

Research on the Methods and Strategies of Integrating Social Participation Art into the Vitality of Rural Revitalization: A Case Study of Longwan Lake Demonstration Zone

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Abstract: With the communique of the third plenary session of the 20th Central Committee of the CPC putting forward a new direction for the revitalization of China's contemporary countryside, in the context of urban-rural integration and development, the integration of social participation art into the practice of rural revitalization has become one of the important trends in the current rural revitalization and development. In this article, based on the overall requirements of rural revitalization, a successful case of social participation in artistic rural revitalization practice with typical bottom-up exploratory nature is analyzed from the aspects of governance mechanism, industrial economy, ecological environment, rural culture, and people: the rural vitality creation method and strategy of art township construction in Longwan Lake Demonstration Zone. The respect and emphasis shown on the development of local villagers, the wide participation of other social groups, and the successful exploration in various aspects have important reference significance for rural revitalization and development in the context of contemporary urban-rural integration.

1. Introduction

In July 2024, the communique of the third plenary session of the 20th Central Committee of the CPC proposed that integrated urban and rural development is an inevitable requirement of Chinese path to modernization. In the context of rural revitalization, art is no longer confined to exclusive features. Artists explore specific solutions to improve human living conditions by enhancing the public and social aspects of art. In the development process of Chinese art intervention in rural revitalization, two practical models of art village construction have gradually emerged, namely the top-down art village construction led by local governments and the bottom-up art revitalization rural practice actively seeking practical space through social artists, professional scholars, and others. In the process of revitalizing rural areas through art in the latter, more social participation has emerged, and all social classes, including local ordinary residents, are beneficiaries of the practice. In November 2023, young artist Tian Bin and his team explored the art township construction in Longwanhu area, Sishui County, Jining City, Shandong Province. With their unique "rural partner"

art township construction method, they were awarded the "Best Poverty Reduction Case" at the "2023 China Africa Cooperation Forum - Poverty Reduction and Development Conference • 2023 World Poverty Reduction Partner Seminar", which is a typical successful case of social participation in art township construction from bottom-up in traditional Chinese rural areas.

This article aims to explore and summarize the experience and strategies of bottom-up art revitalization in rural areas, taking the social participation art rural construction practice in Longwan Lake, Sishui County, Jining City, Shandong Province as an example. Create forms of social participation in rural revitalization through artistic activities, explore the effective integration of art and traditional villages in the future, and promote the development of rural industry, environment, culture and other aspects.

2. The connotation of social participation in art and rural revitalization

2.1. Social Participation in the Arts

From the perspective of avant-garde art, art is a tool for understanding the world and developing culture, which inevitably involves social reality art[1]. Art, as an intermediary participating in society, has brought people closer and played a leading role in social transformation[2]. Since the early 1990s, the art of social participation and collaboration has become popular around the world, and the expanded "post studio" has also extended the concept of participatory art in the practical field[3]. In 1991, Arnold Bellint emphasized the concept of active integration of art[4]. With the continuous extension of art to various fields, its public nature is also constantly strengthening, gradually involving urban society and community space, and presenting certain achievements in the field of rural revitalization. The practice of social participation in art in rural areas can not only provide critical reflection and bottom-up alternative solutions for contemporary social development, but also activate and expand the potential of art as an agent of social intervention, community building, and cultural change[5]. From an anthropological perspective, the construction of art villages is an important representation of social participation in art in rural China. It demonstrates the overall development characteristics of diverse subjects and has Eastern aesthetic philosophical implications[6]. From the perspective of participating subjects, art has shown a phenomenon of multi subject participation in rural revitalization [7].

2.2. Social Participation in Art and Rural Revitalization under the Background of Urban Rural Integration Development

The overall requirements of China's rural revitalization, which include prosperous industries, livable ecology, civilized rural customs, effective governance, and prosperous living, emphasize the important positions of the five elements of industry, living and ecological environment, culture, governance mechanism, and people. Against the backdrop of the need to prevent poverty from returning to China and the reality and inevitable historical trend of urban-rural integration development, rural revitalization is facing the challenge of how to mobilize urban resources to drive rural self creation and sustainable development, fully activate the high vitality and self driving development of rural areas, and achieve effective integration development where cities drive rural areas and rural areas feed back cities. Urban development is relatively complete. As a force with unprecedented urbanization speed and scale, it is crucial to create the characteristic vitality of rural industries, spaces, and cultural elements when intervening in various elements of rural areas. This is essential for rural areas to break free from cultural commercialism and long-term dependence on urban resources, and achieve personalized and sustainable development. For local development, the evaluation of economic development is an important part, but the construction of non economic

achievements can often effectively promote the spontaneous revitalization of rural areas. As a priority for the revitalization of rural areas, establishing new industrial economic drivers will no longer be the only focus. At the same time, it is necessary to explore an effective cultural path that can attract rural tourism, build livable environments, create a good social order, and promote population renewal. Social participation in art, as a platform connecting cities and rural areas, has attracted a large number of professional artists, scholars in related fields, and local investors. Art village construction has also gradually become closely linked to related majors such as university design and media.

However, the practice of social participation in art for rural revitalization in China is not always a successful case. Due to the disconnect between local rural culture and humanistic construction, the blind pursuit of the value of art in the rural tourism industry has led to the rapid disappearance of traditional rural architecture, social customs, and related material culture, and further exacerbated the collapse of the local rural economy. The urgent pursuit of results in the construction of art towns has also led to the common phenomenon of "one size fits all" in urban tourism construction, which has continued into the practice of art town construction. Capitalization and commercialization have severed the relationship between people, tradition and natural ecology. How to effectively promote rural revitalization through art in a more approachable and local characteristic manner, driving the dynamic development of various aspects such as economic industry, local environment, cultural life, etc., and building a bridge for friendly development between cities and rural areas, rather than intervening in the regional space of rural areas with a dominant attitude, even surpassing the local characteristics of rural areas, has become a new thinking for social participation in art village construction under the background of urban-rural integration development.

3. Ways and Strategies for Integrating Art into Rural Revitalization through Social Participation: A Case Study of Longwan Lake

3.1. Art 'participation' in rural revitalization, nurturing the core driving force mechanism of rural revitalization through negotiation

The Longwanhu Rural Revitalization Demonstration Zone is located in Sishui County, Jining City, Shandong Province, with a total area of nearly 80000 acres, 7500 acres of water surface, and a forest coverage rate of over 54%. It includes 18 villages with over 12000 villagers. Under the rural revitalization practice of Tian Bin and his art team, it has become one of the first provincial-level demonstration zones for rural revitalization in Shandong Province. Its unique "rural partner" art rural construction method was rated as the "best poverty reduction case" in the "2023 China Africa Cooperation Forum - Poverty Reduction and Development Conference • 2023 World Poverty Reduction Partner Seminar".

Before the intervention of social participation in art, Longwan Lake had significant common characteristics in some backward rural areas of China. In the process of rapid urbanization, the economic and cultural gap between Longwan Lake and the city quickly widened. Many young laborers migrated to the city, leaving behind children and the elderly, as well as barren land and dilapidated houses. Meanwhile, the local handicrafts, arts, and social customs that form the foundation of traditional Chinese culture have gradually lost their vitality. Compared with the development of the city, there is a significant imbalance and insufficiency, but it still retains a good ecological environment. In 2013, young artist Tian Bin and a group of young designers and artists chose Longwan Lake due to its excellent ecological environment and established the "Idle Valley Art Granary" base in Chujia Mountain. As the leading base of Longwan Lake Demonstration Zone, numerous talents gather here to nurture the core driving force of art revitalization in rural areas: the "rural partner" mechanism. The "rural partnership" mechanism mainly utilizes various forms such as technology investment, direct capital injection, and creative cooperation, with the aim of attracting

talent to gather, such as intangible cultural heritage inheritors, artists, etc., and fully promoting rural revitalization through social participation. Especially as the main body of rural revitalization, local villagers have not been sidelined in the practice of rural revitalization and have become important participants. The wide range of social participation groups has gradually become the core driving force for Tian Bin's artistic revitalization of rural areas. With the help of talent, about 400 villagers have been directly employed, and dozens of cultural and tourism projects developed with art as creativity have been implemented[8]. At the same time, the bottom-up social participation in the art rural revitalization practice of Longwan Lake Demonstration Zone has also promoted the innovative strategies of the relevant "rural revitalization partners" in Shandong Province, helping the local government explore a path for rural revitalization. At the same time, it has greatly promoted the trend of urban talent resources returning home to start businesses, and explored an effective practical way to achieve the flow of urban population resources to rural areas.

3.2. Art "serves" rural economy, activating the vitality of rural economic development through participation

Dealing with rural revitalization through artistic means is a highly complex and contradictory issue. The primary challenge is how to transform art, as a shining example, into effective means and strategies that benefit from the development of rural revitalization, and take on more responsibility and strength in social reality. In the art village construction of Tian Bin and his team, art has activated the internal economic development vitality of Longwanhu village by "serving" the rural economy, and helped villagers achieve industrial income generation. The establishment of the study tour industry chain, combined with artistic means, fully utilizes the good ecological environment of Longwan Lake, and creates a high-quality experiential environment for urban consumers, becoming a new attempt for rural revitalization in Sishui County and achieving stable development first. The rural revitalization of Longwan Lake relies on the creativity of artists, and has established research and sketching bases for Longwan Lake Art Town in Dongzhongdu Village on the west bank of Longwan Lake. The first phase includes Longwan Study, Luban Memory Workshop, Taozhu Workshop, seven homestays, art societies, and Fangcun Garden. By establishing a research and learning industry, it covers the consumption needs of tourists for food, accommodation, study, and tourism. In the establishment of the second phase of the cultural and creative commercial street and the third phase of the rural homestay, the parent-child tourism industry was gradually added, creating the Longwan Lake Art Town, which laid a solid foundation for the stable development of Longwan Lake through revenue generation. On the basis of the operation of the study tour industry, Tian Bin and his team have delved into the industrial chain of rural villagers and further "served" the development of their businesses through art, providing a tertiary industry platform for the development of local handicrafts and agricultural specialties. In the industrial development of Longwan Lake Cultural and Creative District, local skilled craftsmen have been utilized to provide sales channels and exhibition spaces for local farmers by conducting traditional handicraft training and helping farmers settle in handicraft products. This has effectively generated income for villagers and activated their development motivation.

3.3. Artistic Innovation in Rural Environment, Discussing the Communist Party's Construction of High Quality Ecological Development in Rural Areas

In typical top-down implementation resulting from cooperation between local governments and private investors, the main beneficiaries of construction projects are often the already affluent elite class, rather than ordinary local residents. In the process, the economy is often used as a single indicator to develop the ecological environment of villages on a large scale to meet the needs of

tourists for exotic or "otherworldly" sentiments. Local residents will be expelled from their hometowns as the cost of living and property value rise, and the countryside will eventually be taken over by commercial institutions. Such rural revitalization often overlooks the bottom-up development needs of rural populations, and the countryside is no longer a space and venue for rural people to rely on for survival. The bottom-up exploration of social participation in art village construction in Longwan Lake not only avoids the drawbacks of top-down implementation, but also does not adhere to completely reproducing the authentic environment. Instead, based on traditional and modern art design methods, it innovatively and creatively creates and inherits local culture and environment, creating a high-quality ecological environment for local villagers. The multifunctional music hall in the countryside, such as the "Waiting Valley Granary," was jointly designed by Mr. Wang Dayu and his wife from the Beijing Central Academy of Fine Arts. After conducting thorough research with local villagers, they selected locally significant grains and grain storage intentions, and combined them with the architectural style of the "Waiting Valley Granary. Selecting stone with a rural local style and combining it with modern glass in building materials, the building's appearance resembles a grain depot, combining rural intentions with modern style. At the same time, the music hall provides a free place for local villagers to visit art by renting out and holding exhibitions and art shows, enriching their lives.

3.4. Art empowers rural culture and drives efficient development of rural culture through inheritance

The social participation in the revitalization of art and rural areas in Longwan Lake Demonstration Zone is achieved through the establishment of research and learning bases, the exploration of excellent traditional culture and inheritance talents, and the attraction of numerous universities and students to participate in learning and tourism, driving the inheritance and development of excellent traditional culture in rural areas in practice. On the other hand, it attracts numerous universities to organize and station in the idle valley art granary, inheriting excellent culture in specialized learning and scientific research, and achieving the inheritance and efficient development of excellent rural culture to a great extent. Longwan Lake is located in the core area of Confucian cultural inheritance and development, including many excellent traditional cultural elements such as the Holy Land of Mount Ni and the Confucian Lecture Hall. Tian Bin and his team have established the Yuehu Shangru Research and Learning Base in the core area of the demonstration zone. Through the establishment of cultural and creative, research and training mechanisms, numerous primary and secondary school students and tourists have participated in learning and practice, effectively promoting the development of excellent traditional Chinese culture. In addition, the demonstration zone has gathered excellent traditional cultures such as Shandong Jining's intangible cultural heritage woodworking skills project, intangible cultural heritage handmade willow weaving skills project, and Sishui pottery resources. It has also established diverse cultural and entrepreneurial spaces such as Luban Memory Woodworking Workshop, Tao Cube, Weaving World, and Folk Art Exchange Center. Through the gathering and development of cultural formats, it further effectively inherits and develops excellent local culture. On this basis, Longwan Lake's excellent cultural formats also attract many professional universities and groups, including Jining Designers Association, Qingdao University of Science and Technology, Qufu Normal University, etc., to settle in and conduct learning and research, achieving effective inheritance of rural cultural revitalization.

3.5. Art "drives" rural people and enhances their participation in cooperation

The true revitalization of rural areas requires facing the real needs of relevant groups, especially the needs of farmers as the masters of the countryside. Tian Bin's participation in art related practices

in Longwan Lake society is a practical exploration and response to the bottom-up needs of rural people. In the cooperation of Longwan Lake Art Town project, local villagers are important participants. Through the mechanism of interest connection, villagers not only participate in the early investment and construction of the art town, but also profit from it, which improves the satisfaction and participation of local villagers. In the construction of some homestays and cultural and creative blocks in Longwan Lake, the village collective takes the lead in collecting idle land from local villagers and conducting house evaluations. At the same time, the village collective acts as an investment shareholder, with Tian Bin and other investors contributing to the unified renovation. At the same time, as a representative of returning home to start businesses, Tian Bin's artistic rural construction practice has also driven urban talents to return home and start businesses, truly opening up a feasible path for urban talent resources to flow to rural areas. Some returned talents try to plant *Dendrobium officinale*, *Ganoderma lucidum* and other agricultural products by using the Internet and Longwan Lake Art Town resources to achieve independent income generation; Utilizing agricultural greenhouses and collaborating with art towns to create an agricultural experience area for industry, academia, and tourism.

4. Conclusion

The "social intervention" of art has made it no longer a purely aesthetic object, but increasingly involved in rural revitalization[9]. This article analyzes successful cases of social participation in art and rural revitalization, and explores the ways and strategies for creating social participation in art practices in Longwan Lake Demonstration Zone from the perspectives of governance mechanisms, industrial economy, ecological environment, rural culture, and people, based on the sixteen character requirements of "prosperous industries, livable ecology, civilized rural customs, effective governance, and prosperous life" in China's rural revitalization. It aims to provide new ideas for the practice of the revitalization of artistic villages under the development trend of urban-rural integration, and provide references for the development of the construction of artistic villages with Chinese characteristics. The rural revitalization practice of Longwan Lake first established a "rural partner" mechanism through social art participation, injected core driving force into the development of rural revitalization by attracting talents, and implemented rural industrial projects based on artistic creativity. In terms of industrial economy, Longwan Lake Demonstration Zone relies on the strength of talents to build a production, education, and research industry chain, taking the lead in achieving stable development of investment teams. On this basis, through social participation in art, it further excavates and designs industries for local villagers, activating the development vitality of rural economy. In terms of ecological environment construction, the drawbacks of neglecting the living environment of local villagers in top-down construction have been eliminated. Through consultation with villagers, artistic means have been used to "innovate" the high-quality ecological development of rural areas, further enriching the living environment of local residents. In terms of inheriting and developing culture, Longwan Lake Demonstration Zone has established an industry university research base through social participation in art, gathered diverse excellent traditional Chinese culture, attracted professional teams to settle in the demonstration zone, and promoted the efficient development of rural culture through practice and exploration. Especially in terms of the people, the integration of social participation and art into rural revitalization in Longwan Lake Demonstration Zone has been achieved through the village collective's leading strategy, utilizing idle properties of villagers and binding interests to respect and meet the real needs of local villagers, and successfully driving the flow of urban talent resources to rural areas. In the social participation art rural revitalization of Longwan Lake Demonstration Zone, the important participation of local villagers, the wide participation of other social groups, and the successful exploration in various aspects have important reference

significance for rural revitalization under the background of urban-rural integration development in the new era.

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