial bases. In 2021, the county will receive 4.5 million tourists, a year-on-year increase of 60.7%; The comprehensive tourism income was 2.52 billion yuan, with a year-on-year growth of 125.0%, and one national 4A scenic spot was created. It can be seen that the unique tourism resources of Dawu County can drive economic growth to a considerable extent. Dawu County's rich red tourism resources provide a large number of high-quality developable resources for the development of online and offline tourism e-commerce, innovative immersion tourism development through the Internet, etc.

2.1.2. Policy Support

Since 1983, Dawu has been successively identified as the key old revolutionary base area county in Dabie Mountains, the national poverty alleviation and development county in mountainous areas, the national poverty alleviation and development key county, the national key poverty alleviation and tackling county in Dabie Mountains contiguous poverty-stricken areas, and the provincial pilot county for poverty alleviation in poor mountainous areas. By 2020, all the documented poverty-stricken villages in Dawu will be out of poverty, and all the poverty-stricken people will be out of poverty. In April 2020, the Hubei Provincial Government officially approved Dawu to quit the poverty-stricken county.[3]

In order to continue to consolidate and expand the achievements of poverty alleviation and promote the effective connection between the achievements of poverty alleviation and rural revitalization, China has issued a series of important documents to provide top-level institutional guarantee for rural revitalization. After sorting out some policies issued by the Party and the state, it is found that various documents contain measures on developing rural e-commerce to promote the development of rural areas.[4] As shown in Table 2 and Table 3:

Table 2: National level policies on rural e-commerce to promote rural revitalization

Main body	Time	Name
The CPC Central Committee and The State Council	2018.01.02	Opinions on Implementing the Rural Revitalization Strategy
	2018.09.26	The Strategic Plan for Rural Revitalization (2018-2022)
	2019.06.28	The Guiding Opinions on Promoting the Revitalization of Rural Industries
	2020.12.16	Opinions on Effectively Consolidating and Expanding the Achievements of Poverty Alleviation with Rural vitalization
	2021.01.04	Opinions on Comprehensively Promoting Rural Revitalization and Accelerating Agriculture and Rural Modernization
	2021.02.23	Opinions on Accelerating the Revitalization of Rural Talents
	2022.01.04	The Opinions on Comprehensively Promoting the Key Work of Rural Revitalization in 2022
	2022.02.11	The Plan for Promoting Agriculture and Rural Modernization during the 14th Five-Year Plan Period

Table 3: Local level policies on rural e-commerce promoting rural revitalization

Main body	Time	Name
Xiaogan Municipal Government	2020.01.03	Xiaogan Rural Revitalization Strategic Plan (2018-2020)
	2022.01.29	The Fourteenth Five Year Plan of Xiaogan City for Promoting Agricultural and Rural Modernization (2021-2025)
	2022.03.02	Implementation Plan of Xiaogan City to Support the Revitalization and Development of Old Revolutionary Base Areas in the New Era
Dawu County Government	2021.12.10	The Fourteenth Five Year Plan for the National Economic and Social Development of Dawu County and the Outline of the Vision Goals for the Year 2035

2.2 Blocking Point Analysis

2.2.1 Serious Aging of Population

People are the most active factor in the productive forces, and economic development is always inseparable from the role of people. According to the results of the seventh national population census, the general trend of population change in the country is that the total population size continues to rise, with an increase of 5.38% compared with the sixth census. The population aged 0-14, 60 and above all shows an upward trend, especially the proportion of the population aged 60 and above rose by 5.44 percentage points, while the population aged 15-59 showed a downward trend, with a decrease of 6.79 percentage points compared with the sixth census.[7] At present, the aging population in China is still very serious. Since 2010, the size and proportion of the elderly population in China have been increasing year by year, with a relatively stable and slow growth rate. From 2019 to 2020, a new inflection point has emerged in the proportion of the aging population(Refer to Figure 1).[8]

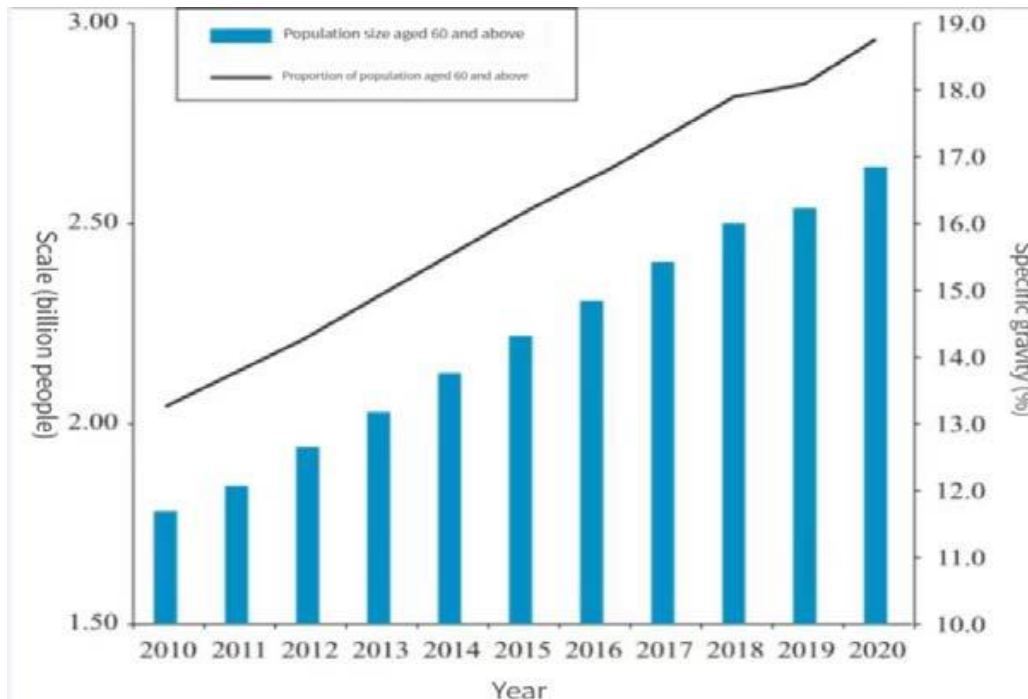


Figure 1: Size and proportion of Population Aged 60 and over in 2010-2020.

The population change trend of Dawu County is basically consistent with the trend of the

seventh population census. Among the permanent residents of Dawu County, the population aged 15-59 has shown a downward trend, from 71% in 2010 to 60.02% in 2020, with a decline of 10.98 percentage points; The proportion of the elderly aged 60 and above has increased from 12.68% in 2010 to 20.50% in 2020, with a population proportion of 7.82 percentage points.[9] Based on the above data, it can be concluded that the proportion of the working age population in Dawu County has decreased, the proportion of the elderly population has increased, and the degree of population aging has deepened.

The development of rural e-commerce can not be separated from talents, and rural revitalization can not be separated from talents. However, Dawu County is faced with the problem of decreasing the number of working age population and deepening the degree of population aging, which seriously affects the effectiveness of rural e-commerce in helping agriculture. Most young and middle-aged labors in Dawu County choose to go out to work to seek development opportunities with higher economic benefits. The main body of agricultural activities is mainly middle-aged and elderly labors. Influenced by practical experience, education level and other factors, it is difficult to master, accept and maintain trust in developing rural e-commerce, which to some extent hinders the development of rural e-commerce and is not conducive to innovation and consolidation of the new model of poverty alleviation. In addition, the prominent bottlenecks restricting the development of Dawu County also include the difficulties in training, attracting and retaining talents, especially the lack of rural doctors, rural cadres and rural scientific and technological talents. This is also an unavoidable and urgent practical dilemma for the realization of agricultural and rural modernization.

2.2.2 Weak Economic Foundation

Getting rid of poverty is not the end, but the starting point of a new life and a new struggle. The Party and the state put forward the development thought of "one more way to help", pointing out that in the next five years, it is necessary to strengthen the endogenous development momentum of poverty relief areas, effectively build a governance system to prevent poverty return, and promote the effective connection between consolidating the achievements of poverty relief and rural revitalization. Since the approval of the Hubei Provincial Government in 2020, Dawu County has officially announced poverty eradication, which has opened a new stage of consolidating and expanding the achievements of poverty eradication and effectively linking rural revitalization. Although Dawu County successfully completed the historical task of poverty eradication, there are a series of development problems, such as short time of poverty eradication, weak modern industrial system, etc.

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3. Research on the Path of Rural E-commerce Serving Rural Revitalization

Dawu County, as a poverty free area and an old revolutionary base area, is a typical representative and reference for China's existing vast poverty free areas. By analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of rural e-commerce development in Dawu County and taking strengthening advantages and complementing weaknesses as the basic development idea, we can draw some development paths that are universal and referential.

3.1. Improve the Quality of Agricultural and Forestry Featured Products and Improve the Modern Industrial Chain System

To develop rural e-commerce, characteristic agricultural and forestry products are the basic support. Most of the poverty alleviation and decapitation areas are located in remote areas. The ecological environment is well protected, the quality of agricultural and forestry products is excellent and the price is beautiful, and there is a broad potential consumer market. However, as raw materials, the intrinsic attached value of primary agricultural and forestry products is not high, and the direct sale of agricultural and forestry products does not play a significant role in driving regional economic growth. We must extend the industrial chain, further process agricultural and forestry products to increase their economic added value, develop more derivative secondary products, and transform the traditional single chain dominated by primary product trading into a multi chain synchronous development, and extend the upstream and downstream chains. Taking peanut products as an example, they have high nutritional value, rich in protein, crisp taste and great potential for peanut food processing. With the enhancement of domestic residents' awareness of food nutrition and health care, the proportion of peanut consumption and comprehensive utilization in China has increased. The proportion of peanut food processing has increased year by year, approaching 50%. As for peanut products in Dawu County, planting experience projects can be launched in combination with featured rural entertainment projects when planting agricultural products; For the secondary processing of peanut products, in addition to the traditional extraction of peanut oil products, food processing industry can also be introduced to produce special flavor food. Therefore, for poverty alleviation areas, we must deepen the development and utilization of agricultural and forestry featured products and build a complete modern industrial system.

3.2. Fully Develop Characteristic Cultural and Tourism Resources and Innovate new Development Mode of Tourism E-Commerce

In recent years, immersion tourism, online tourism and other new tourism models have emerged, bringing new economic growth points. Poverty relief regions can rely on their simple and natural tourism resources to develop traditional tourism industry and improve the service quality of traditional offline tourism, and at the same time, innovative development of new tourism e-commerce models such as "immersive tourism", "online tourism" and "cloud tourism". At the same time, with the help of tourism e-commerce, we will increase the publicity and promotion of agricultural and forestry products with local characteristics. In the post epidemic era, due to the repeated impact of the COVID-19, travel convenience has been greatly reduced and tourism consumption has been impacted. "Immersive tourism" is a new way of tourism accompanied by the experience economy, that is, through panoramic interactive experience of sight, touch, hearing and smell, tourists can feel "immersive". "Immersive tourism" can greatly reduce people's travel costs and time costs, and is not affected by the epidemic. You can also experience unique tourism scenery without leaving home. Taking Dawu County's characteristic red tourism cultural resources as an example, we can rely on its unique red tourism resources, use the Internet to develop an immersive

tourism experience, carry out patriotic education activities, and deeply experience the hardships of the revolutionary road, which is of high educational significance. Therefore, for the poverty relief areas, we must rely on their distinctive cultural tourism resources to develop a new model of "e-commerce+ immersive tourism".

3.3. Increase the Introduction of Professional Talents and Improve the Application Skills of E-commerce for all

Talents are weak points and weak links for poverty alleviation regions. According to the cask effect, the degree of regional economic development depends on the shortest short board, so regional economic development must complement the short board. For talent development, we need to consider how to create talents and how to retain talents. On the issue of talent creation, on the one hand, we rely on the introduction of excellent professional and technical talents to settle in and cultivate a few specialized, refined and top talents; On the other hand, we should rely on endogenous power to cultivate talents, improve the basic professional skills of the labor force in a wider range, and improve the overall skill level. In order to cultivate labor force endogenously, various skills training courses can be held to encourage farmers to apply and participate in practice; Cooperate with local vocational and technical schools to cultivate professional and technical talents to achieve "order type" training. On the issue of retaining talents, we should try our best to improve the construction of regional infrastructure, ensure the material and spiritual life needs of talents, provide welfare subsidies and preferences in all aspects through policies, and use government recognition as a spiritual incentive to fully mobilize the enthusiasm of professional and skilled talents, and even attract the return of local migrant workers. Dawu County has a serious aging population and a serious shortage of labor force. The government has taken the lead in setting up a number of "Wealth Sharing Workshops" to vigorously develop the e-commerce economy of characteristic agricultural products. Through the first trial, the county has "incubated" 23 live broadcast "Wealth Sharing Workshops", attracted more than 200 workers in the county, and earned more than 67 million yuan from live broadcast with goods.[10]

3.4 Consolidate County Infrastructure Construction and Realize Agricultural and Rural Modernization

The development of rural e-commerce is inseparable from the construction of sound infrastructure. A complete rural e-commerce supply chain system needs to be supported by product processing, packaging industry, logistics and transportation, communication network and other related industries and infrastructure construction. Relatively speaking, poverty alleviation regions have relatively weak industrial foundation, imperfect related industrial systems, and lack of solid supporting industries and infrastructure, which is not conducive to the development of rural e-commerce, thus affecting the modernization process of agriculture and rural areas. According to the development idea of consolidating advantages and complementing weaknesses, one of the major tasks of poverty relief areas is to continue to consolidate county infrastructure construction and improve the modern industrial system. We will increase government subsidies, improve transportation networks, further repair roads and expressways, and improve transportation efficiency. Improve the coverage rate of Internet, improve the utilization rate of rural e-commerce, improve the signal quality of rural network coverage, and ensure the stable operation of rural e-commerce.

4. Conclusion

Rural revitalization is the goal of the current and future period, with a significant task and a glorious mission. As a key development area, poverty relief areas should not only ensure poverty relief, but also achieve high-quality development on the basis of poverty relief and achieve the ambitious goal of rural revitalization. Taking Dawu County as an example, there are resource advantages and solid policy support in the process of development of poverty relief areas, as well as problems of aging population and weak economic foundation. According to the development idea of consolidating advantages and complementing weaknesses, it is proposed to improve the quality of agricultural and forestry featured products and improve the modern industrial chain system; It is necessary to fully develop characteristic cultural and tourism resources and innovate the new mode of tourism e-commerce development; We should increase the introduction of professional talents and improve the application skills of e-commerce for all; Four measures should be taken to consolidate the construction of county infrastructure and realize the modernization of agriculture and rural areas(Refer to Figure 2).

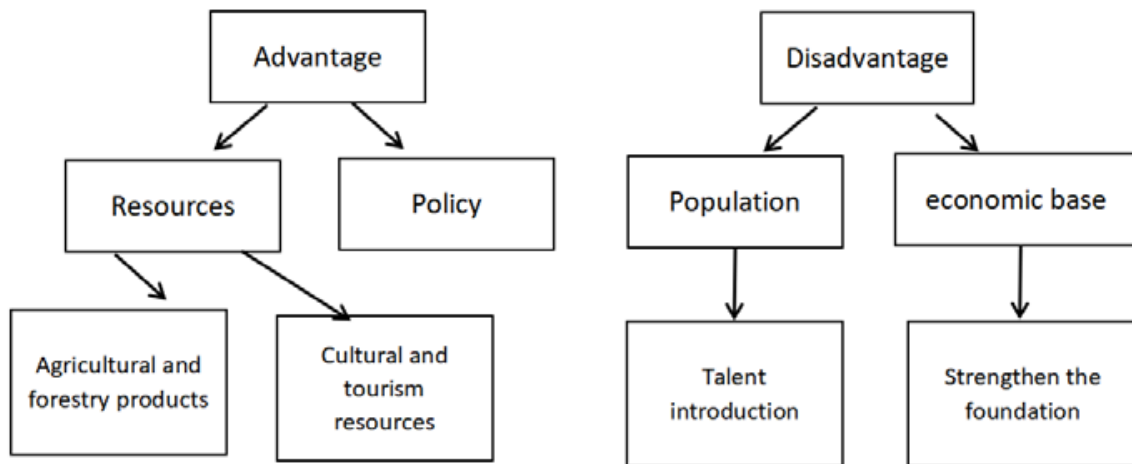


Figure 2: Blocking points and countermeasures

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