

# Study on the Adoption of Digital Financial Inclusion for the Development of Rural Tourism in China: Structured Literature and Case Study Review

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To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBS/v13-i8/18227> DOI:10.6007/IJARBS/v13-i8/18227

*Published Date:* 16 August 2023

## Abstract

China is the world's largest developing country, with a large population base and a high proportion of rural dwellers. Rural construction, agricultural development and farmers' incomes are three of the main problems hampering China's economic development. In 2022, the Chinese government proposes to promote the revitalization of rural tourism, deepen the diversified values of the rural areas, and promote the sustainable development of rural tourism in China. Taking China as an example, this paper analyzes the digital financial inclusion's adoption and discusses the role and importance of it in supporting the development of rural tourism. In this paper, several representative digital inclusive finance platforms, such as Rural Commercial Bank, WeBank and Alipay, were selected to support the development of rural tourism in China. It is found that digital inclusive finance has broad application prospects and great potential in rural tourism, which can provide diversified financial services to rural tourism entrepreneurs, help them address the problem of lack of financing, and improve their competitiveness and sustainable development capacity. At the same time, a digital inclusive financial platform can also offer convenience and protection to consumers of rural tourism and promote their participation and satisfaction. However, the process of digital inclusive financing to support the development of rural tourism also faces some challenges and limitations. Drawing upon the findings of the study, this paper offers a series of policy recommendations and actionable measures aimed at providing guidance and strategic orientation for the effective development and integration of digital financial inclusion within the sphere of rural tourism.

**Keywords:** Digital Financial Inclusion, Rural Tourism, Case Study, Policy Recommendations

## Introduction

In the context of the global digital wave, digital inclusive finance has become a new trend in financial services. The main objective of digital financial inclusion is to extend formal,

affordable and transparent financial services to individuals who do not have access to or have limited access to traditional financial services. While the growth rate of digital inclusive finance has slowed in recent years after an initial rapid development, it remains significant, especially during the Covid-19 period, the growth of digital inclusive financial services will continue (see Figure 1). By the end of 2022, China is poised to make further progress in advancing its digital rural economy, marking significant and innovative advances in this area. Digital technology has strongly consolidated the fundamentals of rural industry and also enabled further consolidation of poverty eradication gains. At the same time, construction of rural digital infrastructure continues, with 5G networks reaching coverage in key cities and some key administrative villages, and internet penetration rates in rural areas exceeding 60%. The accelerated development of the rural digital economy and the continuous improvement of the rural digital governance system have led to a steady deepening of digital inclusive financial services, the effective improvement of digital literacy and skills of farmers, and the initial success of the construction of the digital village pilot project (Sina News, 2022). By the end of 2021, the coverage rate of banking financial institutions in the country's cities was around 98.2%. The bank card withdrawal service for farmers became the main body of basic payment services, with a coverage rate of 99.6%. Financial services channels will be thoroughly promoted to ensure accessibility and age-appropriate transformation. Digital financial services such as mobile banking, internet banking, out-of-bank payments and internet insurance are developing rapidly (Shan, 2023). At the end of 2022, the balance of RMB loans in the inclusive financial sector stood at RMB32.14 trillion, up 21.2% year-on-year, with an annual growth rate 10.1% higher than that of miscellaneous loans. At the end of 2022, the balance of RMB23.8 trillion in inclusive small and micro loans stood at RMB23.8 trillion, with an annual growth rate 12.7% higher than that of miscellaneous loans, maintaining a higher growth rate. The inclusive micro and small enterprise loans grew by 23.6%, and the average interest rate of enterprise-type loans decreased by 0.47% compared with 2021 (Tencent News, 2023).

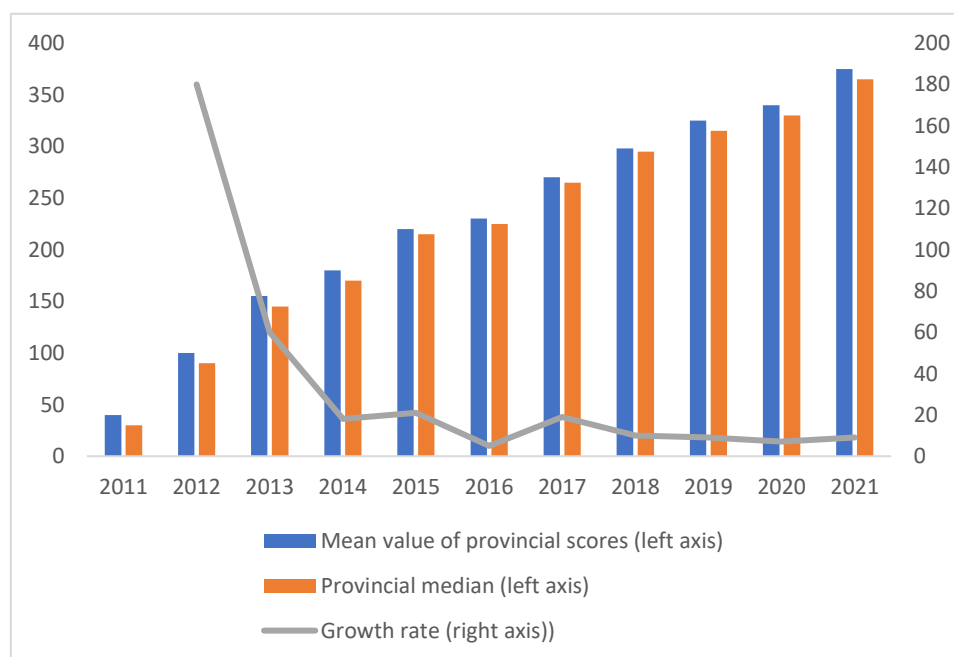


Figure 1: Mean, median and growth rate of provincial digital financial inclusion index, 2011-2021 (%)

Source: Peking University DFI Index, Fourth Issue (2011-2021), 2022  
[https://www.sohu.com/a/582629834\\_641521](https://www.sohu.com/a/582629834_641521)

At present, rural tourism has emerged as a novel genre of tourism, serving as a powerful tool to promote China's rural revitalization efforts. At the same time, it promotes the transformation and upliftment of the rural economy, embracing a transformation trajectory (Lu Lin, et al., 2019). Rural tourism as an important component of rural tertiary industries and an emerging industry can serve the primary and secondary industries to a certain extent, promote the integrated development of rural primary, secondary and tertiary industries, and optimize the structure of rural industries. However, in these years, China's tourism industry has faced a serious decline in the number of tourists and economic revenue due to the COVID-19 epidemic, which is mainly due to the greater impact of the COVID-19 epidemic on rural areas in 2022. According to the statistical results of the China Tourism Sample Survey, the total number of tourist trips reached 2.530 billion in 2022, 716 million fewer than the same period last year, down 22.1% year-on-year (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2023). Among them, domestic tourism trips by urban residents accounted for 1.928 billion, down 17.7% year-on-year, while domestic tourism trips by rural residents amounted to 601 million, down 33.5% year-on-year. China's tourism receipts (total tourism consumption) reached 2.04 trillion yuan, down 0.87 trillion yuan from a year earlier, or 30.0% less than a year earlier. Among them, urban residents spent 1.69 trillion yuan on travel, down 28.6% year-on-year, while rural residents spent 0.36 trillion yuan on travel, down 35.8% year-on-year. (Surfing News, 2023) In this context, rural tourism enthusiasts and consumers face challenges such as financing difficulties, credit and insufficient financial services (Li Zheng, 2019).

Against the backdrop of China's policy of vigorously promoting rural revitalization, the tourism market has gradually regained viability, the population's willingness to travel has increased, the development of the rural tourism sector has accelerated and the number of tourists has continued to rise. According to data, China's rural tourism absorbed 1.85 billion tourists from January to October 2021, up 43.4% year-on-year; (see Figure 2) 55 million farmers benefited from rural tourism every year, and the development of rural tourism has achieved remarkable results. As of 2022, China's domestic tourism receipts will be 204.44 billion yuan, down 30.0% year-on-year (See Figure 3). During the epidemic, the population's demand for outbound travel was suppressed and rural tourism was hit hard. With the liberalization of foreign travel restrictions, the long-suppressed consumption side of tourism is expected to achieve strong growth, and rural tourism revenues are expected to increase steadily. By 2023, with China's per capita spending on rural tourism users in the range of 300-900 yuan as high as 72.4%, the market outlook for rural tourism is promising, with huge potential (See Figure 4).

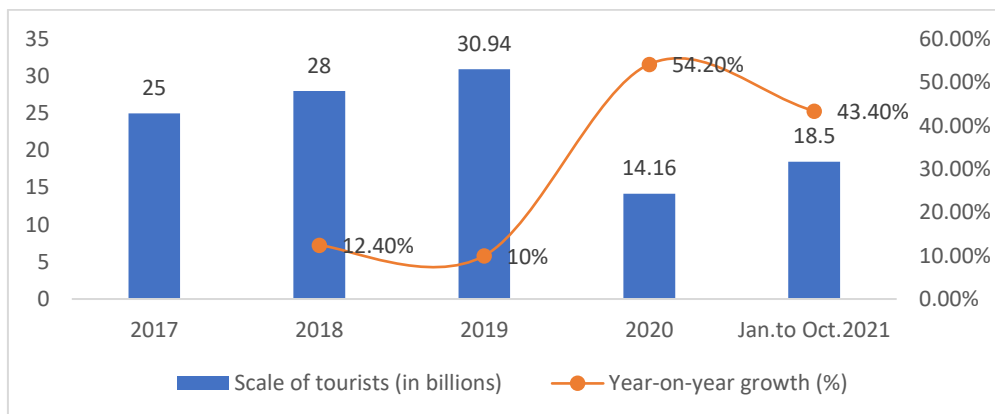


Figure 2 : China's rural tourist scale and growth, 2017-Jan.to Oct.2021  
Source: chinabaogao.com



Figure 3:China's total domestic tourism revenue and year-on-year growth rate, 2011-2022  
Source: iimedia (2022).

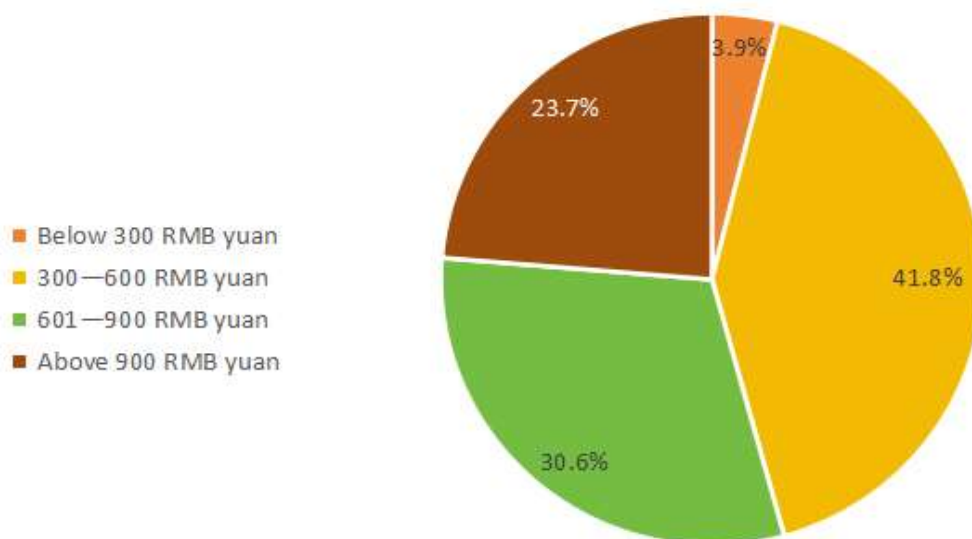


Figure 4: The amount of rural tourism spent by users in China in 2023

Source: iimedia (2022).

This paper uses an inductive analytical approach and examines the complexity of introducing digital financial inclusion in the context of rural tourism development, taking into account selected successful case studies. The overall objective is to provide valuable insights and empirically derived lessons that can in turn shed light on the development pathways for rural economic development and farmers' income generation in China.

### Problem Statement

As the concept of digital financial inclusion and its pivotal contribution to nurturing rural tourism advancement continues to gain traction, it is not without its share of challenges and constraints:

First, the political and institutional system is imperfect. The political and institutional framework is still fragmented. The political and institutional framework is difficult and the institutional and institutional framework is not well developed. Five main problems currently exist for rural tourism in China, such as unbalanced regional development, simpler industrial structure, more dispersed and weaker market players, imperfect service system and lack of policy synergies (Lin, et al., 2019). At present, although the country has issued a number of policy documents to develop digital inclusive financing and support the development of rural tourism, these policy documents tend to be more general, lack specific operational guidelines and are difficult to implement in practice. In addition, there are wide disparities in construction standards between different regions in China, due to imbalances in economic development.

Second, the technical means are insufficient. Digital inclusive finance needs the support of advanced technical tools, including internet, mobile payments, artificial intelligence, etc., but in some remote areas network coverage is insufficient, internet speed and stability is poor, and construction of network infrastructure is lagging behind, resulting in low internet coverage (Zhou et al., 2022). As of December 2022, China's Internet penetration in urban areas is 83.1% and Internet penetration in rural areas is only 61.9% (See Figure 5). China's Internet users reach 1.067 billion people, among which urban Internet users are 759 million, accounting for 71.1% of all Internet users; rural Internet users are only 308 million, accounting

for 28.9%. It can be seen that rural areas still do not have a high level of Internet penetration compared to urban areas, which has a significant impact on the functioning and management of digital inclusive finance (see Figure 6). In addition, electricity supply in remote areas is unstable, which cannot guarantee the normal functioning of digital financial equipment. Moreover, the lack of talent and technical equipment also limits the application and popularization of AI technology in remote areas, which affects the development of digital inclusive finance.

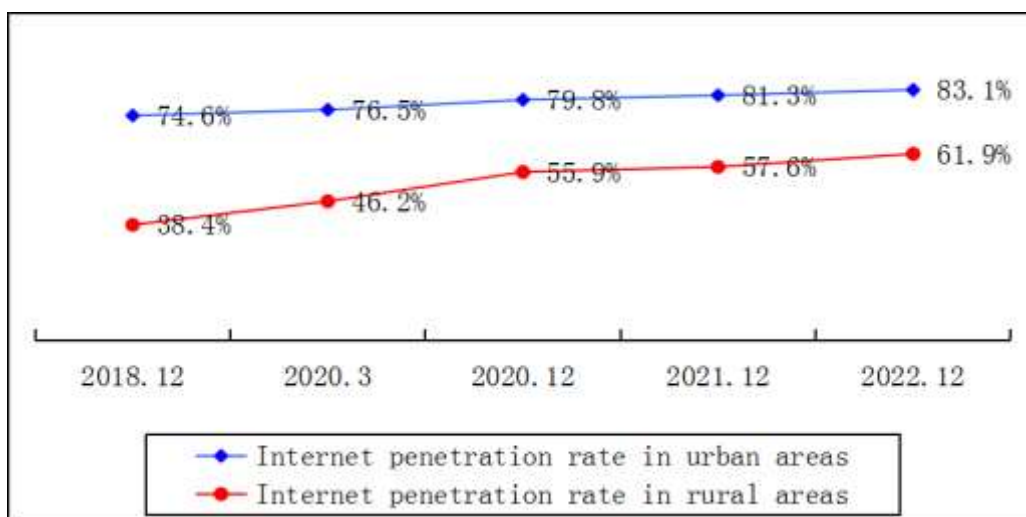


Figure 5: Internet Penetration Rate in Urban and Rural Areas of China,2018-2022  
Source: The 51st Statistical Report on China’s Internet Development,CNNIC, 2023

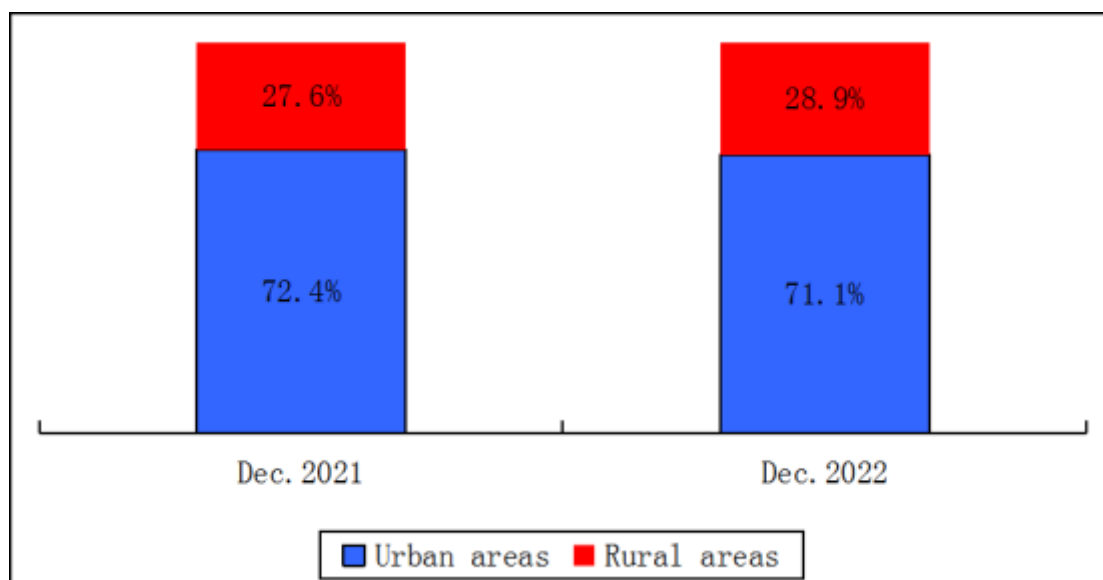


Figure 6:Urban and Rural Structure of Chinese Internet Users,2021&2022  
Source: The 51st Statistical Report on China’s Internet Development, CNNIC, 2023

Finally, there is a lack of trust among users. On the one hand, digital crowdfunding, which relies on the internet and related technological platforms, is susceptible to the dissemination of misinformation, fraud and harmful content, as these areas are inherently open and anonymous. Some bad actors use the openness and anonymity of the platform to

spread false information, including false advertising, false transactions, etc., to lure users into making investments, loans and other transactions for illicit gain. Such behaviour not only harms the interests of users, but also affects the reputation and credibility of the platform and reduces users' trust in the platform (Wu et al., 2023). On the other hand, the credit assessment and security mechanisms of digital inclusive finance platforms have not been improved (Kepu, 2023). Due to the large number of users of digital inclusive finance platforms and their different economic and social backgrounds, it requires platforms to be able to accurately assess users' credit risk and take appropriate security measures. However, due to technological limitations and data constraints, the credit assessment and security frameworks of digital crowdfunding platforms are often inadequate, creating challenges in enabling users to thoroughly understand and acknowledge the underlying risks of these platforms.

### **Limitations**

In this paper, some rural commercial banks in China, WeBank and Alipay, are taken as case studies to analyze the current situation, problems and experiences of digital financial inclusion in supporting rural tourism development, but still there are some potential research limitations:

#### **Sample Selection Limitations**

The selected cases are from rural commercial banks, Weizhong Bank and Alipay, which may not be representatives of all digital inclusive financial service providers in China. Other financial institutions or platforms may also play an important role, but due to space and resource constraints, this work cannot cover all possible cases.

#### **Time Constraints**

The cases selected in this study and literature reviews may be based on a specific time period and may not capture recent trends and developments. The field of both digital financial inclusion and rural tourism is constantly evolving, so the conclusions of this paper may not be applicable to future scenarios.

#### **Subjective Bias**

Due to space and time constraints, the paper may not be able to analyse every case and literature in depth and therefore may miss some subtle but important factors. Therefore, there may be a subjective bias on the part of the researcher in the study which may have influenced the interpretation and presentation of the results.

In conclusion, these limitations of the study need to be appropriately stated and duly discussed in terms of conclusions. This will help readers to understand the findings and will increase the depth and scope of the subsequent study.

### **Literature Review**

Digital financial inclusion, as a pioneering financial services paradigm, seamlessly integrates digital technology and financial services, ushering in an era of greater convenience and cost-efficiency. This innovative approach extends the reach of financial services to a wider range of individuals. In China, rural tourism, as an emerging industry, is gradually becoming an important engine for rural revitalization and economic growth. In the following, the relationship between digital financial institutions and rural tourism in China will be reviewed

in the light of domestic and international literature, and the impact and theoretical and practical significance of digital financial inclusion on the development of rural tourism in China will be explored to provide useful insights for policy-making and practices.

Foreign scholars have conducted in-depth studies on the impact of digital financial inclusion in tourism: a study by Adeola and Evans (2019, 2020) on the African region shows that the availability of mobile phones, internet connectivity and ICT infrastructures play an important role in tourism marketing. These digital technologies provide tourists with easy access to information and reservations, enhancing the tourism experience. Nofal et al (2020) studied the impact of digital marketing on domestic tourism and found that it had a significant positive impact on the willingness to use domestic tourism in Jordan. Al - mughairi et al (2022) studied the impact of COVID-19 on tourism in Oman, highlighting the social impact of the pandemic. They underline that digital marketing is a viable tool to support domestic tourism, even in the face of an epidemic. Moreover, they argue that DFI can increase both the efficiency and the security of financial transactions in this sector. These studies highlight the beneficial impact of digital financial inclusion on tourism growth and also point to the need to include DFI in tourism development strategies.

Hossain et al (2020); Hossain et al (2023) studied the impact of COVID-19 on hospitality industry in Bangladesh and explored few factors. They found that COVID-19 significantly negatively impacts the industry. The informants provide the miserable scenario of the industry during this pandemic, besides suggesting possible strategies.

Dredge et al (2018) conducted an in-depth study on the opportunities and challenges of digitization in the tourism industry. The study delves into how digital technologies can improve the efficiency of tourism operations, the quality of the customer experience and the development of new business models. The researchers note that digitization creates a huge potential for change in the tourism industry and offers new prospects for rural tourism. Kumar (2020) conducted an in-depth assessment to examine how concepts of rural tourism have evolved with technological developments. The study highlights the transformative potential of digital technology in both rural and urban areas, demonstrating the benefits of technology adoption for both tourists and locals. It underscores the indispensable role played by digital technologies, including online booking platforms, virtual reality experiences, and social media-driven destination marketing, in propelling the growth trajectory of rural tourism. In addition, national and international studies have highlighted the potential benefits of digital financial inclusion. For example, Ngo (2022) proposes a blockchain-based model of digital financial inclusion for tourism that aims to improve the efficiency and security of financial transactions. This model can further promote the development of rural tourism businesses, improve the convenience and security of financial transactions, and foster the rapid growth of tourism.

Digital financial inclusion in China has gradually gained scholarly attention in promoting rural tourism development. Researchers have found that digital inclusive finance plays a positive role in promoting rural tourism development and facilitating local economic integration. For example, Huang et al (2020) conducted a comprehensive exploration into the adoption and utilization of mobile payment platforms within China. Their findings illuminate the substantial contributions made by these platforms to the realms of digital economy, financial inclusion, and innovation. Recent studies have also incorporated digital finance into research frameworks in the context of rural tourism development. Ge et al (2022) further explored the role of digital financial inclusion in rural tourism development by



integrating digital financial inclusion into the research framework of tertiary rural integration. In addition to digital financial inclusion, the integration of digital financial technologies has a key role to play in promoting the consumption and management of tourism. Hua (2021) points out that digital financial technology can portray portraits of potential tourists and develop financial consumption products and services based on travel preferences, which can help improve the tourism experience and meet tourists' needs. In addition, digital financial technology plays an important role in the overall tourism consumption process, improving payment efficiency and the travel experience, and offering services such as instalment payments, insurance and travel-related financial products to customers. Chen (2018) points out that through the provision of tourism information services, digital financial platforms can help tourism businesses reduce operating costs and avoid operational risks, which strongly supports the sustainable development of rural tourism. Some researchers have empirically investigated the impact of the digital economy on the efficiency of tourism resource allocation, tourism economic growth and the growth rate of tourism industry aggregates, but high-level results are still very limited (Cai et al., 2023).

In sum, digital financial inclusion is very important for the development of rural tourism in China. Domestic and international studies have shown that digital inclusive finance offers new opportunities for the growth and sustainable development of rural tourism through the application of digital technologies. However, due attention must also be paid to the challenges in the digitization process. Government, business and academia should actively cooperate to strengthen infrastructure building and technical training and promote the organic integration of digital inclusive finance and rural tourism to achieve mutually beneficial development.

### **Research Questions**

5.1 What are the shortcomings of the application and innovation of digital inclusive finance in China's rural tourism policy and system based on case studies?

5.2 What impediments or insufficiencies are evident in the implementation of digital financial inclusion to the construction of digital technology facilities in China's rural tourism based on case studies?

5.3 How to improve the application of digital financial inclusion to the construction of digital technology facilities in China's rural tourism based on case studies?

### **Research Objectives**

#### **To Study the Application and Innovation of Digital Financial Inclusion in China's Rural Tourism Policy and System Based on Case Studies**

Achieving this goal will require a careful examination of case studies, with each study being a specific lens through which to methodologically explore the multi-faceted dimensions of digital financial inclusion. Through a systematic examination of a number of well-selected case studies, the underlying mechanisms that facilitate the integration and development of digital financial inclusion mechanisms in the specific context of Chinese rural tourism will be identified. The aim is to provide a holistic view of the complex interplay between policy dynamics, creative breakthroughs and the diffusion of digital financial services, thereby contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the potential for transforming China's rural tourism.

### **To Access the Application of Digital Financial Inclusion to the Construction of Digital Technology Facilities in China's Rural Tourism Based on Case Studies**

It explores how digital financial instruments, such as online payment systems and virtual platforms, contribute to the development of digital infrastructure. These case studies shed light on the symbiosis between financial relationships and technology, showing how their collaboration improves operational efficiency, service quality and the overall visitor experience. By analyzing real cases, this paper offers insights on how to use digital finance to promote rural tourism, fostering economic growth, heritage preservation and better access to rural areas.

### **To Explore the User-friendliness of the Application of Digital Financial Inclusion to China's Rural Tourism Based on Case Studies**

It explores how user-friendly digital financial solutions influence the experience of rural tourism. By analyzing these cases, the study reveals how digital financial tools meet stakeholders' preferences, convenience and needs. The insights gained shed light on the alignment between a user-centered approach and digital financial strategies, providing valuable guidance for improving user experiences and promoting sustainable growth in China's rural tourism sector.

### **Research Methodology**

This paper adopts a qualitative research framework combining literature analysis and case analysis to comprehensively explore the application, significance and influence of digital financial inclusion in the development of rural tourism in China.

### **Literature Analysis**

This study first conducted a detailed survey of domestic and foreign academic literature, research papers, reports and related policy materials related to rural development, tourism, digital financial inclusion and economic growth. In detail, it is necessary to synthesize the insights from these academic materials to build a solid theoretical foundation. This helps to outline key conceptual frameworks and demonstration practices inherent in rural tourism and digital finance, thereby enriching understanding of the synergistic dynamics and inherent challenges of integrating digital financial inclusion into rural tourism.

### **Case Study Analysis**

At the same time, this paper also conducted a comprehensive investigation of representative digital inclusive financial platforms, including rural commercial banks, WeBank and Alipay. These platforms were chosen because they have a pivotal position in the field of digital finance and play a catalytic role in the development of rural tourism in China. A case study methodology will be used to analyse in depth the actual effectiveness of digital financial inclusion in the context of rural tourism. Qualitative analysis is helpful to understand the specific impact of digital financial inclusion on rural tourism.

## **Case Studies**

### **Rural Commercial Bank's Digital Financial Services Support the Development of Agritainments**

Agritainment is an important part of rural tourism, and agritainment practitioners often face challenges including lack of capital and obstacles to securing finance (Yuanzhen, 2020). To address this problem, Rural Commercial Bank offers them a variety of financial products and services, such as "Agricultural Support Loan" and "Agritainment Loan", through digital financial services. Through these services, farmers can easily apply for loans and receive more favourable interest rates and flexible repayments, which will improve their financing efficiency and ability to control financing costs. At the same time, through digital financial services, the Rural Commercial Bank will also offer a range of value-added services, such as smart marketing, membership management and supply chain finance, to help agritainment operators improve the quality and competitiveness of their services and promote the development of rural tourism.

### **Changle Rural Commercial Bank: Empowering Green finance and Rural Tourism through Digital Innovation**

Changle Rural Commercial Bank is a bank that is taking the initiative to act as a major force for green finance and promote the sustainable transformation of local ecological benefits into economic and social benefits, with strong support for rural tourism development. In 2021, Maofeng Farm ran into financial difficulties, and Changle Rural Commercial Bank, upon learning of the situation, quickly issued a 1.5 million yuan "Battle - Agriculture Subsidy Loan" to the farm, which effectively alleviated the farm's financial burden with a favourable interest rate and helped it overcome its difficulties. In addition, Changle Rural Commercial Bank also fully supports the new rural ecotourism model combining "B&B+ study", and innovatively launched "Benefit to Farmers - B&B Loan" to transform the unused "overseas Chinese residences" into unique B&B, providing significant financial support for the development of the local tourism industry (Yu Shaolin, 2022)

### **Rural Commercial Banks in Pan'an: Pioneers of Rural Tourism Development through Innovative Digital Financial Solutions**

As of 2022, the government of Pan'an County in Zhejiang Province has developed 108 preferred villages, with 1014 agritainments as the No. 1 industry for their high-quality development. The local rural commercial bank has provided loans, such as agritainment loans, totaling RMB 118.58 million yuan to 430 households to help the county's common prosperity through government-bank cooperation and linkage with the county's agricultural and rural bureau, actively providing financial security. In recent years, Pan'an has undertaken the construction of Yuzen Mountain Residence, the largest comprehensive recreation project with a total investment of 2.3 billion yuan. It will cover an area of 7,157 acres with a maximum daily accommodation capacity of 2,000 people and will attract around 400,000 leisure and tourist visits every year. Today, the Pan'an Rural Commercial Bank has formed a low-, medium- and high-level service mechanism for the agricultural entertainment system. The bank actively promotes financial innovation by exploring new integrated development paths of "financial and cultural tourism", providing more professional and accurate financial services and credit support to various enterprises in the rural tourism industry chain, such as

agritainment, B&B and leisure agriculture tourism, helping more people in rural areas embark on the path of shared prosperity (Yi and Rui, 2022).

### **Xuyi Rural Commercial Bank: Enabling Rural Revitalization and Innovative Financial Solutions**

As of 2023, Xuyi Rural Commercial Bank in Jiangsu province has been focusing closely on the local rural revitalization scheme, deepening inclusive financial services, innovating financial products, optimizing financial services, and doing a good job in supporting agriculture and small businesses. By formulating opinions and management measures on agricultural credit support, the bank ensures that people have plans and resources for their business projects. At the same time, optimize the loan operation process to achieve new customers with less than RMB 100,000 yuan small loans on the same day, so as to improve the quality and efficiency of services for people. Focusing on customers' demands, the Bank will enhance credit loan innovation by continuously developing credit products to meet customers' needs. More than ten types of business credit products will be innovated, such as "Youth Business Loan", "Micro Express Loan" and "Cultural Tourism Agricultural Loan". It has provided financing channels for the public sector and for small and micro enterprises wishing to start their own business. It is reported that as of February 19, 2023, Xuyi Rural Commercial Bank has issued 787 million RMB yuan of various loans to support agriculture so far this year, which has strongly supported people's entrepreneurship and the healthy and rapid development of the local cultural tourism industry in the context of rural revitalization (Zhian, 2023).

### **Rural Tourism Microcredit Supported by WeBank Digital Financing**

WeBank is the first internet bank in China. Since the launch of its online operating model in 2015, it has been committed to providing inclusive financial services to the public through digital innovative technologies and financial services. In order to support the development of rural tourism, WeBank has conducted several experiments in digital inclusive financial services. Its digital financial services platform provides microfinance services for rural markets and analyses and mines data using big data risk control technology.

Currently, WeBank has launched a number of inclusive financial products, such as "Microcredit", "Micro Industry Loan" and "WeBank Wealth+", which have provided financial services to a total of 350 million private customers and over 3.4 million micro and small market entities. The bank has provided comprehensive financial services to more than 350 million private customers and over 3.4 million micro and small market participants, including online bank accounts, deposit management, microcredit and payments, including rural tourism operators, to whom it has provided loans of over RMB 20 billion yuan (Financial News, 2023). In addition, WeBank also provides financial services such as supply chain finance and insurance.

### **Alipay Digital Financing to Support the Protection of Rural Tourism Consumption**

Digital financial inclusion has played an active role in China's rural tourism industry, providing the public with more convenient, more efficient, and higher quality financial services. Chen & Wen (2023) As one representative of digital inclusive finance, Alipay, which has a large user base, not only provides payment and financial services for urban residents, but also offers a variety of financial services and online reservations and smart tour guide

services for rural tourism owners and tourists (Ren & Ren, 2021). Recent data show that the total revenue of rural tourism in China will exceed RMB 1 trillion in 2022, and digital inclusive financing will play an important role in securing rural tourism consumption (Zhou et al., 2022).

There are several successful cases of Alipay digital inclusive financing in rural tourism consumption. Alipay's "Rural Version of Ant Credit" offers rural users the convenience of installment payments, while Alipay also provides secure payment, online booking, and smart travel guide services to facilitate tourists' travel. In addition, Alipay's digital financial settlement also offers financial services such as financing and risk control to rural tourism owners to help them better develop rural tourism.

### **Data Analysis Plan**

Firstly, relevant research findings from the domestic and international literature, focusing on the link between digital financial inclusion and rural tourism development are gathered. Through reading and summarizing, the authors extract those theories, perspectives and findings that are relevant to the cases. This will provide a comprehensive background and helps to compare and validate the results with existing research findings to deepen the understanding of the role of digital financial inclusion in rural tourism.

Secondly, case data from different perspectives, including rural commercial banks, WeBank and Alipay, which include platform information and user survey data are collected. By examining these case studies, the authors identify and extract key themes, important concepts and typical patterns in the development of rural tourism. Using content analysis methods, each theme in more depth to highlight the real impact and mechanisms of digital inclusive financial services in promoting rural tourism development are explored. This will help to systematically demonstrate the concrete contribution of digital inclusive financial services to the development of rural tourism using comprehensive data.

Finally, the results of the case study and the literature review to develop a comprehensive thesis are synthesized. The authors explore the commonalities and differences between the perspectives of the case data and the literature and analyse in depth their implications for the answers to the research questions and the construction of the theory. Through this in-depth analysis, this paper can present an exhaustive overview of how digital financial inclusion promotes the development of rural tourism from a more holistic perspective, providing strong support and in-depth explanations for this study.

### **Data Analysis**

This paper is a qualitative study that aims to explore how digital financial inclusion benefits rural tourism. The analysis consists of two main parts: literature review and case studies.

Literature review: studies and reports exploring the link between digital financial inclusion and rural tourism are analyzed through an extensive review of domestic and international literature on the subject. Examining the literature review allows the authors to identify gaps in the research and to incorporate different research perspectives and findings from the selected cases.

Case studies: in-depth analysis of the case studies of rural commercial banks, WeBank and Alipay. Through the platform data, user feedback and the impact of digital service usage, it provides lessons for understanding how these platforms promote financial access to facilitate the growth of rural tourism and provides a basis for proposals to develop this study.

Summary and conclusions: By combining case studies and literature review, the authors provides a more comprehensive understanding of how digital financial inclusion can promote the growth of rural tourism. By combining insights from case studies and academic work, it enables researchers and practitioners to discover the importance of these financial platforms in promoting financial inclusion, visitor experience and local economic development in rural tourism.

## **Finding and Conclusion**

### **Finding**

Digital inclusive financial services are now an important trend in promoting the development of rural tourism. Through the three cases described above, we can see that digital financial services play an important role in promoting the development of rural tourism. These cases offer financial products and value-added services, such as smart marketing, membership management and supply-chain finance, to rural tourism businesses through digital financial services, helping them to improve the quality and competitiveness of their services, which in turn promotes the development of rural tourism. At the same time, digital financial services can also provide local farmers with more convenient and affordable financial services, increasing their sources of income and promoting rural economic development. Specific experiences and implications from three cases and related literature are presented below:

First, digital inclusive financial services can offer a diverse range of financial products and services, such as "Agricultural Subsidy Credit" and "Agritainment Loan". At the same time, digital inclusive financial services can also provide local farmers with more convenient and affordable financial services to increase their sources of income and promote rural economic development. At the same time, they can also provide value-added services, such as smart marketing, membership management and supply chain finance, to help agricultural entrepreneurs improve the quality and competitiveness of their services.

Second, digital inclusive financial services can actively respond to and work with local authorities' industrial development strategies to support the development of the rural tourism industry. Through cooperation between government and banks, rural commercial banks can offer more favourable lending rates to reduce the cost of financing and promote the development of agri-tourism businesses.

Third, digital inclusive financial services can provide local farmers with more convenient and affordable financial services, increase their sources of income and promote rural economic development. For example, through "Agricultural Subsidy Credit" offered, farmers can benefit from more flexible repayments, improved financing efficiency and the ability to control financing costs, thereby helping them to better develop their rural industries.

### **Conclusion**

In this paper, by examining the application cases of digital financial inclusion in the development of China's rural tourism industry, it is found that digital financial inclusion has become an important force in promoting the development of China's rural tourism industry. It not only improves the accessibility and efficiency of financial services, but also helps improve rural people's income and living standards while protecting the rights and interests of rural tourism consumers.

However, digital financial inclusion still faces some challenges and problems in the development of rural tourism. For example, in some rural areas, digital infrastructure and financial literacy are limited, leading to low uptake of digital inclusive financial services; there is also limited uptake of digital financial services by some rural residents and some trust issues. To address these challenges, we need to work together to improve digital infrastructure and financial literacy, and strengthen financial regulation and risk prevention to ensure the safety and soundness of digital inclusive financial services.

Overall, there is broad prospect and potential for the development of China's rural tourism industry through the implementation of digital inclusive finance. It is believed that with the joint efforts of the government, financial institutions and enterprises, digital inclusive financial services will continue to contribute to the sustainable development of China's rural tourism industry.

### **Recommendation**

Based on the experience and inspiration of the above cases, this paper finds out some development suggestions of tourism practitioners, governments and financial institutions for the application of digital financial inclusion to rural tourism in China.

Firstly, improve the rural tourism policy and system (Feng et al., 2022). According to the 2018 Guiding Opinions on Promoting the Sustainable Development of Rural Tourism, Chinese government should formulate concrete and detailed policy documents, improve the relevance and effectiveness of policies, strengthen the degree of policy synergy, and enhance economic cooperation and inter-regional coordination to promote the sustainable development of rural tourism. In addition, documents such as the Outlook Opinions on the Regulation of the Internet Finance Regime recommend that the government should improve the regulatory system, introduce an appropriate sanction mechanism, improve the integrity of market players and protect the rights and interests of users.

Secondly, strengthen the construction of digital and technical tools (Feng et al., 2022). The Chinese government should increase investment, improve the speed and quality of network infrastructure construction, and solve technical problems in the construction and operation and management of digital inclusive financial tools. At the same time, the government should strengthen the research and development and application of digital financial inclusion technology, improve the level of digital financial inclusion technology, and expand the application of digital financial inclusion in the development of rural tourism.

Finally, enhance the trust of users of digital platforms (Sharma et al., 2020). Platforms of digital financial inclusion should strengthen user authentication and information verification, establish a perfect user credit assessment and risk control mechanism, and improve user trust in the platform. At the same time, the platforms should strengthen information security and data protection, establish a perfect security protection system, and protect users' privacy and security. The Chinese government should also strengthen the supervision and governance of the digital inclusive finance market, establish credit rating agencies, improve the integrity system, and promote the standardization and sound development of digital inclusive finance platforms.

### **Acknowledgement**

The authors would like to express gratitude to all the authors of literature referenced in this paper.

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