

Research on Rural Talents from the Perspective of Rural Revitalization Strategy

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Abstract—Talent is an essential element and important resource for rural revitalization strategy. This paper analyzes the background and classification of talent demands in rural area, the status quo of rural talents and the reasons for lacking such talents from the perspective of rural revitalization strategy and puts forward targeted suggestions for the construction of rural revitalization talent team to provide a reference for solving the problems in development of rural revitalization talents.

Keywords—rural revitalization; rural talents; countermeasures and suggestions

I. INTRODUCTION

The rural revitalization strategy as proposed in the report of the 19th National Congress of CPC is a major strategic deployment made for work relating to agriculture, rural areas and farmers on the basis of the national conditions and agricultural condition in China in order to realize the "two hundred-year goals". Rural revitalization is a complicated systematic engineering in which the rural talent construction and development is fundamental.

II. CULTIVATION VALUE AND CONNOTATION BREAKDOWN OF RURAL TALENT CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

A. *The Important Value of Rural Talent Construction and Development for Rural Vitalization*

In 2018, the No. 1 Document of the Central Committee proposed the goal of implementing the rural revitalization strategy: by 2020, rural revitalization has obtained great progress and the institutional framework and policy system have been formed basically; by 2035, rural revitalization has made decisive progress and the agricultural and rural modernization has been realized basically; by 2050, rural area is fully revitalized, with well-developed agriculture, beautiful appearance and all-round prosperity. [1] Rural talent is the first essential element of all-round revitalization in rural area and is also the fundamental guarantee for implementing the rural revitalization strategy. As an important production factor, rural talents can provide talent protection and intellectual support for implementing the rural revitalization strategy. The five major goals of the rural revitalization strategy include the all-round coordinated

development of economic, social, cultural, political and ecological systems. So, there is wider talent-dimensional demand. Cultivating and establishing a sound rural talent team is the breakthrough and access for implementing the rural revitalization strategy.

With the advancement of urbanization in China, a large number of rural young and middle-aged populations continue to flow to urban area so that rural populations are "hollowed" and "aged" and agricultural resources become "an optional living style" or "left unused". Currently, rural talent team has experienced serious insufficiency and cannot effectively support the development of rural agriculture. The report of the 19th National Congress puts forward five requirements for the rural revitalization strategy. Wherein, the first requirement is to realize industrial prosperity. Industrial prosperity is not only to promote and realize the modernization of agriculture but also the overall requirements for various industries in countryside. It is to develop the industrial chains extended from various industries such as agricultural product processing, leisure agriculture, rural tourism, rural cultural industry and rural e-commerce and greatly promote the development and fusion of the first and second industries provided that modern agricultural production system is constructed. The development of those industries is not available to be supported by the traditional peasant system but need to be supported by a system of talents involving in economic, political, cultural and other fields. Currently in China, rural industrial talent system has a small base and narrow dimensions so that it cannot provide a strong support and guarantee for all-round revitalization in rural areas. Insufficient talent supply becomes a shortage in the all-round revitalization of rural areas. Only by increasing the construction and cultivation of rural talent team and strengthening the extent of supply of rural talents can it be available to better realize the all-round development of rural revitalization.

B. *Connotation Breakdown of Rural Talent Construction and Development*

Rural area refers to various forms of living places of human beings in countryside (i.e., villages or rural settlements). Rural area covers villages and towns and has more extensive populations including rural population and township population.

Talents refer to those who have certain professional knowledge or specialized skills, engage in creative work and contribute to the society and are laborers having higher ability and quality among human resources.¹

Currently in the academic world, there has been no clear definition on the concept and connotation of rural talents but only definition on rural talents.

Rural talents have a broad sense and a narrow sense. In narrow sense, rural talents refer to rural laborers who have skills in rural farming and aquaculture and have the ability to become rich or make people rich. While in broad sense, rural talents not only include such rural laborers having certain knowledge or skills and playing a demonstrative or driving role in developing agricultural economy, increasing farmers' incomes and realizing rural prosperity but also include those extensive rural management personnel who have certain capabilities in social management and production management, especially those who have served or made contribution to the development of rural economy as well as the development in scientific technology, culture, health and other social undertakings. [2]

As pointed out in the "Medium and Long-term Plan for the Construction of Rural Practical Talents and Agricultural Scientific and Technological Talents Team (2010-2020)", rural practical talents are those rural laborers having certain knowledge and skills and serving, contributing to and playing a demonstrative and driving role in the development of economy, science and technology, education, culture and health and other fields in rural area. Agricultural scientific and technological talents are those who have received special education and vocational training and mastered a professional knowledge and skill in the agricultural industry and engage in agricultural scientific research, education, promotional services and other professional works. Rural practical talents and agricultural scientific and technological talents are the backbone group among the rural and agricultural talents.² The rural talents discussed in this paper refer to those who have served and contributed to the promotion of rural revitalization.

III. CLASSIFICATION OF RURAL REVITALIZATION TALENTS

A. Traditional Classification of Rural and Agricultural Talents

In March 2011, China issued the "Medium and Long-term Plan for the Construction of Rural Practical Talents and Agricultural Scientific and Technological Talents Team (2010-2020)" which comprehensively and systematically expounded the concepts of rural practical talents and

agricultural scientific and technological talents. This Plan specifically mentioned that "in practical work, rural practical talent leaders are also regarded as an important force to be paid attention to and trained". However, the traditional classification of agricultural and rural talents is relatively general and not comprehensive enough as shown in "Table I" and still needs to be extended and expanded to catering for the demand of rural talents for implementing the rural revitalization strategic planning.

TABLE I. TRADITIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL TALENTS

Name	Definition	Type	Main talents
Practical talents in rural area	It refers to such rural laborers as having certain knowledge and skills and serving, contributing to and playing a demonstrative and driving role in the development of economy, science and technology, education, culture and health and other fields in rural area.	Production Business Skill service Social service Skill-driven Other: rural practical talent leader	Professional big family, family farmer, vocational farmer Cooperative leader, rural broker Subject of production service Rural teachers, rural doctors, rural literary and art workers Local expert, educated person (village cadres, university student cadres, local respectable persons, etc.)
Agricultural scientific and technological talents	It refers to those who have received special education and vocational training and mastered a professional knowledge and skill in the agricultural industry and engage in agricultural scientific research, education, promotional services and other professional works.	Technical research Technology Promotion	Agricultural scientific research talents, local experts, agricultural technology talents, agricultural technology promotion talents, rural skillful service talents and so on.

¹ Source: collected from the references.

¹ The Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council of China. National Medium and Long-Term Talent Development Plan (2010-2020). June 6, 2010. (in Chinese)

² The organizing department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the Ministry of Agriculture. Medium and Long-term Plan for the Construction of Rural Practical Talents and Agricultural Scientific and Technological Talents Team (2010-2020). March 2011. (in Chinese)

B. Classification of Rural Revitalization Talents

The construction of rural revitalization talent team should closely focus on realizing the overall requirements in the rural revitalization strategy of “industrial prosperity, ecological livability, civilized local style, effective governance and affluent life” and promoting the construction of rural revitalization talents team in a professional and systematic manner. The classification of talents needed for implementing the rural revitalization strategies is relative. Promoting rural revitalization is inevitably to promote the integrated development of the first, second and third industries and the integrated development of urban and rural areas. On this basis, the classification of talents cannot be unique and exclusive and various talents may also have other

social functions. The rural revitalization strategy needs talents of various forms such as individuals, organizations or groups to play diversified roles. For example, the new professional farmers cover a wide range, including all types of those taking agriculture as the vocation to obtain benefits.

In the “Talent Demand of and Policy Suggestions for Rural Revitalization”, Zeng Junxia made a new arrangement for the classification of rural revitalization talents in accordance with the five strategic requirements for rural revitalization (see "Table II") [3]. This classification re-established the rural revitalization talent demand system in a comprehensive and meticulous manner and is more conducive to the construction of rural talent team and promoting the development of rural revitalization strategy.

TABLE II. CLASSIFICATION OF RURAL REVITALIZATION TALENTS

S/N	Category	Function	Main categories
1	Production management	Mainly engaged in the production management of modern agriculture	New vocational farmer Family farmer Professional big family Cooperative leader (only focusing on business) Professional manager Broker Rural e-commerce talent
2	Innovation and entrepreneurship	Engaged in new business in rural new industries	Rural entrepreneurs (including self-employed business owners) Foreign makers and other personnel "returning from urban area" Outflow personnel: returning students, international students, migrant workers, etc.
3	Social service	Engaging in such service works for rural development as in aspects of scientific research, technology, economy and planning	Technical service staff: 1) Technology promotion: such as agricultural machinery, agricultural technology, agricultural technology promotion, agricultural technical service personnel. 2) Technical research and development: such as local experts and other scientific research personnel (institutions + other research companies, etc.) Rural financial service personnel (insurance + guarantee) Village planning and design service talents
4	Public development	Engaged in education, health, culture, environmental protection and other public utilities	Teacher Doctor Literary and cultural workers Environmental protection workers
5	Rural governance	Engaged in rural governance	County and township cadres Members of the two committees of a village (Party branch secretary + village director) College-graduate village official Resident cadres (including the first secretary, resident worker team, etc.) in village Local respectable persons Rural social governance organization, etc.

^a. Source: collected from the references.

IV. STATUS QUO OF AND PROBLEMS IN RURAL TALENT CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT AND ANALYSIS ON ITS CAUSES

A. Status Quo of Construction of Talent Team for Rural Revitalization Strategy

1) *Status quo of production and management talents:* Main representatives of production and management talents include new vocational farmers and family farmers and so on. Up to 2017, the total number of new vocational farmers in

China has exceeded 15 million, accounted for 4.78% of the total number of agricultural production and management personnel in the third national agricultural census. Wherein, the number of new vocational farmers aged 45 and below accounts for 54.35% and that of new vocational farmers with education background not inferior to middle school accounts for 30.34%. The two data are both increased from the previous statistical data. The age structure of new vocational farmers is being optimized and the education level of them is gradually improved. This indicates that the quality of

development of new vocational farmers has also been increased significantly.

2) *Status quo of innovative and entrepreneurial talents:* Constrained by the development of traditional agriculture and affected by the industrialization and urbanization in China, rural areas are experiencing serious loss of high-quality human resources so that agriculture is mainly engaged in by the aged and there is seriously lack of supply of innovative and entrepreneurial talents. According to incomplete statistics in China, only 7.4 million people are migrant workers, graduates from middle school and colleges and universities, retired soldiers, business owners, technicians and such other innovative and entrepreneurial talents as returning home or coming to rural area. Relative to the nearly 600 million of rural population, the proportion of the said innovative and entrepreneurial talents is really too few, which impeded the great development of rural economy.

3) *Status quo of social service talents:* At this stage, there is serious aging phenomenon in rural grassroot agricultural technology promotion talents team in China and serious difference in the education level, professional level and skill level of agricultural technicians. Statistics show that in 2015, there were 680,000 agricultural scientific and technological talents in China, including 600,000 technical promotion talents and 80,000 scientific research talents. There were 151,000 agricultural technology promotion institutions. The existing proportion of talents is still so small that it directly leads to the low contribution of rural area made to agricultural science and technology progress, and it is difficult to drive the overall development of rural revitalization.

4) *Status quo of utility development talents:* Rural revitalization requires to be supported by a large batch of talents specialized in education, medical care, culture, environmental protection and other utilities. However in rural area in China, there is seriously lacking talents for utility development. Taking rural doctors as an example, as shown on statistical data, the number of rural doctors and health workers in China was decreased from 1,126,400 persons (in 2011) to 1,000,300 persons (2018). In China as the country with a large rural population, there is seriously lack of rural public medical personnel. Similarly, the development of rural talents in education, culture, environmental protection and other utilities is also insufficient so that the insufficient talent support becomes the bottleneck constraint for implementing the rural revitalization strategy.

5) *Status quo of rural governance talents:* Rural governance talents refer to rural grassroot governance management organizations, including the township government serving as the governmental organization and the village committee serving as the non-governmental public management organization, as well as the township party committee and the village party branch. At present, the quantity and quality of rural governance and management

talents in China are difficult to meet the demand of rural revitalization strategy development. Taking the college-graduate village officials as an example, according to the statistical data shown on the website of college-graduate village officials, the number of college-graduate village officials all over China is in a decreasing trend year by year. As can be seen from "Table III", to the end of 2017, the number of college-graduate village officials in China is decreased by 36,563 people compared with that in 2016; to the end of 2016, the number of college-graduate village officials in China is decreased by 35,335 compared with that in 2015; and to the end of 2015, the number of college-graduate village officials in China is reduced by 43,062 people compared with that in 2014.

TABLE III. STATISTICS ON THE NUMBER OF COLLEGE-GRADUATE VILLAGE OFFICIALS

Deadline	Number of people on the job
End of 2014	180960
End of 2015	137898
End of 2016	102563
End of 2017	66000

a. Source: collected from data on the website of college-graduate village official: <http://www.54cunguan.cn>

b. unit: person

B. Analysis on Reasons for Lacking Rural Talents

1) *The number of rural laborers has fallen sharply and the supply of rural talents is seriously insufficient:* "In about 1990s, large amount of rural surplus laborers successively migrated to urban area due to the low-income and low-employment driving force in rural areas and the high-income, high-employment and high-utility pulling force in urban area. "[4] The vigorous advancement of urban industrialization has caused the seriously unbalanced development in urban and rural areas. The lagged economic development in rural area causes the huge economic and income differences between urban and rural areas, the difficulty for farmers and rural talents to increase income as well as the increasingly intensified depression of rural area. As a result, a large number of rural talents and young laborers go to urban area unilaterally to earn more money.

2) *The potential of rural talents is not fully found enough and the government has weak awareness of attaching great importance to talents:* Finding rural talents on the basis of retaining local talents is one of the necessary means to realize rural revitalization. For a long time, due to the emphasis on industrialization, each level of township governmental agencies fail to sufficiently retain rural talents and fully find the human resources in rural area. The weak awareness of cultivating local talents makes it impossible for rural local talents to play the best role in the local economic and agricultural development of rural area.

3) *There are many obstacles in the way of urban talents going to the countryside so that the introduction of rural talents is seriously slow:* "Due to the remote location, inconvenient transportation, insufficient education and

medical facilities in rural area, most rural high-educated talents are reluctant to return to work or start business in their hometowns and it is also hard to introduce other high-educated talents in rural area, so that rural areas are facing talent shortages or lack of high-competency talents. This case restricts the development of rural area to a large extent. "[5] At present, there are still many shortages in the development of rural society in China. No matter in the living environment, hardware facilities, or in the supply of utilities and the management of talent mechanisms, it is impossible to mobilize the enthusiasm of urban talents for taking the initiative to go to rural area. There is also no complete rural talent introduction mechanism and sound guarantee mechanism so that it is difficult to recruit talent and even retain talents and the introduction of rural talents is seriously delayed.

V. COUNTERMEASURES AND SUGGESTIONS FOR OPTIMIZING THE CONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL TALENTS

A. *It Is Suggested to Vigorously Develop the Market Economy to Create Attractiveness for the Construction of Rural Talents Team*

It is needed to deepen the supply-side structural reform to establish a rural modern economic development system. Only by realizing the leap-forward development of the rural economy and realizing industrial prosperity can it be available to attract more rural talents.

First, the government should increase capital investment in rural economy and agriculture, finance and develop rural industries and promote realizing rural economic prosperity. Second, it is recommended to increase the income of farmers, especially the net income in agriculture. Farmers can have purchasing power only after having money, while purchasing power is the decisive condition for the expansion and development of market economy. Finally, it is suggested to promote the integrated development of the first, second and third industries in the urban and rural economies and establish a modern rural economic development system to realize industrial prosperity and further lay a good foundation for rural revitalization.

B. *Paying Attention to Cultivating Rural Talents to Lay a Good Foundation for the Construction of Rural Talents Team*

First, it is suggested to guarantee the development and construction of rural revitalization talents team, break the unequal institutional arrangements for urban and rural areas and ensure that rural talents enjoy the same quality of services as urban residents enjoying in politics, economy, education, employment, medical care and social security by virtue of policy and system. Further, it is suggested to adhere to the farmers' dominant position in rural revitalization, stimulate the initiative, enthusiasm and creativity of all farmers and gradually cultivate the farmers' sense of responsibility as the subject of the rural revitalization in

order to lay a powerful foundation for retaining local talents in rural area.

Second, it is recommended to classify the rural talents to be cultivated for different plans, make long-term development plan for different majors of talents as required in the rural revitalization strategy and provide specialized talents training in aspects of technology, operation, management and innovation. Relying on "professional farmers", it is suggested to vigorously cultivate the "new farmers" team and create an incentive mechanism to develop and strengthen the "new farmers" team.

Third, it is needed to create a high-quality cadre team responsible for "work relating to agriculture, rural areas and farmers (hereinafter referred to as 'three-rural work')". The revitalization and governance of rural area are inseparable from the work cadre team serving the three-rural work. Establishing a high-quality management and service talent team can better guarantee the implementation of the rural revitalization strategy effectively, play the predominant role of farmers under the active guidance of the government and maintain the rural revitalization strategy be implemented stably and be far-reaching.

C. *Creating New Mode of Talents Introduction and Establishing a Long-term Mechanism for Retaining High-level Talents*

On the basis of local talent training, it is suggested to establish a scientific and efficient talent incentive mechanism, vigorously introduce foreign talents, establish a human resource development system that combines independent training and talent introduction, "build up a mechanism for talents training cooperation and exchanges among rural and urban areas, regions and school places and create a new mode for talents training to cultivate specialized talents for revitalization of rural area. "[6] Only by providing foreign talents with good development opportunities and a sound security mechanism can it be available to attract and retain rural talents."

VI. CONCLUSION

In short, rural talent is an important guarantee for vigorously practicing rural revitalization and decides the prosperity in rural area. As long as Chinese government formulates a supporting policy, it will surely be able to speed up the strategic development of rural revitalization under joint coordination and help of all fields of the society and collective effects of extensive people in urban and rural areas.

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