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**FROM SURVIVAL TO INNOVATION: RESHAPING SMALLHOLDER
RESILIENCE THROUGH DIGITAL EMPOWERMENT—A CASE STUDY OF
FLOWER FARMERS IN SHUYANG, CHINA**

Wu Huifang (wuhf@cau.edu.cn)

Jian Chen (cj20151214@sina.com)

Qintao Luo (654373813lbxs@gmail.com)

In the era of VUCA (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity), smallholder resilience serves as an endogenous driver of agricultural modernization. While academic discourse has long focused on "survival resilience"—the passive capacity to withstand shocks—this study further explores "innovation resilience." This concept refers to the proactive capacity of smallholders to identify opportunities amidst risks and achieve industrial upgrading through new technologies. The research systematically analyzes how digital technology, acting as an empowering tool, stimulates this internal developmental drive. Adopting a qualitative research perspective, this study is based on field investigations of farmers in Shuyang County, Jiangsu Province,

renowned as the "Hometown of Bonsai and Flowers" in China. Through in-depth interviews and participant observations, the research analyzes how local farmers utilize digital technology to reshape the logic of agricultural production and marketing, thereby constructing an action framework within the context of digital family livelihood. The findings reveal that smallholders are not merely passive risk-bearers but proactive subjects with deep-seated "innovation genes." Digital technology provides smallholders with empowering tools for resource integration and trial-and-error adjustments, enabling them to effectively transform traditional labor-intensive expertise into competitive advantages in the digital age. This research not only enriches the theoretical understanding of smallholder resilience but also provides practical pathways for integrating smallholders into modern agriculture and achieving high-quality transformation.

Palavras-chave: smallholders; innovation resilience; digital empowerment; agency; rural transformation.