



Research on brand strengthening agricultural strategy under rural revitalization strategy

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Abstract. This paper, grounded in the context of rural revitalization strategy, conducts an analysis of the current challenges faced by rural development through field visits and research. Synthesizing existing research findings both domestically and internationally on rural revitalization, it summarizes research outcomes in areas such as farmer professional cooperatives, policies for rural talent development, and the empowerment of the internet. The objective is to elucidate the theoretical underpinnings and practical pathways of rural revitalization strategy. Significant emphasis is placed on the pivotal role of rural branding within the framework of rural revitalization. Drawing upon pertinent literature and real-world case studies, this research unveils the principal issues and difficulties inherent in rural revitalization endeavors. The paper culminates by summarizing relevant theoretical constructs and the advantages of rural development, thereby delineating the issues that require resolution and offering corresponding recommendations for the future implementation pathway of rural branding within the context of rural revitalization.

Keywords: rural revitalization; Village brand; Implementation path.

1 Introduction

As a result of the rapid socioeconomic development and the swift progression of urbanization, there has been a significant elevation in the living standards of the populace, concurrently giving rise to broader upgrades and innovations within the agricultural economic sphere. According to current standards, rural poverty has been fundamentally eradicated, impoverished counties have shed their designation, and issues of absolute poverty and regional aggregate poverty have been effectively resolved, with nearly one hundred million impoverished individuals successfully lifted out of poverty. However, the emergence of a range of issues, including rural labor shortages, underutilization of land resources, rural aging, vacant rural housing, left-behind rural children, and agricultural soil pollution, has presented new challenges to rural development. Consequently, the "San Nong" (Three Rural Issues) have gradually become the focus of increasing attention.

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Against this backdrop, agricultural branding has emerged as an indispensable direction for the development of China's agricultural economy. However, research concerning the construction of agricultural and agricultural product brands within the domestic context remains at a nascent stage, lacking a systematic and scalable approach, and the relevant theoretical research requires further refinement. Hence, our study aims to analyze the advantages and resources that rural development possesses within this context, identify prospects for the future, scrutinize current challenges, and anticipate potential obstacles. Through on-site investigations and accumulated experiential insights from rural areas, we put forth corresponding solutions and recommendations.

2 Current situation of rural development

In 2017, China initiated the Rural Revitalization Strategy, aimed at comprehensively advancing rural development. This strategy encompasses key requirements, including prosperous industries, ecological livability, cultural civility, effective governance, and improved living standards, while also establishing a robust system and policy framework for integrated urban-rural development to facilitate the modernization of agriculture and rural areas^[1]. Within this strategic framework, branding emerges as a pivotal element shaping agricultural competitiveness and serving as a primary driver of modern agriculture, underscoring its critical role in the context of rural revitalization. General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized that "brands embody trustworthiness" and underscored the necessity of branding for agricultural products, highlighting its potential to yield enhanced prices and efficiency^[2]. Although China successfully completed its poverty alleviation mission by the end of 2020 and transitioned into a moderately prosperous society, there remain certain vulnerable aspects, and the foundations of rural revitalization are yet to be fully consolidated. Therefore, consolidating the achievements of poverty alleviation and exploring new development pathways for rural revitalization continue to be central tasks in the realm of agriculture and rural affairs.

Through visits and surveys, we found that the following problems are currently common in rural areas. (1) Rural aging is very serious. The "China Rural Revitalization Comprehensive Survey Research Report 2021" obtained by the National Bureau of Statistics and released by the Institute of Rural Development of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences shows that the current human capital level of rural families is still not high, the overall age is older, the overall education level is low, and the structure is not excellent, regional differences are obvious. The proportion of people aged 60 and over among the entire rural population has reached 23.99%, and the proportion of people aged 65 and over has reached 13.82%, fully meeting the standards of an "aging society". The degree of aging in rural areas far exceeds the national situation^[1]. Through random visits, three villages located in Tingkou Town, Qixia City, Shandong Province and two villages in Quanjiang Town, Suichuan County, Jiangxi Province were collected to collect statistics on the age of rural residents, as shown in Table 1. Furthermore, those engaged in agricultural activities between the ages of 40 and 50

exhibit a declining trend, with the majority falling within the 50 to 70 age bracket.(2)Land Abandonment Issue: Many agricultural lands lie fallow, overrun by wild grasses. Investigations have revealed that some of this abandoned land is a result of landowners passing away or seeking employment elsewhere, while another portion is attributed to landowners being too elderly to cultivate extensive areas.(3)Inadequate Transportation: On-site visits have uncovered that numerous farmlands and orchards are situated in mountainous areas with poor road conditions, rendering modern machinery inaccessible and unusable, especially during adverse weather conditions.(4)Outdated Farming Techniques and Crop Varieties: Surveys indicate that most fruit trees require 5-10 years or more to yield profitable results, with tree ages mostly ranging from 10 to 25 years and some exceeding 30 years. Agricultural farming techniques are relatively antiquated, heavily reliant on manual labor.(5)Underutilization of Water Resources: The lack of adequate irrigation facilities is the fundamental reason many lands are not fully utilized. Among the surveyed villages, only 27.8% have implemented high-standard agricultural land development, with 86.1% still relying on traditional irrigation methods such as water pumps, ditches, and manual water lifting. Furthermore, 41.7% of villages have inadequate farmland water infrastructure. For instance, a village in Tingkou Town, Qixia City, Shandong Province, possesses approximately 3000 acres of mountainous agricultural land, but due to inadequate water infrastructure, slightly over 1000 acres receive sufficient irrigation, using traditional flood irrigation methods. Additionally, due to scattered agricultural land, farmers exhibit limited enthusiasm for investing in irrigation facilities.(6)Traditional Sales Models: Rural areas continue to heavily rely on traditional offline sales methods, lagging behind urban digital economic development. This is primarily due to lower overall education levels in rural communities, making it challenging to adopt and implement internet-based sales models.(7)Agricultural Land Pollution: Excessive and improper use of fertilizers and pesticides, along with the discharge of "industrial waste" and rural domestic wastewater, constitute the primary sources of agricultural land pollution. Agricultural environmental pollution has become a significant constraint on agricultural and rural economic sustainability.(8) Rural farmers exhibit limited educational background and unfamiliarity with modern concepts such as the Internet and branding. The Blue Book of Aging "China Elderly Quality of Life Development Report (2019)" reveals that nearly 29.6% of elderly individuals over 65 years old in China did not attend school. Additionally, roughly 41.5% of this age group has an elementary school education. It is safe to assume that the cultural level of elderly individuals in China is generally low, and this is especially conspicuous in farming communities ^[2]. The low literacy level among rural agricultural laborers can be confirmed through local surveys, as demonstrated in Table 2.(9)Challenges in Implementing Rural Revitalization Policies by Local Governments: Significant regional resource disparities, challenges in establishing regional brands, and insufficient competitiveness of rural agricultural products contribute to the difficulties faced by local governments in implementing rural revitalization policies.

Table 1. Age questionnaire for agricultural workers.

Village/age	Under 30 years old	30–40 years old	40–50 years old	60–70 years old	70 years old and above
Village A	0	0	4	123	17
Village B	0	0	32	147	21
Village C	0	0	22	204	34
Village D	0	6	15	75	19
Village E	0	11	31	153	23

Table 2. Survey of the educational level of agricultural personnel.

Age/Education level	Not attending school	elementary school	junior high school	high school	Technical secondary school or above
30–40 years old	1	1	15	0	0
40–50 years old	25	52	11	16	0
50–60 years old	32	406	127	112	25
60–70 years old	85	115	12	5	0
Over 70 years old	96	12	6	0	0

Following on-site visits and investigations, the aforementioned issues were found to be prevalent. To achieve genuine rural revitalization, it is imperative to fundamentally address these issues, encompassing comprehensive solutions to challenges such as talent revitalization, land rejuvenation, technological advancement, sustainable rural development, and rural branding. Only through this multifaceted approach can the decline of rural areas be mitigated, ultimately leading to the authentic rejuvenation of rural communities.

3 Theoretical research on rural revitalization strategy

In the current research, the primary focus has been on the topic of farmers' professional cooperatives. Initially, domestic scholar Huang Zuhui (2004)^[3] proposed recommendations related to farmers' professional cooperatives, agricultural products, and agricultural modernization when discussing rural revitalization. Zhang Xiaoshan (2009)^[4], through case studies, provided a comprehensive analysis of the future development trends and associated issues of farmers' professional cooperatives. Huang Zuhui and Yu Ning (2010)^[5], using Zhejiang province as an example, analyzed the current status and limiting factors of new agricultural operating entities, including agricultural professional households, farmers' professional cooperatives, and agricultural enterprises, and put forward corresponding development strategies. Wen Tiejun (2013)^[6] currently views farmers' professional cooperatives as a highlight in the innovation of China's agricultural operating organizational system and has conducted research in collaboration with numerous domestic scholars on the challenges and prospects faced by these cooperatives in their development. Although farmers' professional cooperatives have performed admirably in addressing issues such as rural population decline and a shortage of agricultural labor, with the progress of time, they are also encountering new problems and challenges in their establishment and development.

Conversely, much of the recent research has been centered on branding strategies in the context of rural revitalization. As per Zou Lixing (2017)^[7], Li Zhou (2018)^[8], and Ye Xingqing (2018)^[9], the foundation of the rural revitalization strategy is rooted in modern agricultural development, which facilitates the growth and unification of the secondary and tertiary industries, and ultimately expands the agricultural industry chain. Li Zhou (2018)^[8] emphasized that Chinese agriculture has transitioned from quantity expansion to quality improvement. The focus of attention is now on not only the quantity of agricultural products, but also their quality, competitiveness, and sustainable development. Li Daohe and Li Jun (2003)^[10] as well as Liao Song (2010)^[11] contend that implementing a branding strategy for agricultural products is crucial. This is because it contributes to modernizing agricultural development within the rural revitalization strategy, increasing farmers' income, expanding domestic demand, and improving the competitiveness of agricultural products.

However, to achieve genuine rural revitalization, one of the key factors is talent, encompassing not only agricultural practitioners but also a substantial number of highly skilled individuals. Li Jing and Zhang Chuanhui (2020)^[12] point out that China's urban and rural aging issue will become more severe in the future, posing one of the major obstacles to rural revitalization. Huang Jikun (2022)^[13] believes that the number of agricultural laborers will continue to decrease in the future, making it crucial to increase farmers' income and achieve common prosperity through promoting rural economic transformation and enhancing agricultural labor productivity. He Xuefeng (2022)^[14] systematically analyzes the critical issues under the backdrop of rural revitalization and, in response to the differentiation between rural areas and farmers, offers corresponding research outcomes on how rural revitalization can provide support to rural regions. He Xuirong (2018)^[15] emphasizes the vital importance of attracting talent to rural revitalization. Li Ning (2018)^[16] analyzes the current status and issues of rural talent under the context of rural revitalization, exploring practical approaches for promoting the strategy of strengthening agriculture through talents. Zhou Xiaoguang (2019)^[17] explicitly states that in the implementation of the rural revitalization strategy, talent is fundamental. He proposes a series of strategies, including targeted talent recruitment, multidimensional talent acquisition, categorized talent development, scientific talent utilization, and providing a livable environment to retain talent, in order to promote rural talent revitalization and support the implementation of the rural revitalization strategy. Wang Fuzhong (2020)^[18] analyzes the types of talents currently lacking in rural areas and suggests various approaches for talent development, including selection, training, management, and motivation. Talent resources are considered the primary resource for development and a crucial support for implementing the rural revitalization strategy. Addressing the issue of talent resources in rural development, attracting and retaining talent, remains a key concern in rural revitalization.

With the continuous development of internet technology, emerging models such as e-commerce, livestreaming for product promotion, and others have played a significant role in providing new pathways for rural revitalization. Wei Xiaobei and Wang Miao (2018)^[19], utilizing the "Internet Plus Rural" model, successfully integrated "returning to the countryside + entrepreneurship" with "sales + production," forming

the rural e-commerce's collective "2+" model, becoming a crucial driving force for the rural revitalization strategy. Pang Ailing (2019)^[20] extensively discusses the development of the rural e-commerce industry as a potent measure within the rural revitalization strategy and offers solutions to address the challenges faced by rural e-commerce. Li Xiaoxia and Zhao Xiufeng (2020)^[21] analyze the development logic and role of the new model of livestreaming for product promotion, constructing a future pathway for rural revitalization primarily based on livestreaming. The rapid development of the internet is expected to propel rural revitalization to new heights.

Furthermore, research on rural branding, including agricultural product brands, rural tourism brands, and regional public brands, has played a critical role in promoting rural development. Research on agricultural product branding has received significant attention since 1999, with the successive issuance of a series of policy documents by the national government regarding the construction of agricultural product brands. The Central Document No. 1 of 2018 explicitly stated that brand construction should permeate the entire agricultural industry chain, underscoring its utmost importance for rural revitalization and enhancing the competitiveness of agricultural products in the market. Tong Yuquan (2007)^[22] suggests that through scientific brand positioning, online presence, public relations, and advertising, the intrinsic cultural value of rural tourism should be explored to enhance the sustainability of rural tourism. Bai Kai and Zhang Chunhui (2009)^[23] analyzed the characteristics of "Nongjiale" (rural recreational) tourism brands from different dimensions. Lu Zhengying (2009)^[24], through empirical research, analyzed the impact of rural festival tourism activities on the image of rural tourism brands and proposed strategies for improving brand image. Li Qiaosha (2022)^[25], by analyzing the rural tourism model in Japan, summarized the experiences of rural tourism brand development in Japan, providing new insights for poverty alleviation through rural tourism in China. In the realm of regional public branding, Pei Rong and Zhang Pingdan (2006)^[26] explored public brands to some extent, revealing their characteristics and conducting preliminary research on public brand development. Yang Darong (2019)^[27], using empirical analysis, studied the regional public brand of Suzhou and proposed innovative methods for improving the public brand image. Liu Xinwei and Hu Mengting (2022)^[28] introduced brand archetype theory into regional brand development, holding practical significance. Under the rural revitalization strategy, the development of agricultural product brands, rural tourism brands, and regional public brands offers new possibilities for modernizing agriculture, fostering distinctive rural economies, and promoting high-quality agriculture. It represents an urgent need for high-quality economic development and serves as a potent avenue for advancing structural reforms in the agricultural supply side, enhancing agricultural competitiveness, and increasing farmers' income.

Furthermore, Western developed countries initiated research in the fields of rural development, rural construction, and agricultural economics in the 1960s of the last century. These studies were not only diverse but also inspiring. Even highly developed countries face challenges in rural development. For instance, Japan has implemented the "One Village, One Product" development strategy since 1979, achieving significant results despite entering an aging society. Germany launched the Rural Competition Development Program in the 1960s, while France promoted rural devel-

opment in the early 20th century. These foreign experiences have significant implications for in-depth research on rural revitalization. Onitsuka K and Hoshino S^[29] analyzed the practical experiences of rural revitalization and rural renaissance in Japan, affirming the positive role of reform organizations in contemporary rural development. Barbora Gulisova^[30] examined the influence of Danish rural lifestyle experiences on rural tourism branding and the role of sustainable development in rural economics. Barniol-Carcasona M.^[31], through case studies, explored rural development in Catalonia and analyzed the relationship between rural branding strategies and local economic development initiatives. The direct impact of rural branding on rural regional economic and social development policies is evident in the strengthening of local communities, the consolidation of regional identity, local residents' identification with their regions, and the activation of "local power" or the reevaluation of endogenous resources. These studies not only broaden our research perspective but also provide rich experiences and insights for rural revitalization.

4 Rural present and future development: threats and difficulties

After reviewing the literature, it is evident that both domestic and international contexts face similar challenges in rural revitalization. Therefore, achieving genuine rural revitalization necessitates extensive research and deep contemplation. A key factor in realizing rural revitalization lies in the thorough exploration of various advantageous resources, which constitutes the linchpin for propelling this process forward. The primary concern is how to attract external resources and integrate internal resources. This requires an accurate identification of the current and future threats and difficulties faced by rural areas to implement targeted measures that will open the doors to rural revitalization.

Fundamental issues such as rural aging, a shortage of agricultural labor, land underutilization, and the need to modernize agricultural cultivation and marketing models are rooted in the scarcity of talent. How can rural areas attract talent? Firstly, it is essential to delve into the reasons behind the severe outflow of rural agricultural labor. Since the beginning of economic reforms and opening-up policies, China has experienced rapid economic growth, leading to significant improvements in material conditions. This has resulted in an increasing exodus of agricultural laborers to urban areas. In 1978, China's urbanization rate was a mere 17.9%, but by 2000, it had risen to 36.2%, with an annual increase of 0.8 percentage points. Since 2000, the urbanization rate has grown by an average of 1.3 percentage points annually, reaching 58.5% by 2017. While urbanization has created ample employment opportunities for agricultural laborers and driven rapid economic development, it has also brought about profound social structural changes, leading to a gradual decline in the rural agricultural workforce. Particularly after experiencing the conveniences of urban life, an increasing number of individuals choose to remain in cities. Therefore, attracting the younger generation back to rural areas is no small feat. Secondly, rural areas lack strong organizational and leadership talent. In many villages, the number of Communist Party

members accounts for only 0.3% to 1% of the total population. In some rural areas, village party secretaries are public officials dispatched by town governments. The quantity of rural party members is significantly lower than the national average, and the structure of party membership requires optimization. Looking at age demographics, there are virtually no young party members remaining in rural areas, with most village cadres being over 49 years old. Regarding educational qualifications, the highest level of education among rural cadres is typically high school. Limited by knowledge, ideology, and capabilities, there is a lack of the ability and means to lead rural residents toward prosperity.

Agricultural operations entail considerable risks, necessitating solutions to safeguard the livelihoods of rural residents. Presently, agricultural production, particularly in certain specialized cultivation and breeding projects, is highly susceptible to factors such as natural disasters, market conditions, and diseases. However, corresponding insurance protection measures are not yet well-established, resulting in prolonged recovery periods for farmers in the face of risks. For instance, in the Shandong Qixia Tingkou area, the influence of cold waves during the period from 2021 to 2022 affected nearly 80% of high-yield economic crops such as apples and cherries, leading to a significant decline in farmers' income. Therefore, in future development, measures need to be taken to reduce the impact of exceptional circumstances on regional agriculture.

The mechanism for rural investment needs strengthening, as fiscal inputs remain unequal and require structural optimization. In recent years, with the deepening of the rural revitalization strategy, financial investment has gradually increased. However, very little of these funds actually reach the rural farmers who need them. The question of where funding for rural development comes from remains a query in the minds of many young entrepreneurs considering returning to rural areas. The structure of financial investment is not rational; in many regions, funds are allocated to enhance areas that are already prosperous, exacerbating disparities between well-developed and less-developed regions. During interviews, it was observed that two villages situated less than five kilometers apart, along the same road, exhibited stark differences, with one boasting tall buildings and numerous corporate factories, while the other lagged significantly behind. Difficulties in financing, including challenges in securing and affording loans, persist. New rural residents and new agricultural operators often struggle to obtain loans due to insufficient collateral assets and guarantees. For example, in recent years, when there was a boom in greenhouse cherry-picking gardens, those wishing to expand often encountered difficulties in obtaining financing from financial institutions, especially state-owned banks, due to the lack of a sound financial system and effective collateral assets. This, to some extent, hampers local economic development.

5 Rural present and future development: opportunities and advice

The development prospects in rural areas are ample; however, realizing their potential necessitates comprehensive strategies and collaborative efforts. Governments, businesses, and various segments of society should jointly endeavor to advance rural modernization and sustainable development. This pursuit aims to enhance the quality of life for rural residents, mitigate the urban-rural disparity, and pave the way for a more prosperous future, for an example see Figure 1.

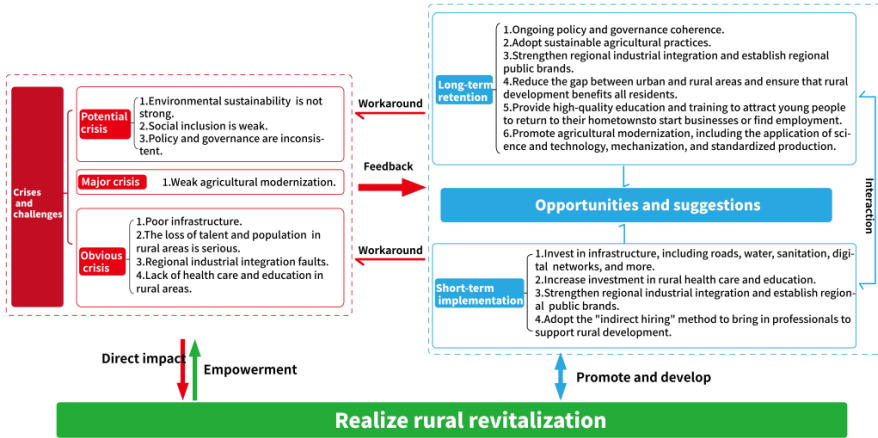


Fig. 1. Architecture of a typical wireless sensor node.

5.1 Strengthening Rural Talent Development

The quality of talent is paramount to the fate of rural revitalization. This study presents two solutions to address the current economic lag in rural areas. Firstly, the "indirect employment" approach, led by local governments, involves the collection of basic information such as age, education, and industry of those engaged in work or studies outside their hometowns. This information is then utilized for indirect recruitment of specialized professionals through online platforms, thereby promoting local rural economic development and providing economic support. Secondly, direct training is provided to existing agricultural workers through government-organized training programs, covering various aspects including farming techniques, mechanized operations, and online sales. This multifaceted approach aims to stimulate comprehensive rural development and attract more individuals to return to their hometowns for entrepreneurship or employment. Furthermore, it is imperative to focus on nurturing a cadre of young rural leaders characterized by high qualifications, capabilities, and innovative thinking [17]. Diversifying the selection process for village cadres and encouraging public officials to return to support rural development are essential steps in this endeavor.

5.2 Enhancing Local Livelihood Security Measures

Firstly, local governments should establish and improve insurance systems to provide basic guarantees for local agricultural workers. For instance, the introduction of orchard insurance allows villagers to enroll at the beginning of each year. In the event of damage to orchards due to unforeseen circumstances, insurance companies provide partial compensation, ensuring basic income security. Secondly, efforts should be directed towards strengthening local market supervision, offering market information, and addressing market fluctuations and supply-demand imbalances to mitigate adverse effects on farmers caused by fluctuations in agricultural product prices. Thirdly, promoting the integration of rural industries and building regional brands to enhance the competitiveness of agricultural products. The establishment of regional public brands not only fosters the development of the primary industry but also attracts migrant workers to return to rural areas for work and entrepreneurship. Lastly, investment in rural infrastructure should be increased to elevate the standard of living and enhance the provision of public services in rural areas. Elevating the level of rural livelihood security and reducing disparities with urban areas are fundamental to ensuring the well-being of rural residents.

5.3 Advancing "Internet+" Agricultural Infrastructure

The integration of information technology and the utilization of internet platforms to consolidate agricultural production and operation resources are essential steps towards modernizing agricultural production. Through internet technology, the removal of intermediary links, improved efficiency in the supply of agricultural products, and the establishment of agricultural information service systems facilitate timely problem-solving in production, enhancing the quality and market competitiveness of agricultural products.

5.4 Strengthening Rural Agricultural Brand Development

As China's economy undergoes rapid development, agriculture and rural tourism have become integrated into global economic competition, making the establishment of rural brands an inevitable imperative. In developed nations like those in Europe and America, branding has permeated all levels of industry. The "Dole" agricultural product brand from the United States has claimed a leading global position. As of 2019, China had only a little over 1,600 Dole stores. Japan initiated the "One Village, One Product" plan in 1979, aiming to fully leverage local resources to cultivate leading products and industries with distinctive local characteristics, thereby fostering rural economic revitalization. Rural areas have seen a gradual improvement in their appearance, with rapid development in both rural tourism and agricultural products. For example, the "Mother's Ranch" in Chiba Prefecture, Japan, situated in the picturesque Kano Mountain, attracts 850,000 visitors annually, with an average expenditure of ¥240-300 per person, resulting in an annual income of ¥2.1 to ¥2.6 billion RMB. Moreover, Japan's "Kobe Beef" once commanded a price of ¥7.22 million (approx-

mately ¥500,000 RMB) in a single transaction. Furthermore, New Zealand's kiwifruit brand, "Zespri," has also achieved international renown with support from the national government. Branding signifies a critical milestone in rural modernization and industrial structural adjustment. It not only represents intangible assets but also differentiates products, creates distinctiveness, and secures a competitive advantage in the market. However, it also exerts significant economic impacts on practitioners, surpassing those associated with the sale of similar products and the effective execution of agricultural brand strategies. Branding also holds paramount importance in coordinating urban-rural development and narrowing the urban-rural wealth gap. Within the context of the "San Nong" (agriculture, rural areas, and farmers) policy focus, branding has consistently held a special position. Given that China's economy has entered a new normal, comprehensive rural reform and adjustments to the agricultural economic structure have underscored the pronounced significance of rural brand development, primarily manifested in the following aspects:

Facilitating Rural Agricultural Supply-Side Reform. The construction of Chinese agricultural product brands constitutes a comprehensive project of structural reform on the supply side of agriculture in the new era. The primary focus of rural agricultural brand construction is on the production phase, demanding that producers and operators enhance the supply of high-quality products from a supply perspective, reduce ineffective supply, expand effective supply, enhance supply flexibility and adaptability, increase the overall factor productivity, and better meet market demands. The construction of agricultural product brands has promoted the formation of a thriving modern agricultural industry system. By promoting agricultural product brands and building regional public brands, we expand and strengthen distinctive and beneficial agricultural industries. This transformation of modern marketing elements enhances traditional high-quality brands, invigorates brands, and encourages the transition from product-based businesses to brand-based businesses.

Driving the Transformation and Upgrading of Traditional Rural Agriculture. The implementation of the rural revitalization strategy, a significant decision made at the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, is a critical historical mission aimed at decisively achieving the goal of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects and constructing a socialist modernization nation comprehensively. Promoting the transformation and upgrading of traditional agriculture into modern agriculture is not only reflected in mechanization, standardization, and informatization in production methods but, more importantly, in achieving brand-building for agricultural products and rural tourism. In other words, the transformation and upgrading of traditional agriculture entail the transition from traditional agricultural products with no standards, no brands, no trademarks, light packaging, and poor traceability to standardized production, brand-based operation, information-based traceability, and e-commerce sales facilitated by modern technological equipment. Branding rural tourism involves integrating and sharing regional tourism resources, forming a complete brand image structure, emphasizing the richness and hierarchy of brand construction, and establishing the advantage of a "winning brand image" in rural tourism, thereby stimulating consumers' interest in participating in tourism experiences.

Enhancing the Core Competitiveness of China's Rural Agriculture. In the context of intense competition in China's agricultural products and rural tourism markets, product quality, brand reputation, scenic beauty, and promotion will determine consumers' choices, gradually forming consumption habits. Cultivating brands is a critical means of establishing a favorable market image for agricultural products. Agricultural enterprises face greater operational risks. Only by implementing brand integration and strengthening strategies can agricultural products enhance their ability to withstand risks, exclude non-brand agricultural products from the market, and disrupt the market competition mechanism. Furthermore, brand integration and promotion can expand the production and sales of agricultural products, providing greater development space in competition. It can be argued that having a "golden brand" for high-quality agricultural products and the "most beautiful countryside" is equivalent to possessing ultimate competitiveness. For instance, within agricultural product brands, Yantai apples and Anhui Hongcun have both become synonymous with high quality.

Contributing to the "Beautiful China" Image Building. The green ecological aspect of "Beautiful China" is not limited to blue skies, white clouds, green mountains, and clear waters but also encompasses high-quality agricultural product brands, rural tourism brands, and regional public brands. These rural brands make the world recognize that, under superior natural ecological conditions, China offers beautiful natural landscapes and high-quality agricultural products, thus establishing an image of the beauty of Chinese rural areas. From an economic perspective, branding possesses not only utility value but also brand value. It is the key to distinguishing a brand from other similar brands and the core of brand management. Ecological livability is the key

6 Conclusion

Since the inception of the Rural Revitalization Strategy, the nation has provided top-tier guidance for rural development, undertaken comprehensive rural reforms, and actively promoted agricultural modernization and the establishment of new rural areas, achieving remarkable historical milestones. Nevertheless, China currently finds itself in the initial exploratory phase of rural revitalization. This study conducts an analysis of existing issues in regions such as Qixia in Shandong and Suichuan County in Jiangxi, offering corresponding solutions. Ultimately, employing theoretical modeling, it synthesizes the crises and challenges confronting rural revitalization alongside the corresponding strategies. The analysis yields the following findings:

6.1 Challenges and Threats

1. A reduction in the rural population and an aging demographic may lead to labor shortages, thereby impacting the sustainability of agricultural production and rural economies.

2. Persistent threats stemming from natural disasters, climate change, and environmental pollution continue to pose risks to agriculture and rural livelihoods, necessitating appropriate mitigation measures.

3. A dearth of infrastructure, healthcare facilities, and educational resources in rural areas can contribute to issues of inequality, affecting the quality of life for rural residents.

6.2 Opportunities and Recommendations

1. The Rural Revitalization Plan and policy support present opportunities to promote rural development, with the government further enhancing rural infrastructure development and the provision of public services.

2. Sectors such as rural tourism, agricultural product branding, and rural e-commerce are rich with developmental potential, capable of attracting more young individuals to participate in rural entrepreneurship and provide employment opportunities.

3. The adoption of modern agricultural technology and sustainable farming practices contributes to enhancing both the quality and yield of agricultural products, increasing farmers' income, while concurrently reducing reliance on natural resources.

These conclusions underscore the urgent necessity, amidst challenges and threats, to proactively leverage opportunities and implement recommendations to achieve the imperative goal of sustainable rural development and revitalization.

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