

The new characteristics of the new generation of migrant workers in China

zhang Fujian

(School of Economics, Anyang Normal University, Henan Anyang 455000)

Abstract: *After the reform and opening up, rural labor began to work in cities. Over time, the contingent of migrant workers in China has undergone generational differentiation, and the new generation of migrant workers has gradually become the main force. Compared with the first generation of migrant workers, the new generation of migrant workers has shown new characteristics in terms of values, social cognition, behavior, and future vision.*

Key words: *Intergenerational differentiation; new generation of migrant workers; new characteristics*

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With the process of China's reform and opening up, rural laborers began to work in cities, which has been going on for more than 40 years. A large number of rural laborers left the land and entered the factories, forming a labor force with Chinese characteristics—migrant workers. Migrant workers are laborers who have rural household registration but work in cities and towns. They are a special identification mark under the traditional Chinese household registration system. Migrant workers are the main body of China's industrial workers and an important force in the construction of industrialization and modernization. With the introduction of the concept of the "new generation of rural migrants", many scholars have agreed that the contingent of migrant workers in China has undergone generational differentiation, that is, the two generations of migrant workers are born before and after 1980 as the dividing point. The first generation of migrant workers refers to migrant workers who were born before 1980 and began to flow from agriculture and rural areas to work in cities in the 1980s and 1990s; the second generation of migrant workers refers to those who were born after 1980 and began to work in the late 1990s. Migrant workers working in cities. At present, the new generation of migrant workers account for 51.5% of the total migrant workers, and they are an important force in China's current economic and social development. Compared with the first generation of migrant workers, the social environment and cultural background of the growth of the new generation of migrant workers have undergone tremendous changes. They have shown new characteristics in terms of values, social cognition, behavior, and future vision.

1. The basic characteristics of the individual

The new generation of migrant workers are young. Among the new generation of migrant workers, "post-80s" accounted for 50.4%; "post-90s" accounted for 43.2%; "post-00s" accounted for 6.4%. The new generation of migrant workers are younger when they first go out to work. A survey shows that in the Pearl River Delta, the average age of the first generation of migrant workers for the first time is 26 years old, while among the new generation of migrant workers, the average age of those born in the 1980s is 18. Years old, the post-90s generation is only 16 years old on average, which basically means that many new-generation migrant workers have embarked on the road of migrant workers as soon as they left the middle or high school gates.

The new generation of migrant workers have a relatively high level of education. With the popularization of nine-year compulsory education in rural areas, most of the new generation of migrant workers have received middle school education, and some have college or higher vocational education. The proportion of the new generation of migrant workers with a high school education or above is 67.2%, which is 18.2% higher than that of the first generation of migrant workers. The proportions of those with technical secondary school (technical, vocational high school), junior college (or higher vocational), undergraduate and above education experience are 1.6 times, 2 times and 2.3 times that of the first generation of migrant workers, respectively.

The growth experience of the new generation of migrant workers converges to that of their urban peers. From the perspective of growth experience, the new generation of migrant workers has not experienced the process of change from rural to urban as their parents did, and they are more similar to their urban peers. Most of the new generation of migrant workers have no real farming experience, and it is difficult to find traces of migrant workers except for their rural household registration. They moved to the city with their parents since childhood, or went to work in the city as soon as they graduated from the countryside. The urban life experience filled them with

urban knowledge rather than rural knowledge. According to statistics, 89.4% of the new generation of migrant workers basically do not know how to work in farming, and 37.9% of the new generation of migrant workers have never worked.

2. Employment status

From the perspective of employment concepts, the new generation of migrant workers have higher employment expectations. Compared with the first generation of migrant workers who went out to work to earn money to support their families, the purpose of the new generation of migrant workers has extended to the spiritual level. Their purpose of going out is to "experience life and realize their dreams." Data shows that up to 71.4% of the new generation of migrant workers are employed for the purpose of "seeing the world, learning skills, and exercising themselves." This shows that the new generation of migrant workers are more confident and optimistic, full of longings and expectations for work and life. The new generation of migrant workers is eager to "live more colorfully." They also have higher pursuits, hoping to enjoy urban life on an equal footing, and eventually take root in the city.

From the perspective of employment channels, the new generation of migrant workers have shown a diversified trend in their job-hunting channels. Due to the improvement of cultural level and changes in employment concepts, the employment channels of the new generation of migrant workers are more flexible and diverse. Unlike the first generation of migrant workers who mainly find jobs through the introduction of fellow villagers, the new generation of migrant workers mainly rely on market-oriented means to choose jobs and use the labor market and other formalities. Finding jobs through channels has become a new feature. According to statistics, only 15% of the new generation of migrant workers find jobs through acquaintances, while others find jobs through the Internet, newspapers, and job fairs.

From the perspective of employment choices, the new generation of migrant workers has a clear industry preference for employment. Compared with the first generation of migrant workers, the new generation of migrant workers is more inclined to work in industries with better working conditions and employment conditions, and is unwilling to engage in jobs that are "dirty, bitter, and tired", faceless, and hopeless. Therefore, the industry distribution of the new generation of migrant workers shows a downward trend in the construction industry and an upward trend in the manufacturing and service industries. As a model of "dirty, hard and tired" jobs, the construction industry continues to be less attractive to the new generation of migrant workers. The "aging" of construction workers has become a common phenomenon. Among the workers, only 30% of the "post-80s," "post-90s," and "post-00s" new generations of migrant workers, workers between the ages of 40-50 account for half of the country.

From the perspective of employment stability, the "short-term employment" phenomenon of the new generation of migrant workers is more prominent. "Short-term labor" has become a very common phenomenon in the employment of migrant workers, which is mainly manifested in the short duration of work and high mobility. Moreover, the younger the age, the more frequent job changes, and the new generation of migrant workers, who are the main body of migrant workers, the "short-term employment" problem becomes more prominent. Compared with the first generation of migrant workers, the average duration of the first, last and each job of the new generation of migrant workers has been reduced from 4.6 years to 1.7 years, 4.0 years to 1.5 years, and 4.2 years to 1.5 years, respectively. . The reason for this is that "short-term labor" is a fierce game between the higher expectations of the new generation of migrant workers and the limited working conditions and returns that enterprises can provide. It is inevitable.

3. Urban living conditions

In terms of economic income. Theoretically speaking, the new generation of migrant workers have long years of education and relatively high human capital, and should have a higher wage level than the older generation. However, the survey results show that the income level of the new generation of migrant workers is generally lower than that of the first generation. A generation of migrant workers. There are many reasons: the new generation of migrant workers have short working hours and are not as proficient as the older generation of migrant workers; the new generation of migrant workers have frequent job changes and high mobility, which is not conducive to their skill reserves; industry income differences are obvious, and the new generation of farmers Mainly concentrated in the manufacturing industry, and the first generation of migrant workers engaged in the construction industry, on the whole, the income of the construction industry is higher than that of the manufacturing industry.

In terms of living conditions. The housing problem of the new generation of migrant workers mainly depends on their own leasing and the unified provision of dormitories by the unit. Among them, "own lease" accounted for 57.5%, the unit provided unified dormitories accounted for 30.4%, and 12.5% lived with relatives or friends. The data shows that among the new generation of migrant workers who rent houses by themselves, the proportion of independent rental houses is relatively low, accounting for only 25.6%, while the proportion of

co-renting houses with others is relatively high, accounting for 74.4%, and there is generally a small living area, poor living environment and poor supporting facilities. It is not difficult to find that the housing problem has become an important constraint on the citizenization of the new generation of migrant workers.

In terms of spiritual life. Compared with the first generation of migrant workers, the spiritual and cultural life of the new generation of migrant workers has obviously added a lot of new elements, but on the whole, the spiritual and cultural life of the new generation of migrant workers is poorer and the way is simpler. The survey shows that most units do not provide cultural and sports venues for employees, let alone organize some cultural and artistic activities for employees. In their leisure time, surfing the Internet and watching TV have become the main leisure activities of the new generation of migrant workers. The average number of visits to Internet cafes per month is 5, spending on movie theaters, parks, performances, competitions, training, buying books and magazines, or participating in activities. The frequency is very small, of which only 7.1% have participated in the adult self-examination or training. It can be seen that in the context of increasingly diverse value orientations, the new generation of migrant workers lack a positive and upward atmosphere orientation at the spiritual and cultural level, presenting a confused state of no sense of belonging to the city and no sense of responsibility to the society.

4. Status status

Due to the different growth environment of the new generation of migrant workers, in terms of social identity, they tend to be urbanites themselves. The purpose of the first generation of migrant workers entering the city for employment was to earn money to support their families, and they regarded themselves as urban travelers, and most of them identified themselves as farmers. The new generation of migrant workers is more than that. Although they are still suffering from social exclusion and discrimination from all aspects in the city, their growth environment and educational level are different from those of the first generation of migrant workers. City life, identify with city life. A survey shows that only 32.3% of the new generation of migrant workers think they are "farmers", which is 22.5 percentage points lower than the first generation of migrant workers. It can be seen that the new generation of migrant workers agree with the work style and living habits of the city, resulting in a strong tendency to live in the city.

The new generation of migrant workers has taken the lead in integrating into the city in terms of social identity and lifestyle. Most of them have realized "citizenization in thought" and "citizenization in action", and generally believe that they have "integrated into city life." However, restricted by the dual urban-rural system, the status of "migrant workers" puts them in the sandwich layer of society, floating between the city and the countryside, and still faces obvious obstacles such as social security, children's education, and housing in the process of "citizenization", and hidden obstacles such as employment discrimination, marriage, and making friends. These series of institutional and non-institutional barriers make it difficult for them to communicate and integrate with other groups. Although they have civicized themselves ideologically, they still lack a general sense of trust and responsibility in the city.

This social reality also makes the self-development of the new generation of migrant workers appear contradictory. In planning for the future of personal development, the new generation of migrant workers has always hesitated between the city and the countryside, falling into a dilemma. They have more desire and attachment to urban life. Their purpose of entering the city to work is not simply to increase their income. They hope to finally settle down in the city and become a member of the urban society. However, in the real society, the urban society's various exclusions and discriminations against them have made their urban dreams elusive and hopeless. The high threshold of urban household registration and the continuous increase of urban living costs have caused the new generation of migrant workers to face the dilemma of whether to stay in the city.

In terms of social interactions, they are unable to integrate into the urban social circle in a short period of time. They are particularly dependent on nostalgia, family affection and friendship. Most of them attach importance to the traditional "township" relationship and often participate in gathering activities. The scope of social interaction is limited to a small area. Within the homogeneous group of migrant workers, there is a lack of interaction and dialogue with urban citizens, which objectively forms a state of social isolation.

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