

A Study on the Control of Gambling in Mobile Casinos in Rural Areas under the Background of Rural Revitalization

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Abstract: The rural revitalization strategy aims to focus on solving the problems of "strong agriculture, beautiful countryside, and rich farmers," and promoting rural civilization construction and curbing bad habits are important guarantees for achieving this strategy. In recent years, the problem of gambling in mobile casinos in some rural areas has been spreading, causing serious damage to the stability and development of individuals, families, and society. Some villagers are addicted to gambling, leading to family breakdown and even a series of social security problems. Therefore, it is urgent to strengthen the control measures for mobile casinos in rural areas. This paper analyzes the characteristics and harms of mobile casinos in rural areas, analyzes the main reasons for their formation, fully utilizes the proactive awareness of shifting from traditional passive response to active attack, improves governance capacity and service capacity in the governance of mobile casinos in rural areas, explores comprehensive strategies for governing mobile casinos in rural areas, in order to maintain rural harmony and stability, establish a new civilized style, contribute to the realization of rural cultural revitalization, and promote the development of rural society.

Keywords: Rural Areas; Mobile Casinos; Gambling; Proactive Awareness; Control

1. Introduction

The harmony and stability of rural areas is the cornerstone of the overall social stability. The rural revitalization strategy aims to comprehensively activate the economic, cultural, and social vitality of rural areas, and to build a new era of rural landscape with prosperous industries, livable ecology, civilized customs, effective governance, and a prosperous life. At present, the rural social

ecology is undergoing unprecedented reshaping, and a series of new problems have emerged. Among them, the problem of mobile casinos in rural areas is like a malignant tumor, eroding the healthy body of rural society. Relying on the vast territory of rural areas, these mobile casinos often lurk in hidden corners and are highly mobile, frequently changing their locations, and operating in the gaps of supervision. Not only do they seriously impact the simple public order and good customs in rural areas, but they also severely damage the endogenous driving force of rural economic development, and even give rise to many illegal and criminal activities, making the rural social security situation increasingly severe. Current management measures should shift from traditional passive response to proactive attack, enhance the proactive awareness of governance capacity and service capacity, emphasize front-end proactive prevention and source governance, so as to accurately and efficiently control mobile casinos in rural areas and create a safe and stable social security environment for promoting comprehensive rural revitalization.

2. Definition of Relevant Concepts

2.1 Rural Revitalization

The rural revitalization strategy proposes the 20-character guideline of "prosperous industries, livable ecology, civilized customs, effective governance, and a prosperous life", which is the "overall requirement" of the rural revitalization strategy. Zhang Jianwei and Tudengkezhu (2020) believe that the five aspects of the "overall requirement" complement each other and are indispensable; implementing the rural revitalization strategy, prosperous industries are the key, livable ecology is the key, civilized customs are the guarantee, effective governance is the foundation, and a prosperous life is the fundamental and goal. [1] Rural revitalization aims to comprehensively and systematically

promote the all-round development and progress of rural areas in the economic, political, cultural, social, and ecological civilization fields, fundamentally change the backward appearance of rural areas, build a new pattern of integrated urban-rural development, make agriculture a promising industry, farmers an attractive profession, and rural areas a beautiful home for people to live and work in peace and contentment.

2.2 Rural Gambling

According to the "Law Dictionary", gambling refers to a behavior in which property is bet based on luck and chance, using forms such as poker and dice, to compare the outcome. [2] Gambling can be understood as an entertainment activity in which property is bet to compare the outcome and the main purpose is to win more money or material value. Rural gambling refers to gambling activities conducted in rural areas by operators for profit.

2.3 Mobile Casinos

Mobile casinos refer to gambling venues that have no fixed location and change their location temporarily for gambling purposes. In order to evade police crackdown, they often choose remote and hidden places, such as abandoned factories, idle rural houses, mountain forests, or boats, and frequently change locations. [3] Mobile casinos have a certain degree of organization and operation, with dedicated personnel organizing, planning, and managing, and setting up personnel responsible for recruiting gamblers, keeping watch, providing gambling equipment and loans, and the organizers making a profit from it. [4]

3. Characteristics of Gambling in Mobile Casinos in Rural Areas

3.1 Frequent Mobility

To evade law enforcement, mobile casinos frequently change locations. They may move from one village to another overnight, or even across different townships and counties. Sometimes, temporary makeshift casinos are set up in fields, using the cover of night to conduct gambling activities, and then quickly evacuate without leaving a trace. This mobility makes it difficult for law enforcement agencies to establish a long-term monitoring mechanism. Every time a report is received and law

enforcement officers arrive at the scene, the casino is often deserted. Moreover, due to the mobility of the casino, the participants in gambling are difficult to form a stable group, which makes it difficult for law enforcement agencies to track the casino's whereabouts by investigating the participants. In addition, casino organizers take advantage of the lack of information communication between law enforcement agencies in different regions to move back and forth in border areas, increasing the difficulty of law enforcement. At the same time, "With the development of network technology, gamblers no longer need to carry large amounts of cash as before. They can complete gambling fund borrowing, transfer, and payment through swiping cards at the gambling scene, greatly increasing the level of concealment." [5] Mobile illegal activities pose a challenge to the mobility and coordination of the existing public security prevention system, and mobile casinos in rural areas are typical examples of such difficult problems.

3.2 Strong Concealment

Rural areas are vast and have many remote places, providing excellent hiding places for mobile casinos. Some abandoned factories have been left unattended for a long time, with weeds growing all around, making it difficult to detect abnormal activities inside from a distance. In the depths of mountains and forests, dense trees and complex terrain not only form natural barriers but also make it difficult for law enforcement personnel to approach. Some remote farmhouses are located on the edges of two villages or deep in the mountains and have little contact with the outside world, making it difficult to attract others' attention. In addition to carefully selecting locations, casino organizers also adopt a series of strict security measures, arranging special personnel to keep watch at traffic arteries and village entrances around the casino, and equipping them with walkie-talkies or mobile phones. Once they find suspicious vehicles or personnel approaching, they immediately report to the casino. There is also multiple observation points inside the casino to keep track of the surrounding dynamics at all times. Casinos are often arranged with hidden signs or codes, and only those who are familiar with the situation can find the entrance. This high level of alertness and concealment allows mobile casinos to exist

in rural areas for a long time, and also makes it difficult for law enforcement agencies to crack down on hidden illegal activities.

3.3 Complex Composition of Participants

Participants in rural mobile casinos come from different social classes and backgrounds. Local farmers are a major component. Some farmers have a lot of free time and lack entertainment activities, making them easily tempted by gambling. The unemployed also often participate. They have no fixed jobs or sources of income and try to obtain money through gambling. Returnees from working outside may also participate in gambling when they return to rural areas due to monotonous lives. In addition to these groups, some criminals also mix in. They take advantage of the chaotic environment of casinos to engage in various illegal and criminal activities. Some lend usury, exploiting gamblers with high interest rates; some organize theft gangs, stealing property while gamblers are focused on gambling; others collude with criminal gangs to engage in extortion and other criminal activities around casinos. In recent years, many participants in gambling in rural areas have criminal records. The existence of these illegal and criminal activities further exacerbates rural social security problems. The connection between the rural social environment and the breeding ground for illegal and criminal activities, as well as the special personnel structure and living conditions in rural areas, provide a breeding ground for the complex personnel ecology of mobile casinos.

4. Harms of Gambling in Mobile Casinos in Rural Areas to Rural Revitalization

4.1 Destroying Rural Civilization Construction

Gambling is a bad social behavior, and its damage to rural social atmosphere is subtle and profound. In rural areas, the family is the basic unit of society, and gambling often becomes the fuse of family conflicts. When family members are addicted to gambling, they will invest a large amount of time and money in it, neglecting family responsibilities and care, leading to constant quarrels between husband and wife, tense relationships, and even divorce. For children, their parents' gambling behavior can set a bad example, affecting the formation

of their values and outlook on life, leading to behavioral deviations in children's growth. Once the gambling atmosphere spreads in rural communities, it will erode the entire village's spiritual outlook like a contagious disease. The original simple, kind, and mutually helpful folk customs will gradually be replaced by indifference and selfishness. Trust among villagers decreases, and neighborly relations become tense. Some originally united villages have developed factions and mutual suspicion due to gambling problems, seriously damaging the harmony and stability of rural areas.

4.2 Hindering Rural Economic Development

The development of the rural economy depends on the hard work of farmers and reasonable capital investment. However, the existence of mobile casinos seriously hinders rural economic development. Gamblers often lose their reason when gambling and invest a large amount of family savings in it. Some people even borrow usury to participate in gambling, eventually losing everything. Due to economic difficulties, these families cannot carry out normal agricultural production investment, such as purchasing high-quality seeds, fertilizers, and farm tools, thus affecting crop yield and quality. In addition, gambling behavior leads to a waste of rural labor. Many farmers who participate in gambling, especially young and able-bodied laborers, spend a lot of time at the gambling table, neglecting agricultural production and other economic activities. This not only reduces the supply of effective labor in rural areas but also reduces labor productivity. Some rural industries that originally had the potential for development cannot develop and grow normally due to lack of labor support. The development of the rural economy requires a good investment environment, but in rural areas, "while the material level is improving and improving, the gambling atmosphere is spreading." [6] The existence of mobile casinos has reduced external investment confidence in rural areas and hindered the diversified development of the rural economy.

4.3 Disrupting Rural Governance Order

Mobile casinos are very likely to breed various illegal and criminal activities. Among them, usury is the most common. In casinos, usurers take advantage of gamblers' urgent desire to make a comeback and provide loans at

extremely high interest rates. Once gamblers fail to repay on time, usurers will use threats, beatings, illegal detention and other violent means to collect debts, seriously threatening the lives and safety of gamblers and their families. In order to repay gambling debts, losing gamblers often turn to crime. They may choose to steal, rob, or steal livestock, farm tools, and other property from villagers. Some gamblers rob on highways, seriously affecting traffic safety in rural areas. In addition, mobile casinos can also become places for drug trafficking. Some criminals take advantage of the spiritual emptiness of gamblers during gambling to sell them drugs, further aggravating social harm. The occurrence of these illegal and criminal activities not only disrupts the social order in rural areas but also puts great pressure on law enforcement agencies.

5. Reasons for the Formation of Gambling Problems in Mobile Casinos in Rural Areas

5.1 Lack of Spiritual and Cultural Life among Villagers

With the acceleration of urbanization, a large number of young and middle-aged laborers in rural areas have poured into cities, leaving behind mostly the elderly, women, and children. This has not only changed the rural population structure but has also led to a lack of spiritual and cultural life in rural areas. Compared with cities, rural areas have a serious shortage of cultural and entertainment facilities. Many villages do not have libraries, cinemas, theaters, or even a decent cultural square. During their leisure time, farmers have few other entertainment activities besides watching TV and chatting. This monotonous leisure life makes some farmers feel spiritually empty and bored, and they urgently need to find ways to pass the time and satisfy their entertainment needs. Gambling activities happen to cater to this psychology and become one of their choices to pass the time. In some rural areas, gambling has even become a kind of "social activity", and villagers exchange feelings and pass the time while gambling, but ignore the harm caused by gambling.

5.2 Insufficient Understanding of the Illegality of Gambling among Villagers

The lack of understanding of the illegality of gambling among some farmers is an important

reason why mobile casinos in rural areas are difficult to eradicate. In their minds, they believe that gambling is just a form of entertainment, and as long as it does not involve large sums of money, there will be no problem. Some elderly people even believe that small gambling can be a pastime and is a good way to pass the time. This misconception leads to their higher tolerance for gambling behavior, and they not only participate in gambling themselves but also turn a blind eye to gambling phenomena around them. In addition, some farmers have a fluke mentality, believing that mobile casinos are highly concealed and mobile, and it is difficult for law enforcement agencies to discover and crack down on them. They feel that even if they are caught participating in gambling, they will not be severely punished. This fluke mentality makes them even more reckless in participating in gambling activities, thus contributing to the spread of the gambling atmosphere.

5.3 Insufficient Law Enforcement Efforts against Mobile Casinos in Rural Areas

The concealment and mobility of mobile casinos pose a huge challenge to law enforcement. First, it is difficult for law enforcement agencies to obtain clues. Due to the vast and sparsely populated rural areas, information dissemination is relatively slow, and the organizers of casinos take strict precautions, making it difficult for law enforcement agencies to timely grasp the exact location and operating time of the casinos. Second, tracking down casino organizers also faces many difficulties. These organizers usually have strong anti-reconnaissance capabilities, frequently changing their contact information and identity information, making it difficult for law enforcement agencies to effectively track and arrest them. In addition, insufficient law enforcement in some areas is also an important factor affecting the effectiveness of crackdowns. In some rural police stations, the police force is relatively small, and police officers have to be responsible for both daily public security management and handling various cases, leaving them overwhelmed. Faced with the complex public security issue of mobile casinos, "Although rural gambling is a focus of governance by public security organs, it is simply impossible to effectively govern

gambling by relying solely on the police force of rural police stations." [7] Moreover, when law enforcement agencies crack down on mobile casinos, they need to cooperate with other departments. However, in actual work, the communication and coordination mechanism between various departments is not perfect, resulting in the inability to form a joint force for crackdown actions, which affects the effectiveness of the crackdown.

6. Measures to Strengthen the Control of Mobile Casinos in Rural Areas

6.1 Greatly Strengthen the Construction of Proactive Forces

"To curb the trend of gambling, we must first strengthen ideological education, improve people's understanding of the harm of gambling, and build a solid defense line against gambling." [8] Grassroots organizations, community police, and other "proactive" forces play an important role in the prevention and control of mobile casinos in rural areas. They should actively go deep into rural areas and widely publicize the harm and legal consequences of gambling through various forms. Utilize rural radio to regularly broadcast special programs on the harm of gambling, popularize gambling-related laws and regulations to farmers; post propaganda posters and slogans in conspicuous places such as village bulletin boards and main roads, so that farmers can see the propaganda content against gambling anytime and anywhere. Innovate propaganda methods and means; utilize new media platforms such as WeChat public accounts and Douyin short videos to create vivid, interesting, and easy-to-understand propaganda content; use gambling cases that have happened around them to make farmers deeply aware of the serious harm of gambling to individuals, families, and society, and organize legal education activities to go to the countryside, inviting legal experts to give lectures in rural areas to answer farmers' legal questions and improve their legal awareness and self-protection ability. Through continuous and in-depth propaganda education, farmers can recognize the seriousness of participating in gambling from an ideological perspective, enhance their self-awareness and initiative to resist gambling, and curb the occurrence of gambling behavior from the source.

6.2 Enrich Rural Cultural Life

To meet the spiritual and cultural needs of farmers and reduce the attractiveness of gambling for them, we should actively promote the construction of rural cultural facilities and the development of cultural activities. Increase investment in rural libraries, cultural squares, sports facilities, and other cultural infrastructure to improve the hardware conditions of rural culture. In some villages, build spacious and bright libraries, equipped with rich book resources, covering agriculture, technology, literature and art, law, and other fields, to provide a platform for farmers to learn knowledge. Install fitness equipment and audio equipment on cultural squares to provide venues for farmers to carry out cultural activities. Organize a variety of cultural activities, such as cultural performances, sports competitions, and science popularization lectures. During the slack season, invite professional art troupes to perform in rural areas, bringing farmers wonderful songs, dances, and operas. "Strengthen the mutual penetration of farming culture education, legal civilization, sports culture, and science and technology, and replace bad social practices such as gambling, superstition, and luxury." [9] Through these healthy and beneficial cultural activities, enrich the leisure life of farmers, allow them to feel happy and fulfilled in entertainment, and effectively divert their attention from gambling, reducing the occurrence of gambling behavior.

6.3 Formation of Common Governance with All-people Participation

Grassroots rural organizations play an irreplaceable role in the prevention and control of mobile casinos. Give full play to the management and education functions of village committees and villager groups, and strengthen the daily management of villagers. Establish and improve village rules and regulations, include the resistance to gambling in the content of village rules and regulations, and impose corresponding penalties on villagers who participate in gambling, such as criticism and education, and public exposure. Through the constraints of village rules and regulations, guide villagers to consciously abide by laws and regulations and resist gambling behavior. Establish a reward system for reporting,

encourage villagers to actively report mobile casinos, set up special reporting phone numbers and email addresses, and strictly keep the information of the informants confidential. For verified reports, provide the informants with certain material rewards. Through this method, fully mobilize the enthusiasm of villagers to participate in the crackdown on mobile casinos and form a good atmosphere of all-people participation. Strengthen the management of idle houses and sites in rural areas, conduct regular inspections, and prevent them from being used to set up casinos. Community police officers should strengthen patrols and increase the visibility of police in rural areas. Develop a scientific and reasonable patrol plan to focus on patrolling major rural roads, villages, and remote corners. During patrols, pay attention to identifying suspicious persons and vehicles and promptly investigate gambling clues. At the same time, establish contacts with rural security activists and volunteers to form a joint prevention and control work pattern and jointly maintain the social security of rural areas. In the process of innovating governance models, "introduce more diversified subjects and explore a multi-center participation mechanism based on resource sharing and information sharing to improve the collaborative mechanism of multi-subject participation in rural governance." [10]

6.4 Continue to Strengthen the Strike Force

We will continue to improve the joint law enforcement mechanism, further clarify the responsibilities and division of labor of each department in the fight against mobile casinos, and strengthen the cooperation and cooperation between the departments. We will regularly organize and carry out joint action to conduct an all-round and carpet-style inventory of rural mobile casinos. We will strengthen the pursuit of the organizers and key members of the casinos, dig deep into the interest chain behind them, and thoroughly destroy the organizational system of the mobile casinos. At the same time, modern information technology, such as big data and artificial intelligence, will be used to improve the accuracy and timeliness of the strike. Through the analysis of the relevant data of gambling activities, predict the activity pattern and possible location of the casino,

Take control and strike ahead of time.

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