



Analysis on the Pathways of Vocational Education in Rural Vocational Schools Serving Rural Revitalization in the New Era

Jingwen Zhang¹ and Hao Wang^{2,*}

¹School of Entrepreneurship, WUHAN CITY POLYTECHNIC, Wuhan, 430000, China

²School of Entrepreneurship, WUHAN CITY POLYTECHNIC; PhD Candidate, WUHAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, Wuhan, 430000, China

907785475@qq.com, *147600410@qq.com

Abstract. With the in-depth advancement of socialism with Chinese characteristics in the new era, vocational education's supportive role in boosting rural revitalization has grown prominent. A great many vocational schools have explored extensively and gained valuable experience, yet relevant research and practice still have shortcomings, and the actual effect of vocational education in serving rural revitalization remains underutilized. This paper commences with an examination of the four key significance of vocational education in serving rural revitalization, identifies three key challenges and proposes four targeted initiatives.

Keywords: Rural Vocational Schools, Rural Revitalization, Service Pathways.

1 Introduction

The 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) proposed the implementation of the rural revitalization strategy. It's a key development decision and institutional arrangement made by the Party Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core, focusing on the overall situation of socialism with Chinese characteristics for a new era, profoundly grasping the laws of modernization and the needs of balanced urban and rural development, and following the expectations of hundreds of millions of people for a better life. Securing a decisive triumph in building a moderately prosperous society in all respects and fully developing a modern socialist country stands as a major historical mission, which also acts as the core focus of our work on issues relating to agriculture, rural areas and farmers in the new era. The report to the 20th CPC noted that the most arduous and heavy task of building a modern socialist country in all respects still lies in the countryside. We must prioritize the development of agriculture and rural areas, advance the integrated development of urban and rural regions, and facilitate the smooth flow of production factors between them. We need to speed up the development of a strong agricultural sector and steadily push forward the revitalization of rural businesses, talents, culture, ecology and

organizations. Vocational education, especially rural-oriented vocational education, plays an irreplaceable role in these aspects.

2 The Significance of Vocational Education in Serving Rural Revitalization

2.1 Serving Rural Revitalization: A Sacred Mission Endowed to Vocational Education by the Party and the Nation

At the 2021 National Conference on Vocational Education, General Secretary Xi delivered important guidance on vocational education. He stressed the imperative to accelerate the establishment of a modern vocational education system, foster more top-tier technical talents and accomplished artisans, thereby laying a solid talent and skill foundation for building a comprehensive modern socialist country and realizing the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation.

2.2 Supporting Rural Revitalization: An Inherent Need for the Quality-Oriented Development of Vocational Education in the New Era

In 2019, the State Council promulgated the "National Vocational Education Reform Implementation Plan," which stipulates that efforts should be made to actively enroll middle and high school graduates who have not pursued higher education, veterans, retired athletes, laid-off employees, and returning rural migrant workers in secondary vocational education programs. The plan also underscores the imperative to align with the rural revitalization strategy and nurture practical talents for rural development, with a primary focus on cultivating a new cohort of professional farmers. Furthermore, it mandates that secondary vocational schools should leverage their strengths to assist students facing academic challenges in completing compulsory education and acquiring foundational vocational skills. Simultaneously, the "Vocational Education Quality Improvement and Excellence Program (2020-2023)" highlights the necessity to expand vocational education resources in talent-deficient sectors including agriculture and rural development, establish 100 high-quality institutions dedicated to training professionals for rural revitalization, and fully capitalize on the pivotal function of national demonstration counties for rural vocational and adult education in advancing the rural revitalization strategy. It is essential to deepen the integration of industry and education, and propel the high-quality advancement of rural vocational education to foster the development of rural areas characterized by robust industries, livable surroundings, social etiquette and civility, effective governance, and common prosperity.

2.3 Achieving Rural Revitalization: A Necessity for Modern Vocational Education to Cultivate a Larger Contingent of Skilled Talents

In advancing the rural revitalization strategy, the revitalization of rural talent stands as the foremost priority. The Party and the country have attached profound significance to this endeavor. As a frontline sector most closely aligned with rural revitalization, rural vocational education must enhance its service capacity and take the lead in enabling vocational education serving rural revitalization. Industrial talents are the primary resource for rural revitalization. It is essential to further define the objectives and positioning of talent training in vocational education, build a high-quality modern vocational education system, in order to nurture technical and skilled talents capable of meeting the needs of rural revitalization. By means of targeted education and instruction, we will comprehensively elevate the capacity of vocational education to serve agriculture, rural areas, and farmers, realize the social benefits of "training one talent, fostering one industry, supporting the economy, and enriching the people".

2.4 Serving Rural Revitalization: An Imperative of the Times for the Connotative Development of Rural Vocational Institutions

Currently, vocational education has entered a phase of quality-driven advancement, with "enhancing quality and pursuing excellence" as its core guideline. The transformation and upgrading of the socioeconomic landscape have also set higher benchmarks for it. Amid this new context, vocational schools ought to further advance industry-education integration, deepen the reform of teachers, teaching materials and teaching methods, adhere to the principle of "equal emphasis on academic education and vocational training", foster a contingent of high-caliber technical professionals and master artisans, and make greater contributions to regional economic growth.

Rural vocational schools are rooted in rural areas. The rural revitalization strategy has opened up new avenues for the growth of rural vocational education. These schools should closely align with the strategic requirements of rural revitalization, and cultivate a large workforce for rural development that understands agricultural practices, is dedicated to rural areas and cares for farmers, as well as modern farmers equipped with education, professional skills, business acumen and management capabilities to support the rural revitalization drive. In the next period of time, rural vocational schools will evolve into talent cultivation hubs for rural revitalization, pivotal supports for ecological development strategies, key links connecting the new round of technological revolution with agriculture, rural areas and farmers, and powerful drivers for the advancement of modern agriculture.

3 Major Dilemmas Facing Rural Vocational Colleges in the Service of Rural Revitalization

It has been widely acknowledged within the vocational education sector that vocational colleges ought to proactively support rural revitalization. Numerous scholars

and experts have undertaken extensive research on this pivotal theme, while vocational institutions have also implemented a wealth of practical initiatives. However, restricted by a multitude of factors—including flawed institutional mechanisms, inadequate impetus for the development of rural vocational education, and unbalanced vocational education resources—the current efficacy of rural vocational education in advancing rural revitalization remains limited^[1]. Comprehensively analyzing the current landscape of rural vocational education and relevant policy frameworks, the primary causes underlying the inadequate effectiveness of rural vocational schools in serving rural revitalization are outlined below.

3.1 The Positioning of School is Not Clear Enough in Meeting the Needs of Rural Industrial Development

At present, nurturing talents and offering human capital support for rural revitalization constitute the era-defining mission and core responsibility of rural vocational education. Yet, due to factors including student recruitment sources and prospects for future development, most rural vocational schools have determined their main goal as students' targeted admission to higher education, and the primary orientation of academic programs has shifted toward non-agricultural sectors. The number of schools offering majors oriented towards "agriculture, rural areas, and farmers" has been on a steady decline. Therefore, their educational objectives and developmental paths are seriously misaligned with the strategic demands of rural revitalization^[2].

3.2 Inadequate School Conditions Impede the Implementation of the Rural Revitalization Strategy

Most rural vocational schools are situated in regions where local fiscal resources are limited, agricultural-related enterprises are scared, and have weak willingness of school-enterprise cooperation. This leads to a singular investment structure for rural vocational schools, persistent funding shortages, and constrained service capacity. Meanwhile, affected by inadequate financial input and a shortage of qualified teaching staff, rural vocational schools tend to prioritize preparing students for higher education. Vocational skills training that "benefits farmers" and "helps farmers" has a small coverage and isn't highly targeted. Consequently, the role of vocational schools as hubs for cultivating human resources to support rural industrial development remains underdeveloped. Moreover, they have insufficient development of "agriculture-related" curricula and training resources^[3], with outdated content, backward teaching methodologies, and narrow range of instructional tools. Practical teaching has become a mere formality, creating a significant disconnect between educational content and the genuine developmental needs of agriculture, rural areas and farmers. This misalignment ultimately hinders their capacity to bolster the advancement of modern agricultural industrial, production, and operational systems.

3.3 The Talent Development System and Mechanism for Rural Revitalization Support Remain Inadequate

In rolling out rural revitalization policies, local governments consistently highlight the strategic importance of talent and outline institutional arrangements for fostering professionals to drive rural revitalization. Unfortunately, the corresponding supporting systems, fiscal allocations, and incentive measures are either absent or insufficiently robust^[4]. This has diminished the appeal of rural vocational education, leading to inadequate initiative and enthusiasm among social entities to engage with rural vocational institutions. Meanwhile, the depth of enterprise involvement in the advancement of rural vocational education and the extent of industry-education collaboration remain limited. The talent development system and mechanism for rural revitalization lack substantive participation from agricultural stakeholders. In addition, the inherent weaknesses in the quality of rural vocational education itself constrain its capacity to support rural revitalization, rendering it challenging to satisfy the demand for cultivating new types of agricultural business entities, enhancing the agricultural socialized service system, and developing a contingent of professionals who understand agriculture, are devoted to rural communities, and care for farmers.

4 Key Strategies for Strengthening the Capacity of Vocational Institutions to Support Rural Revitalization

Rural vocational schools should ground their development in the national "14th Five-Year Plan" and the "Long-Range Objectives Through the Year 2035". They need to proactively align with the demands of scientific and technological advancement as well as industrial evolution, serving strategies such as rural industry revitalization, rural talent revitalization, and ecological civilization construction as their fundamental starting point. By unlocking new impetus for reform, they can provide robust talent support for the goals of advancing the "agriculture, rural areas, and farmers" agenda: promoting high-quality and efficient agriculture, pleasant living environment, and prosperity for farmers".

4.1 Align with Strategic Requirements and Improve the Ability to Cultivate Talents for Rural Industries and Rural Revitalization

4.1.1 Steadily Boost the Adaptability of Rural Vocational Education.

Centering on the "revitalization of rural industries, talents, culture, ecology and organizations," we should highlight pertinence, comprehensiveness and responsibility in school running models, education methods, professional settings and other aspects. This requires rural vocational schools to make strategic plans, carry out the industry-education integration and school-enterprise collaboration around the needs of rural industrial and rural revitalization talent training, and actively introduce industries, enterprises, projects and excellent technical and skilled talents into schools and classrooms. We should carry out in-depth school-enterprise collaboration across curricu-

lum instruction, internship and practice training, the translation of scientific and technological advances, business partnerships and social services, etc. Through forms such as the construction of double-qualified teachers, mentoring pairs, internship and practice experiences, we should gain insights into the current state of rural industries and revitalization efforts, recognize the corresponding talent demands, optimize the talent training system, and proactively align with the implementation of the rural revitalization strategy and the talent requirements of the new era.

4.1.2 Comprehensively Improve School Governance Competence.

Drawing insights from modern governance theories, we should advance the modernization of rural school governance system and governance capacities, comprehensively optimize the school system, and ensure the full participation of the School-Enterprise Cooperation Council, Academic Committee, Quality Assurance Committee, Parent Committee, And Staff Congress in school governance.

4.1.3 Further Deepen the Reform of Quality Improvement.

We should further refine the internship and practical training environment, foster a distinctive campus culture, promote the "three education reforms" in depth, established a model for faculty team development characterized by "leading geese guiding the way and all geese flying together"^[5]. New forms of integrated teaching materials that combine education and vocational training must be developed, and improve the graduates' adaptability and sustainable development capacity.

4.1.4 Refine the Development of Agriculture-Related Specialties.

Centering on the demands of agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry and fishery industries, we should make appropriate forward-looking plans^[6], focus on "understanding agriculture, loving rural areas and farmers", and open modern agricultural-related majors including "family farm production and management" and "crop production technology". Focusing on ecological development and adhering to the philosophy that "lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets", we should offer characteristic agricultural programs such as "leisure agriculture production and management". We should actively adapt to the new round of technological revolution, promote regional agriculture from traditional agriculture to intelligent, green, efficient and sustainable modern agriculture, while developing green agricultural majors including Protected "Agriculture Production Technology" and "Rural Electrical Technology".

4.1.5 Holistically Elevate the Standard of Open Education.

Emphasizing the type characteristics of rural vocational education, exploration should be conducted into the "Five Integration and Five Shared" school-enterprise cooperation model. The effective implementation of a Chinese-style modern apprenticeship system tailored to rural industrial development should be fully advanced, and

extensive cooperation and exchanges related to domestic and international agricultural expositions should be carried out.

4.2 Uphold the Principle of "Equal Emphasis on Academic Education and Vocational Training" to Strengthen the Support Role of Rural Vocational Institutions in Farmers' Learning and Development

4.2.1 Build "Three Resource Libraries".

We should unite vocational school teachers and technical backbones of local leading enterprises to build teacher resource library with noble morality, excellent professional competence, and a genuine commitment to rural development. Leveraging "information technology +" initiatives, we should develop a number of high-quality agricultural-related teaching resources and establish a digital repository to support rural revitalization. In collaboration with industry regulatory authorities, we should construct standardized industrial demonstration zones and establish a network of teaching and practical training bases. Furthermore, we should deliver training programs on modern agricultural technologies, offer technical advisory services, and conduct vocational training for employees in agricultural and rural sectors as well as agribusinesses.

4.2.2 Establish Relevant Platforms.

Centering on the development needs of "agriculture, rural areas, and farmers", with multi-stakeholder participation, we should build an agricultural-related theoretical research platform to conduct in-depth studies on strategies for serving rural revitalization and explore effective pathways for education to support this national initiative. We should establish a talent development platform to deliver comprehensive training programs covering rural grassroots governance, crop and livestock breeding techniques, modern agricultural practices, eco-tourism, rural e-commerce, and other key areas. This platform aims to enhance the technical proficiency of agriculture-related professionals, cultivate high-quality farmers, and foster a sense of dedication to rural communities among students, thereby nurturing a talent pool to drive rural revitalization. Additionally, we should set up a practical guidance platform to advance models such as school-village collaboration, school-household partnerships, and the "school + enterprise + base + farmer" integrated model. These efforts will promote the modernization of regional agriculture, consolidate poverty alleviation outcomes, and provide robust support for rural revitalization.

4.3 Gather Competitive Resources and Build the Innovation Capacity of Serving Rural Industrial Revitalization

4.3.1 Establish an Innovation and Entrepreneurship Platform to Advance the Commercialization of Scientific and Technological Achievements.

Under the guidance and support of industrial experts, demonstration bases including high-quality vegetable seedling breeding centers, standardized fruit tree cultiva-

tion sites, and smart agricultural parks should be developed. These bases will serve as reference models and benchmarks for the modernization of local agriculture. We should establish modern agricultural technology promotion and service teams with enterprises, scientific research institutes, agricultural parks, university experts to promote new crop varieties, cutting-edge technologies and innovative materials. By engaging directly with farmers and working in the fields, these teams will help resolve on-the-ground technical challenges, while also providing high-quality social practice opportunities for students.

4.3.2 Uphold Government-School-Enterprise-Village Synergy to Drive the Integrated Development of Rural Industries.

Efforts should be made to consolidate agriculture-related resources and establish a rural revitalization service platform featuring government-school-enterprise-village linkages^[7]. Under the coordination of the local government, dedicated project funding should be allocated to advance the integrated development of rural primary, secondary, and tertiary industries. We should actively encourage agriculture-related enterprises to use their advantages in technology, resources, and markets to cooperate with vocational institutions in cultivating skilled farmers. The "enterprise + farmer + vocational school" model should be vigorously implemented to provide farmers with agricultural input support, production guidance, and market channel services, realizing "off-factory production", reducing farmers' risks and stimulating their enthusiasm for participation. Full play should be given to the role of villages cooperatives as executors of policies benefiting farmers, ensure that varieties are planted and policies are implemented, and encourage farmers to take an active part in advancing the rural revitalization strategy. Rural vocational institutions should capitalize on their comparative advantages in technology, talent, and project support to align specialty development closely with industrial growth. They should collaborate with villages and communities to foster local industries and deliver targeted technical services, including rural skills training, on-site instruction at enterprise greenhouses and school demonstration bases, and the establishment of modern agricultural demonstration sites. These measures will address farmers' needs for scientific cultivation practices and facilitate the integrated development of agriculture, culture, and tourism.

4.4 Foster Farmers' Spirit of Craftsmanship to Forge the Driving Force for Rural Revitalization Support

"Spirit constitutes the wellspring of all strength". Rural vocational education must extensively cultivate the spirit of great artisans—epitomized by Yuan Longping—who are deeply rooted in rural communities, dedicated to fieldwork, committed to agriculture, and courageously undertake the mission of advancing human development. On the one hand, we should cultivate craftsmanship spirit, set benchmarks for farmer artisans across society, extensively publicize agricultural-related great craftsmen and skilled craftsmen, and guiding students in vocational institutions to comprehend and embody the farming-oriented craftsmanship spirit exemplified by Yuan

Longping: dedication, integrity, pursuit of excellence, and pioneering innovation. On the other hand, alongside fostering the spirit of craftsmanship and cultivating skilled artisans, a talent training and evaluation mechanism centered on capability and quality should be established. Vocational institutions should fully leverage their professional and guiding roles, focus on the new business forms, industries, and models emerging in rural revitalization, nurture technical and skilled talents suited for emerging agriculture-related sectors, and promote the deepening and implementation of the rural revitalization strategy.

5 Conclusion

With the rural revitalization strategy advances in depth, rural vocational education, as a pivotal link connecting education, industry and rural development, has been entrusted with new developmental requirements and historical missions. This paper elaborates on the four core values of rural vocational education in supporting rural revitalization, and analyzes its practical predicaments in aspects such as school-running orientation and conditions, and talent cultivation mechanisms. On this basis, four improvement paths are proposed in the paper. First, align with the rural revitalization strategy, deepen teaching reform, thus consolidate the guarantee capacity for talent cultivation; second, integrate various resources and establish service platforms, thus strengthen the supporting capacity for farmers' learning needs; third, promote collaborative innovation and thus stimulate the innovation capacity in serving industrial revitalization; fourth, foster the craftsmanship spirit among rural workers and thus build the driving force for serving rural revitalization through spiritual cultivation. While this paper clarifies the core paths to enhance the service capacity of rural vocational schools for rural revitalization, it fails to deeply explore the impact of regional differences on the implementation effects of these paths. In the future, it's advisable to focus on the characteristics of rural development in different regions, further refine the implementation paths, and provide refined and targeted theoretical support for the deepening of practice.

Acknowledgments

This study was funded by 2025 University-level Special Project for Core Teachers, Wuhan City Polytechnic: Practical Study on the Teaching Transformation of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Competition Achievements in Higher Vocational Colleges Based on the "ADDIE-SECI" Double Helix Model (grant number 2025WHCPG01), and 2025 University-level Master's Special Project, Wuhan City Polytechnic: Research on the Integration Path of Curriculum, Competition, and Innovation for Cultivating the Innovative Ability of Students in High-Level and High-Quality Professional Clusters (grant number 2025WHCPS02).

References

1. Sun Chanchan. A Study on the Practical Dilemmas and Optimization Paths of Vocational Education in Cultivating Local Talents for Rural Areas[D]. Guangxi Normal University,2025. DOI: 10.27036/d.cnki.ggxsu.2025.001230.
2. Zhang Bocong. Practical Exploration of Higher Vocational Education Supporting Rural Revitalization in the New Era [J]. Technology Wind,2024, (24):160-162. DOI:10.19392/j.cnki.1671-7341.202424053.
3. Wu Di. A Study on Rural Vocational Education in Jilin Province from the Perspective of the Rural Revitalization Strategy [D]. Jilin University, 2025.DOI: 10.27162/d.cnki.gjlin.2025.003425.
4. Zhao Yalan. The Feasibility, Difficulties and Imperatives of Modernizing China-Style Rural Vocational Education [J]. Cross-Straits Lifelong Education,2025,28(02):15-22. DOI:10.16416/j.cnki.cn35-1216/g4.2025.02.007.
5. Zhao Qiuqing. A Study on the Integrated Development of Vocational Education and Rural Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Industries in Henan Province from the Perspective of the Rural Revitalization Strategy [J]. Shanxi Agricultural Economy,2025, (22):103-105. DOI: 10.16675/j.cnki.cn14-1065/f.2025.22.032.
6. Huang Jin, Huang Shengnan&Zhao Yuanyuan.Exploration on Higher Vocational Colleges Supporting Rural Labor Force Training [J].Co-Operative Economy&Science,2025, (09): 87-90. DOI: 10.13665/j.cnki.hzjyjkj.2025.09.016.
7. Zhu Yedan.Practical Progress and Future Vision of Vocational Education Serving Rural Revitalization in Zhejiang Province [J].Vocational Technology,2025,24(06):86-95.DOI:10.19552/j.cnki.issn1672-0601.2025.06.012.

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

