

PREPARING MIGRANT WORKERS FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP: A REVIEW OF SOCIAL NETWORK AND SELF-EFFICACY

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Abstract:

The entrepreneurship of migrant workers is one of the important ways to achieve the strategic goal of rural revitalization in China and the Chinese Government have introduced a series of supporting policies to implement innovation and entrepreneurship in rural areas. Based on the background of the study, important research questions are raised: what is the purpose of migrant workers' entrepreneurship? What role do social networks and self-efficacy have on their entrepreneurial intention? In order to prepare migrant workers for entrepreneurship, this study collated the research through literature review and found that migrant workers' social network and self-efficacy play an important role in the formation of entrepreneurial intentions. Suggestions, such as entrepreneurship training courses provided free of charge to migrant workers are made to enhance their entrepreneurial intentions and thus enable them to transfer their intentions into behaviour.

Keywords: social network, self-efficacy, migrant workers' entrepreneurial intention

Introduction

Living a rich life is the fundamental strategy of rural revitalization, which is highly consistent with the goal of farmers' entrepreneurship. The successful entrepreneurship of farmers will not only make them rich, but also lead more farmers to become rich. Therefore, the entrepreneurship of farmers is one of the important ways to achieve the strategic goal of rural revitalization.

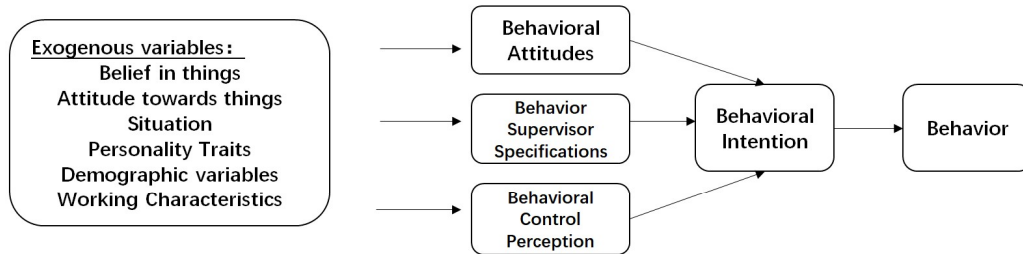
In December 2022, the report of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) pointed out that it is necessary to comprehensively promote the revitalization of the countryside, accelerate the construction of an agricultural powerhouse, and solidly promote the revitalization of rural industries, talents, culture, ecology and organizations. In previous 2021, China Central Document No. 1 (CCD), issued by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, which was the 18th CCD No. 1 in the 21st century to guide the work of the 'Three Rural Areas'. With the migrant workers, which are also called new farmers in China,

along with new thinking, new industries and other new industries back to agriculture and rural areas, it also further stimulates the development speed and modernization process of China's agriculture and rural areas, which is beneficial to agricultural enterprises and entrepreneurs in the field of agriculture.

Entrepreneurial Intention

Review of TPB

The Planned Behaviour Theory (TPB) was developed by Icek Ajzen(1985) as a theory that can effectively help people to quickly understand and change their own behaviour patterns. TPB assumes that human behaviour is the result of deliberate planning. TPB analyses the process by which behaviour is formed: firstly, behavioral intentions determine behaviour; secondly, behavioral intentions are influenced by three endogenous psychological factors - attitudes, subjective norms and control perceptions - that act together or in part on the final decision making (Yan, 2014). Therefore, it is found that behavioral intention is an important variable to predict the decision making behavior of the actor. At the same time, TPB believes that non-self-willed control elements, including their own individual differences, personal abilities, self-confidence and other intrinsic factors as well as external factors such as opportunities, time, policies and contacts, can also influence individual behaviour. The specific analysis process is shown in the figure.



The Planned behavior model

Figure 1. TPB Model

The connotation of migrant workers' entrepreneurial intention

Entrepreneurial intention is a visual representation of the subjective attitudes of potential entrepreneurs towards entrepreneurial activities, and can effectively predict the probability of entrepreneurial behaviour. Existing research has focused on three aspects of migrant workers' entrepreneurial intentions: Firstly, individual characteristics-based research on migrant workers' entrepreneurial intentions, which shows that external individual characteristics such as

age, marital status, risk attitude and education level have significant effects on migrant workers' entrepreneurial intentions, with age having a weakening effect on entrepreneurial intentions and other factors having positive effects of varying significance (Zhu & Kang, 2013). In addition, family size, income status and entrepreneurial experience also have an impact on entrepreneurial intention (Huang et al., 2014). Sun et al. (2013) made a simple distinction between entrepreneurial self-efficacy and found that the strongest influence on migrant workers' entrepreneurial motivation was opportunity recognition efficacy, while among entrepreneurial resources; financial resources had the strongest influence on migrant workers' entrepreneurial motivation. Secondly, the study of migrant workers' entrepreneurial intentions based on the social environment shows that compared to the average entrepreneur, migrant workers' perceptions of the social environment such as policy, government support, economic environment and market environment are weaker, while their perceptions of successful cases of entrepreneurship around role model power are stronger. In particular, successful examples of entrepreneurship from friends and relatives can effectively stimulate the willingness to start a business, thus boosting migrant workers' confidence in entrepreneurship (Jiang & Guo, 2012). Thirdly, Chiang & Ma (2017) proposed a study of migrant workers' entrepreneurial intentions based on regional differences, as China is a vast country with differences in economic development and cultural practices between different regions. The study found that the entrepreneurial intentions of migrant workers in ethnic minority regions such as Xinjiang are mainly influenced by marital status, language and culture, family income, government policies and training. For migrant workers in developed coastal regions such as Guangdong Province, their motivations to start a business are mostly rooted in survival needs, self-fulfilment and solving employment (Luo et al., 2012).

Migrant workers' entrepreneurial behaviour is influenced by their entrepreneurial intentions, and subjective norms shaped by their attitudes towards investment, financing and risk management behaviour, perceived behavioral control and perceptions of support and pressure in the external environment (Su & Kong, 2019).

Implications of TPB as a guide to migrant workers' entrepreneurship

Ajzen's TPB suggests that attitudes, perceived behavioral control, and social norms influence entrepreneurial intention. Zaremohzzabieh et al. (2019) proposed the application of the TPB model to the formation of intentions for social-entrepreneurship, stating that social capital could influence social-entrepreneurial intention through perceived behavioral control.

Migrant workers play many roles in the development of the market economy, such as producers, decision-makers and consumers. As economic agents, migrant workers aim to gain more benefits in the market economy to improve their living standards. In order to analyse the behaviour of migrant workers in a comprehensive manner, the influence of psycho-social factors on the behaviour of migrant workers must also be taken into account. TPB, which is widely accepted in

the field of social psychology, is of great importance in sorting out the internal logic of migrant workers' behaviour and in complementing it with an explanation of their economic choices.

As mentioned earlier, in the process of fully applying TPB to the analysis of migrant workers' decision-making behaviour, the three endogenous factors that determine people's behaviour in TPB, namely people's attitudes, subjective norms and control cognition, are combined with the individual characteristics of the farmers under analysis, so that the expectations of migrant workers' behavioral decisions can be fully analyzed and the mechanisms behind their behaviour can be explored.

In summary, migrant workers' attitudes are the most important determinants of their behaviour; migrant workers subjective norms are the external pressures they are subjected to in the course of carrying out a certain behaviour, so that their willingness to act is influenced by the opinions of their friends and family, etc.; migrant workers control perceptions explain their perceptions of the ease or difficulty of the behaviour to be carried out, including their subjective perceptions of the various parts of the behavioral process (goods, social, time, place, risk, etc.). These perceptions are also key factors influencing migrant workers' behaviour.

Determinants of Migrant Workers' Entrepreneurial Intentions

The impact of social networks

1 The connotation of social networks

An entrepreneur's social network is essentially the structure of a network of social relationships external to the entrepreneur's business (Wang & Yan, 2019), and the interactions between the entrepreneur and the members of his or her social network subtly influence the entrepreneur's behaviour. The concept of social network was first introduced by Bourdieu (1986) in France, who argued that a social network is a collection of actual or potential resources that are associated with an enduring network of mutual acquiescence or recognition of relationships.

Social networks, as important social capital, can significantly increase individual income, alleviate household poverty, and reduce consumption inequality (Yang et al., 2022), at the same time, social networks, as informal social insurance systems, help to transfer information among residents, facilitate the establishment of risk-sharing networks, and promote household participation in financial markets (Wei et al., 2018). Due to the 'demonstration effect' and 'Matthew effect' of social networks, the more resources individuals have in social networks, the more they can significantly improve the ability of families to access information (Jia & He, 2020).

2 The scope of social networks

The category of social networks covers both the natural extension of kinship ties within families and between generations and the networks of personal relationships formed through one's own efforts, which can be summarized in the following four categories.

First, clan networks, as a type of social network, clan networks can help their internal members to protect themselves against negative shocks and act as social insurance (Guo & Yao, 2013). Within the clan network, migrant workers are able to access information and spread risks more easily. Second, paternal endowment, rural Chinese households suffer from an inter generational low-income transmission trap (Hao & Guo, 2019) and educational transmission is also persistent across multiple generations; in general, the higher the educational attainment of parents, the greater the positive impact on the education of their offspring (Zou & Ma, 2019). Thus, paternal income status and human capital become important factors influencing offspring endowment and social networks. Third, external identity. External identity is not only a symbol of social identity and social networks, but can also help individuals to gain greater access to knowledge and information, which can play an important role in promoting employment and income growth. Fourth, the local socioeconomic status of the migrant workers. An increase in socioeconomic status not only brings psychological satisfaction but also helps the migrant workers to gain more material or non-material benefits.

3 Social networks of migrant worker entrepreneurs

One is a ‘near network’ based on kinship and blood, while the other is a ‘far network’ based on the social environment and between groups.

Strong relational social capital significantly strengthens the relationship between family embedded in diversity and shared family business experience and farmer performance (Li & Liu, 2018), with family networks providing access to resources and emotional support, but too much family dependence is detrimental to small business development (Zhang et al., 2018). Paternal social capital plays an important role in children's choice of entrepreneurship and type of business, while the effect of human resources is not significant. Scholars therefore argue that to promote entrepreneurship among migrant workers, it is important to encourage and support the return of working children to the city and to give more weight to entrepreneurial inheritance (Luo et al., 2013). Migrant workers are generally influenced by the 'family' culture and local sentiment, and are more likely to choose the family governance model and to engage in agriculture-related businesses. However, at this stage, migrant worker entrepreneurs do not show an advantage in modern agricultural entrepreneurship, which is a matter of concern (Gui, 2013).

In addition to ‘proximity networks’, the power of role models in complex social networks can influence migrant workers' entrepreneurial decisions, and the support of social networks can help increase the likelihood of entrepreneurial activity and make it more likely that migrant workers with management and industry experience will identify entrepreneurial opportunities (Jiang, et al., 2013). Due to the uncertainty of the market environment, migrant workers cooperatives are an important form of their entrepreneurship, and collective entrepreneurship is a rational choice (Deng, 2010). The social networks of migrant workers' entrepreneurship are mostly in the form of informal contracts, which increase in uncertainty and risk as they become more embedded, and when they eventually evolve into path dependencies, they are not conducive to the long-term

development of migrant workers' entrepreneurship (Zhang et al., 2017). In addition to this, off-site entrepreneurship is a form of resource network integration. Therefore, relocation entrepreneurship has better performance than local entrepreneurship, especially in coastal areas where differences in cultural values are conducive to entrepreneurial performance (Yang, et al., 2019).

4 The impact of social networks on migrant worker entrepreneurship

The impact of self-efficacy

1 The connotation of self-efficacy

Self-efficacy is the academic term for a person's ability to perform a target behaviour, which is based on an individual's self-perception of his or her own skills and abilities, and represents an individual's confidence in his or her ability to perform a given task (Bandura, 1983). Individuals with a high sense of self-efficacy remain calm and collected even in the face of challenging circumstances, and are resilient even in the face of difficulty and failure (Brändle et al., 2018), while low self-efficacy can lead to self-perception disorders and emotional dysregulation (Sotre et al., 2018).

2 Self-efficacy of migrant worker entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurial self-efficacy is a concept that measures an entrepreneur's confidence in his or her ability to succeed in business (Zhang, 2023), it plays very important role in migrant workers' entrepreneurship. On one hand, it helps migrant workers to maintain a vision for the future, be confident, and their leadership skills are stronger (Gao et al., 2015), which is one of the necessary factors influencing the success of entrepreneurship. On the other hand, migrant workers with high self-efficacy believe they can independently develop plans for new tasks (Korsching et al., 2001), increasing their ability to adjust their business plans. Entrepreneurial self-efficacy measures the extent to which entrepreneurs perceive themselves to be capable of successfully organizing and executing tasks, which mainly consist of activities critical to innovation such as opportunity identification and resource mobilization. As an important positive psychological factor for migrant workers, it is implicit and often manifests itself through certain activities or behaviors in a certain situation (Zhang, 2023). For example, in the early stages of entrepreneurship migrant workers are confident and hopeful about the future, and those with a high sense of self-efficacy are able to cope with such challenges in the face of rapid technological iteration and environmental uncertainty. Migrant workers with high self-efficacy tend to set challenging goals and will persist in accomplishing them in the face of difficulties and pressure, and will recover quickly from failure and persist in accomplishing their goals. Therefore, those who have a strong belief in their own abilities, i.e., high entrepreneurial self-efficacy, will put in more effort when faced with difficulties in the process of starting their own business or challenges in an uncertain future. In short, migrant workers who do not have sufficient self-efficacy are unlikely to be sufficiently motivated to engage in the entrepreneurial process.

3 The impact of self-efficacy on migrant workers' entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurial intention is the degree to which an individual believes in his or her future entrepreneurship and has a guiding role in entrepreneurial behavior (Shen, 2021). Migrant workers' entrepreneurship is a complex process and the level of their entrepreneurial intentions, the generations of their behaviors depend on the migrant workers' own abilities compared to the expected income from their business (Su & Kong, 2020), they are more inclined to start a business when their expected income from entrepreneurship is higher than their current income.

Self-efficacy is at the heart of the TPB model and represents the perceived desirability of performing a particular behaviour. It refers to an individual's willingness to start a business. The entrepreneurial intention model was one of the first models to predict the willingness to start a business, while TPB is widely used as a theory of reference framework for explaining and predicting behavioral intentions in different research contexts.

In terms of internal individual characteristics, studies have focused on the perceived entrepreneurial self-efficacy of migrant worker entrepreneurs. It was found that perceived entrepreneurial self-efficacy has a transmissive effect on migrant workers' entrepreneurial intentions, while the social environment changes migrant workers' perceptions of entrepreneurial awareness, perceptions and management styles (Peng et al., 2011). Studies have shown the positive and significant effect of self-efficacy on entrepreneurial intention. Jiang (2018) found that migrant workers' entrepreneurial intentions become more pronounced as a result of increased entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Research in this area has consistently emphasized the importance of self-efficacy as a key determinant of human agency, and that those who have a high level of self-efficacy for a task are more likely to pursue and persist in that task. Deng(2022) used a questionnaire for 284 returning entrepreneurs in China and found that self-efficacy partially mediates the effect of pro-social motivation on entrepreneurial well-being. Zhang(2023) collected 665 samples of entrepreneurship training for family farmers based on social cognitive theory, a significant chain-mediated effect of self-efficacy was found between entrepreneurship training and sustainable entrepreneurial intention.

Conclusion

Rural migrant workers can improve their individual entrepreneurial resilience through entrepreneurship training. The main body of rural entrepreneurship in the process of entrepreneurship should always maintain the learning state, and strive to be a learning entrepreneur, through entrepreneurial training and other ways to improve the entrepreneurial skills of migrant worker entrepreneurs, risk identification, entrepreneurial cognitive level and entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and ultimately enhance the entrepreneurial resilience of rural entrepreneurs.

Migrant worker entrepreneurs should focus on improving their self-efficacy. Research has shown that entrepreneurial self-efficacy is a learning competency and that a person's self-efficacy may

increase through observation, mentoring, prior experience, training and education. In other words, individuals can increase their level of entrepreneurial self-efficacy by actively participating in entrepreneurial training, engaging in innovation, and other activities.

The government should co-ordinate policy resources and optimize the business environment to make the entrepreneurial environment more secure and sustainable. More importantly, the government should also increase its efforts to reduce bureaucracy and taxes, improve infrastructure and promote entrepreneurial behaviour among migrant workers. Third, the government should strengthen the support and assistance of entrepreneurship policies. Promote a change in the way entrepreneurs are helped, from mainly financial support to a multidimensional support mechanism. Establish a systematic way to promote entrepreneurial incubation, for example, you can set up an entrepreneurial learning network for entrepreneurs to take the initiative to learn, and enhance migrant workers' self-efficacy through learning, study tours and exchanges.

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