

The Characteristics and Countermeasures of China's Population Migration

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Abstract: Since the reform and opening-up, population migration has become increasingly active, which not only meets the demand of labor shortage in inflow areas, but also drives the employment of labor in outflow areas. Population migration has become the focus of labor market research. Therefore, it is of great significance to accurately judge and grasp the changes in the characteristics of population migration. Based on the relevant economic theories and models of population migration, this paper analyzes the characteristics of China's population migration at this stage, and puts forward countermeasures against the problems that may be encountered.

Keywords: Characteristics of population migration, Labor migration model.

1. Introduction

Since the founding of the People's Republic of China, the spatial pattern of population migration has undergone two important turning changes: the first is the reform and opening up, from the eastern coast to the central and western regions to the eastern regions; The second was in 2010, the scale of population migration from the central and western regions to the east changed from a sustained high growth in 30 years to a significant decline [1]. The migration of labor force between regions will affect original labor factor endowment and production environment of each region, change economic activity and economic structure, and affect the development path and spatial structure.

Population migration refers to the permanent (half a year or more) change of the population's residence (spatial location), including international population migration and domestic population migration, which is a very complex socio-economic phenomenon. At present, the research results of population migration in China have been very rich. Population migration has not only promoted economic growth, but also brought about changes in the labor market. Li Zhigang pointed out that the current situation of population flow in China has undergone a fundamental change, which has changed from the one-way flow of rural population into the city and the cyclical circulation of urban and rural areas in the early stage of reform and opening up to the settlement of urban and rural areas and the multi-directional flow between cities [2]. However, there are few studies depicting the characteristics of population migration in China in the middle and late stages of urbanization. Academic circles have different views on whether domestic population migration contributes to regional economic development. From the perspective of the neoclassical economic growth model, the flow of population from areas with low marginal output of labor to areas with high marginal output will make the regional economy tend to converge and help to narrow the economic differences between regions. Shioji believes that population mobility may aggravate the differentiation of economic development between regions, which may be due to the migration of heterogeneous labor force, that is, labor mobility with human capital may expand the gap between regions [3].

So far, domestic and foreign studies on China's population migration and flow lack in-depth investigation on the transformation process, new characteristics and new problems of population migration and flow forms, so it is also difficult to form a clear and systematic policy on this basis, which needs to be filled. Based on this, this paper uses the labor migration model and the migrant workers monitoring survey report to reveal the new characteristics of China's population migration and puts forward corresponding policies.

2. Methodology

2.1. Todaro labor migration model

Todaro believes that population migration mainly depends on two factors: the expected income of rural-urban areas and the employment situation of the population. He built a model based on the rural-urban labor flow, assuming that migrants can freely choose their own employment opportunities in the traditional and modern sectors. He believed that labor flow is a decision made by people on the expected income difference rather than the actual income difference between the place of immigration and the place of emigration, and that migrants should choose the maximum opportunity of expected income based on employment preference.

2.2. Rosen-Roback Model

Rosen-Roback model provides a spatial analysis framework for the study of labor migration. The benchmark model points out that the completely free flowing homogeneous labor force makes migration decisions based on the combination of convenience facilities, income, and living costs provided by the region. Once the welfare obtained from the steadily growing income reaches a certain level, the labor force begins to pay more attention to the non-market attributes of its environment.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Increased population return

On the one hand, the inter-provincial migration flow is still dominated by large cities and megacities along the eastern coast, and the concentrated migration to the coastal areas continues to become the mainstream. On the other hand, the

central region has replaced the western region as the main emigration area of the population, and its emigration population accounts for an absolute proportion of the country's total trans-provincial emigration, thus showing an increasingly marginalized trend. According to the Todaro labor migration model and Rosen-Roback model, due to the rapid growth of rural population, the existence of a large number of surplus labor, the slow development of rural economy, and the limited employment opportunities created, it is difficult to find new jobs in rural areas, while the opportunity cost of urban migration is very little or even zero, and the urban income is high, and the living conditions are favorable, stimulating the migration of rural population to economically developed cities. People's expected income difference between economically developed provinces (the place of immigration) and the place of emigration is large. The greater the difference, the more people will flow into economically developed provinces.

According to the national migrant workers monitoring survey report shown in Table 1, the total number of migrant workers in 2021 will be 292.51 million, an increase of 2.4% over the previous year. Among them, there were 171.72 million migrant workers, an increase of 1.3% over the previous year; There were 120.79 million local migrant workers, an increase of 4.1% over the previous year. Among migrant workers, 71.3 million people moved across provinces, an increase of 1.1% over the previous year; There were 100.42 million people floating in the province, an increase of 1.4% over the previous year. From the perspective of export places, the trans-provincial migrant workers in the central region accounted for 56.6% of migrant workers, while the western region accounted for 47.8%. The migrant workers in the eastern and northeastern regions were mainly intra-provincial migrant workers, and the trans-provincial migrant workers accounted for 15.1% and 28.9% respectively.

Table 1. Regional distribution and composition of migrant workers in 2021

Divided by output place	Migrant workers' scale		Migrant workers' Constitute	
	Inter-provincial mobility	Intra-provincial mobility	Inter-provincial mobility	Intra-provincial mobility
Total	71300000	100420000	41.5%	58.5%
Eastern region	7000000	39360000	15.1%	84.9%
Central region	35780000	27420000	56.6%	43.4%
Western region	26690000	29130000	47.8%	52.2%
North East	1830000	4510000	28.9%	71.1%

The number of migrant workers employed in the central region increased the most, 3.44 million more than in 2020, an increase of 5.5%. The change in the proportion of floating population in different regions not only reflects the change in the concentration degree and spatial distribution pattern of floating population, but also indicates the fact that the scale and intensity of China's large-scale and long-distance migration from the central and western regions to the eastern coastal areas tend to decline. In the context of the overall decline in the size and growth of the floating population, the floating population in the eastern region has continued to decrease, while the floating population in the central and western regions has continued to increase, which fully shows that the phenomenon of population returning from the east to the central and western regions is increasing.

3.2. Countermeasures

All economic regions should introduce and improve policies on floating population, ensure the social and economic interests of floating population, promote the transfer of industries in developed regions to the central and western regions, and drive the return of human capital. First, formulate differentiated labor force introduction policies; Secondly, we should improve the social security system and solve the problems of medical care and children's education of migrant workers; Finally, guide the industry and population to gather in a province or a smaller region, and increase the regional labor flow.

In the future, cities and developed provinces will still be the main places of population migration, and the trend of population migration is irreversible. Therefore, industrial transformation in developed regions is very necessary to give full play to the industrial scale effect and group effect, link

the development of relevant industries, and promote the employment of various labor factors. At the same time, some labor-intensive industries should be transferred to backward labor-intensive areas in a timely manner to solve the employment problem on the one hand, and reduce the operating costs at the same time, so as to create a win-win situation in both social and economic fields.

4. Conclusion

The large-scale migration of China's population to developed provinces plays a positive role in the optimal allocation of resources and China's economic growth. The regions with population inflow will often benefit from the agglomeration of various factors of production and realize the sustained growth of local economy. Based on Donald Berger's "push pull" theory of population migration, Todaro's labor migration model and Rosen-Roback's model, this paper analyzes the characteristics of China's population migration at the current stage under regional development, and puts forward countermeasures to the problems that may be encountered with these characteristics. China is likely to continue the pattern of population migration from less developed areas to more developed areas in the future, and gradually form several urban clusters relying on megacities. This is similar to the direction of urban evolution in most developed countries in the world.

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