Implementation Approaches of Talent Revitalization Strategy in Rural Areas Adjacent to the City from the Perspective of Strategic Ecosystem— the Case Study of Shuangliu District of Chengdu City

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Abstract. Implementation of the national strategy of rural revitalization requires strong talent support. For rural areas adjacent to the city, there is still a gap in the theoretical research on how to use their location advantage effectively, from the perspective of strategic ecosystem, to build a long-term talent revitalization strategy that combines the endogenous power and urban-rural integration characteristics. Through the case study of Shuangliu District of Chengdu City, this paper focuses on four principles, namely the urban and rural complementarity of the relevant sectors of talent revitalization, the urban-rural exchange of the talent teams, the urban-rural integration of the talent service systems and maintaining the unique value of rural areas, and then builds the implementation approaches of the rural talent revitalization strategy that takes the construction of talent teams and of human resource service platform as its main content, thus providing theoretical support and practical guidance for subsequent research and relevant policy-making.

1. Introduction

At present, it has become a general consensus among the theoretical and political circles that among the five rural revitalizations, the talent revitalization is the basis and support for the rest four (Wu Qun, 2018). Topics like how to guide reasonably talents to participate in rural revitalization, how to build steadily a talented team for rural revitalization, and how to create effectively a suitable environment for talents to showing their capabilities, have become the scholars' focus and research subjects (Zhao Xiuling, 2018). In addition, governments at all levels have introduced a series of measures to ensure the smooth implementation of the talent revitalization strategy in rural revitalization.

However, the implementation of the rural revitalization strategy still faces obvious bottlenecks of talent (Lai Desheng and Chen Jianwei, 2018). Due to such constraints as the urban-rural dual systems and poor rural grassroots governance, rural areas suffer obvious shortcomings in the introduction, cultivation, incentive, and retention of talents (Yan Xiaohan and Zhao Xiaochun, 2018). For the rural areas adjacent to the city, thanks to the feedback effect, they may have certain first-mover advantage in economic and cultural development. But, due to the tremendous capacity of cities to absorb talents, these rural areas, although without great labour losses which is common in remote villages, are often faced with the unfavourable situation of lacking high-calibre and high-skilled talents and of uneven talent teams of industrial, ecological and cultural revitalization (Kong Xiangzhi and Zhang Xiaorong, 2018).

As the rural revitalization strategy has complex attributes of multiple values and objectives, the existing research results of the implementation approach of the talent revitalization strategy are of inadequate pertinence in this context. In addition, the talent strategy that is based on the competition paradigm emphasizes excessively the competition between urban and rural areas, and thus it can hardly support the development ideas of urban-rural integration and composition (Li Li and Guo
In view of these, this paper, based on the perspective of strategic ecosystem, through the case study of talent revitalization strategy implementation in Shuangliu District of Chengdu, mainly discusses the participants, specific actions and interconnections of strategy implementation, and constructs the implementation framework of rural talent revitalization strategy through the building of talent teams and human resources service platform.

2. Literature review

2.1. Review of studies on the talent strategy implementation approach

The research on the talent strategy implementation approach has been conducted on various levels (from the national to the enterprise levels), and obtained numerous theoretical results. Although scholars have different perspectives and focuses, most of the research conclusions can be summarized into the four basic dimensions of human resources studies, namely introduction, cultivation, use and retention of talents. Liu Wenjing and Wang Mingshun (2004) presented that the implementation approach of talent strategy composes mainly of three parts: talent development, talent team construction and talent appointment management. After empirical study on enterprises, Fleenor (2004) proposed that the talent strategy shall be implemented mainly from four aspects: establishing talent growth mechanism, promoting talent structure adjustment, strengthening innovative talent cultivation and optimizing talent growth environment. Wang Mingjie (2005) and Liang Maoxin (2013), after sorting out and comparing the talent strategy implementation in developed countries, concluded the “American model” that is based on its powerful educational, cultural and industrial resources and focuses on the cultivation and introduction of various top talents and the construction of talent “habitat”; the “German model” that is based on its sound vocational education system and focuses on cultivating professional personnel, building talent echelon and craftsmanship; and the “Japanese model” that emphasizes introducing scientific and technological talents, transforming scientific and technological achievements and attracting creative and entrepreneurial young talents. Besides, Wang Zhitian et al. (2005) summarized, after the comparative study of talent development strategies in various regions of China, the five-dimensional talent strategy implementation approach of education boosting, technology driving, economy pulling, policy guiding and coordination and interaction.

There are still not plentiful studies on the implementation approach of talent revitalization in rural revitalization. Pu Shi and Sun Wenying (2018) introduced an all-round implementation approach that focuses on cultivating key talents for rural revitalization, encouraging people from all walks of life to go to the countryside, and building a competitive living and employment environment for talent. Yin Jie and She Huanhuan (2018) explained from the grass-roots perspective that the training of professional farmers, the incentives and retention of grassroots talents and the preferential policies-making for talent introduction are the core content of talent revitalization in rural revitalization. Xue Jianliang et al. (2018) focused on the rural practical talent team, and constructed a talent strategy implementation framework that is based on introducing and cultivating practical talents, managing talent teams and building financial social service system.

2.2. Review of studies on strategic ecosystem

Classical strategic theory originates from the background of the big industry era, and cultivates the core competence of enterprises through resource acquisition to gain competitive advantage (Pan Songting and Yang Dapeng, 2017). However, the theory of competitive advantage and competitive strategy in the traditional industrial era could not explain the management practice of cross-industry integration and borderless cooperation in the post-modern era (knowledge economy, information age), and then the strategic ecosystem theory emerged as needed (Lengnick Hall and Wolff, 1999).

The current research on strategic ecosystems in the theoretical circle focuses on three aspects: conceptual construction, relevance application and evolutionary development. The study of conceptual construction is conducted mainly from two perspectives: ecosystem-as-affiliation and
ecosystem-as-structure (as shown in Table 1). The former tends to define the strategic ecosystem as a strategic alliance of suppliers, customers, producers, partners, governments and social institutions, which transcends traditional industry boundaries and creates common values through interdependence and under the influence of dominant corporate’s values (Autio and Thomas, 2014; Iansiti and Levien, 2004; Moore, 1993; Rong et al., 2018); the latter defines it as a multilateral strategic alliance of actors, activities, positions and link, which is not limited to the value propositions of core enterprises (Adner and Kapoor, 2016; Jacobides, 2018; Kapoor, 2017). Relevance application research focuses on the symbiotic evolution of firms and ecosystems (Moore, 1993; Iansiti and Levien, 2004), resource allocation, knowledge sharing and value creation within ecosystems (Clarysse et al., 2014; Chesbrough, 2007; Tsatsou et al., 2010). The research on the evolution and development of strategic ecosystem mainly focuses on the growth stages and evolution types of ecosystems. Similar to the theory of corporate growth cycle, Moore (2006) believed that ecosystem has experienced four stages of S-curve: birth, expansion, leadership and self-renewal or death; Peltoniemi (2005) introduced the evolution process of self-organization, rise, evolution and adaptation from the perspective of internal growth mechanism. In terms of evolution types, the theorists tend to think that after the initial development, strategic ecosystems will evolve in two directions: one is to the innovative ecosystem that focuses on the value proposition and unique innovation of system members and supporters (Adner, 2016; Chesbrough, 2010), and the other is to the platform-based ecosystem that emphasizes the use of platforms to achieve participants’ development (Gawer, 2010).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structural elements</th>
<th>Affiliation perspective</th>
<th>Structure perspective</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activities</td>
<td>Specific actions to achieve value proposition</td>
<td>No specific application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actors</td>
<td>Entities or individuals that undertake the activities</td>
<td>Entities that connect core members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positions</td>
<td>Specific Flow of Ecosystem Activities</td>
<td>Links with Other Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link</td>
<td>Different transfers between locations</td>
<td>Association of core members with other members</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### 2.3. Review of existing research

After summarizing the existing studies, the research on the implementation approach of talent strategy has the following characteristics. First, the research conclusions are diversified, and there is not any agreed talent revitalization model. According to the scope of research, the research on the implementation approach of talent strategy can be divided into two categories: the research on regional talent revitalization approach and the research on enterprise talent revitalization approach. The former stresses mainly on building comprehensive and all-round talent echelon, while the latter focused on introducing and cultivating certain specific positions and core talents. There are obvious differences between these two researches (Zhang Xiangqian et al., 2006). Second, most of the existing studies are not aimed to the special context of rural revitalization. Only a few studies are based on the perspective of rural revitalization, but their conclusion is not interpreted deeply. The measures and suggestions given are vague, and cannot show the particularity of the background of rural revitalization. Third, most of the existing studies are based on the competitive paradigm of strategy, and emphasize constructing sustainable competitive advantages from four aspects, namely talent selection, cultivation, utilization and retention to promote the talent strategy implementation. But this paradigm does not fit in with the current concept of urban-rural integration and composition in rural revitalization, and weakens the applicability of the research conclusions.

In addition, the rural revitalization implementation under the guidance of the competition paradigm is a regression to the logic of the urban-rural dual system. Compared with cities, the competitiveness of rural areas is in a natural disadvantage in many aspects. Therefore, the strategy
built under this paradigm will encounter great obstacles inevitably. On the contrary, from the perspective of strategic ecosystem, rural and urban areas hold different positions in the ecosystem and have their own values and advantages. Talents flow between urban and rural areas as a factor, and urban and rural areas create value together. This recognition expresses a deeper and more accurate understanding and grasp of the urban-rural relationship, and also represents the direction of its future development. In view of this, this paper chooses the perspective of strategic ecosystem to construct the follow-up theory.

3. Research methods

3.1. Selection of research methods

This study focuses on the implementation approach of talent revitalization strategy in the rural areas adjacent to the city, and its purpose belongs to the theoretical construction. As case study has unique advantages in constructing new theories and enriching existing theories (Lee, 1999), and can grasp the complexity of the research objects and produce massive data for detailed descriptive analysis (Weick, 2007 & Yin, 2009), this paper decides to adopt the case study method.

3.2. Object selection

This study selects Shuangliu District of Chengdu City as the research object. First, this region is typical and representative. Chengdu, as the central city of Western China, has gotten a good development opportunity in the implementation of the “Belt and Road Initiative” strategy. The economic development speed and the talent introduction in Chengdu have shown an accelerating trend in recent years. As a region adjacent to Chengdu, Shuangliu enjoys the economic and cultural first-mover advantages, but suffers the shortage of high-end and skilled talents. This problem is common in rural areas adjacent to cities. Second, the authors, as the main compilers of Shuangliu District talent revitalization plan for rural revitalization, has accumulated abundant first-hand and second-hand information on talent strategy of Shuangliu District, which provides a solid foundation for research.

3.3. Case description

Shuangliu District lies to the southwest of the fourth ring road of Chengdu City, with a jurisdiction area of 466 square kilometres. Its resident population was 793,800 in 2018. Shuangliu District is the key area of Tianfu New Area of Sichuan Province, and Chengdu Shuangliu International Airport is located here. It achieved a regional GDP of RMB 82.944 billion in 2018. It is one of the top 100 regions with strong comprehensive strength in China, and its comprehensive economic strength has ranked the first in the top ten counties of Sichuan for 18 consecutive years. This region has rich human resources background and a growing population. However, before the implementation of the rural talent revitalization strategy, as high-calibre talent were absorbed by Chengdu City, the skilled, entrepreneurial and cultural talents in Shuangliu rural areas were deficient and lacking, which hampered the rapid development of its industries and culture.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Numerical values</th>
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<tr>
<td>Urbanization rate</td>
<td>81.04%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Per capita disposable income</td>
<td>RMB 24,772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Per capita GDP</td>
<td>RMB 54,416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average population per household</td>
<td>2.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population growth rate</td>
<td>7.81%</td>
</tr>
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</table>
4. Research findings

4.1. Clarifying the demand of talents by confirming the position of rural areas in strategic ecosystem

The implementation of the rural talent revitalization strategy often faces the problem of talent shortage. It is not only ineffective but also unnecessary to expand the size of the talent team blindly in a short time by means of policy inclination. The first step in the talent strategy implementation is to clarify the supply-demand relationship of talents on the basis of scientific prediction. Rural areas adjacent to the city should make a comprehensive analysis of the composition and format of the city's industry, and find out its own orientation and the industries to be developed strongly, from the perspective of complementary integration of industries. Then the next step is to determine the type and quantity of talents needed through the comparison between industrial development forecast and existing talent background. In this way, we can identify the positioning of the rural areas in the strategic ecosystem composed of urban and rural areas, and realize the complementary integration of rural and urban industries and the effective support of the rural talent strategy for industrial development, so that the following talent introduction and cultivation will have clear objectives and be well-targeted.

In this case, after the analysis of the upper-level planning and the status quo of Chengdu's industry, Shuangliu District has selected the airport-related urban agriculture and the Huaixuan Confucian cultural industry as the pillar industries for the development of rural areas. Among them, the airport-related agriculture takes advantage of the airport in the district, and aims at the huge demand for fresh fruits and vegetables in the city. The Huaixuan Confucian cultural industry is in concert with Chengdu's urban culture, and aims at city residents' demand for traditional Chinese culture and slow life. On this basis, Shuangliu District has determined the two types of talents to be introduced and cultivated vigorously: airport agricultural talents and cultural creative management talents. Also it has developed the talent teams gradually in the ways of introducing high-calibre and special talents and local university education, so ensuring the support and assistance of the talent strategy implementation for industrial development.

4.2. Attracting talents with a rural complex by maintaining the unique value of rural areas in strategic ecosystem

The conclusions of previous career studies show that people's choices of workplace, place of residence and occupation often reflect their own values. In post-modern society, cities and villages embody different values. The city embodies the values of pursuing wealth, challenges, social activities and fast-paced life, while the countryside shows the values of returning to homeland and nature, pursuing tranquility and slow life. In the strategic ecosystem composed of urban and rural areas, rural values are unique and will not be replaced by urban values, and can attract talents with similar values. Therefore, in the implementation of rural talent strategy, we should pay close attention to the talents with "rural values" and rural complex, and attract and retain them with specific measures and programs, so providing long-term talent power for rural revitalization.

In this case, Shuangliu District has established contacts with entrepreneurs, artists and veteran cadres of Shuangliu District by founding the Committee of the RepuTable, and learned their attitudes towards the rural areas and their values through in-depth interviews. For those who have the rural complex and are willing to return to the rural areas, it is necessary to create favourable conditions and guide them to start a business at the homeland. For the talent introduction, Shuangliu District has set up an inspection mechanism to test the applicants' values, and give priority to those with “rural values”. Additionally, the value investigation is contained in the development of the training plan, and is an important indicator for choosing priority trainees. To sum up, through the screening of values, supplemented by incentives, we can retain talents who really love the rural areas and make them engaged in the rural revitalization.
4.3. Building flow mechanism of strategic ecosystem to promote the talent exchange between cities and villages

In the strategic ecosystem, the boundaries of organizations are usually open, and the orderly flow of elements between organizations creates value. Talent is the most active element in the ecosystem composed of cities and villages. Whether talents can move reasonably between urban and rural areas is related to the healthy operation of the entire ecosystem and also the creation of common values. For the rural areas adjacent to the city, reasonable talent flow is also an important way to utilize the city’s development and enjoy its feedback effect. The talent flow between urban and rural areas is not a one-way talent output from the countryside to the city, but the talent interaction based on meeting their respective needs and synergies. Under the concept of urban-rural integration and composition, its role has become more and more prominent and important.

During implementation of the rural talent strategy, Shuangliu District has constructed a two-way exchange mechanism for urban and rural talents. On the one hand, urban talents go to the countryside, which is realized in four ways: government, enterprises and college talents work in villages, outstanding graduates work at the grassroots level, experts go to the countryside regularly, and social groups stay in the township. On the other hand, the rural talents go to the city, for example excellent rural talents visit the city for study and vocational farmers learn at higher education institutions, so as to improve the go-to-city system effectively. Besides, Shuangliu District has promoted the development of rural economy and culture effectively through the short-term residential projects of urban talents. For example, the artists are invited to stay in Shuangliu District for a short period of time, live with local residents, complete artistic creation together, and enhance the local artistic atmosphere. Through the two-way mechanism of talent exchange between urban and rural areas, Shuangliu District utilizes the external intelligence on the one hand, and improves the quality of local talents on the other hand, thus alleviating the talent pressure faced during rural revitalization.

4.4. Establishing the connection mechanism of strategic ecosystem to achieve integration of urban and rural human resources services

In the strategic ecosystem, organizations have realized intensive information and resource sharing through effective means of connection, which provides guarantee for cooperation and win-win across organizations. In the real environment, the business platform established by the eco-leading enterprise often assumes the role of connection. For example, in Ali’s retail ecosystem, Taobao and Tmall platforms are the links between organizations. In the urban and rural ecosystem, it is necessary to build the connection platform of talent information and services, to equalize the service for every organization and even every individual in the ecosystem, which is an important prerequisite for the sound operation of the system.

In this case, the construction of human resources service platform is one of the essential ways to implement the rural talents strategy in Shuangliu District. It has built a human resources service platform with both hardware and software foundations, and realizes the integration of urban and rural human resources service gradually. In terms of hardware foundation, a top-down system of human resources service stations, from district, town to township levels, has been built. The district-level human resources service center is set up under the District’s Labor and Social Security Bureau, and it fulfils mainly the four-dimensional talent service of “high-end talent introduction + independent innovation research and development + incubation of scientific and technological achievements + industrial transformation of achievements”. The town-level human resources service platform is responsible mainly for the selection and training of key business staff, the development and training of rural professional skillful teams, and is set up under the township government. The village-level human resources service stations are responsible mainly for the selection and training of professional farmers, human resources policy consulting and other basic human resource management service, and is set up under the village committee. This three-level human resources service stations enable talents of different levels to enjoy human resources
services nearby. In terms of software foundation, through the construction of rural talent think tank, database, cloud service and cloud curriculum system, the information of talents can be shared unimpeded among organizations and departments, which is helpful in the government’s policy-making, the talent introduction and training of various business entities and meeting the needs of individual talent.

5. Conclusion and suggestion

By means of case study, this paper summarizes the implementation approach of talent revitalization strategy in rural areas adjacent to the city that consists of four main strategies: focusing on industrial development and identifying the types and positioning of rural talents, returning to values and attracting talents with rural complex, building flow mechanism to promote the talent exchange between cities and villages, and establishing service platforms to achieve the integration of urban and rural human resources services. The first three strategies focus on the construction of the talent teams, and answer the question of what kind of talents the countryside needs, how to retain talents and how to use them well. The last strategy focuses on the construction of human resources service platform and the equalization and integration of urban and rural human resources services. Through the effective construction of talent teams and human resources service platform, we can realize the talent revitalization in rural areas and provide strong talent support for the integration and development of urban and rural areas.

![Diagram of Implementation approaches of talent revitalization strategy in rural areas](image)

Fig. 1 Implementation approaches of talent revitalization strategy in rural areas

Compared with other existing studies, this paper adopts the perspective of strategic ecosystem to explain the problems of talent positioning, flow, link and value agreement in the implementation of rural talent strategy, thus avoiding the contradiction of urban-rural opposition in the traditional talent strategy, and providing a new direction and inspiration for the research of talent strategy implementation approach. Moreover, the talent strategy implementation approach constructed in this paper has the situational mobility and guiding significance for the rural areas adjacent to the city.

References


