

## On the Improvement of Human Capital in the Process of Citizenization Of Migrant Workers “Second-generation Immigrants”

Yang Wei

China West Normal University,  
Nanchong, Sichuan  
Email: [yangweiandorange@163.com](mailto:yangweiandorange@163.com)

### Abstract

*Human capital improvement is helpful to strengthen the employment competitiveness, alleviate “marginalized” status, enhance the sense of belonging and identity and promote the degree of citizenization of the second generation immigrants of migrant workers. This paper analyzes the human capital dilemma of citizenization of migrant workers’ second-generation immigrants. On the basis of these analyses, the paper puts forward suggestions including strengthening rural basic education to enhance human capital stock and enhancing vocational skills training to enrich migrant workers’ human capital accumulation. It is hopeful that these suggestions can be helpful to promote the upgrading of citizenization of human capital and to complete the role reversal of migrants to the urban citizens.*

**Key words:** the second-generation immigrants of migrant workers, citizenization, human capital, thinking

The theory of “human capital” was first put forward by American economist Joseph Leonard Walsh in 1935, and perfected by American economist Theodore W. Schultz. Human capital is embodied in the workers who, through investment by the workers to form the knowledge, skills, and physical (health) posed by the capital to labor. [1]It can be said that human capital can be measured by workers’ quality and skills. In other words, human capital of the second-generation immigrants of migrant workers includes education, health, professional skills work experience and so on, and the core content is education and professional

skills, which are the decisive elements of the survival ability, employment ability and development ability of the second-generation immigrants of migrant workers. “The citizenization of the second generation of migrant workers” refers to the process in which the second generation of migrant worker who enter into cities can gradually integrate into the city in the aspects of occupation, geography, identity, ideas, habits and behavior in order to achieve the transformation of the role of the public in the process of industrialization and urbanization. “The second generation of migrant workers” in this paper refers to migrant workers who were born after 1980s specifically. Due to lack of human capital, these workers are less competitive in employment. Consequently, they tend to be “marginalized” in the process of urbanization.

## **1. Enhancing human capital is conducive to improving the degree of citizenization of the second-generation of migrant workers**

1.1 Enhancing human capital can help to improve the competitiveness of the second-generation of migrant workers. Enhancing human capital is helpful to improve the competitiveness of the second-generation of migrant workers, expand career choice and obtain higher income. Conversely, without enhancing human capital, migrant workers may lose their jobs in the fierce competition due to lower cultural quality and lower vocational skills. They can only engage in simple and heavy manual labor, and will not change the status of “marginalization”.

1.2 Enhancing human capital can help to alleviate the “marginalized” status of the second-generation of migrant workers. Enhancing human capital is helpful for migrant workers to face the changes in the social environment, create an independent and healthy personality, and to improve their level of socialization. Continuous education and guide can make migrant workers release and resolve negative emotions, accept and internalize of new social norms, and keep optimistic attitude towards life and work, so they can integrate into the life of cities and alleviate the “marginalized” status.

1.3 Enhancing human capital can help to strengthen migrant workers’ sense of identity and belonging. Enhancing human capital can promote cultural level, professional skills of the second generation of migrant workers in order to better meet the needs of economic and social development. At a result, they can get employment and income. Consequently, economic pressure and psychological confusion can be reduced gradually. At the same time, they can continue to achieve their aspirations, and enhance their sense of identity and belonging to promote the citizenization of migrant workers of the second generation immigrants.

## **2. The analysis of the human capital dilemma and its reasons of the second-generation of migrant workers**

2.1 Lower stock of human capital blocks the citizenization of the second-generation of migrant workers. Human capital stock generally refers to capital content accumulated by school education and accumulated, including knowledge, skills, health, and among which, the most important is intellectual capital. Compared with the previous generation of migrant workers, the second-generation immigrants of migrant workers’ education levels have been higher. But compared with urban youth labor force, they are in a status of lower education level, insufficient stock and low quality. The figures from National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) show that the second-generation migrant workers with education below junior high school (secondary

education) account for only 12.4%, with junior high school education account for as much as 61.6%, with high school 16.7%, with college and higher education account for 9.3%.[2] It can clearly be seen that the education of the second-generation migrant workers is at a low level, with the vast majority receiving only junior high school education. What's more, the human capital stock is also at a low status. It should be noted that the overall education level of the second-generation migrant workers is low, and the stock of human capital is not high. The education level of the second generations of migrant workers is far from reaching the market requirements. And the low stock human capital has become a major obstacle to hinder them from job-hunting in the city or completing the process of citizenization. There are many factors causing this situation, among which the most important is the unfair distribution of educational resources leading to rural basic education in a backward state, thus affecting the overall cultural level of the generation of migrant workers. The distribution of expenditures on education shows that the country pays more attention to the higher education. In that case, the majority of government finance is used for higher education. And the distribution of expenditures on education between urban and rural areas shows that the country attaches more importance to rural education. The investment in rural education is unable to meet the needs of rural compulsory education. Accordingly, the teaching conditions and teachers' professional level are unable to meet the actual needs of rural education. Accordingly, the teaching conditions and teachers' professional level are unable to meet the actual needs of rural education. All these factors lead to the overall low educational level of the second-generation immigrants of migrant workers, and reduce their work ability. And they are not favorable to the process of citizenization.

2.2 Insufficient human capital accumulation has slowed the process of citizenization. Human capital accumulation refers to the accumulation obtained by later human capital investment such as participation in vocational skills training on the basis of human capital stock. When the second generation of migrant workers enters the city after school education, their human capital accumulation is mainly carried out by taking part in various vocational skill training. Some certain kind of vocational skill training is beneficial to their professional competence as well as to completing the conversion from migrant workers to urban citizens as soon as possible. The migrant workers who have accepted vocational skill training is increasing, however, as a whole, the numbers are small. The statistics from NBS shows that in 2014, 34.8% of migrant workers participated in skill training, a rise of 2.1 percent over the previous year. Among them, 32% accepted non-agricultural vocational skills training, a rise of 1.1 percent over the year of 2013. And 36.4% of male workers have involved in agricultural and non-agricultural vocational skills training, while female workers account for 31.4%. [3] From the perspective of age, the proportion of migrant workers to receive training in each age group improves to some extent. There are some reasons for this situation. On one hand, vocational skills training programs are not targeted or with high quality. There is no obvious relevance between training programs and actual production. Furthermore, the quality of training institutions varies unevenly. Some are lack of appropriate training equipments, with weak targeted vocational training materials and curriculum and inflexible training methods, training time and training location. On the other hand, vocational skill training has been unable to meet the needs of the citizenization of migrant workers. Education and training about labor safety and professional skill are urgent needs for the second-generation immigrants of migrant workers. However, little counseling and training about labor disputes, protection of legal rights, career development and guidance, psychological stress are provided. What's more, as part of the

second generation of migrant workers are limited to professional development and orientation, they are unwilling to participate in vocational skills training. Combined with training fees, this part of migrant workers even abandons human capital investment.

### **3. Suggestions on promoting the degree of citizenization of the second generation of migrant workers**

3.1 Strengthening rural basic education to enhance the human capital stock of the second-generation immigrants of migrant workers. For the second-generation immigrants of migrant workers, the rural basic education they receive is the primary way to obtain their human capital. More importantly, for the future migrant workers, there is a direct link between their education situation and cultural quality. This is the foundation for migrant workers to enhance their own human capital. Therefore, more importance must be attached to the basic education in rural areas. First of all, the government should increase investment in rural basic education. The government should raise the proportion of the funds for rural education in the national education funds to make up the deficiency of the rural basic education funds. The implementation of earmarked funds can make up the funding gap of formal basic education in rural areas, which can increase the stock of human capital in rural areas, and lay the initial foundation of the citizenization of the second-generation immigrants of migrant workers. Meanwhile, the government should actively improve rural education environment, and promote rural school conditions, in order to make a better educational environment in rural areas. Timely and full payment of teachers' salaries should be ensured, and then the pay and treatment should be gradually increased. Second, the quality of basic education in rural areas should be improved. Adjust and optimize the structure of teachers in rural areas according to the actual situation of the local rural, strengthen teachers training and assessment, constantly update their concepts of education, and improve teaching methods, professional quality and teaching ability. Third, continue to broaden the investment channels of education in rural areas, and actively encourage and guide the community from the capital to participate in the education of construction in the past, and gradually formed diversified school running structures.

3.2 Strengthening vocational skills training to enrich the human capital accumulation of the second-generation immigrants of migrant workers. On the one hand, we should improve the government-led urban-rural labor training system. We should deepen the development of rural vocational and technical education connected with compulsory education in rural vocational education, focusing on building a number of key rural vocational schools and adult cultural and technical training schools. And strengthen the construction of vocational teachers, teaching materials, and training base in rural areas. Also encourage all kinds of social educational and training institutions to undertake the task of rural vocational training, and carry out various forms of vocational education and technical training activities. These intensive measures enable migrant workers to accept certain career guidance before entering the city. What's more, they can understand the country's labor laws and regulations, the employment situation, the policy, the job hunting skills through these measures. In that case, they can own clear career orientation and development goals, and develop a practical career planning, so that they can enhance the competitiveness in the labor market. On the other hand, design the training content reasonably according to market demand, to ensure that vocational skills training market is consistent with the demands of enterprises and increase the employment rate after training. At the same time, greatly support employing units to establish stable labor training base in the labor

output and develop order-oriented training. Compiling teaching materials and teacher training are encouraged. In addition, the second generation of migrant workers themselves should make adequate preparations. After setting career goals, they should invest in their own human capital in a planned way to ensure their human capital more suitable for the future needs of the labor market and to achieve successful employment, then to improve capabilities of citizenization.

## **Notes**

1. Walsh, Joseph. *Investment in Human Capital*, trans. Wu Jiangzhu [C] Beijing: Beijing Institute of Economics Press, 1990.

2, 3. National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). 2015. *Report on the Survey of Rural Migrant Workers in China in 2014* [EB/OL]. (accessed 29/04/2015).

[http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/zxfb/201504/t20150429\\_797821.html](http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/zxfb/201504/t20150429_797821.html)