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# Research on the Education and Management Path of First Secretaries Under the New Situation of Rural Revitalization

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**Abstract:** 2025 marks the final year of the transition period for consolidating and expanding the achievements of poverty alleviation and effectively connecting them with rural revitalization, and the implementation of the rural revitalization strategy is about to enter a new stage. As frontline implementers of rural revitalization at the grassroots level, the First Secretaries' competence, work style, and management efficiency directly affect the quality of the rural revitalization strategy implementation. Starting from the profound connotation of the new situation of rural revitalization, this paper systematically expounds on the necessity of strengthening the education and management of First Secretaries. It deeply analyzes the existing problems in the current education and management of First Secretaries in aspects such as selection and deployment, thematic training, assessment and incentives, and support guarantees. The study constructs a new education and management path supported by precise selection, result-oriented training, scientific assessment, and institutionalized guarantees, so as to provide strong talent support and organizational assurance for the implementation of the rural revitalization strategy.

**Keywords:** rural revitalization; first secretaries; education and management; talent development; governance efficiency

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## 1. Introduction

As the country's work on agriculture, rural areas, and farmers enters a new historical stage of comprehensively advancing rural revitalization, rural revitalization is no longer a single economic growth and infrastructure improvement, but a comprehensive, systematic, and in-depth social reform covering industrial revitalization, talent revitalization, cultural revitalization, ecological revitalization, and organizational revitalization. As the backbone force at the rural grassroots level, the First Secretaries stationed in villages have witnessed new changes in their role positioning, work tasks, and competence requirements, and have become the "leaders" driving the sustained, stable, and all-round development of rural areas. The traditional education and management methods for First Secretaries can hardly meet the new challenges and tasks posed by the new situation of rural revitalization. Optimizing and improving the education and management of First Secretaries can support them to better carry out rural revitalization assistance work and promote rural revitalization to achieve new breakthroughs and outstanding results [1].

## 2. The Profound Connotation and Manifestations of the New Situation of Rural Revitalization

### 2.1. The Goal Orientation Shifts from Eliminating Absolute Poverty to Advancing Agricultural and Rural Modernization

During the poverty alleviation period, the core goal was to ensure that the rural poor population achieved "no worries about food and clothing, and guaranteed access to

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compulsory education, basic medical care, and safe housing" and eliminate absolute poverty. The work focus was characterized by a distinct "tackling" nature and bottom-line thinking. The goal of the new stage of rural revitalization is the ambitious agricultural and rural modernization, which requires high-quality and efficient agriculture, livable and prosperous rural areas, and affluent farmers. The work focus of First Secretaries needs to shift from solving subsistence problems to promoting high-quality development. They must possess a long-term development perspective, systematic planning capabilities, and modern governance concepts to lead rural areas in achieving a qualitative leap from poverty alleviation to revitalization.

#### *2.2. The Work Content Transforms from Point-like Breakthroughs to Systematic Advancement*

The poverty alleviation stage emphasized comprehensiveness, with a large amount of work centered on specific indicators such as poverty alleviation at the household level and villages being lifted out of poverty, showing certain point-like characteristics. Rural revitalization focuses on the coordinated advancement of the "Five Revitalizations" (industrial, talent, cultural, ecological, and organizational), which form an indivisible organic whole. Among them, industrial revitalization is the material foundation, talent revitalization is the key support, cultural revitalization is the spiritual core, ecological revitalization is the inherent requirement, and organizational revitalization is the fundamental guarantee. First Secretaries need to have systematic thinking and overall coordination capabilities, and be able to integrate the development of the economy, politics, culture, society, and ecological civilization to achieve the all-round development of rural areas [2].

#### *2.3. The Dynamic Mechanism Changes from External "Blood Transfusion" to Internal "Blood Production"*

During the poverty alleviation period, a large amount of external resources such as financial investment, social assistance, and policy preferences were input, featuring a strong "blood transfusion" nature. The new situation of rural revitalization emphasizes stimulating the internal driving force for rural development and realizing a fundamental transformation from "blood transfusion" to "blood production". The core task of First Secretaries has shifted from simply striving for projects and distributing resources to cultivating local industries, attracting and retaining talents, reshaping rural cultural confidence, and improving the rural governance system, so as to promote the formation of a virtuous cycle of self-development and sustainable development in rural areas. Therefore, First Secretaries need to continuously enhance their capabilities in mass work, resource integration, market development, and social organization cultivation [3].

#### *2.4. The Governance Model Evolves from Administrative Leadership to Diversified Co-governance*

During the poverty alleviation period, strong administrative promotion and a precise responsibility system played a decisive role. The new situation of rural revitalization emphasizes the construction of a rural governance system combining self-governance, rule of law, and virtue-based governance, promoting the downward shift of governance focus and realizing the coordinated co-governance of multiple subjects including the government, market, society, and villagers. The role of First Secretaries needs to transform from managers and commanders to guides, service providers, and coordinators. They need to be good at using the thinking and methods of the rule of law to handle rural affairs, guide villagers to participate in self-governance practices, and give play to the positive role of multiple subjects such as new rural sages, cooperatives, and social organizations to realize the transformation of governance.

### *2.5. The Development Paradigm Transitions from Resource Consumption to Green Development*

The concept that "lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets" has taken root in people's hearts, and rural revitalization unswervingly follows the path of ecological priority and green development. When promoting industrial development and planning rural construction, First Secretaries need to give priority to ecological environmental protection, have a strong sense of ecology, identify and utilize the ecological value of rural areas, and explore effective paths to convert ecological advantages into development advantages. They should vigorously develop ecological tourism, health and wellness industries, green agriculture, etc., to realize the harmonious unification of economic development and environmental protection [4].

## **3. The Necessity of Strengthening the Education and Management of First Secretaries Under the New Situation of Rural Revitalization**

### *3.1. An Inevitable Requirement for Adapting to Role Transformation and Enhancing Job Performance Capabilities*

The role of First Secretaries is transforming from poverty alleviation specialists to comprehensive operators of rural revitalization. They need to master extensive knowledge and capabilities covering multiple fields such as industrial economy, rural planning, ecological environment, laws and regulations, grassroots governance, and digital application. Without continuous and targeted education and effective management support, most First Secretaries will find it difficult to be competent in their new roles, may experience a sense of "incompetence anxiety", and thus face problems such as unclear work ideas, insufficient methods, and poor results. Systematic education and management are the main ways to help them smoothly complete the role transformation and enhance their comprehensive job performance capabilities.

### *3.2. An Important Guarantee for Ensuring the Accurate Implementation of Policies and Avoiding Work Deviations*

The rural revitalization strategy has rich connotations and a complex policy system. If First Secretaries have an insufficient or superficial understanding of policies, they are prone to deviations in policy implementation, leading to problems such as resource misallocation, blind launch of projects, and unsustainable development models, which deviate from the strategic original intention of rural revitalization. Strengthening education and management, especially the in-depth interpretation of the central government's major policies and local specific policies and case teaching, can ensure that First Secretaries accurately grasp the direction and principles of rural revitalization, improve the accuracy and effectiveness of policy implementation, and truly transform good policies into good results benefiting the people.

### *3.3. A Key Measure for Stimulating Internal Motivation and Preventing Burnout*

The working conditions for stationed First Secretaries are relatively harsh, with heavy tasks, great pressure, and significant responsibilities. Especially in the rural revitalization stage, which has shifted from a "tough battle" to a "protracted war", First Secretaries are prone to professional burnout and loneliness. A scientific education and management system not only includes professional training, but also covers ideological guidance, psychological counseling, humanistic care, and effective incentive guarantees. It helps First Secretaries relieve physical and mental pressure, enhance professional identity and sense of mission, and stimulate their long-term enthusiasm and internal motivation for taking root at the grassroots level and starting businesses [5].

### *3.4. An Urgent Need for Consolidating the Foundation of Governance and Enhancing Rural Governance Efficiency*

First Secretaries are important links for strengthening the Party's overall leadership over rural work and narrowing the relationship between the Party and the masses. Their work style, image, and capabilities are directly related to the consolidation of the Party's governing foundation at the grassroots level. Strengthening the education on Party spirit cultivation, integrity, and the mass line can urge First Secretaries to always maintain the qualities of integrity, pragmatism, and dedication to the people, continuously enhance their capabilities in organizing, publicizing, uniting, and serving the people, effectively improve rural governance efficiency, and consolidate the Party's governing foundation in rural areas.

## **4. The Current Situation and Existing Problems in the Education and Management of First Secretaries**

### *4.1. Inaccurate Selection and Deployment Mechanism, and Room for Improvement in Job-personnel Matching*

The selection of First Secretaries is mostly recommended by the sending units and approved by the organizational departments. Although the personal wishes and basic conditions of cadres are taken into account, there are still deficiencies in precise matching. Firstly, the research on the actual needs of rural areas is not in-depth enough, and sometimes the dispatched cadres do not meet the actual needs of the villages. Secondly, insufficient consideration is given to the compatibility between the cadres' capabilities, expertise, professional background and the development type of the rural areas, and there is a lack of a docking platform from demand to supply. Thirdly, the selection standards are too general, and there is a lack of differentiated definition and assessment of the core competencies required for First Secretaries in different types of rural areas, such as those led by Party building, industrial development, and governance improvement [6].

### *4.2. Generalized Thematic Training Content System, with Insufficient Targeting and Effectiveness*

The thematic training for First Secretaries can hardly meet the differentiated needs. Firstly, in terms of content, it focuses on theory rather than practical operation, with an emphasis on policy promotion and macro-theory, while providing insufficient training on practical skills such as rural planning, project financing, brand building, and conflict mediation. Secondly, in terms of methods, it focuses on lectures rather than interaction, mainly adopting classroom lectures, while using fewer interactive and experiential teaching methods such as case teaching, on-site observation, and exchange seminars, resulting in poor training effects. Thirdly, there is a lack of "training on demand" - no hierarchical and classified training curriculum system is designed according to the different terms of office of First Secretaries and the different types of villages where they are stationed.

### *4.3. Unscientific Assessment and Evaluation System, with Deviations in the "Guiding Role"*

The special assessment of First Secretaries' work serves as a "baton", but the current assessment system has some problems. Firstly, it focuses on assessing "visible achievements", such as the amount of investment attraction and the number of projects launched, while it is difficult to quantify "invisible achievements" and long-term benefits such as Party building leadership, governance efficiency, talent training, and ecological protection. Secondly, the assessment subjects are single, mainly relying on superiors' inspections and listening to reports, while the evaluation weight of stakeholders such as village representatives and village "two committees" (village Party committee and village committee) cadres is too low, resulting in the assessment results failing to truly reflect the actual work performance of First Secretaries and their reputation among the masses.

Thirdly, the process management is lacking - there are more one-time year-end assessments, and there is a lack of regular daily tracking, mid-term evaluation, and feedback guidance, so the incentive, restraint, and guiding role of the assessment cannot be fully exerted.

#### *4.4. Inadequate Incentive and Guarantee Measures, and Persistent Worries of Cadres*

Effective incentives are the key to maintaining the stability of the team, but there are still deficiencies in motivating First Secretaries to start businesses and work hard. Firstly, the channel for political incentives is not smooth enough, and the institutional arrangements for the promotion and reuse of outstanding First Secretaries need to be further improved. Secondly, the economic benefits do not match the efforts - the standard of stationed subsidies is relatively low, and its incentive effect is not strong compared with the work pressure they bear and the harsh working environment. Thirdly, humanistic care is not in place - insufficient attention is paid to the family difficulties, physical and mental health of First Secretaries, and there is a lack of effective psychological counseling and logistics support mechanisms. Fourthly, the combination of "cultivating cadres" and "protecting cadres" is insufficient - there is a lack of effective protection mechanisms against risks such as false accusations that cadres may encounter in their work, which dampens their courage to take on responsibilities.

#### *4.5. Gaps in the Management Coordination Mechanism, and Insufficient Joint Support from Multiple Parties*

The management of First Secretaries involves multiple subjects such as the sending units, the receiving villages, and the organizational departments, which easily leads to a situation where "everyone is in charge but no one is really in charge". Firstly, the sending units fail to carry out education and management in place - after dispatching the cadres, they do not provide sufficient care and support, and fail to fully play their role as a "backing". Secondly, the management responsibility boundary of the receiving villages is unclear, with phenomena such as over-reliance on First Secretaries or neglecting management. Thirdly, the information communication and policy coordination among various departments are insufficient, resources cannot be effectively integrated, the support for First Secretaries is scattered, and a strong joint work force cannot be formed.

### **5. The Optimization Path of Education and Management for First Secretaries Under the New Situation of Rural Revitalization**

#### *5.1. Optimizing the Selection and Stationing Mechanism with Precision as the Orientation*

Deepen the research on needs and establish a "rural profile". Before selection, the organizational departments, together with the rural areas, conduct a comprehensive diagnosis of the resource endowment, industrial foundation, Party organization status, governance shortcomings, and development needs of the villages to be stationed, and form a detailed list of rural needs. Refine the candidate standards and map the "cadre profile". Establish a talent pool for First Secretaries, conduct a precise assessment of the professional background, work experience, capabilities, expertise, and personality characteristics of the candidates to be selected, and form a list of cadres' capabilities. Promote two-way selection to achieve job-personnel suitability. Explore the establishment of a demand docking meeting, and on the basis of respecting personal wishes, promote the precise docking between rural needs and cadres' expertise, so as to realize the scientific deployment of cadres based on the actual conditions of the villages and form a reasonable team.

### *5.2. Reconstructing the Thematic Training and Empowerment System with Effectiveness as the Core*

Build a hierarchical and classified curriculum system. According to the requirements of the "Five Revitalizations" in rural areas, design modular courses. Combined with the term of office, set up pre-service adaptive training, in-service improvement training, and special problem-solving training. Combined with the type of rural areas, launch characteristic training courses for industry-led villages, ecological protection-oriented villages, etc. Innovate diversified teaching methods. Significantly increase the proportion of case teaching, and select typical cases of rural revitalization nationwide for in-depth analysis. Widely use on-site teaching and organize field visits to advanced villages. Introduce the action learning method, organize team discussions around the difficulties faced by First Secretaries, and improve their capabilities in solving practical problems. Utilize information platforms to develop high-quality online courses and build a strong practical-oriented teaching team. Recruit university experts, successful entrepreneurs, retired cadres, and senior village Party organization secretaries to form a diversified teaching team, highlighting the practical experience and operational capabilities of the teachers.

### *5.3. Improving the Assessment, Incentive and Restraint Mechanism with Science as the Principle*

Optimize the assessment indicator system. Establish a comprehensive assessment and evaluation system oriented by both "visible achievements" and "invisible achievements". Combine quantitative indicators with qualitative evaluation - not only focus on economic development indicators, but also on long-term indicators such as the effectiveness of Party building work, villagers' satisfaction, rural governance level, ecological environment quality, and talent cultivation. Strengthen the whole-process performance management. Transform the one-time year-end assessment into a dynamic management model including daily tracking, quarterly evaluation, and annual summary. Establish a work record system, where First Secretaries regularly submit work reports, and the superior management departments conduct regular heart-to-heart talks and on-site supervision to promptly identify problems and provide guidance. Improve the diversified incentive and guarantee mechanism. Give priority to the promotion, position advancement, and selection of outstanding First Secretaries who have made remarkable achievements and are recognized by the masses. Reasonably increase the standard of stationed work subsidies and explore an incentive mechanism linked to work performance. Strengthen the recognition and publicity efforts, tell the stories of excellent First Secretaries, and enhance their professional sense of honor. Establish a care mechanism to help solve practical difficulties such as children's enrollment and relieve their worries. Establish and improve a fault-tolerance and error-correction mechanism to provide protection for First Secretaries who dare to take on responsibilities and work steadfastly.

### *5.4. Building a Coordinated Support Network with Institutionalization as the Guarantee*

Clarify the management responsibilities of all parties. Define the list of management responsibilities of the sending units, receiving villages, and organizational departments. The sending units should act as a strong backing, provide support in terms of projects and funds, and conduct regular visits and condolences. The receiving villages should fulfill their main responsibilities, strengthen daily management, work guidance, and living guarantees. The organizational departments should play a leading role in overall coordination, supervision, and assessment. Build an information sharing platform. Establish an information management system for First Secretaries to realize information interconnection and sharing among the sending units, receiving villages, and organizational departments, dynamically grasp the work situation and difficulty

demands of First Secretaries, and facilitate the timely provision of support. Promote experience exchange and mutual assistance. Organize work seminars for

First Secretaries to provide a platform for them to share experience and discuss problems, and form a good atmosphere of mutual learning, mutual reference, and mutual benefit.

First Secretaries play a key role in the implementation of the rural revitalization strategy. Facing the new situation, new tasks, and new challenges, the traditional education and management model needs to be further updated and improved. The systematic education and management path proposed in this paper, with precise selection, result-oriented training, scientific assessment, and institutionalized guarantee as the core, aims to solve the current existing problems and empower.

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