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# Demand and Development of New Generation of Migrant Workers in Hebei Province

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**Abstract** A field investigation was conducted on the new generation of migrant workers in Hebei Province to understand their present situation and characteristics, based on which countermeasures and suggestions were put forward to improve the survival and development of the new generation of migrant workers.

**Key words** Hebei Province, New generation of migrant workers, Survival, Development

## 1 Introduction

The migrant workers of new generation refer to agricultural accounts that are born after the 1980s and older than 16 years of age. Most of them are engaged in non-agricultural work<sup>[1]</sup>. The No. 1 document (*Some Opinions on Strengthening Urban-rural Coordination and Foundations of Agricultural and Rural Development*) of 2010 has clearly required adopting targeted measures to solve the problems of the new generation of migrant workers to make the new generation of migrant workers become urbanized. Currently, young and middle-aged migrant workers have gradually become the mainstay of migrant workers in Hebei Province. As theoretical knowledge and operational skills are at a disadvantage, practical problems such as long labor time, poor working conditions, high work pressure, low wages, and psychological anxiety exist in the employment process of the new generation of migrant workers. These make it difficult for them to transform into industrial workers and skilled personnel, achieve stable employment in cities and integrate into cities. Therefore, studying the needs and development issues of the new generation of migrant workers is not only conducive to guiding the new generation of migrant workers to obtain better employment, but also has important significance in establishing a correct outlook on life and values. It is also of great significance to the stable development of China.

## 2 Materials and methods

In June 2017, 372 questionnaires on the survival needs of the new generation of migrant workers in Hebei Province were issued in the talent market in Hebei Province, and total 360 valid questionnaires were collected, with effective questionnaire rate of 96.77%. The questionnaire covers the basic situation, of the individual, the employment situation, the participation in vocational

training and the employment needs. The data was processed and analyzed using Excel software.

The 360 people interviewed were all new generation of migrant workers, with a male to female ratio of 2:1. The main jobs were manufacturing, construction, wholesale and retail, accommodation and catering. Among them, migrant workers with junior high school education and below accounted for 74.1%, and migrant workers with high school education and beyond accounted for 25.8% of the total number of the interviewee. Among the interviewee, 91.0% of them were unmarried (Table 1). In summary, the surveyed migrant workers of the new generation mostly had a junior high school degree and the vast majority of them were unmarried.

**Table 1 Basic situation of the surveyed migrant workers of the new generation**

Item		Number of people	Proportion//%
Education	primary school	58	16.1
	junior high school	209	58.1
	High school	68	18.9
	College degree or above	25	6.9
Marital status	Married	32	9.0
	Unmarried	328	91.0

## 3 Results and analysis

**3.1 Shortage of survival and development skills** Considering the best way to acquire knowledge, among the 360 samples surveyed, 62 people chose professional training institutions and 234 people chose learning by working (Table 2). This showed that there were very few migrant workers of the new generation who received professional skills education before they went to work, and only 17.2% of the surveys were pre-trained for systemic vocational training.

**3.2 Manufacturing and construction industries are the most engaged industries** When asked about the preferred industry to be engaged in, 128 migrant workers chose manufacturing industry, and 89 migrant workers chose construction industry, accounting for 35.56% and 24.72% of the total, respectively (Table 3). This

Received: June 25, 2018 Accepted: August 2, 2018

Supported by Soft Project of Shijiazhuang Science and Technology Intellectual Property Bureau (185490105A).

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corresponded to the survey results of the best way to acquire knowledge. The phenomenon of learning by working is particularly prominent in the construction industry, and it is usually considered that there is no need for migrant workers to be trained. Most of them were engaged in labor-intensive industries such as construction and manufacturing, characterized with low employment level, strong substitutability and weak stability, which made it difficult to improve work conditions. The economic foundation of integration into the city could not be guaranteed, and this is the big-

**Table 3** Expected industry of the new generation of migrant workers

Item		Number of people	Proportion//%
Primary industry		13	3.61
Secondary industry	Manufacturing	128	35.56
	Construction	89	24.72
Tertiary industry	Wholesale and retail trade	50	13.89
	Transportation, warehousing and postal services	23	6.39
	Accommodation and catering industry	22	6.11
	Resident services, repairs and other services	35	9.72

**3.3 Poor hard-working spirit** The survey found that compared with their parents, the new generation of migrant workers had poor hard-working spirit<sup>[3]</sup>. Most of them entered the society after graduating from junior high school. With the rise of new countryside, the living conditions have been gradually improved. In addition, due to the far-reaching impact of China's national policy on family planning, most of the migrant workers of the new generation have few brothers and sisters, and they have more love from their parents and family<sup>[4]</sup>.

**3.4 Higher requirements for the future** When asked about the primary consideration when selecting a work unit, 36.1% of the people surveyed chose wages and benefits, and 21.6% of them chose development space and employment prospects. Relevant data has shown that wage is still the first choice of the new generation of migrant workers, taking into account future development space and long-term employment. Compared with the older generation of migrant workers, the new generation of migrant workers has higher requirements for the future development and spiritual and cultural life<sup>[6]</sup> (Table 4).

**Table 4** Considerations of the new generation of migrant workers during choosing working units in Hebei Province

Item	Number of people	Proportion//%
Development space and employment prospects	78	21.6
Work and living environment	54	15.0
Whether the profession is counterpart	27	7.5
Wages and benefits	130	36.1
Whether new skills can be learned	47	13.0
Corporate culture, company strength	24	6.6

**3.5 Poor psychological quality** During the interview, it was found that the interpersonal communication network of the new generation of migrant workers mainly involved relatives and fellow villagers, and there was limited interaction with local citizens<sup>[7-8]</sup>. Due to differences in lifestyle and psychocultural characteristics, coupled with the differences in values, the migrant workers of the new

generation obstacle to integrate into the city<sup>[2]</sup>.

**Table 2** Best way for the new generation of migrant workers to get knowledge

Learning path	Number of people	Proportion//%
Professional training institutions	62	17.2
Learning by working	234	65.0
Discussing with people around	58	16.1
Learning by oneself	6	1.6

generation, as transitional person from farmers to citizens, have a dual value system and a dual identity<sup>[9]</sup>. It is difficult for the new generation of migrant workers to move upwards in cities, and the sense of social belonging and identity is unclear, leading to the emergence of the current situation of the inability to integrate into the city and return to the countryside<sup>[10]</sup> and the formation of new unemployed people. In the long run, there will be a lot of social problems<sup>[11]</sup>.

## 4 Conclusions and discussions

**4.1 Creating a good policy environment to promote the citizenization of new generation of migrant workers** China's current household registration system has severely restricted the transformation of migrant workers' status to industrial workers' status<sup>[12-13]</sup>. Relevant departments should further implement the spirit of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council on the household registration reform documents and continue to deepen the reform of the urban household registration system. The restrictions on household registration in county-level cities should be further liberalized, and the threshold for household registration should be lowered, thus letting more migrant workers of the new generation have the opportunity to achieve citizenization on the spot or nearby<sup>[14]</sup>. The pension insurance system should be improved. The national pension insurance plan will be integrated into a whole. The difficulties of the migrant workers of the new generation in renewing the insurance will be solved to let them also enjoy the five major insurance and gradually enjoy the same insurance as the citizens of the city. The special requirements of children's entering schools and housing allocation on the household registration will be gradually diluted. Thus, the new generation of migrant workers and urban residents will be put in the same position, and the interests behind urban household registration will be eliminated.

**4.2 Improving the protection system for the new generation of migrant workers' rights and interests to create a good legal environment** The relevant government departments should also

strengthen legal education while cracking down on the behavior of infringing on the legitimate rights and interests of migrant workers. The educational mechanism for the new generation of migrant workers needs to be established and improved. The principle of "who is in charge, who is responsible; and who employs, who educates" will be adhered to. The publicity and education functions of the news media will be brought into full play. Activities such as legal lectures and legal consultations will be carried out to solve the dilemma of migrant workers who want to use the law without knowing the law<sup>[15]</sup>. A publicity and education atmosphere for the new generation of migrant workers will be created in the society to promote the awareness of the new generation of migrant workers to learn the law, use the law and safeguard their rights and interests in accordance with the law. The rights of the new generation of migrant workers must be defended through legal means such as negotiation, labor security supervision and labor dispute arbitration, rather than swallowing up or taking extreme measures to deal with<sup>[16]</sup>.

**4.3 Establishing and improving the training system to improve the social competitiveness of the new generation of migrant workers** In order to meet the requirements of the development of the times, the government should encourage labor skills training for new generation of migrant workers<sup>[17]</sup>. At the same time, relevant policies need to be formulated to support skills training institutions to resolve the contradiction between supply and demand and ease employment pressure, thereby laying a solid foundation for the establishment and upgrading of a modern industrial system in China. (i) The government and enterprises should change their concept, create a good atmosphere for the employment training, introduce relevant policies, improve the system of holding certificates, protect the rights and interests of the new generation of migrant workers, so that employment and training will be effectively linked<sup>[18]</sup>. (ii) All levels of finance should support rural labor vocational skills training, increase the investment in the vocational skills training of the new generation of migrant workers, and make appropriate subsidies for the individuals participating in the training. (iii) The situation that various training institutions lack effective communication and collaboration, professional settings are blurring, and teachers' resources are decentralized should be changed. (iv) For migrant workers of different cultural foundations and different occupations, different training methods and contents should be adopted. Vocational quality education should be strengthened. The concept innovation of migrant workers should be promoted. Flexible, practical and effective teaching methods should be adopted to enable migrant workers to sit still, learn and use it, thus achieving the preset training effect. (v) The cooperation between vocational colleges and employment enterprises should be promoted further, and the corporate training will be improved through order training<sup>[19]</sup>.

**4.4 Concerning about the psychological changes of the new generation of migrant workers and providing more humane care** Government departments of all levels and employers may organize various training and cultural activities and psychological counseling services to let the new generation of migrant workers gradually integrate into the city psychologically, actively participate in various social activities with the attitude of the master, and

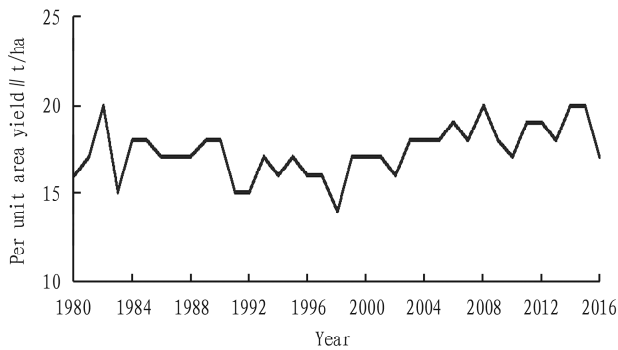
complete the psychological transformation from migrant worker to new citizen<sup>[20]</sup>. City residents should also raise awareness to regard the new generation of migrant workers as the main body of social rights equal to themselves, help them to maintain a healthy and up-to-date attitude in their work and life and enhance their sense of identity and belonging.

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## 6 Changes in the per unit area yield of oil palm

According to the statistics of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the per unit area yield oil palm in Malaysia was 12 t/ha in 1961, 14 t/ha in 1970, 16 t/ha in 1980, 18 t/ha in 1990, 17 t/ha in 2000, 2010, and 2016 (Fig. 4).



Data source: FAOSTAT.

**Fig. 4** Changes in the per unit area yield of oil palm fruit of Malaysia in 1980–2016

From Fig. 4, it can be seen that the per unit area yield of oil palm fruit of Malaysia fluctuated in 14–20 t/ha, it was the highest (20 t/ha) in 1982, 2008, 2014, and 2015, it was the lowest (14 t/ha) in 1998. In recent years, the per unit area yield of oil palm fruit remained the high position (17–20 t/ha), and is expected to reach a new peak in future.

## 7 Conclusions and discussions

### 7.1 The oil palm development staying at the peak stage

The arable land area of Malaysia is about 13.53 million ha. In 2017, Malaysia's oil palm planting area accounted for 43% of the total arable land. In 2013, oil palm harvested area of Malaysia reached its peak, ending the rising trend over the years. In 2016, the oil palm harvested area dropped by 4% compared with 2013; the oil palm fresh fruit yield reached its peak in 2015, and the oil palm fresh fruit yield in 2016 reduced by 14% compared with 2015; at the same time, the development speed of oil palm planting area in Malaysia slowed down obviously, and oil palm planting was mainly upgrade of old oil palm plantations. Therefore, judging from the percentage of oil palm planting area in Malaysia to the to-

tal area of arable land and the demand to update the old oil palm plantation, it is expected that the development of oil palm harvested area and production in Malaysia stays at the peak stage, and it is difficult to realize a high growth in the harvested area, and the increase of yield will mainly depend on the increase in the per unit area yield.

### 7.2 The percentage of oil palm industry of Malaysia to the world oil palm industry constantly declining

Before 2005, Malaysia's oil palm planting area and annual palm oil yield ranked first in the world. Since 2006, Indonesia's oil palm plantation has been growing faster than Malaysia, taking the place of Malaysia as the world's largest oil palm grower. Besides, Malaysia's oil palm harvested area accounted for 33.1% of the world's oil palm harvested area from 23.1% in 1999 to 23.7% in 2016. Oil palm yield accounted for 52.8% of world oil palm yield in 1989, dropping to 28.0% in 2016. The harvested area and yield of oil palm from Malaysia showed a significant decline trend. It is predicted that the proportion of Malaysian oil palm industry in the world oil palm industry will continue to decline.

### 7.3 The per unit area yield of oil palm expected to reach a peak

From 1980 to 2016, the world's per unit area yield of oil palm fruit was in the range of 7–15 t/ha. In the same period, the Malaysian per unit area yield oil palm fruit was in the range of 14–20 t/ha. It can be seen that Malaysian per unit area yield oil palm fruit is relatively high. The technical level of oil palm planting in Malaysia is relatively high, and the old oil palm plantation is gradually updated. The newly planted and updated oil palm plantation will continue to increase the per unit area yield. It is estimated that the per unit area yield of Malaysian oil palm fresh fruit is expected to reach a new peak (20 t/ha).

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