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LITERATURE REVIEW ON URBAN INTEGRATION OF THE RURAL WORKERS IN CHINA

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Abstract

Social integration refers to the individual integrated into a social group, and complied with the social groups and social rules and eventually reduced the possibility of alienation. The new generation of rural migrant workers in China is generally born after 1980s, their age above 16, the young labor force whose household registration belonged to rural areas while working in the urban districts. Compared with the traditional rural migrant workers, the new generation has both subjective and objective advantages and are more easier to integrate into the city, With the continuous progress of urbanization in China, the problems of rural migrant workers has become the focus of attention. Summaries and comments are given toward the past research, and some creative ideas are also discussed.

Keywords:urbanization, migrant, rural-worker, labor, integrate, city

JEL Classification: L

Literature Review

The group of migrant workers has developed and grown in more than 50 years. All have changed whether in national policy level or individual psychological level, especially with the policies of account introduced in 1958, Migrant workers even those in the industrial fields, could not get the identity of the city and no entrance to it, either. But after the policy of reform and opening up, the cities gradually release restrictions to farmers and migrant workers, and last , the free flow of farmers to city was realized, due to the economic development and the demand for labor. With the improvement of Chinese economy development, migrant workers gradually gained the concept of urban life, the self-recognition of their city life, and their sense of "passersby" gradually faded. They are more willing to melt into the city and become Citizens.

Different ideas about migrant workers

Academics generally believe that there were many factors influencing migrant workers when they were in the process of integrating into the urban society, such as economic level, system, social exclusion, and the migrant workers own factors. Scholars generally think that it is easier to integrate into the city environment by breaking the institutional barriers, strengthening the cultivation of human capital and social capital of migrant workers, optimizing community management and other measures.

The barriers of integrating into urban areas

The migrant workers could not avoid contacting with urban residents when they integrated into the city. And in the process of integration, there were many

conflicts because of a series differences, such as different life styles, values, backgrounds and so on. Professor Zhu Li (2001) stated in his paper Group prejudice and discrimination---the citizens of friction interaction of migrant workers and citizens, that there is a big gap between rural and urban areas due to the positioning of the urban-rural of economic structure, and gradually the differences between migrant workers and urban residents are enlarged. However, such problems decreased after the reform of the household registration system and the construction of the social security system. In addition, some Scholars, such as Yuan Yayu, analyzed that the specific cause of the discrimination against migrant workers is their identities, and this is a new social discrimination situation, namely identity discrimination. Zhou Chunxia's paper rural migrant workers and civil conflict in the economic and Social Analysis (2004) focused on analyzing the specific forms of conflicts between the migrant workers and urban residents, including not only individual language quarrel, conflict behavior but also psychological resistance, containing groups of riot, strikes, crime, and all conflicts that would occur in daily life with politics, economy and culture involved. Eventually, they were led to choose to communicate with those who have the same background as them and formed the certain social network.

The integrating level into the city

In the article On migrant workers in the urban adaptability investigation and thinking, Tian Kai who is a professor from Huazhong University of Science and Technology, proposed that analyzing the problem of urban adaptation of the peasant workers could be from the three perspectives as economic, social, cultural and psychological for the first time. Through his analysis from the three levels, he finally draws a conclusion that the adaptation process of

migrant workers in the city is a socialized process. In the field of basic research, Professor, Zhu Li from Nanjing University refined this research. In his article Rural migrant workers stratum adapted, he focuses on the analysis of the migrant workers' specific features in various levels, including the frugality in the economic level and the initiative and imitation in social level, and the highest level of migrant workers is the cultural and psychological adaptation to urban life, which is not only the embodiment of migrant workers internalizing the city lifestyle and regulating the system, but also the logo implying they can really integrate into the city. Finally, it can be concluded that migrant workers integrate into the city is the process of continuing socialization, in which the main obstacles is the household registration system.

Enlightenment from other countries

There are no such migrant workers in Western countries as that in China, but they also experienced the process of recognition of farmers to the public. For example, the British enclosure movement, during which there were many farmers who lost their land and integrated into the city.

From the perspective of Social change, the scholars of Chicago school represented by the American sociologist Parke began to study the work and life of new immigrants who were from Europe to the United States in 1890. On the whole, Western immigrants research mainly focused on the expansion of the relationship between the mainstream society and outsiders, which can be summarized as two main schools---"assimilation" and "pluralism" according to the basic tendency. The scholars, who advocated the "assimilation theory" tending to emphasize the adaptability of immigrants to the local mainstream society, abandoning the existing cultural traditions and ideas so as to adapt to

the local environment. For example, Parker believes that the fusion and assimilation is that individuals gain other groups' memory, emotion, attitude, and share their experience and history, and gradually integrate into a common cultural life. While social integration of "pluralism" holds different views. Some scholars emphasize that "different racial or social groups have rights to maintain the power of 'being difference'". Hoss put forward the "non-zero-sum assimilation" by studying the United States Korean ethnic group and pointed out that the higher socioeconomic status, for instance, the high occupational status social groups like Korean ethnic group, does not necessarily consistent with the social assimilation. That is to say, although these Korean ethnic groups adapted to American society in culture, they could not be assimilated the United States social structure in all the important respects, and they also preserve the cultural core of their own.

Summary of existing research

There are many literature and admirable achievements on the problems of the new generation of rural migrant workers in current literature. Scholars generally think that the new generation of rural workers is easier to melt into the city than the first generation of migrant workers. Through the study of the domestic and foreign researches on social harmony and rural migrant workers' social harmony in the city, we found that some of them focused on the system and the objective environment, emphasizing the constraints of Urban Inclusion caused by external factors; Some simply focused on the analysis of individual psychological level, emphasizing individual identity with the city, which has strong pertinence, but also has certain sidedness.

Overall, the previous study on the integrating problems of rural migrant workers into urban areas has made great approaches in different perspectives, mainly centralized in the external factors, such as system barriers, culture obstacles and other environmental problems etc. However, the immigrant workers integrating into urban citizen is after all a systematic event. It requires both favorable external environment and the individuals' internal maturity as well. Therefore, it needs more studies such as the empirical analysis from the perspective of psychology and the micro levels from causal perspectives etc.

Conclusions and future suggestions

As a special phenomenon of the process of industrialization and urbanization in China, Migrant workers play important roles in expanding domestic demand, increasing labor participation rate and maintaining economic growth in general. Despite they play pivotal roles in economic growth of China, they are still regarded as urban social vulnerable group and marginalized group, and it is difficult for them to integrate into urban society. Therefore, the government should coordinate and integrate the power of social organizations and enterprises to solve the problem of the new generation of migrant workers. Therefore, suggestions for future studies are expected to focus on both social policy overall design and the migrant workers' own maturity of awareness, responsibility and ability to adapt the urban life. What's more, we benefit from international researches about the immigration inquiry as well as urban and rural surplus labor force shift for Chinese new generation of migrant workers into the city, but the solution must conform to Chinese reality, to the local situation of China.

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