

Research on the Demand Characteristics and Cultivation Pathways of Agricultural, Cultural, and Tourism Talents in the Context of Rural Revitalization

Fang Wen

School of Cultural Management, Communication University of China, Nanjing, China

Email: 46430004@qq.com

How to cite this paper: Wen, F. (2026). Research on the Demand Characteristics and Cultivation Pathways of Agricultural, Cultural, and Tourism Talents in the Context of Rural Revitalization. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 14, 407-426. <https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2026.1410019>

Received: September 3, 2026

Accepted: October 17, 2026

Published: October 20, 2026

Copyright © 2026 by author(s) and Scientific Research Publishing Inc. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0). <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



Open Access

Abstract

Against the backdrop of the comprehensive advancement of the rural revitalization strategy, the deep integration of agriculture, culture, and tourism industries has become a crucial engine driving rural development. However, a significant disconnect currently exists between the cultivation of agricultural, cultural, and tourism talents and actual industrial demands, restricting the quality and sustainability of integrated development. This study employs literature analysis, field surveys, and questionnaire surveys. Through an investigation of 92 frontline rural revitalization workers across 9 provinces and regions in China, it explores, in an exploratory manner, the demand characteristics and practical dilemmas of agricultural, cultural, and tourism talents. The research finds that the integrated development most urgently needs industrial leaders, management professionals, and tourism experts, with a strong demand for composite, skilled, and innovative talents. Survey respondents perceived the current talent supply to be deficient in professional knowledge, practical ability, and industry cognition. Based on these findings, this paper constructs an integrated talent cultivation pathway of “attracting, nurturing, retaining, and utilizing” from six dimensions: educational philosophy, program design, curriculum system, teaching models, local talent cultivation, and faculty development. It aims to provide theoretical reference and practical guidance for rural talent revitalization and industrial integration.

Keywords

Rural Revitalization, Integration of Agriculture, Culture, and Tourism, Talent Cultivation, Cultivation Pathway

1. Introduction

Since the implementation of the rural revitalization strategy, the deep integration of agriculture, culture, and tourism industries has become a vital pathway for rural development. With the deepening advancement of agriculture-culture-tourism integration and the requirements for high-quality development of the cultural and tourism industry in the new era, the connotations, functions, and industrial environment of agriculture, culture, and tourism have undergone tremendous changes. The agriculture-culture-tourism industry in the new era requires new types of talents. However, in practice, graduates from higher education institutions find it difficult to meet the real needs of industrial development, leading to a prominent “mismatch between supply and demand” in talent cultivation. This paper attempts to conduct an exploratory analysis of the pain points in cultivating agricultural, cultural, and tourism talents, clarify the demand characteristics through investigation, and explore effective pathways for their cultivation.

Rural revitalization is a major strategic task in comprehensively building a modern socialist country. The Report of the 20th CPC National Congress explicitly stated the need to “solidly promote industrial, talent, cultural, ecological, and organizational revitalization in rural areas” (Xi, 2022), with talent revitalization serving as the foundational project supporting comprehensive rural development. As the “agriculture + culture + tourism” integration model deepens, the agriculture-culture-tourism industry has not only become a new growth point for the rural economy but also an important vehicle for inheriting local culture and optimizing rural governance (Bai, 2019). However, in practice, the talent shortage has become increasingly prominent: on one hand, talents cultivated by universities struggle to match the complex demands of rural cultural and tourism integration; on the other hand, the aging structure and insufficient professional capacity of local rural talents severely constrain the high-quality development of the agriculture-culture-tourism industry (Chen et al., 2021).

In this context, clarifying what kind of talents are actually needed for agriculture-culture-tourism integration and how to systematically cultivate and retain these talents has become a core issue of common concern for both academia and policymakers. Existing research mostly focuses on macro-level policy elaboration or discussions on single educational links (Bao et al., 2021; Liu, 2021; Yang, 2022), lacking systematic talent demand analysis and cultivation path design based on empirical investigation. Therefore, this study obtains perceptions and opinions from frontline practitioners through field visits and questionnaire surveys, aiming to reveal the true demand characteristics of agricultural, cultural, and tourism talents in the context of rural revitalization, and accordingly propose operational cultivation pathways to contribute to the construction of the rural talent system and sustainable industrial development.

2. Research Methods

This study adopts a combination of qualitative analysis and quantitative investi-

gation. First, by systematically reviewing domestic and international literature and policy documents on rural revitalization, culture-tourism integration, and talent cultivation, a theoretical analysis framework for this study is constructed. Second, primary data is collected through field visits and questionnaire surveys.

The questionnaire design consists of two parts: Part I gathers basic information about respondents, including their gender, age, region, education level, and occupation type; Part II focuses on the demand for agricultural, cultural, and tourism talents, covering aspects such as talent types, competency requirements, supply issues, and policy suggestions. The questionnaire consists of single-choice and multiple-choice questions together with one five-point rating item (anchored from “completely satisfying” to “not satisfying”), with open-ended questions at the end to collect qualitative suggestions. Multiple-choice items allowed respondents to select several options; in the analysis, each option was counted by the number of respondents who selected it, and percentages were computed as that count divided by the 92 valid respondents, so the percentages of multiple-choice items do not sum to 100%. The full item wording and response options are provided in the Appendix.

Respondents were eligible for the survey if they were frontline rural revitalization practitioners directly engaged in agriculture, culture, or tourism-related work, including grassroots cadres and village personnel, enterprise managers, professional and technical personnel, returned migrant workers, and local villagers. The questionnaire was distributed between August and October 2023 through the online survey platform “Wenjuanxing” and forwarded via WeChat through county and township government liaisons and industry contacts. The survey adopted a non-random, convenience-based sampling approach; the sample is therefore best characterized as an exploratory sample of frontline practitioners, and it cannot ensure statistical representativeness, so the findings should not be generalized to the whole population of rural revitalization workers. A total of 93 questionnaires were collected, mainly from Jiangsu ($n = 41$), Guizhou ($n = 21$), and Chongqing ($n = 11$), with the remainder distributed across Hubei, Shandong, Zhejiang, Henan, Hebei, and Sichuan. One questionnaire was excluded because the respondent did not meet the eligibility criteria (i.e., the screening item showed that the respondent was not a frontline rural revitalization practitioner), leaving 92 valid questionnaires and an effective recovery rate of 98.9%. Data were analyzed using SPSS for descriptive statistical analysis.

3. Research Results

3.1. Basic Sample Information

The questionnaire survey sample of this study covers 9 provinces (municipalities) including Jiangsu, Zhejiang, Shandong (Eastern), Henan, Hubei, Hebei (Central), Guizhou, Chongqing, Sichuan (Western), taking into account different economic development levels and rural revitalization stages in Eastern, Central, and Western China, offering exploratory, though non-random and non-probabilistic, cov-

erage of different economic development levels and rural revitalization stages in Eastern, Central, and Western China; as a convenience sample of frontline practitioners, the provincial distribution reported above should be read as descriptive rather than as a population-level estimate.

In terms of occupational composition, grassroots staff constitute the main body ($n = 60$, 65.2%). This group primarily includes township cadres, village organization leaders, and village-based work team members. They are the most direct executors of rural revitalization policies and the most intuitive perceivers of rural development conditions, and their views deeply reflect the real talent pain points in the grassroots practice of agriculture-culture-tourism integration. Next are enterprise management personnel ($n = 20$, 21.7%), mainly from various enterprises involved in rural cultural tourism project investment and operation, focusing on market demand, project benefits, and professional operation, revealing the specific competency requirements from the industrial side. Professional technical personnel (including agricultural technicians, tourism planners, cultural conservation workers, etc.) account for 12 respondents (13.0%). They provide judgments on professional literacy and skills from the perspective of professional standards and technical implementation. The occupational structure of the sample aligns with the research theme, helping the survey information reflect the practical demands from multiple dimensions of “policy execution - market operation - professional service”. Among the 92 valid respondents, 49 were male (53.3%) and 44 were female (47.8%); 57 were aged 18 - 30 (62.0%), 28 were aged 31 - 45 (30.4%), and 8 were aged 46 - 60 (8.7%); 55 held a bachelor’s degree (59.8%), 19 held a junior college degree (20.7%), and 15 held a master’s degree or above (16.3%). All percentages in this section are based on the 92 valid respondents.

3.2. Analysis of Survey Results

1) Factors Affecting Local Agriculture-Culture-Tourism Integration Development. This was a multiple-choice question. As shown in the statistical chart (**Figure 1**), the primary factor affecting the development of agriculture-culture-tourism integration is talent shortage, followed by the deepening aging of the surplus labor force, and insufficient national policy and financial support. Factors such as insufficient technological content, inadequate transportation, and communication scored relatively low. This fully demonstrates that talent cultivation has become the most fundamental, primary, and critical element in the process of agriculture-culture-tourism integration within rural revitalization. In terms of the number of respondents selecting each option (denominator $N = 92$; multiple selections allowed), 76 respondents (82.6%) selected “talent shortage”, 62 (67.4%) selected “the deepening aging of the surplus labor force”, 58 (63.0%) selected “insufficient national policy and financial support”, 51 (55.4%) selected “insufficient technological content”, and 45 (48.9%) selected “inadequate transportation and communication”.

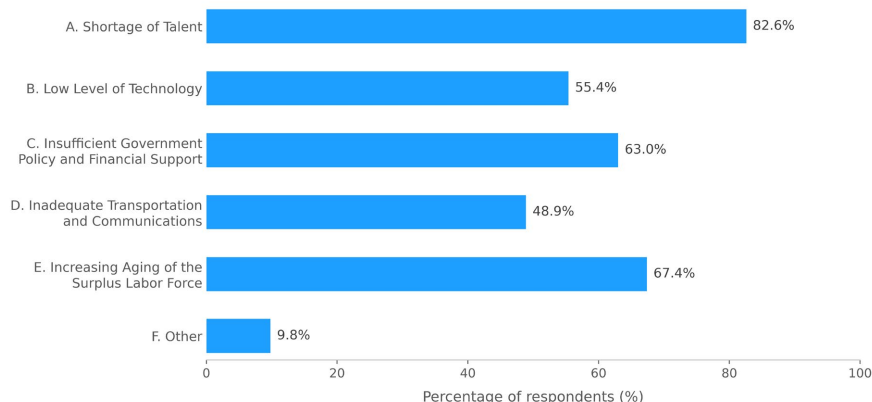


Figure 1. Analysis of factors influencing the integrated development of agriculture, culture and tourism.

2) Most Lacking Talents for Agriculture-Culture-Tourism Integration Development. This was a multiple-choice question. As shown in the statistical chart (Figure 2), the top three most lacking talents for integrated development are industrial leaders, management talents, and tourism experts, followed by grassroots service project personnel, agricultural experts, and outstanding village cadres. Talents such as grassroots township government leaders and professional farmers scored relatively low. Specifically (N = 92), industrial leaders were selected by 74 respondents (80.4%), management talents by 59 (64.1%), tourism experts by 55 (59.8%), grassroots service project personnel by 43 (46.7%), agricultural experts by 42 (45.7%), outstanding village cadres by 40 (43.5%), grassroots township government leaders by 33 (35.9%), and professional farmers by 31 (33.7%).

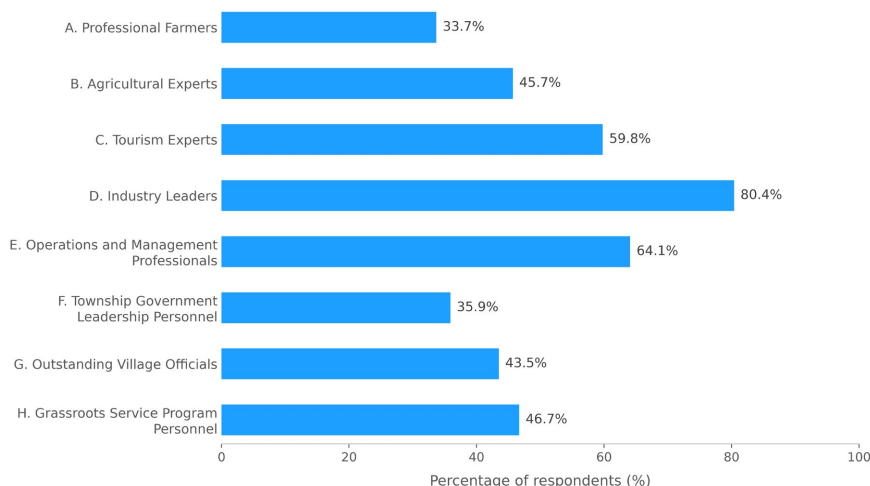


Figure 2. Analysis of the most needed talents for the integrated development of agriculture, culture and tourism.

3) Sources of Talents in Local Economic Development. This was a multiple-choice question. As shown in the statistical chart (Figure 3), talents cultivated through local production practices are the primary source of talents for local eco-

conomic development, followed by returning college students and talents introduced by the government from outside. Graduates from vocational colleges account for a relatively low proportion. Specifically (N = 92), 68 respondents (73.9%) selected talents cultivated through local production practices, 59 (64.1%) selected returning college students, 57 (62.0%) selected talents introduced by the government from outside, 48 (52.2%) selected technicians in government departments, and 36 (39.1%) selected graduates from vocational colleges.

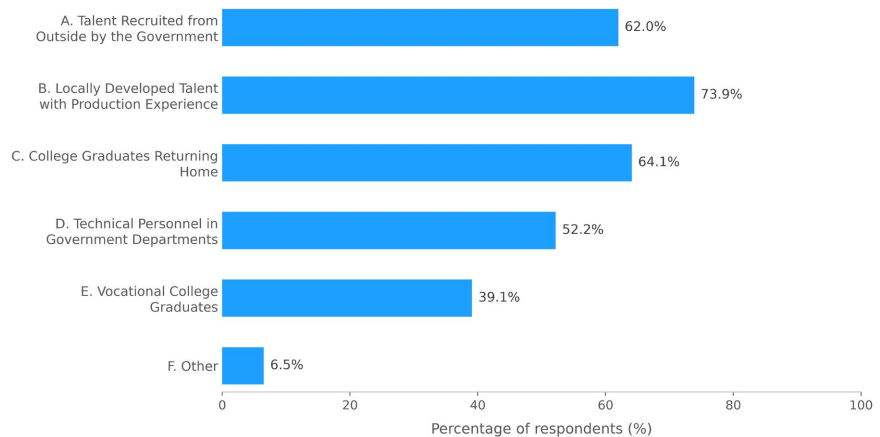


Figure 3. Analysis of the sources of talent in the local economic development process.

4) Types of Talents Needed for Local Agriculture-Culture-Tourism Integration Development. This was a multiple-choice question. As shown in the statistical chart (**Figure 4**), the proportions of skilled talents, specialized talents, versatile talents, and innovative talents in local integrated development all exceed 69%, with very close figures, indicating that all four types are required for industrial integration development. Specifically (N = 92), specialized talents were selected by 67 respondents (72.8%), skilled talents by 66 (71.7%), innovative talents by 66 (71.7%), and versatile (general-purpose) talents by 64 (69.6%).

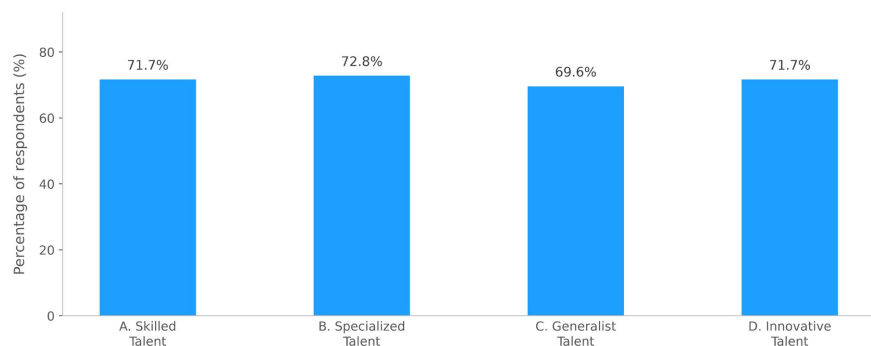


Figure 4. Analysis of the talent types required for the integrated development of agriculture, culture and tourism.

5) Professional Backgrounds Needed for Local Agriculture-Culture-Tourism Integration Development. This was a multiple-choice question. As shown in the

statistical chart (Figure 5), integrated development most urgently needs talents with backgrounds in Tourism Management, New Media-related majors, and Marketing, followed by talents with backgrounds in History, Geography, Literature-related majors, and Business Management. Traditional majors such as Hotel Management and Computer-related fields received relatively lower demand. Specifically (N = 92), Tourism Management was selected by 70 respondents (76.1%), New Media-related majors by 69 (75.0%), Marketing by 63 (68.5%), History, Geography, and Literature-related majors by 51 (55.4%), Business Management by 50 (54.3%), Hotel Management by 40 (43.5%), and Computer-related majors by 35 (38.0%).

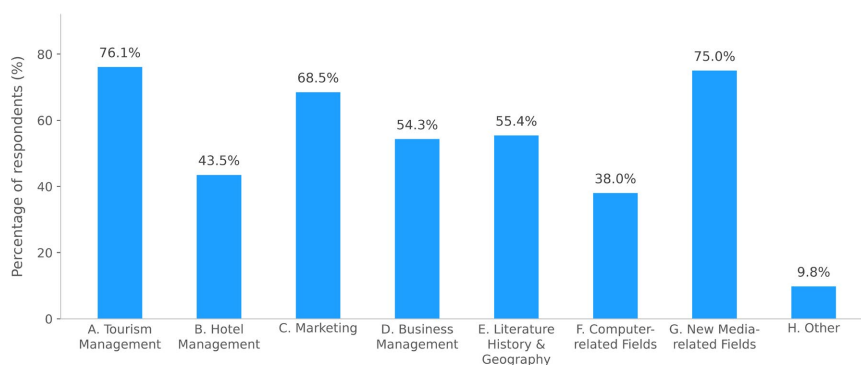
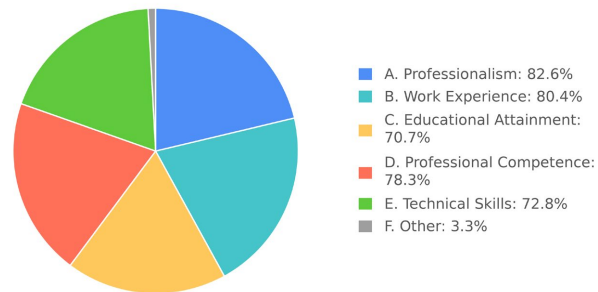


Figure 5. Analysis of the educational backgrounds of talents needed for the integrated development of agriculture, culture and tourism.

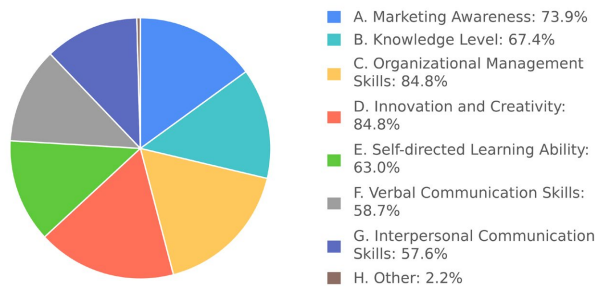
6) Humanistic Literacy and Comprehensive Skills Required for Local Agriculture-Culture-Tourism Integration Development. Both surveys were multiple-choice questions. As shown in the statistical chart (Figure 6(a) & Figure 6(b)), regarding the most essential humanistic literacy for agriculture-culture-tourism talents, employing units rank professionalism first, followed by work experience, and then professional ethics. Regarding the comprehensive skills required, organizational management ability and innovation/creativity ability are tied for first place, followed by marketing awareness, and then knowledge level. This result provides a basis for curriculum system design and skill training in talent cultivation. Specifically (N = 92), professionalism was selected by 76 respondents (82.6%), work experience by 74 (80.4%), and professional ethics by 72 (78.3%); for comprehensive skills, organizational management ability and innovation/creativity ability were each selected by 78 respondents (84.8%), marketing awareness by 68 (73.9%), and knowledge level by 62 (67.4%).

7) Prominent Problems of Needed Talents in Actual Local Positions. This was a multiple-choice question. As shown in the statistical chart (Figure 7), in actual local work, employing units believe the most prominent problem of needed talents is a lack of industry knowledge, followed by a disconnect between learned professional knowledge and actual job requirements, lack of experience, and weak management knowledge, then unfamiliarity with business operations, poor communication skills, and weak learning ability. Subsequent talent cultivation should ad-

dress these issues pertinently. Specifically (N = 92), a lack of industry knowledge was selected by 67 respondents (72.8%), a disconnect between learned professional knowledge and actual job requirements by 64 (69.6%), lack of experience by 61 (66.3%), weak management knowledge by 60 (65.2%), unfamiliarity with business operations by 52 (56.5%), poor communication skills by 36 (39.1%), and weak learning ability by 29 (31.5%).



(a)



(b)

Figure 6. (a) & (b) Analysis of humanistic literacy and comprehensive skills of talents required for the integrated development of agriculture, culture and tourism.

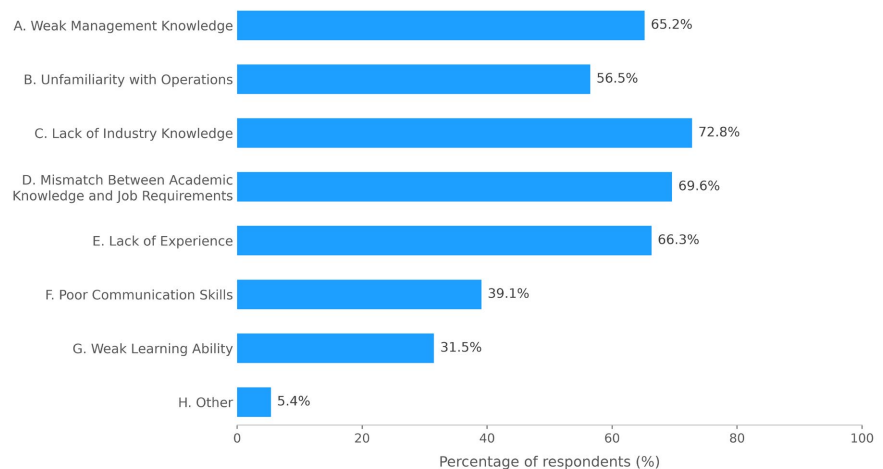
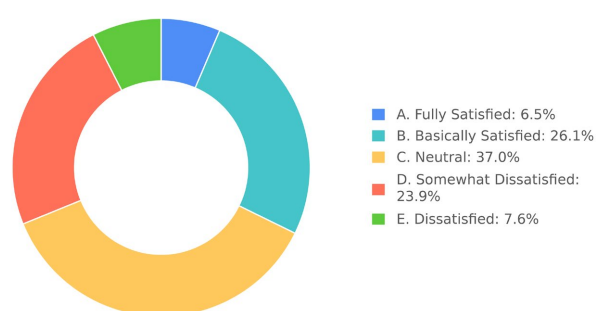


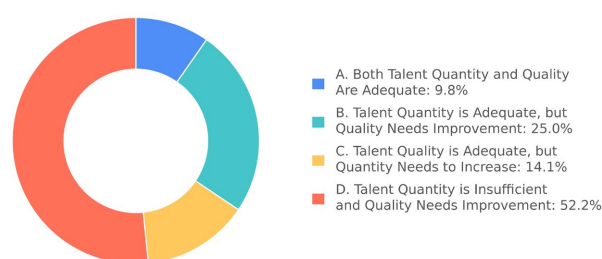
Figure 7. Analysis of problems of locally-needed talents in actual job positions.

8) Whether the Current Situation and Resource Quality of Agricultural, Cul-

tural, and Tourism Talents Can Meet Local Development. These were two single-choice questions. As shown in the statistical chart (**Figure 8(a)** & **Figure 8(b)**), only 6 of the 92 valid respondents (6.5%) believe that local talent resources can fully meet local development needs. Those believing it basically meets needs account for 24 respondents (26.1%), while those considering it average, insufficient, or not meeting needs total 63 respondents (68.5%). The situation regarding the development status of agricultural, cultural, and tourism talents is even less optimistic. Only 9 respondents (9.8%) believe the local talent quantity and quality are reasonable; 48 respondents (52.2%, over half) believe the talent quantity is insufficient and quality also needs improvement; 36 respondents (39.1%) believe either quantity or quality alone needs improvement; 14 respondents (15.2%) believe the talent quantity is adequate but quality needs improvement; 14 respondents (15.2%) believe the talent quality is adequate but quantity needs to increase; 14 respondents (15.2%) believe the talent quantity is insufficient and quality needs improvement. It can be said that cultivating agricultural, cultural, and tourism talents is an arduous task with a long way to go.



(a)



(b)

Figure 8. (a) & (b) Analysis of the current situation and resource quality of agriculture-culture-tourism talents.

9) How the Government Should Promote Talent Revitalization and Better Retain Talents. This section includes two questions, both multiple-choice. The results are shown in statistical charts (**Figure 9**, **Figure 10**). Regarding how the government should promote rural talent revitalization, the top three responses are: government providing preferential policies and improving reward mechanisms; implementing policies and leveraging the role of local talents; and establishing rural revitalization classes to cultivate retainable talents. Regarding how to better retain talents, providing convenient living conditions and a favorable ecological environment, increasing support policies for talents willing to take root in rural

areas, and strengthening the promotion of the “Three Supports and One Assistance” policy rank in the top three. These results provide a basis for the government to more effectively attract, cultivate, and retain talents. Specifically (N = 92), regarding promoting rural talent revitalization, 73 respondents (79.3%) selected “government providing preferential policies and improving reward mechanisms”, 72 (78.3%) selected “implementing policies and leveraging the role of local talents”, and 66 (71.7%) selected “establishing rural revitalization classes to cultivate retainable talents”; regarding retaining talents, 76 respondents (82.6%) selected “providing convenient living conditions and a favorable ecological environment”, 75 (81.5%) selected “increasing support policies for talents willing to take root in rural areas”, and 67 (72.8%) selected “strengthening the promotion of the ‘Three Supports and One Assistance’ policy”.

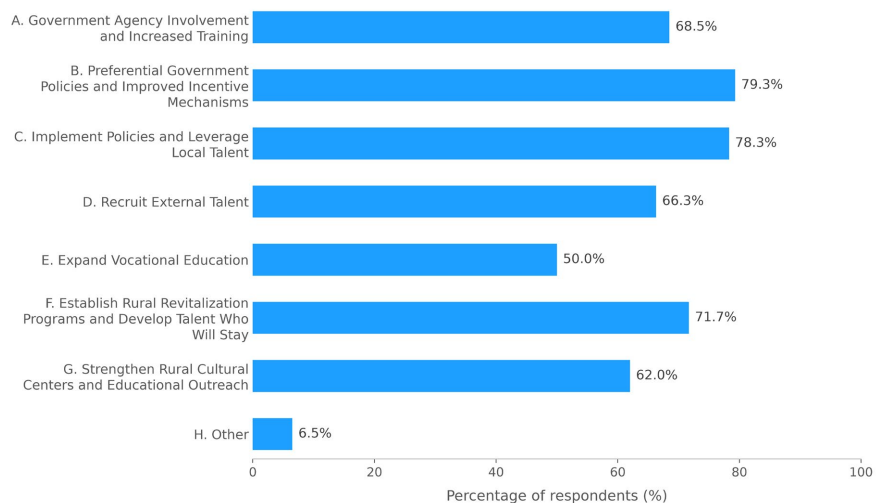


Figure 9. Investigation and analysis of government’s efforts to promote rural talent revitalization.

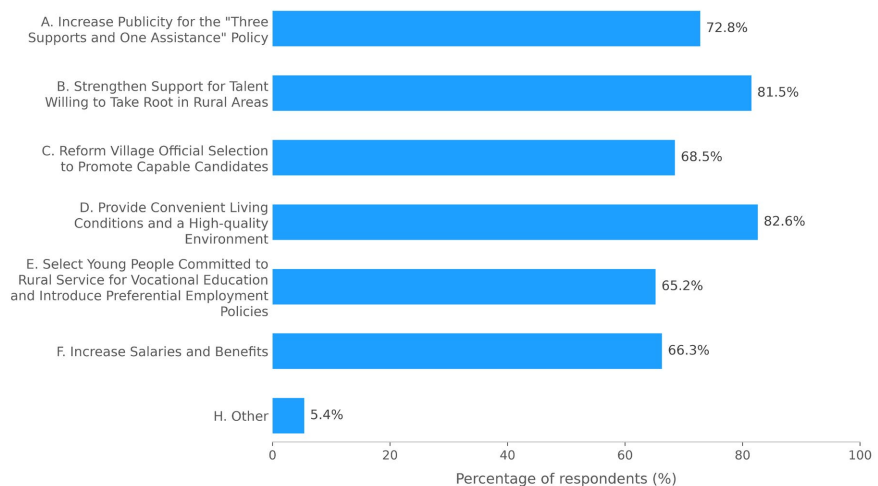


Figure 10. Investigation and analysis of government’s measures to retain talents for rural revitalization.

10) Opinions and Suggestions on Cultivating Agricultural, Cultural, and Tourism Talents. This was an open-ended question, answered by 28 of the 92 valid respondents (30.4%). Of the 28 responses, 15 were non-substantive (e.g., “none” or “no comment”), leaving 13 substantive responses for coding. The responses were read and inductively coded: statements expressing similar ideas were grouped into common themes, and the frequency of each theme was counted. The coding yielded the following themes: salary and benefits as incentive guarantees (4 responses); government policy and funding support (4); training and talent cultivation system building (2); school-local cooperation and talent channels (1); guiding young people to return home and play a leading role (1); infrastructure and ecological environment improvement (1); and development model optimization such as “small but refined” development (1). Overall, the suggestions focus on “policy support”, “salary and benefits”, “retaining talents”, and “college students returning home”. From the perspective of rural work practice, strengthening professional talent cultivation, building communication bridges between schools and local areas, promoting college students to return home as pioneers and leaders, improving infrastructure construction levels, and being able to retain talents are crucial.

4. Research Conclusions

4.1. The Composite and Practical Orientation of Agricultural, Cultural, and Tourism Talent Demand

The survey results of this study clearly reveal two core characteristics of the demand for agricultural, cultural, and tourism talents in the context of rural revitalization: a composite knowledge structure and a strong practical ability orientation. Firstly, there is a significant “composite” nature in the types of talents and competency requirements. The deep integration and development of the agriculture-culture-tourism industry no longer relies solely on talents with single skills but urgently requires comprehensive “one specialty, multiple competencies” talents capable of spanning multiple fields such as agriculture, culture, tourism, management, and digital marketing. Secondly, the survey data highlights the practical orientation of talent cultivation. The primary source of talents for local economic development is “talents cultivated through local production practices” (selected by 73.9% of respondents). This strongly indicates that in the real rural field, practical experience in solving complex problems, deep understanding of local contexts, and flexible adaptability often hold greater value than mere academic background and theoretical knowledge. This reality poses a clear challenge to the current education system: it is necessary to completely reverse the cultivation tendency that emphasizes theory over practice. By deepening industry-education integration and school-enterprise cooperation, a practical teaching system based on real projects must be constructed, allowing students to learn, hone skills, and grow on the industrial frontline, thereby bridging the gap between “what is learned” and “what is used”.

4.2. Main Disconnection Points in the Current Talent Cultivation System

The survey data profoundly reveals a systemic mismatch between the supply side of agricultural, cultural, and tourism talents and the industrial demand side. The primary manifestation is a significant “knowledge-practice” gap, with current talents exhibiting problems such as “lack of industry knowledge” and “disconnect between learned professional knowledge and actual job requirements”. Because the questionnaire did not directly measure curriculum updating, the reported knowledge-practice gap should be treated as respondents’ perceptions rather than as direct measurements of the cultivation system; on this basis, we interpret the gap as suggesting that curriculum content in current programs may update slowly and fail to keep pace with new business formats, models, and skill requirements arising from agriculture-culture-tourism integration, such as rural digital marketing and heritage culture activation and operation. Secondly, read together with the reported problems of “lack of experience” and the “knowledge-practice” gap, we interpret the cultivation process as showing a likely “emphasis on theory, neglect of practice” tendency; this is an interpretive judgment rather than a direct survey finding, as teaching methods were not measured by the questionnaire. It is plausible that teaching still relies heavily on theoretical inculcation in classrooms, with insufficient project-based and scenario-specific practical teaching, making it difficult for students to develop comprehensive abilities to solve complex real-world problems in rural areas.

The underlying cause of this disconnection may be closely related to the faculty structure. The questionnaire did not directly measure teachers’ industry experience; drawing on prior studies and the respondents’ reported “knowledge-practice” gap, we conjecture that many teachers in higher education institutions and vocational colleges responsible for talent cultivation may lack long-term practical experience or deep participation in the agriculture-culture-tourism industry, and that their knowledge systems may lag behind updates, making it challenging to integrate fresh industry cases and practical experiences into teaching. Furthermore, a structural contradiction highlighted in the survey is particularly prominent: vocational college graduates, theoretically intended as high-skilled talents oriented towards the frontline, account for a relatively low proportion in actual rural talent sources. This sharply indicates that the vocational education system is disconnected from the rapidly developing rural agriculture-culture-tourism industry demands in terms of program offerings and cultivation positioning. The talents it cultivates insufficiently meet the needs of the rural market regarding skill adaptability and local identity. In summary, the current talent cultivation system exhibits systematic lags and disconnections in curriculum content, teaching methods, faculty allocation, and articulation with vocational education, which are the core crux of the talent supply-demand contradiction.

4.3. Constructing a Synergistic Cultivation Pathway of “Cultivating, Attracting, Retaining, and Utilizing”

Based on the above findings, this paper proposes systematically constructing an agricultural, cultural, and tourism talent cultivation system from the following six aspects:

1) Innovating Educational Philosophy, Internationalizing Talent Cultivation Vision

“Philosophy is the forerunner of action”. Industrial transformation and consumption upgrades have placed new demands on agricultural, cultural, and tourism talents. Currently, the tourism market is rapidly transitioning from mass tourism to personalized and high-quality tourism. Niche markets such as “Generation Z” and the “silver economy” are emerging rapidly, with tourists increasingly pursuing emotional and experiential high-end consumption. However, the talent cultivation philosophies of many institutions still lag behind industrial development, confined to traditional, single-skill oriented output, leading to a severe disconnect between talent supply and market demand. Therefore, it is imperative to accelerate the transformation of talent cultivation orientation from “single-skill-oriented” to “composite-innovative-oriented”, cultivating new talents who understand business integration, scenic area construction, and possess smart tourism operation capabilities.

Simultaneously, rural tourism in China is gradually stepping onto the world stage. As of 2023, eight Chinese villages have been selected as the World Tourism Organization’s (UN Tourism) “Best Tourism Villages”, ranking first globally (UN Tourism, 2023). These villages attract numerous international tourists with their unique ecology, culture, and living experiences. International tourism is essentially a process of cultural experience and dissemination. The cultural diversity and life aesthetics inherent in Chinese villages are becoming significant resources attracting global tourists. Facing the trend of rural tourism globalization and the growing demand for high-end cultural tourism talents in both domestic and international markets, universities must adopt an international cultivation philosophy, actively learn from advanced international educational models, and focus on cultivating composite talents with cross-cultural communication skills, international vision, and profound humanistic literacy. This will not only enhance the international competitiveness of China’s rural tourism but also contribute Chinese wisdom and solutions to the sustainable development of global tourism.

2) Adjusting Program Offerings, Precision in Talent Cultivation Objectives

Program offerings in colleges and universities are the fundamental units of talent cultivation and should closely align with industrial development needs. Currently, tourism management program offerings mainly revolve around four traditional directions: Tourism Management, Hotel Management, Exhibition Economy and Management, and Tourism Management and Service Education (Chen et al., 2021). However, against the backdrop of deep agriculture-culture-tourism integration, the existing program system struggles to cover emerging fields such

as rural cultural tourism, homestay operation, and smart tourism, leading to a mismatch between talent supply and industrial demand.

To enhance the relevance and adaptability of talent cultivation, the program structure urgently requires optimization and adjustment from three aspects: First, promote the upgrading and transformation of existing programs, for example, expanding “Hotel Management” to “Hotel Management and Digital Operation”, integrating modern skills like smart management and data analysis. Second, actively add new program directions, establishing specialized programs such as “Rural Cultural Tourism Planning and Operation” and “Homestay Development and Management” around rural revitalization and culture-tourism integration. Third, vigorously build interdisciplinary programs, breaking disciplinary boundaries between tourism, agriculture, culture, art, communication, etc., exploring the establishment of composite programs like “Tourism Performing Arts” and “Heritage Tourism”, cultivating interdisciplinary talents capable of handling complex industrial scenarios.

In this process, clear and precise cultivation objectives must be established simultaneously. Closely centering on national strategies such as rural revitalization and building a culturally strong country, focusing on new business formats like study tourism, customized tourism, film-induced tourism, and rural tourism, a high-quality composite talent cultivation system centered on “agriculture-culture-tourism integration” should be systematically constructed. This system aims to equip students not only with theories and skills in modern tourism management but also with comprehensive abilities in agricultural fundamentals, cultural creativity, market operation, and innovation and entrepreneurship, thereby providing precise and sustainable talent support for the high-quality development of rural revitalization and the cultural tourism industry.

3) Reshaping the Curriculum System, Modernizing Talent Cultivation Thinking

Curriculum construction is the core carrier of talent cultivation. Faced with the new demands of agriculture-culture-tourism integration development, the original curriculum structure must be systematically reshaped to reflect interdisciplinary characteristics and align with industry realities. According to the “National Standards for Teaching Quality of Undergraduate Programs in Ordinary Higher Education Institutions” (Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China, 2018), tourism management programs have established four core courses, including Introduction to Tourism Studies, forming a “4 + X” curriculum system framework. Building upon this, the cultivation of agricultural, cultural, and tourism talents should break traditional boundaries, organically integrating knowledge from fields such as agricultural production and management, local cultural heritage, rural governance, and cultural heritage protection into the curriculum modules, constructing a composite curriculum cluster of “Agriculture + Culture + Tourism + X”.

The key to curriculum reshaping lies in modernizing talent cultivation think-

ing. This not only means adding cutting-edge courses in digital marketing, smart tourism, and data analysis in content, but also permeating the teaching process with the development philosophy of Chinese-style modernization, focusing on cultivating students' sense of national identity, ecological awareness, innovative spirit, and entrepreneurial ability. Particularly crucial is actively responding to the industrial digital transformation trend by introducing application scenarios and practical cases of new technologies such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and big data into the classroom, strengthening students' operational management, creative planning, and problem-solving abilities in digital environments. Through the modernized reconstruction of the curriculum system, the aim is to cultivate a new generation of agricultural, cultural, and tourism management talents who are deeply rooted in local communities yet possess internet thinking and technological literacy, thereby effectively supporting the modernization transformation and sustainable development of rural industries.

4) Reforming Teaching Models, Diversifying Talent Cultivation Methods

The growth of agricultural, cultural, and tourism talents relies on the comprehensive effect of multiple pathways. Traditional cultivation models, overly concentrated on school education, struggle to meet the industrial demand for practical and composite talents. Existing research indicates that substantial improvement in talent ability stems from the systematic combination of education, training, and on-the-job practice (Bai, 2019; Garavan, 1997). Therefore, it is necessary to establish an open, lifelong educational view, break the boundaries between campus and industry, and construct a "Education-Training-Practice" three-dimensionally linked cultivation system.

Given the highly practical and comprehensive nature of the agriculture-culture-tourism industry, teaching models should undergo a deep transformation towards "practice-oriented education." The core pathway lies in establishing a systematic industry-university-research collaborative mechanism, promoting the alignment of curriculum content with professional standards and the integration of teaching processes with production processes. Specifically, project-based teaching and task-driven learning models should be widely adopted. Relying on school-enterprise cooperation platforms, students should be guided to directly participate in real projects such as rural cultural tourism product development and operation promotion. By transforming key links of the industrial chain into teaching scenarios, students acquire professional knowledge and exercise innovation and operation abilities while solving practical problems. This practice-oriented, diversified cultivation approach can effectively promote the matching of talent supply and demand, achieving bidirectional empowerment of personal growth and industrial development.

5) Cultivating Local Talents, Diversifying Talent Introduction Channels

The integrated development of agriculture, culture, and tourism must be rooted in local talents. The survey shows that locally grown talents cultivated through practice are the main force in rural development (selected by 68 of 92 respondents,

73.9%), indicating that “internal cultivation” should be the core of talent team construction. It is essential to select key local young and middle-aged personnel, enhance their professional competence and operational capabilities through systematic training, and make them the endogenous driving force for rural revitalization. Concurrently, vocational training for rural cadres and ordinary farmers should be strengthened, organizing field visits and study tours, and gradually establishing a certification and information management system for professional farmers to promote the professionalization and standardization of local talent development.

While solidifying the local foundation, external introduction channels should be actively expanded, forming a talent echelon combining “internal cultivation and external introduction”. On one hand, experts and scholars from universities, research institutions, and enterprises can be flexibly introduced to establish rural revitalization think tanks, providing planning, technical, and management consulting for rural areas. On the other hand, talent return policies need improvement. Through financial support, salary guarantees, and career development support, college students, returning entrepreneurs, and composite professionals should be attracted to devote themselves to rural development. Furthermore, local governments, enterprises, and educational institutions can be promoted to engage in “order-based” joint training, directionally supplying specialized talents that meet local industrial needs, achieving sustainable talent supply and precise matching, collectively supporting the high-quality development of agriculture-culture-tourism integration.

6) Enhancing Professional Competence, Achieving Efficiency in Faculty Team Development

A high-quality faculty team is the cornerstone of the quality of agricultural, cultural, and tourism talent cultivation. Currently, teachers’ knowledge systems and practical experience face severe challenges. With the deep integration of digital technology and cultural tourism formats, many teachers’ existing knowledge structures find it difficult to effectively guide cutting-edge industrial practices. An urgent transformation from “theory imparters” to “leaders in industry-education integration” is required.

Promoting faculty team development requires coordinated efforts at both individual and systemic levels. At the individual teacher level, self-development awareness should be strengthened, proactively updating knowledge reserves through specialized training and academic exchanges. More importantly, teachers must delve into the industrial frontline, accumulating practical experience in authentic agriculture-culture-tourism operation and management through enterprise secondments and project cooperation, achieving a substantive transformation from “academic-oriented” to “dual-qualified” teachers.

At the institutional and policy level, systematic support and incentive systems should be constructed. First, special incentive policies for teacher practical training and capacity enhancement need to be formulated and implemented, encouraging teachers to integrate new industry trends and cases into teaching. Second,

efforts should focus on optimizing the faculty structure, strengthening the cultivation of young and middle-aged key teachers, while actively introducing high-level talents with industrial backgrounds and extensively hiring senior industry experts as part-time mentors, forming a teaching team characterized by “full-time and part-time combination, complementary advantages”. Finally, teacher evaluation reform must be deepened, fully recognizing teachers’ contributions to industrial services and practical teaching achievements in assessment, appointment, and promotion processes, smoothing their career development channels. Only by building a faculty team that is proficient in theory, familiar with industry, rationally structured, and full of vitality can solid talent support and intellectual guarantees be provided for agriculture-culture-tourism integration.

5. Conclusion

In the contemporary context of the in-depth implementation of the rural revitalization strategy, the agriculture-culture-tourism industry is experiencing leapfrog development, presenting both opportunities and challenges for the cultivation of agricultural, cultural, and tourism talents. To adapt to the development trends of the agriculture-culture-tourism industry, tourism colleges, universities, and relevant talent cultivation institutions must transform their talent cultivation concepts, closely follow market demands, continuously optimize curriculum structures, innovate teaching models, strengthen faculty team construction, and cultivate high-level, composite talents adapted to the development needs of the agriculture-culture-tourism industry. This is essential to achieve an effective supply for rural talent revitalization and empower the high-quality development of rural industrial revitalization. It should be noted that the empirical findings of this study are based on an exploratory, non-random sample of 92 frontline practitioners; the conclusions should therefore be regarded as exploratory evidence and hypotheses to be further verified through large-scale, probability-based sampling, rather than as population-level estimates.

Funding

General Project of the National Social Science Fund of China, “Research on the Development, Utilization, and Innovation Model of Chinese Cultural Digital Resources Based on the Metaverse” (23BGL323); University Philosophy and Social Science Project of the Jiangsu Provincial Department of Education, “Research on the Cultivation Model of Jiangsu Agricultural, Cultural, and Tourism Talents in the Context of Rural Revitalization” (2021SJA2330).

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

References

Bai, C. H. (2019). Talent Training in the Industry under the Background of Integration of

- Culture and Tourism: Practical Needs and Theoretical Issues. *Frontiers*, No. 11, 36-42. (In Chinese)
- Bao, J. G., Feng, J., Huang, X. H., Zhao, X., Wu, Y., Wang, K., Chu, B., Li, D., Wang, H., & Luo, X. (2021). Special Discussion: Talent Cultivation in the Culture and Tourism Industry. *Tourism Forum*, 14, 1-16. (In Chinese)
<https://doi.org/10.15962/j.cnki.tourismforum.202105038>
- Chen, L., Feng, N., & Xu, Z. (2021). Research on the Cultivation of New-Type Tourism Talents under the Background of Cultural and Tourism Integration: Opportunities, Challenges, and Implementation Paths. *Journal of Jinling Institute of Technology (Social Science Edition)*, 35, 76-81. (In Chinese)
- Garavan, T. N. (1997). Training, Development, Education and Learning: Different and Same? *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 21, 39-50. (In Chinese)
- Liu, H. (2021). Research on the Innovation of Cultural and Tourism Integration Talent Training Mode in Gansu Province under the Strategy of Building a Strong Cultural Tourism Province. *Comparative Study of Cultural Innovation*, 5, 168-172.
- Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China (2018). *National Standards for Teaching Quality of Undergraduate Programs in Ordinary Higher Education Institutions*. Beijing: Higher Education Press.
https://www.ahjzu.edu.cn/_upload/article/files/5d/fb/b25012054ec09025dd70e8f5e764/69701a46-4472-47f2-86f7-a3dd7f705486.pdf
- UN Tourism (2023). *Best Tourism Villages 2023*. <https://www.unwto.org/tourism-villages>
- Xi, J. (2022). *Hold High the Great Banner of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics and Strive in Unity for the Comprehensive Construction of a Modern Socialist Country: Report to the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China*. People's Publishing House.
<https://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202210/25/WS6357e484a310fd2b29e7e7de.html>
- Yang, M. (2022). Reform Path of the Supply Side of Tourism Talent Cultivation in the New Era. *Social Scientist*, No. 1, 52-56.

Appendix: Questionnaire Items and Response Options

The questionnaire contained 18 items. Items 1, 2, 4, 5, 14, and 15 were single-choice items; Items 6 - 13, 16, and 17 were multiple-choice items in which respondents could select any number of options; Items 3 and 18 were open-ended questions. Item 14 used a five-point scale anchored at “completely satisfying” (1) and “not satisfying” (5). The item pool was adapted from prior studies on culture and tourism talent cultivation and revised by the research team to fit the frontline rural context before formal administration. The item wording and response options were as follows (options with no responses are not listed):

1. Your gender is: A. Male; B. Female.
2. Your age is: 18 - 30; 31 - 45; 46 - 60.
3. The name of your village or town (open-ended).
4. Your identity is: retired cadres or veterans; entrepreneurs or managers; scientific and technical personnel; students; returned migrant workers; local villagers.
5. Your education level is: junior high school or below; senior high school (including secondary vocational school, vocational high school, and technical school); junior college; bachelor's degree; master's degree or above.
6. Factors affecting the development of local agriculture-culture-tourism integration (multiple choice): talent shortage; insufficient technological content; insufficient national policy and financial support; inadequate transportation and communication; the deepening aging of the surplus labor force; other.
7. The talents most lacking for local agriculture-culture-tourism integration (multiple choice): professional farmers; agricultural experts; tourism experts; industrial leaders; management talents; grassroots township government leaders; outstanding village cadres; grassroots service project personnel.
8. Sources of talents in the process of local economic development (multiple choice): talents introduced by the government from outside; talents grown through local production practice; returning college students; technical personnel in government departments; vocational college graduates; other.
9. Types of talents needed for local agriculture-culture-tourism integration (multiple choice): skilled talents; specialized talents; versatile (general-purpose) talents; innovative talents.
10. Professional backgrounds of needed talents (multiple choice): tourism management; hotel management; marketing; business management; history, geography, and literature-related majors; computer-related majors; new media-related majors; other.
11. Humanistic literacy required of needed talents (multiple choice): dedication (professionalism); work experience; educational level; professional competence; technical skills; other.
12. Comprehensive skills required of needed talents (multiple choice): marketing awareness; knowledge level; organizational management ability; innovation and creativity ability; interpersonal communication ability; language expression

ability; self-learning ability; other.

13. Prominent problems of needed talents in actual positions (multiple choice): weak management knowledge; unfamiliarity with business operations; lack of industry knowledge; a disconnect between learned professional knowledge and actual job requirements; lack of experience; poor communication skills; weak learning ability; other.

14. Can the quality of local talent resources meet the needs of rural revitalization development (single choice, five-point scale): completely satisfying (1); basically satisfying (2); average (3); not quite satisfying (4); not satisfying (5).

15. The current status of locally needed agriculture-culture-tourism talents (single choice): both quantity and quality are relatively reasonable; quantity is satisfied but quality needs improvement; quality is satisfied but quantity needs increasing; quantity is insufficient and quality also needs improvement.

16. How should the government promote rural talent revitalization (multiple choice): government participation and increased training; providing preferential policies and improving reward mechanisms; implementing policies and leveraging the role of local talents; attracting external talents; vigorously developing vocational education; establishing rural revitalization classes to cultivate talents who can stay; leveraging rural cultural stations and strengthening education; other.

17. How can talents be better retained (multiple choice): strengthening the publicity of the “Three Supports and One Assistance” policy; increasing support policies for talents willing to take root in rural areas; updating the selection system for village officials so that the capable rise; providing convenient living conditions and a favorable ecological environment; selecting young people willing to serve rural areas to attend vocational colleges with preferential policies; raising salaries and benefits; other.

18. Your valuable opinions and suggestions on the cultivation of agriculture-culture-tourism talents (open-ended).