

# An Analysis of the Realistic Dilemma and Optimization of the Citizenization of Agricultural Transfer Population

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**Abstract:** *Both urban and rural areas are the focus of China 's development in the future. Solving the urban-rural dual difference and promoting the citizenization of agricultural transfer population are important ways to promote the realization of the Chinese dream. This study believes that there are three dilemmas in the citizenization of agricultural transfer population, which mainly include : the coexistence of 'Can't' and 'won't' of the household registration of agricultural transfer population, the failure of urban household registration as a means to achieve the expected goals, and the integration of agricultural transfer population into the community. In view of the above problems, this paper puts forward the following countermeasures and suggestions : the household registration management system should gradually unify urban and rural areas, formulate perfect employment policies, and improve the citizenization ability of agricultural transfer population.*

**Keywords:** *the citizenization of agricultural transfer population; household registration system; feasible capability*

## 1. Introduction

Joseph Stiglitz, the Nobel laureate in economics, once said : ' One of the two biggest things in the process of world development in this century is China 's urbanization. ' " People 's cities are built by the people, and people 's cities are for the people. " China 's urban development has always followed the people-centered thinking, and the scale and quality of China 's urban development have achieved unprecedented development. Some domestic scholars believe that urbanization is equivalent to citizenization to a certain extent. Although this idea is consistent with our people-centered development concept, the author believes that urbanization is not equivalent to citizenization, but urbanization includes citizenization. Citizenization is a part of urbanization, and citizenization is one of the important indicators to measure urbanization.[1]

The flow of population from rural areas to cities is an inevitable trend in the development of the world today. Especially with the rapid development of urbanization, the number of population flows is unprecedented. From 2010 to 2020, China 's urban population increased by more than 230 million people, and the proportion of urban population increased from 49.68 % in 2010 to 63.89 % in 2020. In 2020, more than 100 million agricultural transfer population settled in cities and towns. Although the number of agricultural transfer population settled in cities and towns has greatly increased, the quality of citizenization is not satisfactory, especially the many ' urban diseases ' exposed in cities today, which have an important impact on the basic necessities of life of this part of the citizenized population. Some scholars have summarized the development of urbanization into four stages : urbanization, suburbanization, counter-urbanization and re-urbanization. The former is not simply independent, but interrelated and interactive. The latter stage is usually a passive repair of various social problems arising from the previous stage. According to this idea, re-urbanization and re-citizenization are all aimed at the problems in the process of urbanization. Since the reform and opening up, social technology has been developing continuously, and human civilization has made unprecedented progress. Traditional agriculture has no longer adapted to the needs of modern development. Large-scale machine production has gradually become popular, and a large number of farmers have been liberated. In order to seek higher income, they have turned to non-agricultural production in the city. In the long run, this part of farmers has gained a foothold in the city and realized the transfer of occupation and region. However, it has not been more compatible with the city or more integrated. The original living habits still drive and guide their behavior. Perhaps only the income level has been improved. Their social status and inner ideological realm have not been greatly improved. On the

surface, they have obtained urban household registration, but in fact, they have not enjoyed the huge benefits brought by urban household registration. Even if some migrant workers have been working in cities for many years, agricultural income is no longer the main source of their income, but it is difficult for migrant workers to obtain the same rights as urban residents in cities, and land is still regarded as the main social security function. Migrant workers continue to cut the natural connection with the countryside, accelerate the reform of the land system, improve farmers' sense of acquisition, protect farmers' land property rights, and increase farmers' property income. It is an important step to realize the citizenization of farmers and the only way to accelerate the development of modern agriculture.[2]

## **2. Triple dilemmas of citizenization of agricultural transfer population**

### ***2.1. The household registration of agricultural transfer population 'Can't' and 'won't' coexist***

According to the seventh national census report, China's urban population is 901.99 million, and the rural population is 509.79 million. Compared with the sixth census, the rural population has shown a decreasing trend in the overall population increase trend in the country. Compared with the decrease of the rural population, the urban population has shown a huge increase. The proportion of the urban population in the seventh census is 63.89 % higher than the proportion of the urban population in the sixth census. The proportion of 49.68 % was 14.21 %, which was enough to reflect the great vitality of urban development and the enthusiasm of the people for the city. However, a series of institutional barriers represented by the household registration system have always been an important obstacle to the citizenization of agricultural transfer population. A large number of scholars believe that the main obstacle to the process of citizenization of agricultural transfer population comes from the economic structure of urban-rural dual division and the institutional exclusion of household registration regulations. Xi Xuehong pointed out that farmers have not been separated from the countryside from the system, and the household registration system has constrained farmers. Farmers have been excluded from the household registration system from their identity and behavior. The inequality of employment system, medical system and education system based on the household registration system has led to a huge difference between the agricultural transfer population and urban residents, which has been seriously affected from identity to status. In addition, Cai Fang, Zhou Daming and other scholars also dissect the problem at the institutional level, believing that the dual social system of urban-rural division represented by the household registration system hinders the integration of agricultural transfer population into the city.[3]

Although since the 1990s, China's major cities have been actively promoting the reform of the household registration system, they have not fundamentally solved the barriers arising from the household registration system, and the urban-rural dual structure still exists. Although many big cities have introduced policies to attract talents to settle down, the settlement of ordinary people in cities is not only for certain benefits or policies, but also because of the attractiveness and development prospects of the city itself. In addition, the main body of the rural transfer population is farmers, and the talent policy will keep most farmers out. Nowadays, many cities have introduced housing, automobiles and other household registration-related purchase restriction policies, which has further raised the threshold for the settlement of agricultural transfer population. At the same time, due to the national policy orientation, for a long time, the dividend of rural household registration has greatly increased. Most farmers do not give up their rights and interests such as land and homestead for no reason. There has been a phenomenon of reverse citizenization that people do not go away, and even some rich farmers have also produced a phenomenon of exclusion of urban household registration. This phenomenon is more common in some suburban areas. The difficulty of urbanization has become the exclusion of urban household registration, so it is more willing to retain agricultural household registration. The urbanization of agricultural transfer population has the dilemma of 'can't' and 'don't want'. The objective conditions are limited and the subjective conditions are not positive. Therefore, there are also various obstacles to promote the urbanization of agricultural transfer population. It is difficult for agricultural transfer population to integrate into the city. Most of the domestic scholars use the push-pull theory to study the great attraction of the city to the agricultural transfer population. In the past, scholars believed that there is a huge pull in the city, and there is a huge push in the countryside, which promotes the citizenization of the agricultural transfer population. However, as far as the above is concerned, there is a huge dividend in the current and future agricultural household registration, and the thrust of the countryside is significantly reduced, and it is difficult to promote the re-urbanization of the agricultural transfer population.

### ***2.2. As a means of urban household registration failed to achieve the desired objectives***

In essence, the urban household registration population is a crucial goal to measure the level of urbanization in a city, and it should also become the goal pursued by ordinary people. However, under the current policy and form, we can see that the purpose of agricultural transfer population is not to obtain urban household registration. Their purpose is to obtain medical resources, public services, social status, and social opportunities that match the urban household registration. Most of the agricultural transfer population yearn for the city and are eager to get enough work to support themselves and their families in the city, but there is a gap between the 'ideal' and the reality. Even if a large number of agricultural transfer population have obtained the means of 'urban household registration' through various efforts, their original purpose has not been achieved. Most of the agricultural transfer population are engaged in dirty, tired and dangerous work that most urban residents are reluctant to engage in. Usually, the income is unstable, the work is not proper, and the labor intensity is high, resulting in low subjective well-being of these citizenized population. Although the income is higher than that in rural areas, the cost is also higher. In daily life, they are faced with the dilemma of low income and high consumption compared with urban residents, which seriously affects their sense of gain and happiness. Especially in the face of difficulties such as buying a house, these citizenized population more reflects a sense of powerlessness and helplessness. It is believed that the agricultural transfer population will first choose large cities for development and settlement, but with the increase of housing, transportation, social and other pressures, they will gradually change their accounts in small and medium-sized cities, and it is difficult to have a long-term foothold in large cities. In small cities, the salary level is low, and the dilemma is between the agricultural transfer account personnel. Therefore, the agricultural transfer population often shows a 'come and go' feature in the long-term development process after entering the city. After many flows, they finally choose to settle down in small and medium-sized cities.[4]

While a large number of people gather in cities to provide necessary human capital and development prospects for urban development, cities can also provide better wages, welfare benefits and development opportunities for ordinary people. However, such a seemingly equal two-way interactive selection process has also affected various problems, resulting in housing shortage, environmental pollution, traffic congestion and many other urban diseases, and has caused difficulties for the agricultural transfer population to integrate into the city. What was supposed to be a win-win situation has now created numerous problems.

### ***2.3. There are problems in the integration of agricultural transfer population into the community***

The decisive factor for agricultural transfer population to choose urban transfer household registration and development is income, and the level of income also directly determines the degree of integration of agricultural transfer population into the community. The economic level can be integrated to ensure that the agricultural population can have long-term stable development opportunities in the city. In recent years, the income level of agricultural transfer population has increased, and the ability of urban economic integration has also improved, but it is still lower than that of urban residents. Most of the agricultural transfer population is concentrated in the manufacturing industry, construction industry, catering, service industry and other secondary and tertiary industries. According to the National Bureau of Statistics, the average monthly income of urban non-private sector employees in 2022 is 9502 yuan, while the average monthly wages of manufacturing, construction, wholesale and retail trade, transportation and postal services, accommodation and catering, residential service repair and other service industries are 4694 yuan, 5358 yuan, 3979 yuan, 5301 yuan, 3824 and 3710 respectively. The monthly average wage of the agricultural transfer population engaged in a large proportion of the industry is quite different from the monthly average wage of the national urban non-private units. Compared with the urban population, it faces greater housing and living pressure.

The difference between urban and rural areas is not caused by simple reasons. Rural areas are face-to-face conversations, exchanges and exchanges between people. In such a social structure, social relations are mainly centered on individuals and gradually expanded outward. Rural society can be said to be a mapping of traditional Chinese rural society. Each family has its own sufficient family space and land for work. Social relations are mainly based on blood, and people occasionally have the need for social relations. Zhou Xiaohong believes that the traditional rural relationship should be mainly understood from the two aspects of 'country' and 'soil'. Based on the two aspects, the social relationship of the traditional rural society is formed, and a small-scale peasant consciousness is

gradually formed. This idea is still widespread in the current rural areas of China. Li Peilin also pointed out that although migrant workers have entered the city physically and lived in the city, they have not been well integrated into the city in terms of spirit or other aspects. The rural areas mainly establish a circle based on kinship, while the city mainly emphasizes karma, and the construction of a circle based on karma requires them to change their original habits and overcome the drawbacks caused by path dependence. The sudden entry of agricultural transfer population into the city will produce a sense of tension, and the complicated interpersonal relationship will give these transfer population a psychological burden. The agricultural transfer population will have different life experiences and psychological feelings from the countryside. Therefore, the rural migrant population also has difficulties in integrating into interpersonal communication, leisure and entertainment, and community activities.

If the economic income level is the primary factor for the agricultural transfer population to choose to transfer their household registration in the city, the social psychology of the agricultural transfer population is the final factor affecting the integration of the agricultural population into the city. Once the agricultural transfer population has a sense of identity and belonging to the settled city and the living community, it is truly integrated into the city to form a psychological identity consistent with the urban residents. The agricultural transfer population and urban residents are also different in terms of values and emotional attribution. To a certain extent, there is bound to be a natural distrust between the two, which has caused the agricultural transfer population to integrate into the city. Difficulties, hidden barriers to integration into the community, and obstacles to the integration of the agricultural transfer population at the psychological level.

### **3. Thoughts on the re-citizenization of agricultural transfer population**

#### ***3.1. The household registration management system should be gradually unified in urban and rural areas***

The ultimate direction of the reform of the household registration system is that there is no " agricultural hukou " and " non-agricultural hukou, " that is, there is no difference in hukou, and all kinds of social differences attached to hukou are cancelled. However, the establishment of a unified urban and rural household registration system is not achieved overnight, but a slow process. Mei Jianming mentioned that the open household registration system has a very important positive effect on citizenization. 'Going over, staying down ' is the inherent requirement to promote the re-citizenization. The agricultural transfer population has a dependence on the city or a feeling, and the re-citizenization has a deeper level of motivation. It is not in line with the reality of China 's development to only develop cities or only develop rural areas. At present and in the future, it is necessary to combine urbanization development with rural revitalization, work together to promote the development of in-situ urbanization, and rural areas also have broad development space. The gradual establishment of a unified household registration management system can coordinate urban and rural development, reflect the principle of people-oriented, and fully stimulate the endogenous power of agricultural transfer population to ' enter the city ', and promote the positive development of urbanization. The final orientation should be that the city is attractive to the agricultural transfer population, and the agricultural transfer population chooses the city for settlement. It is not just because the city attached to the household registration system has the infrastructure and public services that the village does not have.

#### ***3.2. Develop a sound employment policy***

To a certain extent, employment is the first driving force to attract and retain agricultural transfer population. The formulation and implementation of policies must be able to enhance the feasibility of agricultural transfer population. Employment is the biggest livelihood of the people, and the quality of employment is high, which can help the agricultural transfer population to cross their own class limitations and improve their income level. The government should establish and improve a series of employment policies that are not based on household registration according to the objective reality and development status, break the rigid labor market employment policy, and continue to promote the improvement of the quality of life of the agricultural transfer population. At the same time, we should strengthen efforts to break a series of institutional obstacles that affect the equal employment of agricultural transfer population, fully broaden the channels for the expression of the interests of agricultural transfer population, and effectively ensure that the interests of agricultural transfer

population are valued, so as to further alleviate the pressure of agricultural transfer population to settle in cities. With the government's attention and strong impetus, the situation of 'good employment, high income, retention and high happiness' of agricultural transfer population can be further formed, and the re-urbanization of agricultural transfer population can be continuously promoted. The continuous inflow of agricultural transfer population is bound to add impetus to improving the level of re-urbanization.

### **3.3. Improving the citizenization ability of agricultural transfer population**

The full integration of agricultural transfer population into the city is not a simple process. To promote the integration of agricultural transfer population into the city, it is necessary to improve the vocational skills of agricultural transfer population, strengthen vocational skills training, improve their own development ability, and strengthen the accumulation of human capital of agricultural transfer population. When the agricultural transfer population's own quality and employment competitiveness are improved, it is easier to find stable and high-income jobs, so as to integrate into the city more quickly. The improvement of the citizenization ability of the agricultural transfer population is not achieved overnight. It is necessary to strengthen incentives and guidance, promote the agricultural transfer population to join the community construction and social development, enhance its sense of ownership, and also enhance the interaction between the agricultural transfer population and urban residents. It not only helps the agricultural transfer population to broaden their social networks, but also helps them to generate a sense of belonging, prompting them to integrate into the city more quickly in terms of psychology and emotion. At the same time, due to the dividends of the current rural household registration, while promoting the citizenization of the agricultural transfer population, we must also do a good job in the management of the "three rights" of rural land. According to the actual situation, we should formulate a paid working method for the introduction of the "three rights" of the agricultural transfer population, so that the agricultural transfer personnel can enter the city and develop without worries, and ensure that they can go with the people and bring funds into the city.

## **4. Conclusions**

The population is continuously flowing from the countryside to the city. The rural population is facing a shortage of resources. The city is facing the pressure of resource shortage caused by population convergence. Promoting the citizenization of agricultural transfer population to improve quality and efficiency is a response to the countryside and the city. It is necessary to ensure rural development and improve the quality of urban development. Only by integrating urban and rural areas into a unified comprehensive consideration, ensuring the smooth progress of the citizenization of agricultural transfer population, unblocking the policy space, and making precise efforts, can we achieve high-quality promotion of the citizenization of agricultural transfer population. Through the gradual unification of the urban and rural household registration system, the formulation of a sound employment policy, and the improvement of the citizenization ability of the agricultural transfer population, we will gradually explore the path of citizenization of the agricultural transfer population in line with China's national conditions. Only in this way can we ensure the transformation of human and talent advantages and help the smooth achievement of common prosperity.

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