

Synergetic Development of Rural Revitalization and Ecotourism: A Case Study of Jingning County

Hang Wang

Zhejiang Yuexiu University, Shaoxing 312000, China

Abstract: *Ecotourism represents not only a pivotal approach for the sustainable development of tourism but also a critical driver and distinctive pathway to promote rural revitalization. The core objective of rural revitalization is to enhance the economic, social, cultural, and ecological environments in rural areas, thereby improving residents' quality of life. Ecotourism emphasizes boosting the rural economy and increasing farmers' income while preserving the ecological environment. Together, these efforts contribute to the goal of constructing beautiful countryside. Rural revitalization and ecotourism exhibit a high degree of synergy in ecological protection, infrastructure development, and economic benefits. Drawing upon the practical experience of synergistic development, we should leverage regional resource advantages to promote integrated tourism across entire regions. This will facilitate industrial convergence, enhance tourism amenities, preserve traditional ecological philosophies, develop rural accommodation industries, and intensify the cultivation of tourism professionals. These measures aim to foster the harmonious development of rural area ecotourism and rural revitalization, thereby contributing to the comprehensive rejuvenation of rural areas.*

Keywords: Ecotourism; Rural revitalization; Sustainable development; Jingning County.

1. INTRODUCTION

The implementation of the rural revitalization strategy represents a significant decision and deployment as outlined by the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China. The 20th National Congress Report further emphasized the comprehensive promotion of rural revitalization, marking a new starting point for the work related to agriculture, rural areas and farmers. The rural revitalization strategy sets forth overall requirements including “prosperous industries, livable ecology, civilized village customs, effective governance, and prosperous lives”, with “adhering to harmonious coexistence between humans and nature and pursuing green rural development” as one of its core principles. This strategy provides guidance for achieving agricultural and rural modernization. Given China’s long history, vast territory, and abundant resources, especially in its extensive rural regions which contain diverse natural and cultural-historical resources, vigorously developing rural tourism is crucial for realizing the comprehensive revitalization of rural areas. As an important sector of the contemporary national economy and a key driver for the sustainable development of rural areas in the new era, rural tourism must leverage the advantages of the rural ecological environment and distinctive culture to realize an ecological industry. This places higher demands on the development of rural tourism in the new era. To ensure the healthy development of rural tourism, it is imperative to adhere to the concept of prioritizing ecology and green development, and to implement ecological tourism. This approach serves as a vital engine and characteristic path for promoting rural revitalization.

2. RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE SYNERGISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL REVITALIZATION AND ECOTOURISM

2.1 Research Perspectives

In the context of the nation’s proactive implementation of the rural revitalization strategy, ecotourism is anticipated to assume a more significant role. Jin Yuanyuan et al. posited that fostering rural ecological health tourism serves as an efficacious approach to advance rural revitalization. This necessitates synergistic efforts from government, enterprises, and institutions to establish a cooperative system involving multiple stakeholders, thereby achieving sustainable and mutually beneficial development [1]. Cui Maosen and his team elucidated the coupling and coordination dynamics between ecotourism and rural revitalization in the Yellow River Basin through model analysis, explicating the internal mechanisms of mutual promotion and cyclical development [2].

Xiang Yanping extensively examined the multifaceted internal mechanisms by which rural tourism promotes rural revitalization, focusing on aspects such as agriculture, rural areas, farmers, and production factors. He highlighted that rural tourism can enhance the rural environment, infrastructure, road traffic, and village appearance, improve the quality of the rural ecological environment, leverage the advantages of ecological livability, and fulfill people's aspirations for ecological sustainability. Consequently, this contributes to realizing the goal of ecological livability in rural areas and promoting rural revitalization [3]. Domestic scholars have acknowledged the pivotal role of ecotourism in advancing rural revitalization. At the theoretical research level, they primarily consider rural revitalization as a backdrop, discussing multi-party coordination, existing challenges, optimization mechanisms, and the integration of various elements in ecotourism development. However, there has been limited exploration into the synergistic perspective of the intrinsic fit between ecotourism and rural revitalization. Therefore, we frame the discussion of ecotourism and rural revitalization within the theory of Synergetics, complemented by an in-depth analysis of the case study of ecotourism development in Jingning She Autonomous County.

2.2 Synergetics

Synergetics, has gradually emerged and developed since the 1970s based on interdisciplinary research, becoming an important branch of systems science. The core of this theory is to coordinate two or more distinct resources or entities to achieve common objectives through mutual cooperation, thereby fostering mutually beneficial and win-win development outcomes. The essence of synergistic development lies in emphasizing collective progress, the equal status and indispensable role of all parties within a shared temporal and spatial context, and the relationship characterized by concerted efforts, interdependence, and mutual cooperation. As noted by Ma Shijun, a distinguished contemporary ecologist in China, "synergistic development not only entails the harmonization of various components within the ecological-economic system but also encompasses comprehensive coordination across diverse fields such as ecology, economy, science and technology, education, and society" [4]. From this perspective, synergistic development refers to the coordination and cooperation between two or more distinct resources or entities to jointly achieve established goals and realize mutually beneficial and win-win development results. This concept has been widely applied in numerous research domains, yielding significant achievements. For instance, some scholars have explored the theoretical mechanisms of high-quality synergistic development between the real economy and human resources, proposing that "high-quality development of the real economy can drive supply of human resources, which in turn further promotes its development" [5]. At the same time, this study emphasizes the synergistic effect between rural cooperatives and targeted poverty alleviation. It proposes that if national financial poverty alleviation resources were to be directly channeled into cooperatives, transforming targeted farmers' poverty alleviation funds and resources into equity for impoverished farmers within these cooperatives, while ensuring their legitimate rights and interests are fully protected, it would facilitate synergistic progress and a win-win situation for both parties [6]. Furthermore, the theory of synergistic development has been applied to the integrated development of rural tourism and the cultural industry. By analyzing practical experience, the internal logic of the synergistic development between rural tourism and the cultural industry has been extracted, providing theoretical guidance for addressing practical challenges [7].

Synergetics has been embraced by numerous countries and regions globally as a foundational principle for achieving sustainable social development. It has been extensively applied in China to analyze urban-rural integration, grassroots governance, rural revitalization, and other domains. This theory offers a valuable analytical framework for examining the synergistic development of rural revitalization and ecotourism, providing significant theoretical insights that facilitate harmonious progress across various sectors and levels.

3. THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SYNERGISTIC DEVELOPMENT BETWEEN RURAL REVITALIZATION AND ECOTOURISM IN JINGNING COUNTY

3.1 Align Ecological Protection Objectives

Ecotourism refers to the responsible tourism activities or tourism methods that can promote the economic development of the tourist destination and effectively protect the environment and resources based on the specific high-quality natural ecological environment and ecological landscape. It covers all kinds of tourism activities that implement the principles of ecological protection and make the tourist destination realize sustainable development [8]. Ecotourism, as the inevitable product of tourism development to a certain stage, represents the highest form of sustainable tourism, which has been applied and practiced in natural areas and specific social and cultural areas. As a pivotal element of the rural revitalization strategy, President Xi Jinping has repeatedly emphasized the critical importance of ecological and environmental protection. He put forward the concept of "clear water and green

mountains are gold hills and silver mountains”, emphasizing the inclusive nature of a good ecological environment for people’s well-being. Whether it is promoting ecotourism or implementing rural revitalization, the organic combination and mutual promotion of the two will help achieve the grand goal of ecological protection.

With the rapid advancement of ecological tourism in Jingning, several environmental protection challenges have gradually surfaced. Some practitioners excessively prioritize short-term economic gains, leading to over-development of tourism, which has caused damage to the original ecological environment. Additionally, the conflict between preserving local cultural heritage and commercialization has become increasingly pronounced. While commercial structures and decorations are ubiquitous, rural natural resources, traditional culture, and folk customs remain underutilized. In recent years, Jingning County has proactively explored integrating its unique resource advantages with the rural revitalization strategy to establish a modern green industry system. By systematically developing and expanding the industrial and value chain of ecological products, the scale of the ecological economy continues to grow, and the benefits of green industries are becoming increasingly evident. Presently, the pristine ecological environment has become Jingning’s “golden card” for attracting tourists and exemplifies its commitment to ecological revitalization. The goals of ecological protection and its development strategies are highly aligned. President Xi emphasized that we must uphold the principle of harmonious coexistence between humans and nature, treating the ecological environment as we would our own lives, respecting, adapting to, and protecting nature with reverence. We must collectively safeguard this irreplaceable home on Earth, heal the wounds inflicted upon the ecological environment, create a harmonious and livable human habitat, and ensure that everyone can enjoy the beauty of nature. From an environmental protection perspective, there is significant potential for synergistic development between ecotourism and rural revitalization.

3.2 Integrated Infrastructure Development

In the development of ecotourism, infrastructure construction plays an indispensable role. A robust infrastructure is essential for promoting the effective advancement of ecotourism. Well-developed road, rail, and air transport networks can significantly enhance the accessibility of ecotourism destinations, facilitating easier access to remote areas or nature reserves, thus attracting a greater number of tourists. The provision of supporting facilities such as accommodation, dining, and sanitation directly influences visitor comfort and satisfaction. Eco-friendly hotels and home-stays offer superior experiences and appeal to environmentally conscious travelers. Enhanced infrastructure also improves visitor safety through the implementation of monitoring systems, rescue stations, and first aid facilities, thereby enhancing visitors’ sense of trust and security. Consequently, the impact of infrastructure on ecotourism is multifaceted, affecting not only tourist experiences and behaviors but also encompassing economic, environmental, and sociocultural dimensions. High-quality infrastructure construction and management are crucial supports for the sustainable development of ecotourism.

Prior to the implementation of the national rural revitalization strategy, Jingning had made significant progress in infrastructure development. However, its overall development level still required improvement. Among the 1977.99 kilometers of roads under the jurisdiction of Jingning County, 1893.65 kilometers were rural roads, accounting for 95.7% of the total. Only 85.71 kilometers were classified as third-level or higher roads, representing just 4.3%, the lowest proportion in the province. Jingning County’s terrain is predominantly mountainous with streams running throughout, creating unique geomorphic features that have historically limited transportation development. Due to inadequate road transportation, villagers primarily relied on waterways for travel. In recent years, Jingning has achieved notable advancements in constructing key transportation infrastructure, developing integrated transportation hubs, enhancing internal and external transportation channels, improving transportation service systems, and promoting an integrated development model. Jingning has consistently pursued the overarching goal of “good construction, management, maintenance, and operation” of rural roads, leveraging rural transportation infrastructure as a “pilot” and “engine” for rural revitalization and global tourism, thereby consolidating the effective connection between poverty alleviation achievements and rural revitalization.

The quality of ecotourism experiences is contingent upon comprehensive infrastructure support, with both elements mutually reinforcing each other in terms of development. Robust infrastructure not only enhances the appeal of ecotourism but also infuses new vitality into rural revitalization efforts. In 2021, the Party and the state officially outlined the strategic objective of “holistically advancing rural revitalization and accelerating agricultural and rural modernization”. A key focus has been placed on shifting public infrastructure investment towards rural areas. This encompasses not only the ongoing development of traditional rural infrastructure such as highway improvement projects and water supply security initiatives but also extends to new infrastructure projects like digital countryside and smart agriculture, called “new infrastructure”. The “14th Five-Year Plan” identified

several critical construction tasks, explicitly stating that under the dual-circulation strategy, investment strategies should promote the development of both traditional infrastructure and “new infrastructure”. Firstly, enhance new infrastructure development, include next-generation information networks, to facilitate industrial upgrading. Secondly, strengthen urbanization initiatives by significantly improving county-level public infrastructure and service capabilities to meet the needs of farmers relocating to cities. Thirdly, reinforce major traditional infrastructure projects such as transportation and water conservancy, exemplified by increased funding for national railway construction. It is evident that within the overarching national strategy and rural revitalization plan, the direction of investment in new infrastructure construction remains clear and resolute.

3.3 Foster Sustainable Economic Growth

Ecotourism provides new avenues for employment and income generation for local residents. By promoting ecotourism, rural areas can attract tourists, thereby stimulating local economic prosperity and enhancing the living standards of farmers. Ecotourism has diversified income streams for rural inhabitants beyond traditional agricultural earnings. Additional revenue can be generated through the operation of home-stays, farmhouses, specialized catering services, and the sale of tourist merchandise, facilitating economic structural transformation. The emergence of ecotourism has directly spurred job creation, allowing rural residents to engage in tourism services such as guiding, transportation, and other related roles, thus increasing employment and household income. This rise in employment opportunities contributes significantly to improving the overall economic conditions of rural communities. Moreover, ecotourism enhances the visibility and appeal of rural areas, attracting international tourists, boosting consumption, and stimulating the development of local trade, catering, transportation, and associated industries. This increased economic activity has yielded substantial economic benefits for rural regions.

Jingning County administers four towns, two sub-districts, and fifteen townships, encompassing a total of 136 administrative villages. Leveraging the region’s natural beauty, cultural heritage, and ethnic characteristics, the government has implemented comprehensive planning and development initiatives. Through in-depth exploration, rural tourism resources have been fully harnessed, thereby fostering robust growth in the rural tourism industry. In 2023, Jingning County welcomed 1.71 million tourists, marking a year-on-year increase of 28%. Compared to other industries, the tourism sector exhibits broad market prospects, strong foreign exchange earning potential, and significant industrial linkages. However, several critical challenges remain. Insufficient investment, outdated management practices, and a lack of ecological awareness among tourism enterprises have led to environmental degradation. Moreover, the pursuit of short-term gains has resulted in an oversupply of homogenous tourist facilities, which are neither economically sustainable nor environmentally friendly. The rise of rural tourism has significantly boosted the economic income of some villages, notably improving villagers’ quality of life. For instance, Dajun Town has capitalized on its abundant ecological resources to establish an industrial chain centered around comprehensive emergency rescue training and water-based economy, effectively promoting village collective economic growth through the development of distinctive local economies. Nevertheless, due to inadequate development models and ineffective marketing strategies, some villages have experienced stagnant or declining economic growth, leading to a significant outflow of rural labor to urban areas.

The rural revitalization strategy takes increasing farmers’ income as its core goal. The most arduous and onerous task in comprehensively building a modern socialist country still lies in the countryside. In the process of comprehensively promoting rural revitalization, it is necessary to develop rural characteristic industries and expand ways for farmers to increase their income and get rich [9]. The growth of farmer’ income directly reflects the prosperity of rural economy and the quality of life. For a long time, farmers’ income has been growing slowly, and the income gap between urban and rural areas has been widening, which has become the main obstacle restricting the all-round development of rural areas. Raising the income level of farmers is not only a necessary measure to narrow the urban-rural gap and promote social equity and justice, but also the core of stimulating the inner vitality of rural areas and ensuring sustainable development. The rural revitalization strategy takes raising the income level of farmers as its core goal, aiming to achieve the grand goal of common prosperity for all people. As a key part of the rural revitalization strategy, ecotourism can create employment opportunities and increase income channels for local residents. Improving farmers’ living standards through the development of ecotourism coincides with the goal of improving farmers’ economic income level in the rural revitalization strategy, which reflects the common vision of improving farmers’ economic income.

Taking a comprehensive perspective, the coordinated advancement of ecotourism and rural revitalization holds dual significance both theoretically and practically. Firstly, ecotourism can play a pivotal role in rural

revitalization by leveraging the natural advantages and cultural distinctiveness of rural areas, thereby facilitating farmers' sustainable economic growth. Secondly, rural ecotourism should capitalize on the national rural revitalization strategy by integrating local ecotourism features with national development initiatives to achieve ecological revitalization in rural areas. This encompasses implementing key ecosystem protection and restoration projects, enhancing rural ecological conservation and environmental governance, beautifying rural environments, and constructing picturesque villages. While benefiting from the favorable policies of the national rural revitalization strategy, the potential for rural ecotourism development will also be significantly expanded.

4. STRATEGIES FOR THE SYNERGISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL REVITALIZATION AND ECOTOURISM

Implementing the rural revitalization strategy is a significant historical mission for China as it endeavors to fully establish a modern socialist country and achieve the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Within this context, the coordinated development of rural revitalization and ecotourism has emerged as a pivotal challenge in rural construction. Ecotourism plays an indispensable role in fostering economic growth, safeguarding the natural environment, broadening employment opportunities, and enhancing the quality of life for residents, serving as one of the primary engines of economic development. To ensure the healthy and sustainable development of ecotourism within the comprehensive promotion of rural revitalization, it is imperative to focus on six critical dimensions: integrated planning, cultural-tourism fusion, enhancement of elements, conceptual innovation, development of bed-and-breakfast establishments, and talent cultivation. This approach will maximize the positive impact of rural tourism on rural revitalization.

4.1 Conduct Comprehensive Planning and Strategic Layout

The Fifth Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) introduced the new development philosophy encompassing innovation, coordination, green development, openness, and shared prosperity. The report of the 20th National Congress of the CPC explicitly stated that "implementing the new development philosophy is the only path for China's development and growth in the new era" [9]. The core characteristics of tourism align closely with this new development philosophy, providing a strategic platform for transforming China's tourism development model. To accelerate the upgrading and transformation of the tourism industry, the General Office of the State Council issued the Guiding Opinions on Promoting the Development of All-Region Tourism, which outlined specific guidelines and detailed plans for all-region tourism development. The development of all-region tourism is not only a national strategy but also a pivotal tool for implementing the new development philosophy in tourism. In June 2024, during his visit to Ningxia, President Xi emphasized the need to deepen the integration of culture and tourism and actively promote the development of distinctive tourism and all-region tourism [11]. Currently, all-region tourism has become the core strategy for Jingning's development. However, public awareness of all-region tourism remains limited, and the coordination mechanism requires further strengthening. Therefore, it is essential to fully leverage the functions of cultural and tourism institutions at all levels to ensure comprehensive planning by the Party and government, full participation from the public, and enhanced coordination and cooperation between counties and cities in tourism development. The Lishui City Culture and Tourism Bureau, as the tourism authority, should strengthen collaboration with other government departments, coordinate the integrated development of various districts and counties, prevent resource dispersion and redundant construction, and avoid disorganized development in tourism. Districts and counties must achieve resource sharing and complementary advantages to ensure coordinated progress in ecological tourism. Additionally, Jingning County borders Qingtian and Wencheng counties to the east and Taishun and Shouning (Fujian Province) to the south. As a key part of the mountainous area in southern Zhejiang Province, the development of ecotourism in Jingning will have a profound impact on improving the ecological environment and promoting sustainable social development in the entire region. It is necessary to enhance regional cooperation with neighboring provinces and cities, break down barriers of local protectionism and tourism management systems, improve the regional transportation network, build a trans-regional tourism industry chain, enhance inter-regional information exchange and sharing, coordinate tourism promotion, facilitate tourist transportation, and share benefits. This will expand the coverage of the tourism market and enhance the influence of tourism brands, thereby promoting regional tourism integration and the coordinated development of ecotourism and rural revitalization.

4.2 Enhance the Protection and Utilization of Human Resources While Promoting the Integration Across the Entire Industry

Culture serves as the soul of tourism, forming the foundation for promoting tourism development and enhancing

tourism quality. Throughout its long history, the She Ethnic Minority has gradually developed a cultural system characterized by distinct regional features and rich connotations. Particularly in areas such as ethnic language, religious beliefs, folk festivals, culture and arts, medicine, and sports, the She people have left behind numerous splendid intangible cultural heritages. As the proponent of the “She Ethnic Minority” brand, Jingning has been endowed with significant cultural value, scientific research value, and tourism development potential due to the uniqueness, artistry, mystery, diversity, and interactivity of She culture. It is imperative to explore, fully utilize, and protect these precious historical, ethnic, and regional cultural resources. These should be integrated into the construction of tourist attractions, the development of tourism products, the promotion of tourism brands, and the enhancement of tourism cultural experiences, thereby providing a robust platform for the deep integration of culture and tourism. Simultaneously, tourism constitutes a complex industrial chain formed by the interweaving and close connection of various elements, associated with many related industries. It is a multi-field, multi-level, and multi-dimensional comprehensive industry. To break the inherent self-circulation mode of tourism, it is necessary to further promote industry-wide integration and effectively realize the integrated development of tourism with agriculture, forestry, industry, trade, finance, culture, sports, and medicine. Specifically, emphasis should be placed on the deep integration of “agricultural tourism”, “industrial tourism”, “physical tourism”, “cultural tourism”, “business tourism”, and “health tourism”, thus forming a new pattern of ecotourism development.

4.3 Improve the Components of Tourism, Strengthen Infrastructure Development

Jingning, as the sole She Autonomous County in China, boasts abundant human and natural resources. However, its mountainous terrain poses challenges to transportation infrastructure, with ferry services playing a crucial role in connectivity. In recent years, Lishui City has actively promoted the low-carbon transformation of ferry ports and waterways, enhancing transportation infrastructure and service levels to meet the needs of residents and tourists. Specific initiatives include the implementation of advanced rural ferry management, exploration of innovative “green and low-carbon ferry+” models, and the development of energy-efficient, eco-friendly, intelligent, and community-enriched ferry systems. Notably, Jingning County has successfully established the nation's first green and low-carbon ferry port, which has been designated as a zero-carbon pilot project by the Ministry of Transport for typical transportation facilities. Leveraging the Beauty Ferry quality improvement project, Jingning is exploring new pathways to realize the value of ecological products through industrialization, innovating the “transportation-tourism integration” model, integrating Lishui's green landscapes and cultural features, promoting integrated mountain-waterway construction and cultural tourism, and driving the development of the local cultural tourism industry while showcasing She Ethnic Minority culture.

4.4 Promote Ecological Awareness, Enhance Environmental Protection Education and Publicity Efforts

There exists an intrinsic synergy between the ecological cultural concept and the development of the tourism industry in minority regions. Through generations of observation and induction, the She Ethnic Minority Group has cultivated an ecological wisdom that is finely attuned to the local natural and social environment. This wisdom is primarily manifested in a series of folk taboos and regulations promoting harmony between humans and nature, such as prohibitions on uncontrolled logging and the extraction of medicinal materials. Historically, the She Ethnic Minority Group residents were nomadic farmers who lived among the mountains and referred to themselves as “Shanha”, meaning guests of the mountains. At that time, Jingning County boasted 779 mountains over a kilometer above sea level, with murmuring mountain streams, making it an ideal settlement for the She residents. As large numbers of She Ethnic Minority Group migrated into Jingning, they began constructing shelters amidst these steep mountains. Utilizing local resources, they extensively used natural wood, stone, soil, and grass to build unique She villages. The vernacular architecture and settlement patterns of the She residents reflect their interaction with nature and society, embodying their reverence for nature and wisdom of life.

Therefore, through the collaboration of government organizations, academic research, school education, and online publicity, we can thoroughly explore and organize the ecological wisdom and skills embedded in Jingning's traditional culture. This will aid in understanding how our ancestors valued and protected the natural environment to ensure the sustainable development of society. Simultaneously, this wisdom and skill set can be integrated into the current national ecological civilization construction strategy, promoting the organic combination of traditional and modern, official and folk ecological protection measures, thereby realizing the inheritance and development of local ecological knowledge. Moreover, ecotourism, as a form of tourism based on the natural environment, embodies a strong environmental protection awareness, with its core feature being ecology [13]. Jingning can adopt various effective measures and means to leverage communication media such as schools, communities,

tourism area management departments, government publicity departments, news media, and mobile internet. This will effectively enhance the environmental awareness of tourists, community residents, tourism operators, practitioners, and managers, establishing new development concepts and fostering conscious behaviors of protecting ecological environment resources.

4.5 Vigorous Rural Lodging to Realize Rural Tourism

The home-stay industry adeptly integrates the local rural culture into the accommodation experience, thereby not only meeting tourists' lodging requirements but also offering them an in-depth immersion into rural life and folk customs. This unique experience catalyzes the transformation of the rural economic structure and influences the values and lifestyles of villagers. The home-stay sector has effectively harnessed and preserved the rural ecological environment, converting ecological benefits into economic gains, thus playing a pivotal role in the development of rural tourism. In Jingning, the home-stay industry has significantly propelled the rural economy, enhanced village aesthetics, and promoted civilization progress. To date, Jingning boasts 12 provincially designated agritainment characteristic villages (cluster villages), 287 home-stay establishments, including 2 five-star provincial, 5 municipal complexes, and 20 "Lishui Mountain Residence" boutique home-stay demonstration projects, with direct employment reaching 1,148 individuals. In the first half of 2024, it received 621,400 tourists, generating a total revenue of approximately RMB 39.2198 million, representing year-on-year increases of 3.4% and 3.21%, respectively. However, due to the rapid expansion of the home-stay industry and its relatively low entry barriers, primarily operated by individual farmers, service and management levels are often limited, lacking distinct local characteristics and cultural depth. Consequently, most home-stays remain in the traditional farmhouse model, necessitating improvements in overall service quality. Therefore, it is imperative to broaden funding sources, increase investment in the home-stay industry, enhance service facilities, improve service quality and management standards, and build high-end home-stay brands. Efforts should be made to transcend the limitations of traditional agritainment, develop diversified products such as leisure farms and eco-dwellings, and provide tourists with rich experiences and family-style accommodation services, thereby enhancing accommodation comfort. According to local conditions, local culture should be developed with distinctive features, emphasizing differences and uniqueness among home-stays, focusing on software environment and innovation characteristics, showcasing the distinctiveness between different villages and towns, and achieving harmonious progress in rural cultural heritage preservation and tourism development. Home-stays should integrate leisure and entertainment, sightseeing and tourism, health and fitness, and folk custom experiences to enhance tourists' participation and interaction in rural life during their stay, enriching their experience of rural culture. Furthermore, standardized construction and evaluation criteria for home-stays should be established, unified planning and layout implemented, resource dispersion avoided, monotonous and repetitive construction minimized, rural ecotourism resources integrated, and cluster-effect home-stays created.

4.6 Build Tourism Talent Team, Provide Intellectual Support

With the robust expansion of global tourism, competition within China's tourism sector among various regions, provinces, and cities has intensified. Consequently, the demand for skilled tourism professionals is on the rise. As one of the most rapidly growing industries, tourism faces challenges such as low educational standards, a shortage of high-level management talent, and a lack of specialized personnel. Therefore, there is an urgent need for high-quality tourism talent. Jingning should enhance grassroots party building efforts to leverage the leadership role of grassroots party organizations in tourism development. It should actively support rural elites, local talents, and returning entrepreneurs in joining the tourism industry, ensuring that human resources for rural tourism development are retained. Developing tourism vocational education is crucial, with adjustments to curricula and enrollment based on the current status of tourism development in Zhejiang Province and nationwide. Strengthening cooperation with tourism enterprises, renowned tourism villages, and scenic spots will improve practical training bases and enhance students' practical skills. Promoting school-enterprise collaboration and industry-university-research integration based on ecotourism needs is essential. Talent cultivation should occur through multiple channels and levels, including training tourism practitioners and attracting new talent. Focus should be placed on developing rural tourism leaders, high-end tourism management professionals, specialists in emerging tourism forms, advanced culinary experts, and exceptional tour guides. Additionally, senior talent in tourism management, operations, and planning should be actively recruited to optimize the talent structure, thereby enhancing Jingning's tourism competitiveness and management service level.

5. CONCLUSION

Tourism is an integrative and emerging industry that combines material and spiritual consumption. The robust development of ecotourism relies not only on the magnificent natural landscape resources but also on unique local characteristics, ethnic culture, and folk traditions. In recent years, the Party Central Committee and the government have placed unprecedented emphasis on the construction of ecological civilization and actively promoted the rural revitalization strategy. The principles of ecological protection, cultural inheritance, and economic development inherent in mountain ecotourism align closely with the needs of national and social development, reflecting both the intrinsic requirements and the sole pathway for sustainable tourism development. Guided by the concept of harmonious coexistence between humans and nature, it is imperative to protect the “clear waters and green mountains” while transforming them into “gold and silver mountains” through scientific ecological economic means, thereby achieving common prosperity for ecotourism and rural revitalization. Jingning County, with its diverse and distinctive natural geographical environment and ethnic folk culture, has established a solid resource foundation for ecotourism development. The promotion of the national rural revitalization strategy has brought new opportunities for Jingning’s development. By leveraging these resource advantages, comprehensively assessing the current status and existing challenges of the county’s tourism industry, and conducting overall planning and scientific layout in line with the overall requirements of rural revitalization, Jingning can vigorously develop all-region tourism, further promote industrial integration, improve tourism infrastructure, carry forward traditional ecological concepts, develop the rural accommodation industry, strengthen tourism personnel training, and other measures. These efforts will facilitate coordinated progress in ecotourism and rural revitalization, contribute to the comprehensive construction of a modern socialist country, and assist in realizing the Chinese dream of great national rejuvenation.

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