

Pathways to Promote Rural Endogenous Development through Sharing Economy in the Context of Confucianism

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Abstract: In the new journey of Chinese modernization, leveraging the sharing economy to foster new technologies, industries, and models, thereby promoting rural revitalization and narrowing the urban-rural development gap, is a crucial measure to stimulate the development potential of rural areas. This paper employs qualitative and theoretical analyses to examine the challenges faced in promoting endogenous green development through the sharing economy in rural areas. Subsequently, guided by Confucianism, it proposes corresponding countermeasures in terms of farmers' subjective awareness, rural resource allocation, and the creation of a cultural environment in rural areas, aiming to harness the endogenous capabilities of the rural sharing economy and achieve genuine endogenous green development.

Keywords: Confucianism; Sharing Economy; Endogenous Development; Green Development

1. Introduction

In the new journey of Chinese modernization, promoting rural revitalization, narrowing the urban-rural development gap, and fostering new technologies, industries, and models through the sharing economy is a crucial step to unleashing the development potential of rural areas. The sharing economy, facilitated by internet and other information technologies, is an economic phenomenon where social resources are reconfigured to maximize resource allocation efficiency and generate income. ^[1] Promoting endogenous green development through the sharing economy model can not only advance rural revitalization but also lead rural areas toward sustainable development and ultimately achieve common prosperity. In a country where Confucianism is the mainstream culture, the sharing economy has fertile ground for its emergence and development. Some

Confucianism provide important ideological foundations and practical guidance for the green development of the sharing economy in rural areas.

2. The Sharing Economy and Endogenous Green Development in Rural Areas

2.1 The Mechanism of the Sharing Economy in Promoting Endogenous Green Development in Rural Areas

The sharing economy plays a pivotal role in fostering endogenous green development in rural areas. As an emerging business model, the implementation of the sharing economy in rural regions can significantly stimulate endogenous vitality. The rise of the sharing economy has led to substantial transformations in the forms and utilization of production factors, thereby altering production relations and social distribution, contributing to greater equality of opportunity and outcome, and ultimately realizing common prosperity. ^[2] Through sharing economy platforms, farmers can more conveniently access market information, technical support, and sales channels related to production factors, processes, and outputs, thereby becoming more actively engaged in agricultural production. Simultaneously, with the involvement of digital technologies, the sharing economy can more efficiently facilitate cooperation and communication among farmers, enabling them to share resources, technologies, and experiences, thereby fostering a mutually supportive atmosphere. This stimulation of endogenous vitality contributes to the sustainable development of rural areas.

2.2 Challenges in Promoting Endogenous Green Development through the Rural Sharing Economy

Endogenous development hinges on the organic combination of resources, technology, and industries within a specific cultural context, aiming to maximize benefits aligned with the

five development concepts, improve farmers' quality of life, and achieve rural revitalization. However, the current lack of integration and optimal allocation of resources, technology, and industries in rural areas is a pressing issue that needs to be addressed to facilitate the development of the rural sharing economy.

2.2.1 Deficiency in endogenous green development awareness in rural areas

China's long-standing tradition of small-scale peasant economies has left a lasting impact on the modernization of some rural areas. Farmers maintain deep ties to the land, and their education levels are generally relatively low, limiting their ability to access information. Consequently, they lack both the modern farmer's awareness of endogenous development models based on sharing platforms and the elite capabilities required to navigate the breadth, depth, and precision of rural industrial chains.

2.2.2 Uneven distribution of rural resources and weak industrial foundations

The imbalanced and inadequate regional development, coupled with varying resource endowments, has resulted in uneven and suboptimal resource allocation in rural areas, posing significant constraints on rural revitalization. This has led to insufficient agglomeration effects, and the failure of information technology and the digital economy to deeply penetrate traditional agriculture has hindered the formation of related industrial chains, resulting in weak and slowly developing industrial foundations.

2.2.3 Lack of industrial technologies and lower labor productivity in rural areas

The "endogenous development model" is driven by the bottom-up actions of village-level actors. In some rural areas of the new era, the skill level and education level of farmers limit their ability to access and apply industrial technologies. This inevitably affects the efficiency of resource allocation and labor productivity in rural areas, hindering the scale, modernization, and development speed of the agricultural economy, and leading to low efficiency in endogenous green development.

3. Insights from Confucianism on Promoting Endogenous Green Development in Rural Areas through the Sharing Economy

China's institutional advantages in the sharing economy have global significance and contribute to social equity and justice. [3]

Confucian, Buddhist, and Taoist philosophies, including concepts such as "family and state as a unified whole" and the "three realms of heaven, earth, and humanity," provide a rich historical and cultural foundation for China to achieve the sharing economy and endogenous green development. Among these, Confucianism has a particularly profound influence.

Confucianism emphasizes the harmonious unity of humanity and nature, a concept known as "Tian Ren He Yi". This philosophy provides a crucial ideological foundation for the green development of the sharing economy in rural areas. Under the sharing economy model, the utilization of rural resources should place greater emphasis on ecological balance, avoiding overexploitation and protecting the natural environment of rural areas. Through the sharing economy, optimal allocation and efficient utilization of resources can be achieved while minimizing environmental damage, thereby fostering harmonious coexistence between humans and nature.

Confucianism advocates for "benevolence," which encompasses care for both others and nature. In promoting endogenous green development in rural areas through the sharing economy, it is essential to cultivate environmental consciousness among farmers and related practitioners, encouraging them to care for the natural environment as they would their own families. Through sharing economy platforms, consumers can be guided to choose environmentally friendly and sustainable products and services, thereby driving the development of green industries in rural areas.

Confucianism emphasizes "frugality and love for others", which involves conserving resources and opposing waste. Under the sharing economy model, the utilization of rural resources should place greater emphasis on conservation and efficiency. Through sharing economy platforms, resource sharing and recycling can be achieved, reducing waste. Additionally, the sharing economy can promote energy conservation, emission reduction, and low-carbon development in rural areas, contributing to global efforts to combat climate change.

Confucianism emphasizes the importance of practice and experience, encouraging people to explore and innovate through practical experience. In promoting endogenous green

development in rural areas through the sharing economy, farmers and related practitioners should be encouraged to actively try new development models and technological means to facilitate green transformation. Through sharing economy platforms, advanced agricultural technologies and management experiences can be introduced to improve the quality and yield of agricultural products while reducing environmental damage.

Confucianism emphasizes social responsibility and long-term development. Under the sharing economy model, the green development of rural areas should place greater emphasis on social responsibility and sustainable development. Sharing economy platforms should establish sound supervision mechanisms to ensure that the behavior of relevant practitioners complies with environmental requirements and social responsibility standards. At the same time, governments and all sectors of society should strengthen their support and guidance for green development in rural areas to jointly promote the sustainable development of rural areas.

4. Policy Recommendations for Promoting Endogenous Green Development through the Sharing Economy in the Context of Confucianism

Currently, rural areas in China are undergoing a critical period of transforming growth drivers, optimizing economic structures, and shifting development modes. How to promote green development through the sharing economy model and thereby achieve high-quality development has become a key focus for rural development.

4.1 Strengthening Rural Cultural Construction, Integrating Confucian Culture with the Sharing Economy, and Cultivating Awareness of Endogenous Green Development

Culture serves as a cohesive force for social harmony, possessing the power to unite and sustain society. ^[4] The sharing economy is inseparable from cultural support and simultaneously serves as a testing ground for moral norms. ^[5] Cultural construction is a core component of rural revitalization. By inheriting regional traditional culture, developing advanced socialist culture in the new era, fostering a positive socialist humanistic environment, and optimizing the integration of

regional cultural resources, not only can farmers' moral standards and cultural levels be improved to meet their spiritual needs, but more importantly, based on the endogenous development theory of "resources-participation-identity," accurately grasping the differentiated and personalized characteristics of rural cultural development is crucial for tapping into the endogenous driving force of rural areas, promoting rural cultural revitalization, and fostering the comprehensive development of rural residents. ^[6] Culture is the most profound and enduring force, and human resources nurtured by culture are the source of power for endogenous development in rural areas. The ability to enjoy cultural pleasures during leisure time reflects the participation of new-era farmers in sharing the fruits of reform and common prosperity. The widespread construction of small towns, with their unique cultural characteristics and integrated cultural resources, is the external materialization of the sharing economy, creating the necessary environment for shared development.

As the sharing of public services such as culture and sports becomes more prevalent in rural areas, farmers' humanistic sentiments and awareness of green development will gradually awaken. Guided by the Confucian principle of "frugality and love for others," they will begin to attach greater importance to the environmental friendliness and sustainability of production and consumption. This shift in mindset will have a profound impact on individual consumption behavior and agricultural production and operations. In order to meet market demand for green products, farmers will increase their investment in research and development of green technologies and products, not only promoting green development but also helping to form green production methods and build a green, low-carbon, and circular economy.

4.2 Integrating Digital Technologies into Farmers' Vocational Education to Cultivate New-Era Farmers and Strengthen Farmers' Subjectivity

To achieve endogenous development in rural areas, it is essential to fully leverage the subjectivity and proactivity of local residents on the foundation of green development and cultural heritage, thereby promoting the integration and optimization of internal resource

advantages within rural industries. ^[7] The concept of endogenous development shares a commonality of thought with the endogenous development of rural talent. ^[8] Confucianism emphasizes education as a means of changing one's destiny, and this idea has taken deep root in Chinese rural areas. Therefore, farmers deeply understand the importance of education and knowledge. The "four-good" farmers of the new era are more motivated to learn practical experience and agricultural digital technologies through education. Therefore, the government should strengthen the construction of local rural talent teams. In addition to providing regular training for rural workers in construction, cooking, and other professions, vocational education for farmers should also be conducted, with learning content focused on improving agricultural production efficiency, such as mechanized operation, agricultural product deep processing, e-commerce operations for the integration of production and sales, and rural new media dissemination. By cultivating new-era farmers in the digital age, strengthening farmers' subjectivity in the sharing economy, and enhancing farmers' capacity for industrial cluster innovation, this can help promote the process of China's agricultural modernization.

4.3 Improving Resource Utilization Efficiency, Promoting Industrial Structure Optimization, and Developing the Sharing Economy Based on Local Resources

For over two thousand years, Confucian group thought has been deeply rooted in rural areas, both in terms of explicit governance and underlying thinking. The sharing economy reduces constraints on factor mobility. ^[9] Therefore, rural areas can integrate fragmented land, labor, and agricultural tools through sharing platforms to optimize resource allocation and improve agricultural production efficiency. When technological and other conditions are in place, farmer entrepreneurs or capital flowing into rural areas can use online platforms to connect owners of idle resources with those in need, enabling direct exchange and utilization of resources, emphasizing the right to use rather than ownership, and allowing assets to flow between different individuals, thereby improving the overall utilization efficiency of resources and reducing waste.

As rural resources are gradually promoted through sharing platforms to optimize and

upgrade the rural industrial structure, farmers will transition from traditional agricultural production to more efficient and environmentally friendly agricultural production methods. On the one hand, farmers will develop ecological agriculture, organic agriculture, and other green industries, reducing reliance on chemical fertilizers and pesticides and lowering agricultural pollution. On the other hand, the industrial chain of the sharing economy will inevitably drive the development of rural secondary and tertiary industries, leading to the development of rural tourism, homestays, and other industries. The natural scenery and cultural resources of rural areas will attract tourists, driving rural economic growth. With the gradual enrichment of the rural industrial structure, including agricultural production, agricultural product processing, and rural tourism, the overall competitiveness of the rural economy will be continuously enhanced. The sharing economy model thus formed not only promotes the development of green industries that protect the rural ecological environment but also improves farmers' income levels.

4.4 Joint Participation of Government, Enterprises, and Society to Foster Synergy and Build an Endogenous and Symbiotic Development Path

The sharing economy plays a significant role in promoting endogenous green development in rural areas. However, the sharing economy has negative externalities and can pose a series of challenges to the traditional economy in certain aspects. ^[10] To fully leverage the positive role of the sharing economy, the joint efforts and support of the government, enterprises, and all sectors of society are needed. The government should strengthen regulation and guidance of the sharing economy, formulate relevant policies and measures to promote the deep integration of the sharing economy and rural green development; enterprises should increase investment in technological innovation and improve the service quality and efficiency of the sharing economy; all sectors of society should strengthen the promotion and publicity of the sharing economy, enhancing public awareness and acceptance of the sharing economy.

5. Conclusion

The level and pace of rural development significantly influence the progress of China's

modernization. Only when the five development concepts of innovation, coordination, green development, openness, and shared prosperity are truly rooted in rural areas can digital technologies endow rural industrial development with new formats and models, fully unleashing the endogenous driving forces of farmers, rural resource allocation, and the rural cultural environment. This will enable the rural sharing economy to truly achieve endogenous green development and ultimately realize modernization and common prosperity.

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