



The Local Conditions of Government Policies for Poverty Alleviation in Ethnic Minority Areas--A Case Study of Maigeti County, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region

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Abstract. In the process of poverty alleviation in China, various poverty alleviation models have been innovatively introduced. The governments of ethnic minority areas accumulated a lot of valuable experience in poverty alleviation work, but there are also many problems. This study explores the logic of government poverty alleviation in minority areas. It is helpful to understand the policies of poverty alleviation in the process of poverty alleviation in ethnic minority areas. Meanwhile, it is essential to provide references for other ethnic minority area governments to formulate poverty alleviation policies. This study employs the case study method targeting Maigeti County in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. This study found that the local government formed a set of poverty alleviation models based on local conditions considering the local advantages comprehensively. Other poor areas can combine "poverty alleviation" and "intellectual support" together, encourage more participants in poverty alleviation, and strengthen policy publicity and implementation.

Keywords: Poverty Alleviation, Ethnic Minority Areas, Local Conditions.

1 Introduction

Governance needs to be combined with strengthening the government's own capacity and strong policy support [1]. Governance plays a crucial role in poverty alleviation and can improve social welfare. In China, governance has significantly reduced rural poverty through targeted public spending on education, health care, social security, and infrastructure [2]. In recent years, the government has made remarkable achievements in ensuring people's livelihood, economic development, rural revitalization, and ecological protection [3].

In the course of poverty alleviation in China, various poverty alleviation models have been innovatively introduced and summarized [4-5]. The most representative ones encompass the cooperation between the government and non-governmental organizations for poverty alleviation, investment promotion for poverty alleviation, relocation for poverty alleviation in inhospitable areas, industrial poverty alleviation, education

poverty alleviation, and e-commerce poverty alleviation [6]. These poverty alleviation models possess their distinctive features and complement one another. They jointly constitute a diversified pattern of China's poverty alleviation endeavors. The governments of minority areas accumulated a considerable amount of valuable experience in poverty alleviation work; however, there are also many challenges. Poverty alleviation in ethnic minority areas is characterized by specific targets and the difficulty of assisting. Therefore, policymaking in ethnic minority areas needs to be comprehensively contemplated from multiple aspects to formulate policies that are in line with local development. As a result, this study explores the logic of governments in ethnic minority areas in formulating and implementing poverty alleviation policies. Understanding this logic is beneficial to promote economic and social development and improve the living standards of ethnic minority areas.

In previous studies, the majority of scholars paid attention to the general government poverty alleviation model, while few scholars have delved into government poverty alleviation models in ethnic minority areas. Therefore, based on the existing academic research, further analysis of the poverty alleviation logic of the government in minority areas can make up for the shortcomings of the current research in this field. Thus, it is necessary to study the logic of government poverty alleviation policies in ethnic minority areas. The quality of poverty alleviation in the whole country can be effectively improved by increasing the policy research on poverty alleviation models in western minority areas, finding out problems and taking targeted measures. Ethnic minority areas feature remote geographical locations, fragile ecological environments, significant cultural differences, small populations, low educational levels, high risks of returning to poverty, and imbalanced regional development. These make poverty alleviation greatly challenging. Next, this paper will take the poverty alleviation policies of Maigeti County as a case, introduce the policy contents related to alleviation in Maigeti County, and analyze the policy process and policy effect.

2 Theoretical Foundation

China currently employs a variety of poverty alleviation models, including industrial, market-based, professional, developmental, tourism, e-commerce, targeted, educational, exogenous, and precision poverty alleviation. These approaches focus on key areas such as education, technology, funding, market access, and the environment.

Previous academic studies have examined various poverty alleviation models, including industrial, precision, e-commerce, market-based, tourism, and educational approaches. For the industrial poverty alleviation model, this approach emphasizes new business entities, smallholder farmers, model selection, the creation of supply chain coordination mechanisms, and the implementation of relevant government regulations. The precision poverty alleviation model focuses on projects like photovoltaic power stations, where the government provides institutional, policy, and service support, and the market supplies production materials and price guidance. The e-commerce poverty alleviation model highlights the promotion of agricultural technology, government procurement, input subsidies, infrastructure development, and agricultural support. The

market-based poverty alleviation model relies on the synergy between an “effective market” and a “proactive government” to establish new production relationships in impoverished regions. The educational poverty alleviation model involves collaboration between the government, local communities, and universities to foster educational development.

Drawing from past research, this study synthesizes the findings into four key dimensions, namely ecological, industrial, employment-based, and cultural perspective. These dimensions develop a framework to analyze the poverty alleviation strategies in Maigeti County.

3 Case Study

3.1 Case Description

This study takes Maigeti County, Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region as a case. Maigeti County, located in the eastern part of the Kashgar region of Xinjiang and on the southwestern edge of the Taklamakan Desert, is a multi-ethnic county. Its unique geographical location endows it with abundant natural resources but also brings challenges such as a fragile ecological environment. The seventh census of Maigeti County shows a permanent population of 224,154. Maigeti County has a rich tradition of ethnic culture, including Uyghur song and dance, handicrafts, and traditional festivals. These traditional cultures are valuable cultural resources for Maigeti County, which play a crucial role in promoting the development of local tourism. Maigeti County is the birthplace of "Dolan Culture" and is known as one of the cradles of Uyghur Muqam. In 2005, it was awarded the titles of "Home of Chinese Dolan Meshrep," "Home of Chinese Dolan Muqam," and "Home of Chinese Dolan Peasant Paintings" by the Chinese Specialty Town Recommendation Committee. "Dolan Meshrep" has been designated as a world-class and national-level intangible cultural heritage protection project by the United Nations and the National Ministry of Culture. Prior to 2019, Maigeti County had a large number of impoverished people, with 13,838 households totaling 49,878 individuals registered as impoverished. These impoverished populations are distributed throughout the county, living in difficult conditions with low income levels. Maigeti County was once a national-level poverty-stricken county, characterized by harsh natural conditions, fragile ecological environment, weak infrastructure, a singular industrial structure, and insufficient educational and medical resources. In particular, agriculture is greatly affected by natural conditions, leading to unstable income for farmers and significant difficulties in poverty alleviation.

3.2 Case Analysis

Ecological Poverty Alleviation.

Due to the harsh local ecological environment, the government initiated a project to build a million acres of windbreak and sand fixation ecological forests. Over eight years, a total of 360,000 acres have been planted, with a seedling survival rate of over 90%, significantly improving the ecological environment. Many impoverished

households are located around the forest areas. To integrate ecological and social benefits, the government employed 750 registered impoverished households as ecological forest rangers, responsible for the construction and maintenance of the ecological forest base, with an average annual income increase of 10,000 yuan per person.

Industrial Poverty Alleviation.

Dates, walnuts, goji berries, and "Dolan melons" are the local specialty economic crops. The county has 560,000 acres of date palms, with an annual yield of 250,000 tons in 2019. The government seized the opportunity of date futures listing, and two designated date delivery warehouses were approved by the Zhengzhou Commodity Exchange, promoting the transformation and upgrading of the date industry. The county has nearly 200,000 acres of walnut planting, with 10,634 households growing walnuts, including 3,822 impoverished households. The government established 15 professional cooperatives, with an average income of 2,500 yuan per acre. Many impoverished households in the area engage in goji berry cultivation, leading the government to establish the Runfeng Farmers' Professional Cooperative. The cooperative encourages farmers to plant, achieving an average income of 5,000 yuan per acre. The labor input for goji berry seedling care, harvesting, and processing involves nearly 30,000 person-times, providing local employment opportunities for impoverished households. In 2019, 508 local farmers planted Dolan melons in small arch greenhouses, with 314 impoverished households cultivating 579.1 acres. The government adopted a new sales model to successfully market "Dolan melons" outside Xinjiang and into the mainland consumer market. "Dolan melons" generated a total revenue of 7.245 million yuan, a total profit of 3.984 million yuan, and an average net income of about 1,700 yuan per acre.

Employment-Based Poverty Alleviation.

Maigeti County has a large labor force from impoverished and marginal households. The government provides job replacements for employees whose annual wage income is less than 10,000 yuan. To improve the organization level of labor export, the government conducts skill training and job-matching within and outside the region. On May 15, 2020, the government arranged for 54 people to be transferred by chartered flights to Wuhan Xinyida Auto Parts Co., Ltd., and 9 people to a textile factory in Bole City for employment. 220 job positions have been matched with companies within and outside the region, with 150 people ready for transfer; plans are in place to move 110 people to companies in mainland China soon. The local area has many projects under construction, and the government leverages these projects to absorb employment, exploring the "1+N" employment model to employ labor from impoverished and marginal households.

Cultural Poverty Alleviation.

The locality has excellent poverty alleviation materials, which the government collects and prints into booklets distributed to various townships to boost the morale for poverty alleviation. The local area has a county integrated media center, which the

government utilizes to launch programs such as "Poverty Alleviation in Action," "Village Poverty Alleviation Tour," and "Poverty Alleviation Pioneers" on radio, television, and zero-distance platforms, promoting stories and figures of poverty alleviation among the people. The locality has an art troupe and 13 amateur farmer performance teams; the government ensures that each village hosts no fewer than one cultural performance per month, featuring self-directed shows that incorporate poverty alleviation themes. The area has a cinema, and the government has set a goal of "one village, one movie per month," showing classic revolutionary-themed films.

4 Discussion

4.1 Analysis of the Findings

Adapting to local conditions is the premise of precise governance. Through the use of local advantages, a set of poverty alleviation models tailored to local conditions has been formed to drive the employment of local labor and build an art village with national characteristics, which can fundamentally achieve poverty alleviation and embark on the road to prosperity. Combining traditional material assistance and spiritual assistance can enrich the spiritual and cultural life of the masses, stimulate the endogenous motivation of the masses to get rid of poverty and get rich, and promote the hard-working and prosperous low-income population.

4.2 Comparison with Previous Studies

In previous studies, the poverty alleviation model based on local conditions is only a countermeasure and a direction. This local conditions are the premise of accurate governance, but there is no specific analysis content. The poverty alleviation model of Maigeti County is an all-round policy. This is the difference between this study and previous studies. Compared with previous research results, in the poverty alleviation model of Maigeti County, the policy formulation is more comprehensive, the measures are more accurate, and the emphasis is on sustainable development. In the aspect of poverty alleviation through education, Maigeti County has improved the local education level by improving the educational conditions and quality. In terms of ecological poverty alleviation, Maigeti County implements the construction project of windproof and sand-fixation ecological forest to improve the ecological environment and realize the organic combination of ecological benefits and social benefits. By absorbing poor households to participate in ecological forest management and protection, the income of poor households can be increased and ecological governance can be promoted. In terms of employment and poverty alleviation, Maigeti County has improved the employment level, explored the "1+N" employment model, absorbed the employment of poor households, and improved the quality of employment. The poverty alleviation policy of Maigeti County not only covers industrial development, employment promotion and other aspects, but also pays attention to cultural guidance and ecological protection. When formulating poverty alleviation measures, Maigeti County considers the local actual situation and the needs of the masses, and improves the precision and

effectiveness of poverty alleviation. In the process of poverty alleviation, Maigeti County adheres to the concept of sustainable development and injects new vitality into the local economic and social development.

4.3 Policy Implications

Other poor areas can learn from the poverty alleviation model of Maigeti County, combine the local special cultural resources, ecological resources and human resources, formulate poverty alleviation policies, and achieve precise poverty alleviation. Potential policy directions includes increasing investment in education and training in poor areas, implementing the "poverty alleviation + intellectual development" model, close combining ecological protection and poverty alleviation, and realizing the coordination and unification of ecological protection and economic development. Additionally, strengthen the publicity and implementation of policies, increase the publicity of poverty alleviation policies, develop ecological industries, implement ecological compensation to achieve a virtuous cycle of economic development and ecological protection, and improve the satisfaction of the masses with policies. Besides the above, more measures include strengthening oversight and inspection of the implementation of policies, encouraging social participation in poverty alleviation, forming a poverty alleviation pattern featuring government leadership, social participation and diverse governance, and ensuring that all policies and measures are fully implemented and effective.

5 Conclusion

This paper takes the poverty alleviation model of Maigeti County as a case, and probes into the local conditions of Maigeti county poverty alleviation model. This research found that the poverty alleviation logic of the government of Maigeti County is embodied in four aspects, including ecological poverty alleviation, industrial poverty alleviation, employment poverty alleviation and cultural poverty alleviation. In view of this poverty alleviation logic, other poor areas can learn from the poverty alleviation model of Maigeti County and guide social forces to participate in poverty alleviation work. This study focuses on the specific analysis of policies and measures, while the evaluation of policy effects lacks the support of government data. Future studies can quantitatively assess the effect of poverty alleviation in ethnic minority areas by obtaining government-level data.

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