

The Dilemma and Breakthrough of University Students' Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education in the Context of Rural Revitalization

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Abstract

The key to promoting rural revitalization lies in strengthening the construction of the talent team for rural revitalization, while colleges and universities, as the highland of talent cultivation, are responsible for providing talent support for rural revitalization. It is an important part of the implementation of rural revitalization strategy for colleges and universities to deepen the reform of innovation and entrepreneurship education, focus on cultivating students' innovation spirit, entrepreneurial consciousness and innovation and entrepreneurial ability, and provide diversified talent support for rural revitalization around the implementation of the fundamental task of cultivating people with moral character. This paper analyzes the coupling synergy between innovation and entrepreneurship of college students and rural revitalization, reveals the value convergence between rural revitalization and innovation and entrepreneurship, summarizes the existing problems, and proposes specific countermeasures against the current dilemma of integrating innovation and entrepreneurship education with rural revitalization.

Key words: College students; Innovation and entrepreneurship education; Dilemma; Breakthrough; Rural revitalization

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In the report of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, it is proposed that comprehensively promote the revitalization of the

countryside, adhere to the priority development of agriculture and rural areas, consolidate and expand the achievements in poverty eradication, accelerate the building of a strong agricultural country, and solidly promote the revitalization of rural industries, talents, culture, ecology and organizations (Xi, 2022). This further highlights the determination and confidence of the CPC Central Committee in comprehensively promoting the revitalization of the countryside and accelerating the modernization of agriculture and rural areas. Agricultural and rural modernization is an important part of Chinese-style modernization, and it is the area where Chinese-style modernization reflects the most distinctive national characteristics and the most direct cultural genes. Therefore, it is of extreme importance to thoroughly promote the strategy of revitalizing the countryside and speed up the modernization of agriculture and rural areas. Technology is the first productive force, talent is the first resource and innovation is the first driving force (Huang, 2022). Promoting the full implementation of rural revitalization is inseparable from talent and innovation. Universities are the cradle of talent cultivation. To solve the new problems and challenges arising from the rural revitalization strategy, it is indispensable to have talents as resources, especially innovative talents. As an important place for the cultivation of innovative talents, it is important for universities to provide talent support for the rural revitalization strategy and empower rural revitalization with a high-quality education system.

1. THE COUPLING SYNERGY BETWEEN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND RURAL REVITALIZATION

1.1 Cultivating Innovative and Entrepreneurial Talents Is an Important Grip for Implementing the Rural Revitalization Strategy

In the context of the rural revitalization strategy, talent

introduction policies have been introduced one after another in various places. Reports of university students returning to their hometowns to start their own businesses are common. They have gradually become leaders of rural innovation and entrepreneurship who are full of entrepreneurial passion and entrepreneurial spirit, driving rural economic development and increasing farmers' income, as well as continuously boosting agricultural modernization and industrialization, enhancing the cultural taste of rural areas and consolidating the results of poverty eradication. The university students who have returned to their hometowns and started their own businesses are using their youth and passion to write a proud story about education and helping farmers.

The cultivation of innovative and entrepreneurial talents in universities and the rural revitalization strategy have the principle of consistency of objectives. It is the duty of universities to educate and guide students to go to the place where the motherland needs them most to shine. The rural revitalization strategy provides a broad stage for university students' innovation and entrepreneurship, and the two feed each other to promote the country's high-quality development and achieve Chinese modernization.

1.2 Rural Revitalization Helps Promote Reform of the Talent Training System of Universities

Xi Jinping, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the CPC, pointed out at China's National Education Conference that it is necessary to insist on running universities rooted in the Chinese land. This requires universities to raise the political standing of talent cultivation and firmly commit themselves to the historical mission of rural revitalization. Therefore, universities should clarify the development direction of talent cultivation and focus on researching Chinese solutions for rural revitalization. To implement the training of innovative and entrepreneurial talents, it is necessary to take the real-life problems in rural revitalization as the guide, optimize the positioning of relevant university disciplines, and cultivate a team of relevant university professionals with the industrial development in rural revitalization as the target, so as to achieve a win-win situation of university talent training and helping rural revitalization. With the rural revitalization strategy to broaden the innovation and entrepreneurship platform of university students, build an integrated industry-education integration platform among the university, government and enterprises, promote the deep integration of industry-university-research, extensively carry out coordinated cooperation among enterprises, localities, schools and faculties in the rural revitalization talent team, realize the sharing and organic integration of talent resources across regions and disciplines, continuously deepen the reform of the innovation and entrepreneurship talent cultivation system and enhance the quality of talent cultivation (Guo, 2022).

1.3 The Need for University Students to Realise Their Self-Worth

At present, shortage of talents, hollowing out of population and aging have become difficult problems for rural revitalization (Wu, 2022). Various places have been innovating talent introduction mechanisms, implementing the rural growth plan for university graduates, encouraging university students to engage in teaching, farming, medical and poverty alleviation services in the countryside, applying their professional knowledge and innovative entrepreneurial abilities to rural development, and contributing their self-worth in the great process of realizing Chinese-style modernization. In the context of rural revitalisation, young university students are given high expectations. As the driving force and mainstay of social development, cultivating their love for the countryside, grasping the rare development opportunities and tapping into the vast rural market are wise choices to realise their life values and self-ideals.

2. THE REALISTIC DILEMMA OF INTEGRATING INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP OF COLLEGE STUDENTS WITH RURAL REVITALIZATION

2.1 The Degree of Willingness of College Students to Return to Their Hometowns for Entrepreneurship Is not High

In recent years, "mass innovation and entrepreneurship" has become a new norm, and the Chinese government has also introduced a series of policies to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship among college students. In 2017, the Chinese Ministry of Education issued a regulation requiring universities to offer innovation and entrepreneurship education courses for all students for credit management. Over time, this has led to an unabated fervour for innovation and entrepreneurship among university students. But what is the actual situation? According to the 2021 China Student Entrepreneurship Report released by the Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education of Communication University of China, 96.1% of college students have had the idea and desire to start a business, and 14% have already started a business or are preparing to do so, but the main areas are clustered in the new generation of information technology (5G/blockchain/cloud computing/big data) and Internet/mobile Internet. In addition, the report also summarises the top 10 entrepreneurial trends for 2021. Among them, "university students' attitude towards entrepreneurship is becoming more rational" is a major trend (Centre for Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education, Communication University of China, 2021).

Firstly, the interest driving force of college students returning to their hometowns is not enough. At present, the preferential policies for returning to their hometowns are an important reason to attract college students to return to their hometowns to start their own businesses, but the policies launched around the world are shorter in time and weaker in operability, which do not match with the actual situation of college students in the implementation process, and the economic development of rural areas is slower, and the industrial development and lifestyle are more different from those of cities. Secondly, the pressure of college students returning to their hometowns to start their own business is greater, the theoretical level of college students' innovation and entrepreneurship knowledge is more, while the practical operation experience is lacking, in the process of starting a business, not only facing the pressure from the business, but also facing complex social interpersonal relationship handling and other difficulties, for the freshly graduated college students, inevitably have to take a lot of detours, resulting in the uncertainty of college students returning to their hometowns to start their own business increases, so their willingness to return to their hometowns to start their own business is low degree. This has led to an increase in uncertainty for university students returning to their hometowns to start their own businesses.

2.2 Insufficient Preparation for Innovation and Entrepreneurship Among University Students

At present, college students are more concerned about innovation and entrepreneurship, but they are not determined enough to choose a business track, mainly because they are not sufficiently prepared, mainly because of the following points. Firstly, they are not sufficiently prepared ideologically, they like to talk about things on paper, their business ideas are big but not proper, and their market predictions are generally too optimistic; they are overly ambitious, they look down on small profits, and they tend to talk about the first bucket of gold, not about making the first cent. Secondly, the psychological resistance to stress needs to be improved, college students grow up in the campus environment, the ability to discern the complex society is insufficient, the ability to withstand setbacks is not strong, for the hardships in entrepreneurship is easy to show fear, retreat emotions. Thirdly, there is a lack of good entrepreneurial projects. College students do not have sufficient understanding of innovation and entrepreneurship, fail to find feasible entrepreneurial projects from solving the painful problems of society, and invest in low-cost, low-threshold and low-tech FMCG industries in a big and comprehensive way, lacking entrepreneurial projects with real commercial prospects.

2.3 The Concept of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education Lags Behind the Needs of Rural Revitalization Strategy

To implement the strategy of rural revitalization, it is necessary to build a "three rural" work team that

"understands agriculture, loves the countryside and loves farmers" (Xiang, W. Z., et al, 2022). At present, although universities are in full swing in carrying out innovation and entrepreneurship education, and have made certain achievements in the "Internet+" competition, double-innovation competition and double-innovation practice, they generally do not have sufficient understanding of the background significance of rural revitalization, and do not think enough about how to give full play to their talent advantages and carry out innovation and entrepreneurship education to serve the rural revitalization strategy. There is a lack of research and study on the scarce talents for rural revitalization, which deviates from the actual demand for talents for rural revitalization. Secondly, there is a lack of guidance on the value of cultivating talents to serve the rural revitalization strategy, and failure to effectively integrate innovation and entrepreneurship education with ideological and political education, and innovation and entrepreneurship practice with precise poverty alleviation, so as to effectively cultivate college students' knowledge and love for agriculture, and establish the ideal belief of rooting and serving the rural areas.

2.4 Mismatch Between the Curriculum System of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education and the Needs of Rural Revitalization

At present, the innovation and entrepreneurship courses offered by universities are basically based on theoretical knowledge lectures, and the practice of entrepreneurship education is lacking. As a result, the innovation and entrepreneurship ability of students has not been truly improved, while the cultivation of innovation ability is the core of innovation and entrepreneurship education. Schools have a lack of position in cultivating students' innovation ability and innovation spirit, failing to integrate them into the whole process of talent cultivation, but treating innovation and entrepreneurship education as a kind of marginal education, serving students' employment. Secondly, the curriculum system of university innovation and entrepreneurship education is imperfect, the teaching contents are relatively single, and there is a lack of integration of knowledge on democratic decision-making, leading to wealth, rural economy and ecological tourism in rural revitalization. Moreover, most of the innovation and entrepreneurship incubation bases in schools are concentrated in cities, and few projects are rooted in rural areas, which greatly reduces the opportunities for university students to get close to the elements of rural revitalization.

2.5 Imperfect Teaching Staff for Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education

At present, universities have successively improved their talent training programs and added innovation and entrepreneurship courses, but the number of teachers is insufficient and the structure of the teaching team is unreasonable, making it difficult to ensure the actual

teaching effect and requirements. Firstly, with the expansion of university enrolment, the number of students in schools has increased sharply, but the teaching force engaged in innovation and entrepreneurship education has not been effectively replenished, making the student-teacher ratio increasingly large; secondly, the teaching force of entrepreneurship education has a small number of high-level and highly educated teachers, mostly young teachers, and the overall innovation ability of the teaching force needs to be improved; thirdly, the teaching force of entrepreneurship education Thirdly, the number of teachers who are actually involved in entrepreneurship is relatively small, and the number of teachers who have experience in rural revitalization is even smaller, so that in the actual teaching, there is inevitably a disconnect between the objectives of talent training and the actual needs.

3. BREAKTHROUGH IN THE PATH OF INTEGRATING RURAL REVITALIZATION WITH INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

3.1 Value Leadership Throughout the Whole Process of Education and Teaching, and Cultivating the Sentiment of the Countryside Among University Students

Under the background of rural revitalization, it is necessary to lead college students to be rooted in the countryside and serve the “three rural areas”, so as to cultivate students’ strong sentiment for the countryside and enhance their willingness to join rural revitalization through various aspects such as thinking and politics education, innovation and entrepreneurship education and career planning. Firstly, through Civic and Political Science courses, innovation and entrepreneurship education courses, and career guidance, we can recognize the traditional culture of the countryside, increase students’ understanding of the changes and development of the countryside, eliminate employment worries, and enhance their sense of responsibility and mission for the revitalization of the countryside. Secondly, we should carry out volunteer activities such as “three rural trips” to enhance students’ in-depth understanding of rural areas, identify the painful problems that restrict local development, explore high-quality resources for rural revitalization, carry out project-based micro-entrepreneurial activities in the process of innovation and entrepreneurship education, combine their professional knowledge, put their learning into practice, and tightly integrate students’ own values with social needs and national development. They should combine their professional knowledge with their own learning to put it

into practice, and closely combine their own values with the needs of society and national development.

3.2 Widely Carry Out Innovation and Entrepreneurship Practice Activities and Build a Perfect Practice Platform

Colleges and universities should build innovation and entrepreneurship practice platforms and implement innovation and entrepreneurship service mechanisms for college students, so that college students can get close to innovation and entrepreneurship. First, rely on the innovation and entrepreneurship incubation base on campus to provide practice opportunities. Set up a creator’s studio to provide students who are interested in starting their own business with “multi-on-one” support and guidance services, to promote entrepreneurial policies, carry out feasibility analysis and brainstorming on entrepreneurship. Students will also be able to experience the process, fun and risks of starting a business, and be inspired to start a new business. Secondly, relying on cooperation resources outside the university, build an open platform outside the university, such as deepening the cooperation between the university, government and enterprises, jointly building practical training bases and establishing an alliance for innovation and entrepreneurship practice, so as to promote the convergence of innovation elements and talents to enterprises and the export of innovation results to enterprises.

3.3 Integrate the Concept of Rural Revitalization Into the Whole Process of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education and Promote Goal Integration

Universities need to do a good job of top-level design, strengthen value leadership, cultivate college students’ local sentiment, and integrate the concept of rural revitalization into course teaching and after-school practice. First, in the theoretical courses on innovation and entrepreneurship, the content of the rural revitalization strategy should be integrated into the countryside life and the traditional culture of the countryside, so as to deepen students’ understanding of the importance of rural development and consciously and voluntarily join the construction of rural revitalization. Second, widely carry out practical activities with the theme of rural innovation and entrepreneurship, strengthen communication and contact with government departments, and carry out civilizational practice activities in the new era, so that university students can understand the realistic development of the countryside more intuitively, prepare themselves for future service in the countryside, enhance their competence in grass-roots entrepreneurship and employment, and gradually develop a career development outlook of loving the countryside, loving farmers, understanding agriculture and farmers, and being willing to build the countryside.

3.4 Improve the Curriculum System for the Integration of Innovation and Entrepreneurship and Rural Revitalization, and Cultivate Knowledge of Agriculture and Love of Getting

Colleges and universities should integrate the curriculum resources of innovation and entrepreneurship education, major courses and agriculture-related education to form a complete curriculum system and cultivate composite talents for rural revitalization. This will enable university students to sink and stay in the service of the “three rural areas”. Therefore, the curriculum of university talent training should integrate the above knowledge, so that students can integrate their professional knowledge and innovation and entrepreneurial ability into rural construction, lead hundreds of millions of farmers to explore the “increment” of rural construction, revitalize effective resources, and find innovative and entrepreneurial opportunities in rural revitalization. This will enable students to integrate their professional knowledge and innovation and entrepreneurship skills into rural construction, lead hundreds of millions of farmers to explore the “incremental” amount of rural construction, revitalize effective resources, and find opportunities for innovation and entrepreneurship in rural revitalization.

3.5 Build a “Dual-Teacher” High-Quality Teaching Team and Enhance the Cooperation of Education

Teachers are the initiators and initiators of innovation and entrepreneurship education in colleges and universities, so it is important to build a high-quality teaching team. The first is to optimise the structure of the team. We should introduce experts from industry and enterprises to serve as part-time mentors in the school, and use the resources of mentors to enrich teaching cases and enhance practicality; establish a resource pool of outstanding alumni entrepreneurs, and attract outstanding alumni from various industries to serve as guest lecturers. Second, enhance teaching ability. Actively carry out

entrepreneurship training and entrepreneurial choices, and select some outstanding teachers to take up off-campus postings to avoid “talking on paper” and promote the integration of theory and practice. Thirdly, reform the evaluation mechanism. Further improve the assessment and evaluation mechanism of double-innovation teachers, and form a promotion and reward mechanism that gives equal importance to teaching ability and practical contribution, so as to mobilize teachers’ enthusiasm to the greatest extent.

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