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Analysis of the Current Situation and Countermeasures for College Students Returning to Employment and Entrepreneurship under the Background of Rural Revitalization

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Abstract: With the in-depth implementation of the rural revitalization strategy, an increasing number of college students are choosing to return to their hometowns for employment and entrepreneurship, becoming an important force in promoting rural development. This paper aims to explore the current situation of college students returning to their hometowns for employment and entrepreneurship against the backdrop of rural revitalization, as well as the challenges they face. Through an analysis of relevant policies, data, and case studies, it was found that college students currently face issues such as insufficient funding, unstable market conditions, and a lack of skills and experience during their return. To address these challenges, this paper proposes corresponding countermeasures, including strengthening policy support, providing vocational training, utilizing social resources, and encouraging innovative cooperation. It is hoped that this research can provide references for policymakers and college students, promoting the sustainable development of the rural economy.

Keywords: rural revitalization; college students; return to employment; entrepreneurship; policy support

1. Introduction

The rural revitalization strategy is an important policy for China's development in the new era, aimed at promoting comprehensive agricultural development, increasing farmers' incomes, and advancing rural progress. With the country's emphasis on rural revitalization, more and more college students are beginning to focus on and choose to return to their hometowns for employment and entrepreneurship, hoping to realize their self-worth while promoting the economic development of their hometowns. College students not only possess high cultural literacy and innovation capabilities but also have modern concepts and technologies, making them increasingly important in rural development. However, despite the growing trend of returning for employment and entrepreneurship, college students still face numerous challenges in this process, including insufficient funding, unstable market conditions, and a lack of experience and skills. To effectively address these issues, a systematic analysis is urgently needed from multiple aspects such as policies, education, social capital, and innovative cooperation. This paper aims to comprehensively explore the current situation, challenges, and countermeasures for college students returning to their hometowns for employment and entrepreneurship under the background of rural revitalization, in order to provide theoretical support and practical references for relevant policy formulation and practice [1].

Published: 11 October 2024



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2. Rural Revitalization and the Current Situation of College Students Returning Home

2.1. Current Status of the Implementation of Rural Revitalization Policies

Since the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China proposed the rural revitalization strategy in 2017, governments at all levels have actively promoted its implementation. The strategy aims to achieve comprehensive agricultural development, increase farmers' incomes, and advance rural progress, focusing on five areas: industrial, talent, cultural, ecological, and organizational revitalization. This initiative marks a new stage in rural development and is vital to national growth. In industrial revitalization, the government encourages enhancing the quality and competitiveness of the rural economy through modern agriculture, rural tourism, and e-commerce [2]. By introducing new technologies, traditional agriculture is transformed, promoting deep processing and branding of agricultural products to increase their value. Simultaneously, rural tourism has attracted many urban visitors, boosting local economies. The government supports farmers' cooperatives and family farms, encouraging large-scale production and forming local agricultural industrial chains. To address the talent shortage in rural areas, local governments are implementing "talent return" plans for college students. These initiatives include startup funds, tax reductions, and policy guidance, attracting more students to participate in rural construction. Such policies offer valuable opportunities for returning college students and inject new vitality into rural revitalization. Continuous investments in rural infrastructure, including transportation, education, and healthcare, have significantly improved living standards and created a conducive environment for students returning to work and start businesses. However, despite some achievements, rural economic development faces challenges, including uneven regional growth and difficulties in attracting talent. Many returning students encounter insufficient funding, an incomplete market environment, and a lack of entrepreneurial experience. Therefore, it is crucial to refine policies that promote sustainable rural economic development and better support returning college students in their employment and entrepreneurial endeavors [3].

2.2. Basic Situation of College Students Returning to Employment and Entrepreneurship

In recent years, with the in-depth advancement of the rural revitalization strategy, more and more college students have chosen to return to their hometowns for employment and entrepreneurship, becoming an important force driving rural development. According to statistical data, the number of college students returning to start businesses in China exceeded 300,000 in 2022, and this trend shows a year-on-year increase. Returning college students typically possess higher cultural literacy, strong innovative abilities, and modern concepts, which allows them to play a unique role in rural development. They demonstrate a strong entrepreneurial enthusiasm and practical ability in areas such as agricultural modernization, rural tourism, and e-commerce. In terms of employment, many college students choose to work in local agricultural enterprises, rural cooperatives, and local government agencies. The professional knowledge and modern management concepts they bring back have driven the transformation and upgrading of traditional agriculture in their areas [4]. For example, some college students actively introduce new technologies after returning home, developing smart agriculture and ecological agriculture to improve the quality and market competitiveness of agricultural products. Additionally, with the rapid development of rural e-commerce, many college students utilize their internet skills to establish online sales platforms, helping farmers sell their products directly to the market, shortening the circulation links, and increasing farmers' incomes. In terms of entrepreneurship, the projects of returning college students are diverse, covering agriculture, service industries, and cultural creativity. Many college students rely on local characteristic resources and combine their professional backgrounds to develop rural tourism, agricultural product processing, and specialty catering projects. For example, some students take advantage of their hometown's rich natural resources to open

farmhouses and bed-and-breakfasts, attracting urban tourists and boosting local economic development. However, despite their strong entrepreneurial enthusiasm, returning college students still face challenges in their entrepreneurial endeavors, including a shortage of funds, uncertain market demand, and insufficient experience. Surveys show that about 60% of college students returning to start businesses encounter difficulties with initial funding, while a lack of market information and experience puts them at a disadvantage in competition. In summary, the employment and entrepreneurship of returning college students inject new vitality into rural revitalization. However, the efforts of governments at all levels, social organizations, and educational institutions are needed to provide policy support, financial assistance, and skills training to help them overcome obstacles in the entrepreneurial process and achieve greater development potential [5].

3. Analysis of the Current Situation of College Students Returning to Employment and Entrepreneurship

3.1. Industry Choices and Employment Models for Returning Graduates

With the continuous advancement of the rural revitalization strategy, the employment industry choices for returning college students have gradually diversified, primarily focusing on various fields such as agriculture, services, and local government. Firstly, in the agricultural sector, an increasing number of college students are choosing to return home to participate in modern agricultural development. They drive the transformation and upgrading of traditional agriculture by introducing new technologies and ideas. For example, by utilizing intelligent equipment for precision agriculture, as well as developing ecological and organic farming, they enhance the quality and market competitiveness of agricultural products. According to relevant surveys, nearly 40% of returning college students have found suitable positions in agriculture, indicating the sector's attractiveness [6]. Secondly, the service industry is also an important choice for returning college students. In recent years, the rise of rural tourism has provided abundant employment opportunities for these students. Many returning graduates have established farm stays, bed-and-breakfasts, and rural experience activities to attract urban tourists with rural characteristics, thus driving local economic development. Additionally, with the rapid development of rural e-commerce, more college students are choosing to work on e-commerce platforms or start their own online stores, utilizing the internet to sell local specialty products nationwide, thereby shortening the distance between farmers and markets. In terms of employment models, the forms of employment for returning college students are also exhibiting a trend of diversification. In addition to traditional full-time jobs, many students are opting for flexible part-time work and freelance careers. With the rise of the sharing economy, some students utilize their professional skills to pursue self-employment, such as engaging in online education, photography, and design as freelancers. This type of employment not only increases their income levels but also allows them to find a better balance between work and life. However, despite the positive adaptability shown by returning college students in their choice of industries and employment models, they still face certain challenges. Many students struggle to find positions that match their abilities and interests due to a lack of market information and in-depth understanding of the rural economy. Furthermore, the relatively weak professional development environment and low salary levels in rural areas create confusion for some college students. Therefore, it is essential for the government, businesses, and society at large to support returning college students by creating better employment environments and development opportunities, thus facilitating their successful employment and career development [7].

3.2. Types and Development Trends of Entrepreneurial Activities

Driven by the rural revitalization strategy, the entrepreneurial activities of returning college students are rapidly increasing, with a growing diversity that mainly focuses on

agriculture, rural tourism, e-commerce, and cultural creativity. These entrepreneurial activities not only showcase the innovative thinking and practical abilities of college students but also inject new momentum into the development of the rural economy. Firstly, in the agricultural sector, many returning college students are choosing to engage in modern agricultural entrepreneurship, focusing on emerging business models such as ecological agriculture, organic farming, and smart agriculture. For example, by introducing precision agriculture technology and utilizing big data and Internet of Things (IoT) devices, students are able to improve agricultural production efficiency and optimize resource allocation. Additionally, some college students actively engage in deep processing of agricultural products, enhancing their added value and generating higher market returns. Recent data indicates a year-on-year increase in the number of college students participating in modern agricultural entrepreneurship, demonstrating the vast potential of this sector. Secondly, rural tourism, as an emerging industry, has become a popular choice for returning college students. Many students leverage the natural scenery and cultural resources of their hometowns to develop projects such as bed-and-breakfasts, farm stays, and rural experience activities, attracting urban tourists for leisure and vacation. These entrepreneurial projects not only enrich the product offerings of rural tourism but also enhance the visibility and attractiveness of rural areas. For instance, by providing local specialty foods, handicraft experiences, and cultural activities, entrepreneurs can enhance visitor engagement and satisfaction, thereby achieving sustainable economic benefits. The development of e-commerce has also provided new entrepreneurial opportunities for returning college students. Many students have established online stores leveraging internet platforms, directly selling local specialty products to consumers nationwide. This entrepreneurial model effectively breaks the constraints of traditional sales channels, enabling farmers to achieve higher profits. Moreover, the widespread use of social media allows returning college students to promote their brands online and quickly establish their market influence. In the cultural creativity sector, college students are actively exploring entrepreneurship projects centered around local culture, drawing on their professional knowledge and creative thinking. For example, some returning graduates utilize traditional craftsmanship to design and produce cultural and creative products with local characteristics, catering to the market's demand for personalized and cultural products. Such entrepreneurial activities not only promote the preservation and development of culture but also support the enhancement of rural cultural confidence. Despite the increasing diversity of entrepreneurial activities, returning college students still face numerous challenges during the entrepreneurial process, including funding shortages, intense market competition, and lack of experience. Therefore, the government and society must intensify support for college student entrepreneurship by providing funding, training, and market information services to help them overcome entrepreneurial obstacles and achieve greater developmental potential. With continuous policy support and social attention, the entrepreneurial activities of returning college students will thrive, injecting lasting momentum into rural revitalization [8].

3.3. Major Challenges and Difficulties Faced

Although returning college students demonstrate a positive attitude and potential in entrepreneurship and employment, they still face numerous challenges and difficulties in practice, which significantly affect their employment and entrepreneurial outcomes. Firstly, funding shortages are one of the most significant challenges faced by returning college students. Many students lack sufficient financial support when starting their businesses in their hometowns, often struggling to meet the basic needs for launching their projects. While the government has introduced various entrepreneurial support policies and funding subsidies, the cumbersome application procedures and high entry barriers make it difficult for many students to obtain the necessary funds. Furthermore, many students lack good credit records, making it hard to secure loans from banks or

financial institutions, further limiting their entrepreneurial opportunities. Secondly, the asymmetry of market information is another significant issue. Many returning college students lack a comprehensive understanding of market demand, consumer preferences, and industry development trends, which leads to difficulties in product development and marketing. Especially in emerging fields such as agriculture and e-commerce, the rapidly changing market environment requires entrepreneurs to possess strong market sensitivity and the ability to adjust quickly. However, many students find it challenging to accurately grasp market dynamics due to a lack of relevant market research experience, resulting in unclear product positioning and affecting their entrepreneurial effectiveness. Additionally, a lack of experience is a common challenge encountered by returning college students in both employment and entrepreneurship. Although they receive quality education in their schools, their lack of practical work experience makes them feel unprepared when facing real business environments. In terms of employment, many employers have high requirements for work experience, which places college students without internship experience at a disadvantage in the job market. In entrepreneurship, their deficiencies in areas such as business management, market expansion, and customer relationship maintenance hinder the sustainability of their entrepreneurial projects. Lastly, the lack of a social support system also restricts the career development of returning college students. While the government provides policy support, the actual social services and resource integration are still insufficient. Many rural areas lack well-established entrepreneurial incubators, training institutions, and industry associations, which means that returning college students lack the necessary guidance and assistance during their entrepreneurial journey [9]. Additionally, society's awareness and acceptance of college students returning to entrepreneurship vary, and some hold biases against rural entrepreneurship, which affects the confidence and morale of these entrepreneurs. In summary, the challenges faced by returning college students in their employment and entrepreneurial endeavors are multifaceted. It is imperative for the government, society, and relevant institutions to work collaboratively by providing financial support, market information, practical training, and a comprehensive social support system to help them overcome these difficulties and achieve better career development and entrepreneurial success. Only then can the positive role of returning college students in rural revitalization be fully realized, promoting the sustainable development of the rural economy.

4. Analysis of Countermeasures

4.1. Policy Support

To effectively promote college students' return to employment and entrepreneurship, the government should provide more comprehensive and targeted support at the policy level. This includes not only direct investment in funds and resources but also optimizing the policy environment to ensure that entrepreneurs can thrive in a conducive ecosystem. Firstly, improving the support mechanism for entrepreneurial funding is an important aspect of policy support. The government can establish special funds to offer interest-free loans, low-interest loans, and startup subsidies specifically for the entrepreneurial projects of returning college students. Such financial support can effectively reduce the initial funding pressure on entrepreneurship and help them successfully launch their projects. In addition, the government can also create entrepreneurial investment platforms to guide social capital into investing in the entrepreneurial projects of returning college students, forming diversified financing channels. Secondly, enhancing policy promotion and services is key to increasing the effectiveness of these policies. Many returning college students do not have sufficient knowledge of existing policies, making it difficult for them to access the support they need. The government should strengthen the promotion of entrepreneurial support policies, disseminating relevant information to students through multiple channels and establishing dedicated service agencies to provide them with entrepreneurial consulting, policy interpretation, and project evaluation services.

This will help raise college students' awareness and participation in entrepreneurship, allowing more individuals to benefit from policy support. Additionally, optimizing the entrepreneurial environment is also an important aspect of policy support. The government should actively improve the entrepreneurial environment by streamlining administrative approval processes, lowering entry barriers, and encouraging more college students to engage in rural entrepreneurship. Especially in rural areas, the government can establish entrepreneurial incubators and innovation bases to provide shared office spaces, equipment, and technical support for college students, promoting the sharing of knowledge and resources. Furthermore, a local entrepreneurial service network should be established to integrate various resources and provide comprehensive support for college students, including guidance in legal, financial, and marketing aspects. Finally, strengthening talent cultivation and training is a crucial part of policy support. The government can collaborate with higher education institutions and vocational training organizations to launch entrepreneurial training programs specifically for returning college students, helping them master essential business skills and market knowledge. Moreover, by offering internship and practical opportunities, students can accumulate experience in real entrepreneurial environments, enhancing their practical abilities and market adaptability. In summary, policy support plays an important role in promoting college students' return to employment and entrepreneurship. Through measures such as improving funding support mechanisms, enhancing policy promotion and services, optimizing the entrepreneurial environment, and strengthening talent cultivation, the government can create a better entrepreneurial atmosphere for college students, thereby promoting the sustainable development of the rural economy and supporting the implementation of the rural revitalization strategy [10].

4.2. Education and Training

In the process of promoting college students' return to employment and entrepreneurship, education and training play a crucial role. Through systematic education and practical training, returning college students can enhance their professional skills and entrepreneurial awareness, thereby better adapting to the needs of rural development. Firstly, strengthening entrepreneurial education is key to improving college students' entrepreneurial capabilities. Higher education institutions should add entrepreneurial-related courses to their curricula to cultivate students' innovative thinking and practical abilities. These courses can include topics such as entrepreneurial management, marketing, and financial management, helping students understand the basic knowledge and skills of entrepreneurship. Additionally, inviting successful entrepreneurs and industry experts to give lectures and share experiences allows students to learn from real cases, increasing their interest and confidence in entrepreneurship. Secondly, conducting vocational skills training is vital for enhancing college students' employment competitiveness. The government and vocational training institutions should develop targeted training programs based on local economic development needs, providing practical skills training for returning college students. These training programs can cover areas such as modern agricultural technology, e-commerce operations, and rural tourism management, enabling students to acquire professional skills that meet market demands. Furthermore, the training courses should be flexible and diverse, allowing for both in-person instruction and online learning through internet platforms, facilitating greater participation from college students. Moreover, providing internship and practical opportunities is an important way to enhance students' overall quality. Higher education institutions should establish close cooperative relationships with local governments and enterprises to create more internship positions and practical projects, allowing college students to gain experience in real working environments. By participating in projects related to rural revitalization, students can not only apply the knowledge they have learned in practice but also gain a deeper understanding of the current state and challenges of rural economic development,

laying a solid foundation for their future employment and entrepreneurship. Additionally, establishing a mentorship system for entrepreneurship is another significant way to enhance the entrepreneurial capabilities of returning college students. The government and higher education institutions can collaborate to invite successful entrepreneurs and industry experts to serve as mentors, providing one-on-one guidance and support for returning college students. This mentorship system can help students address practical issues they encounter during their entrepreneurial journey, offering valuable experience and advice, thus boosting their confidence and capabilities in entrepreneurship. In conclusion, education and training are foundational aspects of promoting college students' return to employment and entrepreneurship. By strengthening entrepreneurial education, conducting vocational skills training, providing internship opportunities, and establishing a mentorship system, returning college students can effectively enhance their professional quality and entrepreneurial abilities, thereby supporting their greater role in rural economic development and contributing to rural revitalization.

5. Conclusion

This paper discusses the current situation and challenges of college students returning to their hometown for employment and entrepreneurship under the background of rural revitalization, and analyzes the countermeasures such as policy support, education and training, innovation and cooperation. The research shows that despite the new development opportunities brought by college students returning home to start their own businesses, they still face many difficulties in terms of capital, market information, and lack of experience. In order to promote the smooth development of this group, the government needs to increase policy support, improve the funding system, and provide vocational training and entrepreneurial guidance. At the same time, encourage multi-party cooperation and innovation, promote resource sharing, so as to create a good entrepreneurial environment. Through these measures, it can effectively improve the employment and entrepreneurial ability of college students, help the realization of rural revitalization strategy, and promote the sustainable development of rural economy.

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