

An Investigation Report on Cultural Poverty Alleviation in Ethnic Minority Areas

—Taking the Survey Data from Changdou Village of Maoxian County as an Example

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Abstract

The targeted poverty alleviation strategy emphasizes cultural poverty alleviation, which helps poor households get rid of poverty and effectively prevent them from getting back to poverty. This paper takes the villagers of Changdou Village in Qiang Ethnic region as the main object. Through field investigation and questionnaire, it is concluded that there are some problems in the village, such as low level of education, serious poverty culture phenomenon, insufficient development of local characteristic cultural resources, and imperfect construction of spiritual civilization. Based on the research data of Changdou Village and making full of the cultural resource advantages of the supporting units, in this paper the targeted poverty alleviation of the village's culture will be emphasized, and corresponding suggestions on cultural poverty alleviation put forward from four dimensions "ambition, wisdom, governance and system".

Keywords

Targeted Poverty Alleviation, Changdou Village, Culture of Poverty Alleviation

1. Introduction

Cultural poverty alleviation is considered as a comprehensive development of human resources for conceptual poverty, information poverty and intellectual poverty in poverty-stricken areas, as well as a profound social revolution to overcome ignorance and backwardness (Hu, 2020). Cultural poverty alleviation is an effective means to win the battle against poverty and poverty-returning. It can not only stimulate the endogenous power, but also play the role of "cultural

man”. Cultural poverty alleviation plays a unique role in poverty reduction. Compared with other poverty alleviation methods, cultural poverty alleviation has the greatest advantage of effectively poverty-uprooting, poverty-eradicating, and preventing poverty-returning.

2. Background and Aims

In 2013, China put forward the concept of targeted poverty alleviation and the basic goal of lifting the rural poor out of poverty by 2020 (Xi, 2014). Changdou Village is a poor village in Maoxian County. The village is located in the transition zone between the Sichuan Basin and the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. It is a typical ethnic minority Qiang settlement area. Due to geographical location and traffic problems, this place is relatively closed. There are 123 households with 498 people in the village, and most of the villagers live in high mountains and mid-level mountains. The economic and social development of ethnic minority areas is relatively backward due to the geographical location and natural environment.

Members of the research group had visited the village many times to investigate the development status of the village, analyzed the causes of poverty in the village, and offered suggestions and development strategies for cultural poverty alleviation based on its advantages in cultural resources, so as to help the village get rid of poverty. Here in this paper, I aim to give a detailed analysis based on data from my survey, and try to provide some further suggestions.

3. An Overview of the Investigation

The subject takes the villagers of Changdou Village as the main object of study. The members of the research group have done some literature review and field research, and visited the County government in Maoxian County, Education Bureau of Maoxian County, township government and Changdou Village for investigation. In order to ensure the scientific validity, reliability and comprehensiveness of the samples, field research, interviews with people and questionnaires were adopted in this survey. The survey is divided into two types. The survey is divided into two types, one is the “Changdou Village Cultural Poverty Alleviation Survey Questionnaire”, which is mainly from the survey team’s questionnaire launch and collection; the second are the interviews mainly about MAO County Education Bureau, MAO County middle school teachers, Fushun town government, Leaders of Changdou Village poverty alleviation cadres and so on. The specific survey sample content is shown in **Table 1**.

4. Basic Data Analysis

Through questionnaires and interviews, the research team collected and analyzed the research data, eliminated the invalid data, analyzed and sorted out the effective data, and found that the current situation and existing problems of Changdou Village are mainly revealed in the following three aspects.

Table 1. Investigation information.

The research object	Identity	Research way
MAO County Government MAO County Education Bureau MAO County Science and Technology Bureau	In charge of supervisors and related staff	Interviews
Fushun Town Government	In charge of leaders and village cadres	Interviews
The villagers of Changdou Village	Ordinary villagers	Survey questionnaire (For the illiterate, the members of the research group adopted the form of oral ghostwriting)
The villagers of Changdou Village	Establish a file card for poor households	Interviews

4.1. An Investigation from the Perspective of Helping “Wisdom”—An Analysis of the Educational Level of Villagers in Changdou Village

Education level is closely related to economic income. The majority of villagers in Changdou Village have only received illiterate and elementary school education; about 23% of villagers graduated from junior high school; 15.38% from college; villagers without postgraduate or above. In general, the villagers of Changdou Village are not well educated, which limits their ability to get rich. 92.31% of the villagers’ economic income comes from farming, which is not conducive to the development of this village in the targeted cultural poverty alleviation. Education is the sign of a country’s prosperity. Although the education level of the villagers is low, they have realized the importance of receiving their own education and the education of their children. In this village, 53.86% of the villagers have the willingness to continue their study and receive education, and 30.77% of the villagers choose to participate in the study as long as they have spare time. As for their children’s education, 92.31% of the villagers strongly support their children to go to school, hoping that their children achieve a broad vision, extensive hobbies and rich knowledge, so that they can go out of the village to live in big cities. Only 3.85% of the villagers hope their children would leave home to earn money as soon as possible, while another 3.85% show no care.

4.2. Investigation from the Perspective of Supporting the “Will”—Analysis of the Cultural Phenomenon of Poverty in Changdou Village

Poverty culture refers to a unique lifestyle of the poor. It mainly refers to the non-material forms of behavior, habits, customs, psychological stereotypes, life attitudes, and values of a group of people who have lived in poverty for a long time (Fang, 2012). In other words, it can be seen from the related manifestation of immaterial form that there are many reasons for the existence of cultural phenomenon of poverty in a certain place. The reason why the villagers of Changdou Village are poor is that there are many problems in their way of thinking

and mode of life.

4.2.1. Weak Awareness on Study and Monotonous Recreational Activities

From the perspective of the villagers' investment in learning time, the village's awareness of democratic learning is weak. Among them, 38.46% of the villagers do not invest time in learning, and only 26.92% of the villagers spend most of their time in learning. The villagers believe that learning knowledge is of course important, but there are "older parents and younger children" in their families, so they have a heavy economic burden, and they have neither learning environment nor the time and energy. Besides, learning knowledge is not effective in a short term and they cannot obtain economic income, which directly affects the learning effectiveness of villagers.

The villagers spend their leisure time on the farm from October to March of the following year. They mainly engage in monotonous entertainment activities such as playing poker, chatting, and playing mahjong; they do not actively invest in production, cultural, sports and other entertainment activities.

Among them, the proportion of playing cards and mahjong accounted for 34.62%, casual chat accounted for 53.85%, playing mobile phones accounted for 19.23%, watching TV accounted for 46.15%, reading books and newspapers accounted for 15.28%. Watching TV, reading books and newspapers are important ways for the villagers of Changdou Village to acquire new information and knowledge, and the proportion is relatively low (only 15.38%). The proportion of casual chatting accounted for 53.85%. Casual chatting can easily cause unnecessary conflicts and disputes in the neighborhood, which is not conducive to the harmony of villagers and the formation of progressive ideas. Playing poker and mahjong for a long time is not conducive to villagers' health and prosperity, and it is easy to make people lazy.

4.2.2. Lazy Thinking and a Lack of Initiative

According to **Figure 1**, in addition to spending on education, life, medical care, etc., the amount of money spent by villagers in Changdou Village on festivities and ceremonies is as high as 61.54%. This is related to the local people's mentality of "saving face and being unable to lose face", but this is also a part of precise cultural poverty alleviation.

One of the factors restricting the development of villagers is that villagers there still have a weak sense of initiative are unwilling to actively learn new things, and are lacking in the habits of competition and challenge consciousness. Analyze the data according to **Figure 2**, the phenomenon of lazy food in the village accounted for 53.85%, the phenomenon of resignation accounted for 65.38%, the phenomenon of patriarchy for 26.92%, and the phenomenon of feudal superstition for 38.46%.

Some villagers spend a lot on smoking and drinking, and some villagers like to drink, leading to the bad habit of "not sleeping at night and not being able to afford it during the day" (Liang & Wu, 2017). As a poverty alleviation unit in Changdou

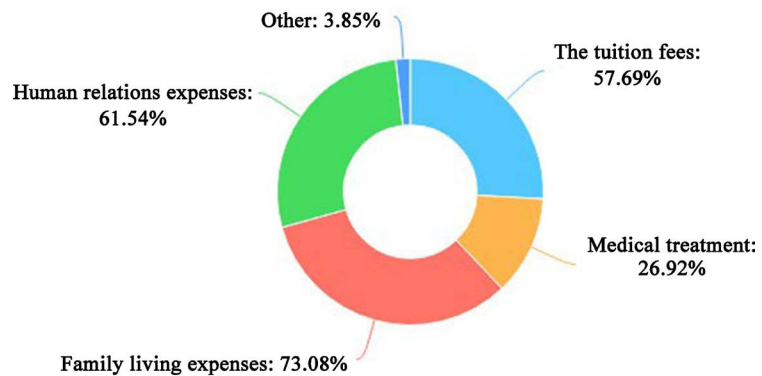


Figure 1. Chart of household economic expenditure.

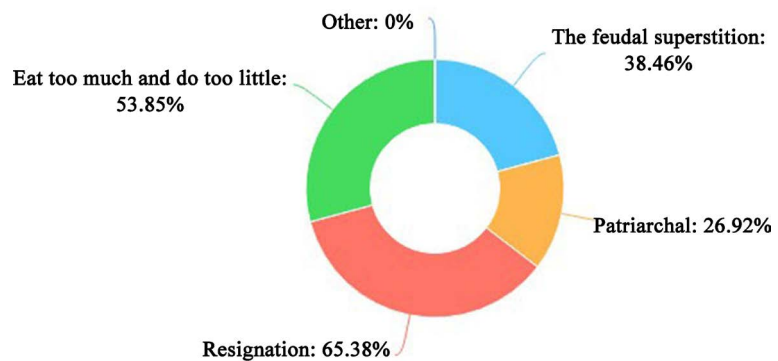


Figure 2. There are some bad habits in the village.

Village, Chengdu Aviation University contacted relevant companies to introduce work for them in order to help poor single young men achieve prosperity. Some people are not enterprising, afraid of hardship and tired of working. All these leave a bad impression on the employers, which in turn affects the overall employment of poor young men in Changdou Village.

4.2.3. Insufficient Development of Spiritual Civilization Construction Activities

The villagers are eager to carry out all kinds of spiritual civilization construction in the village. Specifically, those who think that the village is very necessary to carry out spiritual civilization construction activities account for 30.77%, and very necessary for 61.54%, and only those hold an indifferent attitude for 7.69%. No thinks it is unnecessary to carry out. As far as the degree of participation is concerned, most villagers are willing to participate, and more than 73% of them participate in spiritual civilization construction activities each time or often. From the side, the village's spiritual civilization construction activities are relatively insufficient.

4.3. Investigation on “Governance”—Development and Utilization of the Characteristics of Qiang Culture in Changdou Village

The Qiang nationality has been known as the “nation on the clouds” since ancient times, and 99% of the villagers in Changdou are Qiang nationality. The vil-

lagers with villagers' distinctive national characteristics, can sing and dance, and have possessed valuable cultural heritage such as the unique "Salang Dance" and the famous "Qiang Embroidery". The village is rich in cultural resources, which can be seen from their valuable cultural wealth such as Qiang embroidery, Qiang song and dance, and ethnic costumes. Qiang dance resources account for 50%, Qiang song for 53.85%, Qiang embroidery for 96.15%, and Qiang costumes for 34.62%. The Qiang embroidery craft is the country's intangible cultural heritage. In the slack season, housewives sit at home and embroider, making costumes and decorative paintings and other Qiang embroidery crafts.

Economicalization has caused more and more villagers to go out to work, and fewer villagers understand their cultural value and participate in the above-mentioned folk activities. The cultural resources of the village may face the problem of getting disappeared. Among the villagers, 26.92% of them are very familiar with these folk activities, 57.69% occasionally participate in the activities, and 15.38% understand the value but never take actions. The main reasons are that young people think that the cost of these craft inputs is high, and they bring about few incomes. Besides, that kind of occupation is unstable. Most of them go to big cities to work and live in big cities, while those who stay in the village do not master these folk skills.

5. Countermeasures to Get Rid of Poverty in Changdou Village

Cultural poverty alleviation aims to make use of cultural resources and cultural power to transform ideology, elevate knowledge level, and excavate the regional culture of poor groups. The ultimate goal is to achieve the overall coordinated development of economy, culture, and society in poor areas (Gui & Zhao, 2017). By taking into account the poverty situation in Changdou Village, and according to the "Guiding Opinions of the CPC Central Committee and the State Council on Winning the Three-Year Poverty Alleviation Campaign" (The Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China, 2019), combining with the advantages of the cultural resources of poverty alleviation units, it is necessary to help the "will and wisdom". Work hard on the four dimensions of "system and governance" so as to make Changdou Village get out of poverty and become rich.

5.1. Strengthen the "Will" to Improve Ideological Quality

"Will" is a key word in cultural poverty alleviation, and the emphasis is on awakening the awareness of poverty alleviation of the poor and the idea of proactively alleviating poverty. General Secretary Xi Jinping mentioned many times that "poverty alleviation" first supports "ambitions" and stimulates endogenous motivation. The villagers of Changdou Village are eager for a variety of cultural and entertainment activities, for the abundance of the spiritual world and a strong body, rather than time-consuming leisure such as chatting, playing mah-

jong and playing cards. Supporting units is important in the establishment of village cultural life squares and comprehensive cultural service centers based on actual conditions, and in carrying out activities such as radio broadcasting, TV broadcasting, and film broadcasting, so that villagers can go out of their homes to broaden their horizons and absorb advanced culture. In order to inspire the aspirations of the villagers, put forward construction of four good villages, it is encouraged to design the village logo, change the village appearance, establish a village cultural center, and vigorously praise and publicize the inspirational deeds of poverty alleviation targets. Moreover creating an atmosphere for supporting the “ambition”, changing the lazy habit of the poor and reversing the ideological status of the poor are also needed to awake the positive awareness of taking the initiative to get rid of poverty.

5.2. Emphasize the “Wisdom” to Improve the Cultural Skills of the population

Promoting “wisdom”, which focuses on improving the cultural level and technical skills of the poor, is the key to cultural poverty alleviation. Comprehensive analysis of the survey data shows that the village population is in low cultural and technical qualities. Poverty alleviation units can take the advantage of educational resources to improve the cultural quality of villagers. We will provide in-depth guidance and technical training to the poverty-stricken people, according to their age and level of knowledge. For older villagers with a lower education level, we will build a night school for farmers, hire experts to teach and make videos, use new online media methods to facilitate learning at any time on demand, and hire agricultural and animal husbandry experts to deliver technical knowledge to the fields and household sheds. For young people, activities such as three summer trips to the countryside and summer camps for college students are beneficial to promote information exchange and broaden their horizons. In addition, we will also provide training for teachers in primary and secondary schools in the area to develop the application skills of information technology, thereby improving the education level of the villagers and the level of cultural knowledge.

5.3. Optimize “Governance” to Make Full Use of Local Resources

Optimizing “governance” is a means of cultural poverty alleviation, and it focuses on the effective governance and integration of characteristic cultural resources in minority areas. There are rich ethnic cultural resources in the village. Unfortunately, it has not been protected and fully exploited. The protection and development and utilization of these resources, turning and transformation of “cultural resources” into “cultural capital” and generating economic benefits will not only help increase villagers’ income, inherit and protect their national culture, but also help strengthen national cultural self-confidence. Poverty alleviation units do good to combine their own advantages and with the aid of design experts, teachers and students to guide the inheritors of the excellent traditional culture of

Qiang embroidery in the village to design products, all this contribute to meet the aesthetic needs of modern people, and inspire them to use the Internet and modern logistics to promote their export. In short, making full use of the resource advantages of Changdou Village and a comprehensive management the resources of the village will help to achieve the most optimized comprehensive development.

5.4. Perfect the “System” to Change the Situation of Cultural Poverty

Perfecting the “system” is the guarantee of cultural poverty alleviation, and the ultimate goal is achieved through unified behavior norms. The system generally refers to the rules of affairs or action standards that everyone must abide by. It also refers to the laws, etiquette and other norms or certain specifications formed under certain historical conditions. The purpose is to make all tasks reach the expected goals according to the plan and requirements (Xu, 2019). Cultural poverty in the village is revealed in some aspects, such as the mind of rivalry in celebrations and the common phenomenon that some villagers are not enterprising and lacking in the sense of competition. These all need to guide the villagers to form good customs and habits, and help the formulation of village regulations and other related systems. Once we have got rid of poverty ideologically we will get rid of poverty fundamentally. In order to remove bad habits in Changdou Village as soon as possible, and finally build a wealthy and civilized administrative village, Changdou Village can establish the “Village Rules and Civil Agreement System”, “Peasant Night School System”, “Village Affairs Open System”, “Democratic Decision System”, “Democratic Management System” and other systems to strengthen the party building system and party affairs. In addition, the construction of village branches and the theoretical study of party members and cadres should be strengthened to give full play to the important role of village branches and party members and cadres in targeted poverty alleviation.

6. Conclusion

The targeted poverty alleviation strategy emphasizes cultural poverty alleviation, and cultural poverty alleviation is an effective means to prevent poverty. 2020 is a critical year for building a well-off society in an all-round way, and solving the problem of poverty is a major problem facing the world. While we are united as a whole nation to win the battle against poverty, we must also protect the achievements of our victory in poverty alleviation, and we must never go to the road of “returning poverty”. Cultural poverty alleviation is organically combined with all kinds of poverty alleviation to achieve an all-round well-off and common prosperity as soon as possible.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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