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Employment Will of New Generation Migrant Workers in Hubei Province and Countermeasures

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Abstract The issue concerning new generation migrant workers is an important part of current social management. How to improve employment ability of new generation migrant workers is the central part of improving living of migrant workers and development environment. Based on survey data of 6 counties in Hubei Province, I analyzed employment will and influence factors of new generation migrant workers. Researches have indicated that going out to work, employment opportunity, nature of subordinate service industry, industrial technical level, and financial support play a significant role in employment intention of migrant workers, while their employment ability is influenced by their cultural quality, professional skills, working endurance, degree of policy cognition, and information channel, *etc.* In view of these five aspects, I put forward following countermeasures: raise educational level, improve skills, strengthen endurance, enhance attention to policies, and expand information channel, to improve employment ability of new generation migrant workers.

Key words New generation migrant workers, Social management, Employment will, Employment ability, Professional skills

As a special group with Chinese characteristics, migrant workers emerging during the socio-economic transformation of China, are major rural labor forces and integral parts of rural social management and coordination^[1]. In recent years, issues concerning migrant workers have received wide concern, and both the central government and governments at all levels have issued a series of policies and laws to solve problems of migrant workers. Besides, central No. 1 document has focused on this issue for consecutive 7 years from many aspects^[2].

New generation migrant workers, who are born in the 1980s and 1990s, grown in the period of reform and opening-up. In China, there are 150 million migrant workers, and the new generation migrant workers take up about 60% (100 million)^[3], so they are major forces in socio-economic development. Hubei Province is a big province with flow of migrant worker. In recent years, the first generation migrant workers are becoming older and gradually return to countryside, so the new generation migrant workers go to cities and become major subjects of migrant workers. Influenced by financial crisis of 2008, many medium-sized and small enterprises are staff or even shut down, consequently, lots of new generation migrant workers return to rural hometown, so the employment situation is not rosy for them. In post-financial crisis period, the employment will of new generation migrant workers, how to cope with impact of post-financial crisis, and how to improve employment ability, have become issues to be focused on by departments at all levels and agricultural economic scholars^[4-5].

1 Employment will of new generation migrant workers of Hubei Province

1.1 Data source To find out the employment will of new generation migrant workers of Hubei Province, the Project Team of Returned Migrant Workers of Hubei Academy of Agricultural Sciences conducted a survey in the form of questionnaire in 19 towns of 6 counties in Xiangfan and Yichang. Totally, it received 210 pieces of questionnaire, and 202 of them (96.2%) are valid. Among the 202 migrant workers, 105 are male (67.9%) and 97 are female (32.1%); 99 are 16 to 25 years old, and 103 are 26 to 30 years old. Both the gender structure and age structure basically ensure that samples are typical.

1.2 Analysis of employment will Through further analysis of questionnaire, employment will of returned new generation migrant workers is mainly reflected in following aspects:

1.2.1 Most returned new generation migrant workers want to work outside. In the survey of employment willingness, about 40.6% new generation migrant workers want to work outside, 70 migrant workers (40.3% of the surveyed ones) choose local employment. Due to rapid development of local economy and constantly issuing of policies for supporting migrant workers to find jobs or start an undertaking, 68.6% workers choose non-agricultural individual operation, 18.6% workers choose farming and cultivation in their hometown, and 12.8% workers hope to work in local enterprises. 27 workers (13.4% of the surveyed ones) want to learn a new technology to realize second employment, and 11.4% workers are uncertain of their future work.

1.2.2 Employment opportunity and living environment are major points considered by new generation migrant workers when choosing working areas. As to "Which is the biggest difficulty in working outside?", "Few employment opportunities in the working area" ranks the first, "Feel lonely because relatives

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are not close" and "Poor living conditions" rank the second and third position respectively. Other difficulties include "Discrimination suffered from working and living", "Not adapted to climate, habits and customs", and "Education of children", separately ranked in fourth to sixth position (shown in Fig. 1). With overall consideration of various factors, such as more working opportunity, better living environment, support policies for migrant workers, and close to hometown, near 1/3 migrant workers want to work in middle regions, especially their own province. Those who want to work in the Delta of the Pearl River, and Changjiang Delta take up 31.2% and 20.8% respectively. About 9.4% surveyed workers hope to work in Beijing and Tianjin, and only 7% workers are willing to work in western regions. Among those who want to work in Hubei Province, most migrant workers (33.8%) choose Wuhan City. Next, 30.8% choose other cities and districts, only 21.5% and 12.3% workers are willing to work in their counties or local towns. It indicates that speeding up economic development, improving living environment and implementing preferential policies play a greater role in attracting new generation migrant workers.

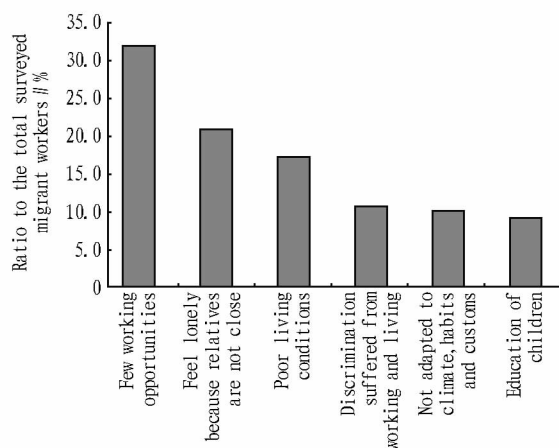


Fig. 1 Difficulty of new generation migrant workers in working outside

1.2.3 Modern service industry is the first choice of new generation migrant workers. Among the surveyed 91 new generation migrant workers, 26.4% are willing to be engaged in "Resident service industry" and "Business service industry"; workers choosing "Transportation industry" and "Lodging and catering industry" respectively take up near 18%; 9.9% workers choose "Building and manufacturing industry"; 8.8% choose "Wholesale and retail industry"; and only 6.6% hope to be engaged in "Agricultural product processing industry". Survey results show that new generation migrant workers are active in thinking, unwilling to suffer hardships, and hope to find decent jobs. Since resident service, business service, transportation industries basically belong to modern production and service sectors, have high content of technology, and better working environment, they have strong attraction for new generation migrant workers.

1.2.4 Those migrant workers who start an undertaking mainly start from machinery manufacturing industry. New generation

migrant workers have advantages of better cultural foundation and open thinking. Going out to work broadens their vision, makes them accumulate capital and technology, and expand circle of interpersonal relationships. The returned migrant workers can start undertaking with the aid of these advantages. Our survey indicates that machine-building industry is the industry most migrant workers (28.1%) hope to be engaged in; the next is agricultural product processing industry; 15.8% want to find jobs in "special planting" and "special cultivation", such as rice, pig and poultry, aquatic, seedling and flower, green vegetable, edible fungus, fruit, traditional Chinese medicine; 12.3% are willing to start undertaking in lodging and catering industry; and 10.5% hope to be engaged in rural tourism industry. Most migrant workers select the industry for starting an undertaking mainly according to "Personal interest", "Demand of rural market", "Support of state policies" and "Familiar with this industry because of having been engaged in relevant works", etc.

1.2.5 Skill trainings with high content and level of technology are favored by new generation migrant workers, and autonomous learning becomes a major way to acquire skills. In the survey, 13.4% new generation migrant workers are not anxious for employment, but want to learn some new technology firstly. This indicates that new generation migrant workers have high expectation for employment; they work not just for survival, but for long term development. As to type of skills they want to learn, 33.3% and 25.9% migrant workers select marketing management and driving skills, 22.2% hope to learn automobile repair, mechanical and electrical technology, tailoring, legal knowledge, housekeeping service, etc. It shows that jobs with low labor intensity and dignity are favored by new generation migrant workers, while electrician, pincers workers, decoration workers and those works with high labor intensity and poor working environment, do not have strong attraction to new generation migrant workers. From the channel of acquiring skill training, "Autonomous learning" is their first selection, the next is "Support of government", and "Assistance of society".

1.2.6 Most returned migrant workers hope to receive financial support from government. For the question "Which services you want the government to provide", most migrant workers choose financial support, the next is support policy, and guidance of starting undertaking and technical guidance. It indicates that if government provides more services in financial support, policy, technical guidance, marketing channel, learning and training opportunities, and guidance of starting undertaking, nearly all new generation migrant workers are willing to start undertaking of find jobs in their hometown. In fact, the return of migrant workers is a big practical problem and has attracted much attention in theory^[6-7].

New generation migrant workers grow up in the period of reform and opening-up. They focus on future development and improvement of self-skills. Their selection of employment in the post-financial crisis period reflects that they are rational in choosing jobs. However, the realization of new generation migrant workers' employment will be restricted by actual conditions.

2 Factors restricting employment of new generation migrant workers

2.1 Low cultural quality The labor quality is an important factor concerning whether the new generation migrant workers can adapt to situation of market competition and find satisfactory jobs. In this survey, 8.9% migrant workers have junior college degree or above, 50.5% have high school or junior college degree, 39.6% have junior middle school education, and the rest 1.0% have primary school or below education. Although 90.1% migrant workers have junior middle school, high school or special secondary school education, few are well educated, so the low cultural quality of migrant workers is obvious. Such situation causes that it is difficult to satisfy demand of skilled workers, and there is still a long way to meet expectation of new generation migrant workers for obtaining employment.

2.2 Lack of specialized ability The professional skill is an important measure of migrant workers' employment competitiveness. Relatively, migrant workers with professional skill have higher employment level and broader employment space. In recent years, Hubei Province has strengthened training for vocational skills of migrant workers. The employment situation of migrant workers is also improved to some extent. However, there is still the situation of low labor skill and lack of high-skill personnel. Among the surveyed 202 new generation migrant workers, those with professional skills are less than half. In the distribution of skills, 18.1% migrant workers have computer operation skills; 13.8% have skills of tailoring, planting and cultivation; 6.4% have automobile driving skills, and 4.3% ones have electric welding, mechanical and electrical operation, and mechanical repair. However, nearly no migrant workers have the skill of marketing and management. In the technical source, 94 migrant workers passed training of professional skills, 28.7% obtain professional skills through uniform training and learning, 18.1% obtain professional skills through government training, and the rest obtain practical skills through autonomous training. Therefore, it is necessary to enhance training of marketing, management, and driving skills that have high content of technology, and strengthen government' training for migrant workers.

2.3 Low working endurance The new generation migrant workers grow up in social transformation period after reform and opening-up. This superior growth environment makes them have the spirit of striving for progress, but their working endurance is low and they are often not willing to enduring hardships. New generation migrant workers prefer to choose industries that have better working environment, white collar jobs for instance, and those high labor and dirty works are left out in the cold. Our survey also reflects that the new generation migrant workers are low in working endurance. During working outside, over 50% migrant workers change jobs for more than three times, some even more than five times. The reasons for changing jobs include hard work, no development prospect, low wages, great working pressure, irony of bosses, and having better working opportunity. New generation migrant workers like choo-

sing whichever is to one personal advantage, which will influence their social identity, and the realization of their employment willingness will also be obstructed.

2.4 Little knowledge of related policies Financial crisis leads to high rate of unemployment of migrant workers, to which government at all levels pay attention and issue series of policies to guide and help returned migrant workers to start an undertaking. However, only 39.6% migrant workers know related preferential policies (including deductions and exemptions of taxes, small-sum guaranteed loan, employment and entrepreneurship training, preferential land use, *etc.*) issued by the local government, more than 60% migrant workers do not know these policies. This situation reflects, on one hand, that new generation migrant workers pay little attention to local policies, and on the other hand, the propaganda strength of government on preferential policies is not adequate.

2.5 Narrow channel for obtaining employment information Our survey indicates that blood relationship and geographical relationship are major channels for new generation migrant workers to obtain employment information. Near 55% new generation migrant workers obtain employment information mainly through introduction of relatives and friends, 16.3% migrant workers are taken out by private labor contractor, 12.4% obtain employment information through labor department or intermediary, less than 8% obtain employment information through urban labor market and employment agency, about 5% obtain employment information through mobile phone, network and newspaper, and less migrant workers obtain information through social organization, such as trade union, Women's Federation, and *etc.* The above situation shows that the employment information channel for new generation migrant workers can be greatly expanded through raising the ability of government department and social intermediaries in providing employment information, bringing into play functions of mobile phone, network, and computer, and improving functions of social public resources on employment of migrant workers.

3 Countermeasures for improving employment ability of new generation migrant workers

The employment ability is a comprehensive term. It includes not only academic credentials and skill level of individuals, but also individual traits (inherent quality), interpersonal interaction, and information. In view of the above analysis, we put forward following countermeasures: raise educational level, improve skills, strengthen endurance, enhance attention to policies, and expand information channel, to improve employment ability of new generation migrant workers.

3.1 Encouraging new generation migrant workers to receive adult education, and speeding up adjustment of adult education mode With rapid economic development and upgrade of industrial structure in China, the educational conditions required by various posts are increasing day by day. Only relying on existing academic credentials and knowledge, it is difficult for new generation migrant workers to find higher level

jobs, so receiving reeducation becomes a major approach to improving overall quality of migrant workers and enhancing their survival and development capability. Therefore, departments at all levels should encourage new generation migrant workers to receive adult reeducation through issuing certificate of diploma, providing employment opportunities, and mitigating burden of tuition fee, compensating for their opportunities of learning cultural knowledge, enhancing their specialized ability, and improving their employment ability.

The existing adult education in Hubei Province has the problem of single operating mode and unsmooth management system, and both the teaching content and form can not meet demand for education of new generation migrant workers. Government at export regions of migrant workers should speed up adjusting mechanism and mode of adult education, to suit for demand of new generation migrant workers for education. Firstly, the teaching form should be practical, and consistent with characteristics of knowledge structure of new generation migrant workers, market demand, and their individual willingness. For example, set up ideological quality course, cultural knowledge course, specialized ability course, and professional morality course, to improve their cultural quality, employment ability, set up scientific and reasonable idea of choosing jobs, form spirit of bearing hardships and standing hard work, and finally have larger space of employment and development. Secondly, it is proposed to bring into play the advantages of modern information technology, and carry out education in the open, non-standardized and long-distance education, to facilitate working and living of migrant workers. Thirdly, education funds should adopt low-fund and many-party (government, school, enterprise and migrant workers) sharing principle. Fourthly, in education management, it is recommended to establish a suitable education performance evaluation system, award those migrant workers who receive training, and criticize and urge those migrant workers inactive in participating in training, and issue applicable certificates for those pass examination and reach certain level, to facilitate them to find new jobs.

3.2 Conducting skill training in many channels and actively guiding new generation migrant workers to receive training at their demands Specialized ability is an essential condition for new generation migrant workers to have redevelopment, better jobs and higher income, so participating in training of specialized ability is one of important approaches to improving employment competitiveness of new generation migrant workers. Since the training of migrant workers in some places of Hubei Province has many problems, such as single training content, lack of pertinence, and disconnection of employment practice of new generation migrant workers with personal interests, local places should take full advantage of local training resources and funds, and bring into full play functions of human resource training bases, reemployment training center, vocational education center, and technical schools in accordance with characteristics of new generation migrant workers and demand of economic development, and timely dispose vocational-technical training plan. In view of shortage of training

provided by government and society, it is required to bring into full play advantages of labor, agricultural, anti-poverty, and education departments and labor union, Communist Youth League and women organizations, to carry out special training project according to different types of employment willingness of new generation migrant workers, and solve the problem of their low employment ability. During launching training, it is required to guide in consideration of differences in employment willingness, level of skills, educational level, and age level. For new generation migrant workers who want to start an undertaking or find jobs in hometown but lack proper skills, all regions should focus on local superior industry and characteristic economy, combine local realities, guide new generation migrant workers to enter modern agriculture, service industry and related industries for employment or starting an undertaking. For new generation migrant worker who want to work outside, it is required to consider their vocational and professional skill preference, and launch many types of pre-post training, to assist in realizing the well connection of employment export of migrant workers with demand of places of influx.

3.3 Society, family and individuals making joint efforts to promote improvement of working endurance of new generation migrant workers New generation migrant workers are often fastidious but incompetent, poor in bearing hardships and low in working endurance, which not only restricts improvement of their employment ability, but also impedes the realization of their employment willingness. To enhance working endurance of new generation migrant workers, the society, family and individuals should make joint efforts. New generation migrant workers themselves should take following actions. Firstly, they should set up clear objectives and understand what kind of people they want to become, and which kind of job they want to be engaged in. Secondly, they should have an accurate self-cognition and evaluation, know their "strength and weakness", and carefully think approaches to improvement. Thirdly, they should learn from excellent migrant workers, analyze their successful experience, and improve their spirit of bearing hardships. Finally, it is required to strengthen training of ideological and cultural courses, and various skills, improve their overall quality, and so as to raise their demand for post conditions and salary level.

In the aspect of families, they shall create all necessary conditions to assist their children in improving their abilities of doing things and correcting their attitude towards doing things.

In the aspect of society, it is required to create atmosphere of advocating and striving for advancement. Relevant departments should establish the system for propagation and regular report of advanced models of migrant workers, annually introduce a batch of advanced models of migrant workers and propagate through radio, television, network, newspaper, and magazine, etc., to create the heavy atmosphere of learning advancement and striving for advancement in the whole society. Besides, all departments should strengthen education of new generation migrant workers, provide reeducation service for them through government and community, and let them un-

derstand that the first thing to have better life is hard work, and next is to learn scientific and technological cultural knowledge to improve their ability.

3.4 Strengthening propaganda of preferential policies for migrant workers, and enhancing attention of migrant workers to state policies Attention of migrant workers to state policies can be strengthened from following two aspects.

In the first place, related departments should take full advantage of various types of media to strengthen propaganda of preferential policies for migrant workers, to increase the influence power of state policies. For example, it is possible to propagate various preferential policies for migrant workers through radio, television, and network in many ways. Besides, it is proposed to establish special edition for favorable policies with the aid of existing network platform resource at grass-roots level. Since mobile phone is widespread among migrant workers, it is proposed to establish mobile phone information issue platform through fully utilizing the advantages of rapid, accurate, and visual information issue of mobile phone platform, to systematically introduce and explain favorable policies for migrant workers. Township government can energetically propagate related policies favorable for migrant workers through posters, bulletins, and publicity columns, to popularize related policies in all villages and towns, to let migrant workers know information of policies without leaving their homes. To solve pertinence of policy demand, village-level government should be provided with a propaganda person for arranging various policy materials and sending to homes of migrant workers.

Strengthening propaganda of preferential policies is not only the matter of agriculture-related departments, but also needs common participation of the whole society, so it is proposed to send these policies to homes of migrant workers and convey the policy information to migrant workers in combination with "Bringing Culture and Technology, Healthcare Skills to the Countryside" and with the aid of university students going to grass-roots.

In the second place, in leisure time, new generation migrant workers should take full advantage of modern media, such as computer and mobile phone, to pay attention to policies closely related with benefits of themselves; incorporate those policies into training of new generation migrant workers; organize new generation migrant workers to watch video or slide to practically know state policies.

3.5 Taking full advantage of information acquisition platform to improve the ability of government departments and social intermediaries in providing employment information

Since the source of employment information is limited and information acquisition channel is not smooth for new generation migrant workers, labor export regions should take feasible and pertinent measures to improve their ability of providing employment information.

It is proposed to establish employment information base for migrant workers according to requirement of "one card for one person", and make timely registration and renewal of informa-

tion, including employment hope, and skill training for returned new generation migrant workers. In addition, the government should speed up construction of social security and service station in villages and communities of the whole province on the principle of "two persons for one station and three-level inter-connected together". Besides, it is required to actively provide policy propaganda, employment information and employment guidance services for returned new generation migrant workers through establishing vocational guidance team at grass-roots.

Labor department or employment service center should strengthen collection and issue of employment information, organize enterprises to participate in recruitment fair at city, county and township levels, facilitate responsible persons of enterprises to directly talk with migrant workers, and explain employment information, including working environment, labor remuneration, enterprise management mode, and nature of products, to facilitate migrant workers to make correct decision, and guide migrant workers to flow in order. Grass-roots labor department should actively adapt to new requirement of network times, accelerate construction of information platform according to employment demands, and issue latest labor information through city and county media, Party and government network, printing materials, and site propaganda.

Along with enhancement of flow of new generation migrant workers, it becomes particularly important to establish unified employment information platform for migrant workers. Therefore, it is required to establish nationwide employment information system for migrant workers, to ensure them to obtain job information of all regions in their hometown, and apply for jobs of other places, and communicate with employing units in time, to enhance pertinence and validity of employment of new generation migrant workers.

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