

Collective Interest Integration and County Governance for Common Prosperity: Evidence from a County in China

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Abstract: *Common prosperity has emerged as a major policy objective in China, highlighting the need for effective governance mechanisms that promote coordinated regional development and equitable benefit sharing. County-level collective interest integration plays a critical role in aligning the interests of governments, collective organizations, enterprises, and residents to support sustainable local development. Using County A in China as an illustrative case, this study examines the governance mechanisms and institutional arrangements through which collective interest integration has been achieved. Drawing on a qualitative case study approach, the analysis focuses on four key dimensions: resource allocation, industrial collaboration, public service provision, and ecological governance. The findings demonstrate how coordinated governance and cross-sector collaboration contribute to balancing multiple stakeholder interests while fostering inclusive local development. The study extends the understanding of collective interest integration within the context of county governance and offers practical insights for regions seeking to strengthen collaborative governance and advance common prosperity.*

Keywords: Common prosperity; County-level collective interest integration; Rural revitalization; New-type urbanization.

1. INTRODUCTION

Common prosperity has been elevated to an unprecedented strategic height, emphasizing that substantive progress in common prosperity for all people should be promoted through integrated urban-rural development and coordinated regional development [1]. As the basic unit of national governance, the county level carries the important functions of connecting urban and rural areas and coordinating regional development [2], playing a key role in the process of achieving common prosperity. County-level collective interest integration is an important pathway to achieving common prosperity. It involves not only coordinated development between urban and rural areas but also multiple aspects such as industrial synergy, equalization of public services, and ecological environmental protection [3]. County A has effectively integrated county-level collective interests through a series of innovative practices, promoting coordinated regional development and the realization of common prosperity goals. The practice of County A provides valuable experience and inspiration for other county-level regions.

2. THEORETICAL FOUNDATION AND RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE

2.1 Theoretical Foundation

2.1.1 New Development Economics

New development economics emphasizes coordinated regional development and inclusive growth, advocating for narrowing development gaps between regions through optimizing resource allocation, strengthening infrastructure construction, and improving public service levels [4]. The practice of County A aligns with this theory [5], promoting coordinated regional development through urban-rural integration, industrial synergy, and equalization of public services [6].

2.1.2 Common Prosperity Theory

The theory of common prosperity emphasizes that in the process of economic development, both efficiency and fairness should be valued, and through institutional innovation and policy guidance, common prosperity for all people should be achieved [7]. County-level collective interest integration is an important lever for realizing common prosperity. By optimizing resource allocation and interest distribution mechanisms, it can effectively

narrow the urban-rural gap [8] and promote coordinated regional development.

2.2 Research Significance

2.2.1 Theoretical Significance

This study explores the pathways and methods of county-level collective interest integration from the perspective of county-level regions, enriching the practical connotation of common prosperity theory. Through the case analysis of County A, it reveals the key factors in the process of achieving common prosperity at the county level [2], providing empirical support for related theoretical research [9].

2.2.2 Practical Significance

The practice of County A provides referential experience for other county-level regions. Measures such as promoting industrial collaborative development [10], optimizing resource allocation, improving public service systems, and strengthening ecological environmental protection [3] to achieve county-level collective interest integration have important reference value for other regions.

3. OVERVIEW OF COUNTY A

County A enjoys favorable geographic conditions and convenient transportation access. With abundant natural resources and profound cultural heritage, County A has achieved remarkable results in economic and social development in recent years, forming an industrial structure led by the service sector, supported by industry, and based on agriculture.

3.1 Economic Overview

In 2023, the Gross Regional Product [GRP] of County A reached 26.617 billion yuan, a year-on-year increase of 4.8%, and the per capita GRP reached 46,083 yuan, a year-on-year increase of 5.9%. The industrial structure continues to optimize, with the proportion of the service sector continuously rising, industrial competitiveness strengthening, the level of agricultural modernization improving, and the coordination and sustainability of economic development significantly enhanced [4].

3.2 Locational Advantages

County A enjoys convenient transportation and obvious locational advantages. Multiple major railways and expressways run through the entire area, forming an extensive transportation network. This has laid a solid foundation for County A to promote new-type urbanization, rural revitalization, and collective interest integration.

3.3 Natural Resources and Cultural Resources

County A possesses relatively abundant natural resources and profound cultural heritage. The county has a high forest coverage rate and an excellent ecological environment, boasting numerous natural and cultural landscapes [5]. These provide unique conditions for County A to develop green industries such as rural tourism and ecotourism.

4. PRACTICAL PATHWAYS OF COUNTY A'S COUNTY-LEVEL COLLECTIVE INTEREST INTEGRATION

4.1 Optimizing Resource Allocation: Urban-Rural Integration and Coordinated Development

4.1.1 Integrated Construction of Urban and Rural Infrastructure

By optimizing the allocation of urban and rural resources and promoting the coordinated development of new-type urbanization and rural revitalization, County A has achieved the organic integration of urban and rural interests. On the one hand, County A has accelerated the construction of urban infrastructure, investing a total of 930 million yuan in the construction and upgrading of the urban road network, enhancing the city's carrying capacity and

residents' quality of life. On the other hand, County A has actively promoted rural infrastructure construction, implemented the "Three Areas Leading" strategy, advanced the construction of rural revitalization demonstration areas, carried out rural human settlement environment improvement and household toilet reforms, and further improved rural transportation, water supply, and other infrastructure, thereby narrowing the urban-rural gap.

4.1.2 Equalization of Urban and Rural Public Services

County A adheres to the people-centered development philosophy, increases investment in public utilities, optimizes the allocation of resources in education, healthcare, culture, and other fields, and promotes the integrated development of urban and rural public services [11]. It has implemented affordable housing projects to improve residents' housing conditions and organized a variety of cultural and sports activities and traditional festivals, enriching residents' spiritual and cultural lives and enhancing their sense of happiness and belonging. Through these measures, County A has effectively improved residents' living conditions and quality of life, providing a solid mass foundation for county-level collective interest integration.

4.2 Industrial Synergistic Development: Building an Interest-Sharing Mechanism

4.2.1 Synergistic Development of Industry and Agriculture

County A takes "strengthening the county through industry" as its strategic core, forming industrial clusters led by agricultural product deep processing and non-ferrous metal processing. At the same time, County A focuses on agricultural industrialization, promoting the large-scale and brand-oriented development of specialty agricultural industries such as Chinese herbal medicine and navel oranges. Through the "company + cooperative + farmer" model, County A has achieved increased income for farmers and enhanced efficiency for enterprises. For example, the planting scale of *Magnolia officinalis* in County A has reached 150,000 mu, with an annual output of 15,000 tons and an output value exceeding 300 million yuan, driving local farmers' employment and income growth [8].

4.2.2 Industrial Integration and Development

By developing green industries such as ecotourism and rural tourism, County A has promoted integrated industrial development [10]. For example, relying on its abundant natural resources and historical and cultural heritage, County A has developed tourism projects, thereby achieving the organic unity of ecological and economic benefits.

4.3 Equalization of Public Services: Improving People's Livelihood and Well-being

4.3.1 Optimization of Education and Healthcare Resources

County A has optimized the allocation of educational resources through multiple measures, improved education quality, and promoted balanced development between urban and rural education [12]. In recent years, County A has implemented a series of education reform measures, including optimizing school layouts, improving school conditions, and strengthening the construction of the teaching workforce. In 2024, the number of undergraduates admitted to the college entrance examination reached 2,288, achieving "nine consecutive increases," and the number of students scoring above 600 in the high school entrance examination reached over 80. In addition, County A has used the "one school, one policy" working ledger to scientifically guide and assist schools, address weaknesses, and promote the integrated development of urban and rural compulsory education. In the field of healthcare, County A has increased investment, improved medical infrastructure, and enhanced the level of medical services. In recent years, County A has implemented multiple medical construction projects, optimized the allocation of medical resources, and improved primary-level medical and health conditions. Although specific data is not explicitly stated, from the overall trend, County A's investment in healthcare continues to increase, and the level of medical services has significantly improved [12].

4.4 Ecological Environmental Protection: Green Development and Sustainable Development

4.4.1 Construction of Ecological Environmental Protection Mechanisms

County A has adhered to the concept that "lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets," and integrated ecological environmental protection throughout the entire process of economic and social development [13].

Through the implementation of measures such as the River Chief System, Lake Chief System, and the Farmland Protection "Field Chief System," County A has achieved remarkable results in water resource management, farmland protection, and forest resource protection.

4.4.2 Development of Green Industries

Relying on its abundant natural resources and historical and cultural heritage, County A has developed green industries such as ecotourism and rural tourism. As of 2023, County A has successfully built multiple 4A-level scenic spots, through the development of green industries. Through the development of green industries, County A has achieved the organic unity of ecological and economic benefits [13].

5. ACHIEVEMENTS OF COUNTY A'S COUNTY-LEVEL COLLECTIVE INTEREST INTEGRATION

5.1 Sustained Economic Growth and Structural Optimization

5.1.1 Economic Growth

Through county-level collective interest integration, County A has promoted sustained economic growth. In 2023, the GRP of County A grew by 4.8% year-on-year, and the per capita GRP reached 46,083 yuan, a year-on-year increase of 5.9%. The industrial structure continues to optimize, with the proportion of the service sector continuously rising, industrial competitiveness strengthening, the level of agricultural modernization improving, and the coordination and sustainability of economic development significantly enhanced.

5.1.2 Industrial Synergistic Development

By optimizing the industrial structure and promoting the synergistic development of industry, agriculture, and the service sector, County A has formed industrial clusters and specialty agricultural brands. Through industrial synergistic development, County A has achieved increased income for farmers and enhanced efficiency for enterprises, providing important guarantees for county-level collective interest integration.

5.2 Narrowing the Urban-Rural Gap and Promoting Common Prosperity

5.2.1 Coordinated Urban-Rural Development

Through measures such as optimizing resource allocation, promoting industrial synergistic development, and improving the public service system, County A has effectively narrowed the urban-rural gap [1]. Urban and rural infrastructure are interconnected, the level of equalization of public services has improved, and the income gap between residents is gradually narrowing. In 2023, the per capita disposable income of residents in County A reached 29,132 yuan, a year-on-year increase of 5.6%, with farmers' income growth accelerating and the goal of common prosperity steadily advancing.

5.2.2 Improvement of People's Livelihood and Well-being

Through the construction of equalized public services [11], County A has improved residents' quality of life. By improving infrastructure construction and enhancing the level of public services, County A has effectively improved residents' living conditions and enhanced their sense of happiness and belonging.

5.3 Improvement of Ecological Environment and Enhancement of Sustainable Development Capacity

5.3.1 Improvement of Ecological Environment Quality

County A's efforts in ecological environmental protection have achieved remarkable results. Through the implementation of strict environmental protection policies and ecological protection measures, County A has made outstanding achievements in water resource management, farmland protection, and forest resource protection, with the quality of the ecological environment significantly improved.

5.3.2 Development of Green Industries

By developing green industries such as ecotourism and rural tourism, County A has promoted integrated industrial development. Through the development of green industries, County A has achieved the organic unity of ecological and economic benefits.

6. REFERENCE SIGNIFICANCE OF COUNTY A'S COUNTY-LEVEL COLLECTIVE INTEREST INTEGRATION

6.1 Policy Guidance and Institutional Support

6.1.1 Policy Leadership and Institutional Support

The successful experience of County A shows that by optimizing the policy environment and providing financial support and financial services, County A has created favorable development conditions for various market entities, promoting the effective implementation of new-type urbanization and rural revitalization strategies [14].

6.1.2 Policy Guidance

Through policy guidance and institutional safeguards, County A has promoted county-level collective interest integration. Through measures such as optimizing resource allocation, promoting industrial synergistic development, and improving the public service system, County A has achieved the advancement of coordinated regional development and the goal of common prosperity.

6.2 Focusing on Industrial Synergistic Development and the Construction of Interest-Sharing Mechanisms

6.2.1 Industrial Synergistic Development

By optimizing the industrial structure and promoting the synergistic development of industry, agriculture, and the service sector, County A has formed industrial clusters and specialty agricultural brands. Through industrial synergistic development, County A has achieved increased income for farmers and enhanced efficiency for enterprises, providing important guarantees for county-level collective interest integration.

6.2.2 Interest-Sharing Mechanisms

By establishing interest-sharing mechanisms such as the “company + cooperative + farmer” model, County A has achieved a win-win situation for farmers, enterprises, and the government. Through the construction of interest-sharing mechanisms, County A has provided important guarantees for county-level collective interest integration.

6.3 Strengthening Ecological Environmental Protection and the Concept of Sustainable Development

6.3.1 Ecological Environmental Protection

County A has integrated ecological environmental protection throughout the entire process of economic and social development. By implementing strict environmental protection policies and ecological protection measures, it has promoted green development. Through ecological environmental protection, County A has achieved the organic unity of ecological and economic benefits. It has also focused on the concept of sustainable development by developing green industries such as ecotourism and rural tourism, promoting integrated industrial development.

6.4 Promoting the Equalization of Public Services and the Improvement of People's Livelihood and Well-being

6.4.1 Equalization of Public Services

In the field of education, County A has optimized resource allocation to promote the integration of urban and rural education. On the one hand, it has increased investment in rural schools, improved school conditions, and equipped modern teaching facilities. On the other hand, it has balanced the allocation of teaching staff, promoting high-quality resources to extend to rural areas. For example, it has implemented the “urban-rural teacher exchange program,” regularly selecting outstanding urban teachers to teach in rural areas while organizing rural teachers to

pursue further training in urban areas, effectively improving the quality of rural education. In the field of healthcare, County A has built a service system covering urban and rural areas. By strengthening the construction of primary-level healthcare institutions, improving the tiered diagnosis and treatment system, and promoting the sinking of high-quality medical resources, the county has newly built and renovated a number of township health centers and village clinics, equipped with advanced medical equipment, enhancing the capacity of primary-level medical services. At the same time, through models such as telemedicine and contracted family doctor services, rural residents can also enjoy high-quality urban medical resources. In addition, County A has increased investment in public health, especially in disease prevention and control, maternal and child healthcare, etc., implementing free physical examinations, health education, and other programs to improve residents' health levels. In the field of culture and sports, County A has vigorously promoted the construction of cultural and sports facilities with the goal of enriching residents' spiritual and cultural lives. It has utilized traditional festivals and local characteristic cultural resources. In terms of sports facility construction, County A has newly built a number of fitness squares, sports parks, and rural fitness trails, promoting the popularization of the national fitness campaign.

6.4.2 Improvement of People's Livelihood and Well-being

County A has focused on improving people's livelihood and well-being from multiple aspects, effectively enhancing residents' sense of gain and happiness through measures such as improving the social security system, optimizing the employment environment, and raising residents' income levels. First, in terms of social security, County A has further improved the basic old-age insurance and medical insurance systems for urban and rural residents, raising the level of security. At the same time, for disadvantaged groups, County A has established a multi-level social assistance system, including minimum living security, temporary assistance, and charitable assistance, ensuring that the basic lives of people in need are effectively guaranteed. In addition, County A has increased care for special groups such as the elderly and disabled, improving their quality of life through the construction of elderly care service centers, rehabilitation centers for the disabled, and other facilities.

In terms of employment and entrepreneurship, County A has promoted the increase of residents' income levels by optimizing the employment environment and providing entrepreneurial support. On the one hand, it has strengthened vocational skills training to improve the employability of job seekers. The county has established multiple vocational skills training centers, offering skills training in electrical work, welding, home services, etc., in response to market demand, helping rural laborers and urban unemployed persons achieve re-employment. In terms of entrepreneurship and employment, County A has encouraged entrepreneurship to drive employment through policy support. The government has introduced a series of preferential policies, such as entrepreneurial subsidies, tax reductions and exemptions, and small loans, focusing on supporting returnee migrant workers, college students, and other groups to start their own businesses. In the field of healthcare, County A has continuously improved the service system covering urban and rural areas. By strengthening the construction of primary-level healthcare institutions and promoting the implementation of the tiered diagnosis and treatment system, high-quality medical resources are channeled to the grassroots level. For example, County A has established an entrepreneurship incubation base in the industrial park, providing venues, equipment, and technical support for entrepreneurs to help start-up companies get off the ground successfully.

Through the construction of equalized public services and the improvement of people's livelihood and well-being, County A has not only effectively improved residents' living conditions but also enhanced their sense of happiness and belonging, providing a solid mass foundation for county-level collective interest integration. These measures have not only promoted coordinated regional development but also provided referential experience for other regions.

7. CHALLENGES AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Challenge 1: Balancing the Relationship between New-Type Urbanization and Rural Revitalization

7.1.1 Imbalance in Urban-Rural Development

In the process of promoting new-type urbanization and rural revitalization, County A still faces problems such as imbalanced urban-rural development and uneven resource allocation. In the future, County A needs to further optimize urban and rural planning, improve the mechanism for infrastructure interconnection, promote the integrated development of public services, and achieve the coordinated advancement of new-type urbanization and

rural revitalization.

7.2 Challenge 2: Improving People's Livelihood and Well-being and the Level of Public Services

7.2.1 Growing Demand for Public Services

With the development of the economy and society, the demand of County A's residents for public services is growing. County A needs to further increase investment in public utilities, optimize the allocation of resources in education, healthcare, culture, and other fields, and improve the quality and level of public services to meet the growing needs of residents for a better life.

7.2.2 Improvement of the Social Security System

County A needs to further improve the social security system, raise the level of social security, and ensure that every resident can enjoy basic living security. By improving the social security system, County A has provided a solid institutional guarantee for county-level collective interest integration.

7.3 Challenge 3: Strengthening Ecological Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development

7.3.1 Environmental Pollution and Ecological Damage

Although County A has achieved certain results in ecological environmental protection, it still faces risks such as environmental pollution and ecological damage. In the future, County A needs to further strengthen ecological environmental protection efforts, improve environmental policies and regulatory mechanisms, promote the development of green industries, cultivate environmental awareness among all people, and achieve coordinated development between the economy, society, and the ecological environment.

7.3.2 Insufficient Development of Green Industries

County A still faces some challenges in the development of green industries. In the future, County A needs to further strengthen the development of green industries, promote the development of green industries such as ecotourism and rural tourism, and facilitate the organic unity of ecological and economic benefits.

8. CONCLUSION

County A has actively explored effective pathways for county-level collective interest integration through measures such as optimizing resource allocation, promoting industrial collaborative development, improving the public service system, and strengthening ecological environmental protection, achieving remarkable results. Its experience demonstrates that this is an important way to achieve common prosperity. In the future, County A needs to continue to optimize the policy environment, promote industrial synergistic development, strengthen ecological environmental protection, and improve the level of public services, laying a solid foundation for achieving the goal of common prosperity. At the same time, the practice of County A also provides useful reference and inspiration for other county-level regions, offering important theoretical and practical references for promoting common prosperity at the county level nationwide.

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