



AgEcon SEARCH
RESEARCH IN AGRICULTURAL & APPLIED ECONOMICS

The World's Largest Open Access Agricultural & Applied Economics Digital Library

This document is discoverable and free to researchers across the globe due to the work of AgEcon Search.

Help ensure our sustainability.

Give to AgEcon Search

AgEcon Search
<http://ageconsearch.umn.edu>
aesearch@umn.edu

*Papers downloaded from **AgEcon Search** may be used for non-commercial purposes and personal study only. No other use, including posting to another Internet site, is permitted without permission from the copyright owner (not AgEcon Search), or as allowed under the provisions of Fair Use, U.S. Copyright Act, Title 17 U.S.C.*

Analysis on the Impact of Folk Custom on Targeted Poverty Alleviation

Xuetao LI*

College of Economics and Management, Hubei University of Automotive Technology, Shiyan 442002, China

Abstract Folk custom is specific embodiment of regional economy, society and culture, which has certain impact on targeted poverty alleviation work. Under the background, by analyzing logical relationship between folk custom and targeted poverty alleviation, and combining actual work experience, its impact on targeted poverty alleviation work is summarized. Analysis results show that folk custom has an active role in poverty alleviation through education, tourism and industry, and could obstruct poverty returning to certain degree. But its dross part brings stubborn conservatism, which hinders progress of regional thinking, reduces the effect of poverty alleviation, affects local people's behavior choice, and also obstructs popularization of poverty alleviation projects. Therefore, it needs conducting necessary guide and management of folk custom in targeted poverty alleviation work, changing existing habits and customs, developing advantages and avoiding disadvantages, which could improve the accuracy of poverty alleviation, and better achieve the goal of poverty alleviation.

Key words Folk custom, Targeted poverty alleviation, Impact

1 Introduction

Folk custom is not only the accumulation of cultural history of human beings in millennium but also the crystallization of people's wisdom of all generations and survival trace of ancestors from generation to generation. Even if in today when culture is changing with each passing day, folk custom still has a profound impact on people's daily life. Folk custom is a microcosm of the social state in a region. It not only could affect people's thinking mode, lifestyle and behavior choice but also has implicit influence on regional economic development. The effect of folk custom on regional economic development has secrecy and persistence, but it is ignored by most of people due to its recessive characteristics. The research aims to reveal double effects of folk custom on targeted poverty alleviation. It hopes to promote organic combination between folk custom and targeted poverty alleviation, making that poverty alleviation way by folk custom is more efficient, practical and applicable.

2 Economic connotation of folk custom

Economic connotation of folk custom is mainly embodied in its economic value and function. As a kind of characteristic culture, folk custom is beneficial to industrialization development of enterprises and promotion of regional comprehensive competitiveness. As a kind of characteristic resource, folk custom drives the development of many industries by its rich culture connotation, and en-

riches itself in continuous development.

2.1 Economic value

2.1.1 Industrialization of folk custom. At present, folk custom tourism is popular with consumers, and economic benefits are becoming increasingly prominent. Its potential value is gradually dug in each area, to drive the development of local tourism. Rapid economic development makes that people start to pursue a more leisurely environment, and the spiritual needs are increasingly prominent. Folklore tourism emerges as the times requires with distinct national, regional and peculiar characteristics, attracting a large number of tourists. Moreover, the linkage effect of folklore tourism is also increasingly apparent. It drives not only the development of tourism but also the development of handicraft, service, catering and other industries, effectively solves local employment and income increase, and brings great economic benefits. By right of its strong driving force, folk custom promotes perfection and optimization of industrial chain structure, making increasing industrialization of small enterprises, and forming complete industrial framework.

2.1.2 Increasing capitalization of folk custom. Capitalization of one resource shows as that it has the function of preserving and increasing value at the same time. Due to special culture value, folk custom could stand in the ever-changing historical stream for a long time, and the value of remaining folk custom is growing instead of loss. At present, it is committed to fostering new economic growth points in many regions, and folk custom subordinating to ideology becomes excavation focus. As a kind of intangible assets, people sufficiently play the value of folk custom, and make it continuously create new value, thereby possessing the attribute of capital. In material production, folk custom is the endogenous motivation of commodities maintaining and increasing value. Meanwhile as a kind of mentality, it brings win-win of economic and social benefits.

2.1.3 Enhance core competitiveness of regional economy. Com-

Received: October 3, 2018 Accepted: December 13, 2018

Supported by Humanities and Social Sciences Research Planning Fund Project of Ministry of Education (17YJAZH101); Key Project of Wudang Cultural Research and Communication Center, Key Research Base of Humanities and Social Sciences in Colleges and Universities of Hubei Province (17wdjd003); Key Research Project of Humanities and Social Sciences in Hubei Education Department (18D059).

* Corresponding author. E-mail:449830602@qq.com

prehensive strength in a region contains economic, political and cultural aspects. As the constituent part of core competitiveness, culture is the internal motivation of regional economic growth, which provides a solid theoretical foundation for economic development, and ensures sustainable and stable economic growth. Folk custom is a part of culture, has the role that can not be ignored on growth of regional economy, becomes special cultural resource utilized by contemporary industry, and promotes regional economic growth. At present, it enhances protection and inheritance of folk custom in many areas, making it better service for growth of regional economy^[1]. Via its bright features, folk custom provides a steady stream of momentum for culture industry, making it maintain vigour, vitality and competitiveness. Folk custom not only promotes regional productivity and economic development, and meets people's material needs, but also maintains people's emotions and meets people's spiritual needs. Moreover, its linkage effect promotes the development and progress of the whole society, enhances local cultural soft power and increases the strength of regional economy.

2.2 Economic function

2.2.1 Providing spiritual power for economic development. Folk custom has value-oriented role, and the formation of sense of worth in a region is often related to local folk custom, while sense of worth decides people's behavior and value choice. Value orientation, ideology, moral standards and living habits in folk customs reflect thinking model, value pursuit, life attitude and needs in the region. Via thousands of years of baptism, folk custom has already been deeply rooted in the hearts of the people, which affects local people's behavioral choices, and has great influence and restrictive effect on regional economic development. China's small-scale peasant economy is taken as an example, and small-scale peasant economy in early period promotes social progress. But with transformation of production mode, agriculture is also gradually modernized, and new-type agriculture has made great progress of regional development, while economy is declining in traditional area. Different thinking ways cause the two situations, while regional folk custom is an important cause of affecting thinking way. Although Shiyuan is in mountain area, with inconvenient traffic, it has been committed to economic development and seeking new economic growth model. Just the unremitting style of the people and an attitude of willingness to work in Shiyuan for a long time make Shiyuan in a state of constant development. Although folk custom is intangible resource, it affects every aspect of people's life at every moment, and provides value orientation and spiritual motivation for the development of regional economy, making regional economy demonstrate vitality.

2.2.2 Characteristic resources of carrying out economic activity. At present, folk custom is widely applied in tourism. For example, both the Water-splashing Festival of the Dai Nationality and the Torch Festival of the Yi Nationality could attract a large number of tourists, which promotes the development of local economy and cultural communication. China is an inclusive country, and overall shows the characteristics of big mixed settlements and small settlements. Folk customs are different in each area, and each has its own characteristics, such as well-proportioned garden building,

charming ice sculptures in Harbin, a small bridge over the flowing stream in Jiangnan, folk costume of Yunnan, and food and beverage etiquette in every area. They all show folk customs with regional characteristics, become local valuable cultural wealth, and provide important resources for the development of regional economy. Shiyuan has long history, and folk custom is more distinctive, such as Taoism culture and pilgrimage to the mountains in Wudang, yellow rice wine culture and the *Book of Songs* culture in Fangxian, Magpie Festival culture in Yunxi. With a little use, it can become a new growth point of the local economy, and help the economic development. Moreover, folk custom could not only be developed as tourism resource but also become culture resource and be used in product design and shaping of enterprise image, thereby creating characteristics for products and enterprises, improving its inimitable symbol and enhancing its market competitiveness.

2.2.3 Important source of creating product value. With rapid economic development, people buying goods are no longer limited to meeting material needs, and more and more consumers start to seek its inherent cultural value to meet their own spiritual needs. Using the consumers' pursuit of returning to the true and enthusiasm for national characteristics, enterprises could merge folk custom and characteristic culture in a series of links such as product conception, design concept, manufacturing, packaging, publicity, *etc.*, to improve its added value, and highlight the unique spiritual function and aesthetic value of products. It not only meets consumers' demands but also promotes the economic benefit of enterprises. Many tourist attractions will be accompanied by specialty sales areas, which not only promotes the development of tourism but also drives the sales of local handcraft products and other special commodities. In Wudang Mountain region, specialty stores can be found everywhere, and there are shops of all sizes situated on the roadside on the way up the mountain. The products contain not only Wudang Sword but also small ornaments rich in Taoist culture and Taoist costume merging modern elements with Taoist culture. Taoist culture is integrated into the design of these products, and they are given a new meaning, thereby increasing its economic added value. It is clear that the products rich in folk custom could not only meet consumer's double demands of material and spirit but also stand out and win the favor of consumers.

2.2.4 Driving the development of regional emerging industries. In recent years, rapid development of folk culture industry makes it become concern focus of many industries and sunrise industry with great development prospects. In future development, the position of folk culture industry in national economy will be promoted day by day, thereby becoming one of important pillar industries. Different from other industries, folk culture industry has stronger influence and wider radiation range. It could drive not only the development of culture-related industries but also the development of services, catering, crafts, transportation, clothing and other industries, thereby promoting the development of whole economic field.

3 The relationship between folk custom and targeted poverty alleviation

Although folk custom and targeted poverty alleviation are in differ-

ent fields, they have inevitable link, and the connection is implicit and objective. In short, folk custom and targeted poverty alleviation have the relationship of mutual influence and interaction.

On the one hand, folk custom could act the process of targeted poverty alleviation. Excellent folk custom has its specific cultural and economic values, and education function of folk custom could enlighten human thinking and mind, educate people, promote all-round development of human beings, and create good foundation and atmosphere for poverty alleviation by education. By uniqueness of folk custom, it could promote poverty alleviation by characteristic industries in poverty-stricken areas, and drive the growth of local economy. Meanwhile, folk custom also could restrict the promotion of targeted poverty alleviation work. The folkways and customs of a region have long been deeply rooted in the hearts of the people, which has deep impact on people's behavior choice. So, when targeted poverty alleviation project is popularized in poverty-stricken areas, it will inevitably lead to some people's suspicion and even resistance psychology, thereby restricting the process of targeted poverty alleviation. Moreover, the spread of common practices of running banquets wantonly and comparison in poverty-stricken areas also could increase the economic burden of poor families, and make that poverty alleviation has little effect.

On the other hand, the promotion of targeted poverty alleviation work also has greater impact on the development of folk custom in poverty-stricken areas. Firstly, the development and use of some folk custom in implementation process of targeted poverty alleviation work make that the connotation of folk custom is enriched. It is not only a kind of special manner protecting folk custom in poverty-stricken areas but also inheritance and development of folk custom. Economic benefit brought by targeted poverty alleviation in poverty-stricken areas also provides good economic environment and more development space for continuous development of folk custom. Secondly, the promotion of targeted poverty alleviation improves infrastructure and traffic condition in the region, and rapid information dissemination and economic development make that the way of life in poverty-stricken areas is becoming more and more modern. To adapt to the development of the times, primitive folk custom is remained by merging new content or assimilated until it disappears, causing the collapse of folk customs in poverty-stricken areas. With omni-directional coverage of network, customs in other developed areas gradually infiltrate into poor mountainous areas, such as high dowry and betrothal gifts. It has the impact on the primitive marriage etiquette in poor areas, and causes that the nature of primitive customs has changed, and even develops toward bad direction^[2].

It needs dialectical thinking to analyze the relationship between folk custom and targeted poverty alleviation. Both of them may promote each other, develop together, or restrict each other, thus making their development in a dilemma^[3]. Therefore, it needs comprehensively considering potential adverse conditions when conducting targeted poverty alleviation by folk custom, and finding the equilibrium point to make both of them fully play its maximum role, thereby accelerating the pace of eliminating poverty and becoming rich in the region.

4 Impacts of folk custom on targeted poverty alleviation in poverty-stricken areas

4.1 Positive impacts

4.1.1 Leading poverty alleviation through education. Poverty alleviation through education is one of targeted poverty alleviation projects. The aim of poverty alleviation through education is improving cultivation of people's cultural, ideological and moral quality, exploring the wisdom of the masses, changing people's thinking way in poverty-stricken areas, emancipating his mind, reserving talent resources for the economic development in poverty-stricken areas, and playing the strength of the broad masses of the people, thereby enhancing poverty alleviation effect, making poverty-stricken areas out of poverty, and realizing common prosperity. Folk custom has the unique function of cultivating people, is a kind of special education resources, and is rich in content and diverse in form. Excellent folk custom could educate people and make the good atmosphere prevail in the whole society. Good folk custom is conducive to people cultivating their sentiments and good character, and could enrich people's knowledge and spiritual world, maintain people's mental health, improve people's practical ability, and stimulate people's creativity. Therefore, although folk custom is intangible, it has the function of educating people that book knowledge does not possess. If folk custom is merged into classroom education, it could not only promote all-round development of human beings but also make poverty alleviation through education obtain better effect.

4.1.2 Promoting poverty alleviation through tourism. With continuous development of tourism and continuous change of consumer's psychological needs, folk culture tourism gradually enters people's vision. Scenic spots with the slogan of eco-cultural tourism are becoming more and more popular with tourists, and folk culture tourism becomes new means of regional economic development. Although economy is backward in poverty-stricken areas, there are plenty of folk culture resources, and it is important channel of overcoming poverty and achieving prosperity in poverty-stricken areas by developing folklore tourism^[4]. The economic benefits brought by folk customs can not be ignored, and the key is how to rationally plan development of scenic spots and make it play the maximum effect, thereby promoting the economic development of the whole region. In Hubei section of Qinba Mountains area, it has long history, containing Taoist culture, Shennong culture, Chu culture and immigration culture, and the resulting folk customs are also diverse. In poverty alleviation by tourism in later period, folk custom should be rationally used, which could not only help poor mountainous areas develop their economy but also carry forward and inherit excellent traditional culture, making folk custom rich in new era implication.

4.1.3 Promoting poverty alleviation through industry. In targeted poverty alleviation work, it vigorously advocates the development of characteristic industry in many places, while the reason why industry has its own characteristics is that it has uniqueness, creativity, practicability and economy. Folk custom is a cultural component with local characteristics that has been selected for thousands of years. The integration of folk custom and industry development could not only provide a steady stream of momentum for

the industry but also make folk custom develop. Moreover, folk custom has economic value of industrialization, could drive the development of many fields, and is helpful to develop characteristic handicraft industry in poverty-stricken areas. Using "Internet + traditional handicraft" and "Internet + characteristic industry", it could open up new ideas for the development of poor mountainous areas, and guarantee successful completion of the targeted poverty alleviation task.

4.1.4 Hindering returning to poverty to certain degree. According to the past poverty alleviation experience, the problem of returning to poverty after poverty eradication will arise in many areas, which is caused by insufficient endogenous motivation of promoting sustainable economic development. Sufficient playing educational role of folk custom could enlighten people's creative thinking, explore more applicable poverty alleviation measures, and increase the possibility of developing characteristic industry. Folklore tourism containing characteristic culture will attract more tourists' attention in the future, and folk custom injects immortal cultural connotation into the landscape, which makes that scenic spots can obtain more sustainable and benign development. The industry adding folk custom has multiple characteristics such as historicity, uniqueness and regionality at the same time. Additionally, folk custom could be able to keep pace with the times, and continuously inject fresh blood into the culture connotation of corporate, making that industry can flourish and last forever. It is clear that sufficiently playing the role of folk custom could maintain sustainable and stable growth of regional economy, which is of great help to the poverty-stricken areas to get rid of poverty thoroughly and could effectively hinder the problem of returning to poverty.

4.2 Negative impacts

4.2.1 Stubborn conservatism obstructing the progress of regional thinking and implementation of targeted poverty alleviation work. After reform and opening-up, people's minds are becoming more and more open, and the mode of thinking also keeps pace with the times and continuously adapts to change of the times. However, stubborn conservatism still prevails in some poor mountainous areas, which hinders the change of people's thoughts and the development of society, and makes targeted poverty alleviation work difficult to be implemented normally. According to the understanding, some people in poor mountainous areas have serious thoughts of waiting, relying and demanding, and they are unwilling to make corresponding variations in the face of changes in the times and even are full of rejection to new things, while these phenomena have larger relationship with their living environment. Faced with emerging industries, many people hold a mentality of watching, are not willing to try, and even stick to the primitive small-scale peasant economy, thereby causing the predicament of depending on the god. It hinders promotion of new rural economic development mode, causes family poverty, and seriously obstructs the progress of targeted poverty alleviation work. Although it emphasizes gender equality at present, the thought of emphasizing men over women is still very serious in some areas, which has very great relationship with local customs and habits. The phenomenon blocks not only girls' development but also progress of the whole

society. Stubborn conservatism has great connection with local customs and much negative impact on the development of customs. It hinders not only the change of people's thinking mode but also economic development in poverty-stricken areas, and makes targeted poverty alleviation work come to a deadlock.

4.2.2 Dross part in folk custom obstructing the economic development of poverty-stricken areas and affecting poverty alleviation effect. China has been a country of etiquette since ancient times, and a unique etiquette culture is formed in thousands of years of historic trend. Courtesy demanding reciprocity has always been the courtesy followed by the Chinese people, and marriages and funerals everywhere are the proofs of relatives and friends expressing their wishes, courtesy demanding reciprocity. There's nothing wrong with this, but it is mixed with some bad atmosphere in contemporary era, making originally simple customs and habits become obnoxious. It not only destroys the social atmosphere, and hurts people and money, but also increases economic load in many families. There are many cases on debt by marriage, which makes many families return to poverty overnight and generate family conflict, affects family harmony, and hinders family development. At present, there are many unhealthy tendencies in society, such as money worship, luxury, waste and comparing psychology, which seriously affects harmony and stability of society, and hinders social progress. Especially in poor mountainous areas, once this custom is formed, it increases economic load in poor families, makes that poverty alleviation is a fantastic dream, and seriously affects the effect of targeted poverty alleviation.

4.2.3 Primitive folk custom affecting behavior selection of local people and making targeted poverty alleviation project difficult to popularize in an all-round way. Since folk custom has long history and is deeply rooted in people's daily life, its influence is lasting and far-reaching. When people face the choices, it is inevitably influenced by folk customs. Current targeted poverty alleviation project aims to help impoverished areas to realize hematopoietic function, and make poverty-stricken areas extricate themselves from poverty by their own development. It indicates that poor areas need to have their own economic pillars, and poverty alleviation through industry becomes one of characteristics of targeted poverty alleviation. Based on the status quo of poor areas, such as inconvenient traffic, poor information and remote location, product sale becomes a difficulty, and the realization of industrial profits is even more difficult. When poverty alleviation through industry is popularized in poor mountain areas, some people will inevitably have resistance to it based on long-term lifestyle and habits and final effect, thereby making poverty alleviation project difficult to be fully popularized, and finally causing that rural industry has small scale, less profit and difficult sale. Meanwhile, the decentralization of industry also greatly reduces the cluster efficiency, making that poverty alleviation through industry becomes prattle.

5 Conclusions

In a word, it needs analyzing the influence of folk custom on targeted poverty alleviation from many angles, and we can't take a one-

value. There are limitless possibilities. The first is to promote "ecology + leisure tourism". Relying on the ecological resources of the town, ecological genes can be integrated into the traditional leisure industry to create ecological and healthy leisure tourism projects. The second is to promote the "ecology + health holiday". Through refining the connotation of medical care and combining traditional Chinese medicine, a full-age health and holiday industry with health and medical regimens as the core will be built from diet, accommodation, entertainment and many other aspects.

3.4 Highlighting cultural charm and enhancing development grade

The underdeveloped regions of the central and western China lag behind the eastern regions in the stage of economic development. However, the advantages in cultural resources endowments are obvious. In particular, some traditional villages, ancient buildings and intangible cultural heritage give these regions a rich cultural heritage. This is also a unique advantage in the future to create a characteristic town and highlight the cultural taste. To create a characteristic town in an underdeveloped area, it is necessary to demonstrate cultural charm to enhance the development taste, including protecting the external cultural carrier and cultivating the inner cultural qualities. The external cultural carrier covers historical celebrity human resources, ancient villages, cultural sites, intangible cultural heritage, *etc.* Backward areas must handle the relationship between protection and development. Under the premise of protecting the integrity and authenticity of the culture, the developed form and progress must be well planned. Within the carrying capacity of resources and environment, tourism should be developed in moderation. Destructive development must be prevented resolutely. Cultural and creative enterprises can be introduced in a timely manner. Through combining tradition with modernity through cultural creativity, fresh lift is brought to the old and heavy culture with technology and information technology, which is easier to be accepted by young people.

4 Conclusions

Promoting the construction of characteristic towns is of great significant to underdeveloped cities. In developed or developing countries, the construction and development of small towns have played

a positive role in promoting industrial development and urbanization. Therefore, China has proposed to promote the construction of characteristic towns, promoting a new round of urbanization with the development of characteristic towns. For less developed cities, the construction of characteristic towns is a major opportunity, conducive to the optimizing industrial structure, utilizing industrial resources, promoting urbanization and promoting the development of new urbanization. Taking Yichun City as an example, combining the natural and economic conditions of Yichun City, this article analyzes the advantages of its development characteristic towns. At the same time, the development paths for characteristic towns are proposed, including vigorously promoting the construction of urban facilities, highlighting the characteristics relying on existing small towns, building the "ecology + leisure" characteristic industrial chain, highlighting the cultural charm, and improving the development grade to explore regional industrial characteristics, cultural heritage, and ecological endowments, drive regional economic and urbanization development, and make up for the lack of urbanization and urban-rural integration in underdeveloped areas in central China, thus providing useful reference for the development of characteristic towns in this type of underdeveloped cities in central China.

References

- [1] ZHOU J, ZHAO ZY. Study on the cultural construction path under the background of rural revitalization strategy[J]. Rural Economy, 2018, 36(9):9-15. (in Chinese).
- [2] CHEN EF, ZHENG YS. Analysis on the elements of characteristic small towns in Central China—Taking Taiping Town of Nanyang as an example[J]. New Western, 2017, 34(12):39-41. (in Chinese).
- [3] ZHANG X. The way to create characteristic industries of "less developed" small towns—Taking Pan'an Jiangnan Medicine Town as an example[J]. Featured Town, 2016, 34(3):99-102. (in Chinese).
- [4] XIANG DW, QIN DL. A study on the planning of characteristic towns in undeveloped areas from the perspective of global tourism: A case study of the characteristic towns in Zhongba Town, Guizhou Province[J]. Urbanism and Architecture, 2017, 14(29):107-109. (in Chinese).
- [5] HAO HY. The basic gap and realistic path of building characteristic towns in underdeveloped areas[J]. Theory Monthly, 2017, 39(12):165-170. (in Chinese).

(From page 29)

sided view of the problem. Folk custom has its advantages, but still needs to abandon the old-fashioned and unhealthy atmosphere. So, it should look at folk customs from a dialectical perspective. It should inherit and develop its essence, and stop and eliminate the dregs. In targeted poverty alleviation process, it should not only rationally use folk custom but also make best use of the advantages and bypass the disadvantages, and select a more appropriate development way.

References

- [1] PAN H, TENG ML, ZHAO R. Research on targeted poverty alleviation

thought of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era[J]. Shanghai Journal of Economics, 2018, 37(4):5-16, 26. (in Chinese).

- [2] MA SJ. Changing customs may be more important than developing the economy[J]. China State Finance, 2018, 63(6):86. (in Chinese).
- [3] YANG ZD, ZHANG Q. The philosophical basis and theoretical innovation of Xi Jinping's thought of targeted poverty alleviation and targeted poverty alleviation[J]. Social Sciences in Guizhou, 2018, 39(3):4-10. (in Chinese).
- [4] LI XQ. Reflection on the integration of rural original ecological folk customs into rural tourism[J]. Agricultural Economy, 2015, 35(6):82-84. (in Chinese).