

Two-Way Efforts: A Practical Exploration of Empowering New Employment Groups through Social Work in a Multiple Subjects Context

Hailing Wang, Mengyao Kang, Le Kang, Sijia Hu

Inner Mongolia Agricultural University, Hohhot, China, 010000

Abstract: This paper explores the practical path of how multiple subjects can empower new employment groups through collaborative cooperation and the application of professional social-work methods. It delves into the role of social work in addressing issues such as the lack of social security, limited career development, and mental health issues faced by new employment groups. This article innovatively proposes the empowerment concept of “two-way efforts”, emphasizing the demand to not only focus on the needs of new employment groups, but also stimulate their inherent motivation, promote their comprehensive development, and achieve the organic integration of personal value and social progress. In response to new realities and tasks, the paper calls for a more robust policy framework, stronger talent pipelines, and a deeper fusion of social work with new employment groups, aiming to explore more innovative practice models and contribute to building a more equitable, inclusive, and sustainable urban development.

Keywords: Multiple Subjects; Social Work; Empowerment; New Employment Groups

1. Introduction

Our society is fragmenting into ever more specialized groups, and we must keep pace with the rise of new groups—food delivery workers, ride-hailing drivers, e-commerce workers, and the like—by filling the gaps in both oversight and support. They need regulation, yes, but they also need services.^[1] From a macro perspective, new employment groups act as a new engine for economic development. They assist in the circulation of the consumer market, promote the deep integration of the digital and physical economies, and inject strong impetus into GDP growth, all while reallocating human capital more efficiently and bolstering economic resilience. As an emerging labor force, the new employment groups is a living manifestation of the Party’s people-centered development philosophy. Safeguarding their rights and advancing their prospects deepens the Party’s mass basis and rallies the mighty energy needed to forge ahead in the new era. From a micro level, new employment workers gain flexible employment opportunities, realize self-worth, and improve their lives through hard work while expanding new career paths. Yet, the new employment group often feels a sense of drifting and a lack of belonging due to their busy schedules and lack of social time, making it difficult for them to integrate into the mainstream social circle of the city.^[2] If these negative effects remain unaddressed, they will not only hinder individual development but also jeopardize the stability of the new employment groups as a whole. Safeguarding the rights of new employment groups and ensuring their healthy development are vital not only for sustaining economic and social progress but also for mobilizing public participation in primary-level governance. This is both a critical agenda for social work practice and an inescapable political imperative. At present, the government remains committed to serving the new employment groups through social governance model of Party leadership, and all sectors of society should engage. Above all, fostering the healthy and stable development of the new employment group is a duty social work practice cannot shirk.

2. Current Status of Social Work Empowerment for New Employment Groups

This survey selected a random sampling method for workers in the new employment group. A total of 532 questionnaires were distributed (including online electronic questionnaires and offline paper questionnaires), of which 481 were valid, with a response rate of over 90%. The survey subjects involved different ages, occupations, and genders, which has certain reference value. The following typical questionnaire samples are selected as research references.

2.1 The Current Situation of Implementing Social Work to Empower New Employment Groups

2.1.1 Policy support and guarantee are improving gradually

The CPC Central Committee has placed high priority on social work, issuing a series of important directives that set the course for its development in the new era. Documents such as *Opinions of the General Office of the CPC Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council on Strengthening the Contingent of Community Workers* and *Opinions of the General Office of the CPC Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council on Improving the Voluntary Service System in the New Era* provide institutional safeguards for social work by strengthening community workforces and building robust volunteer service systems. Since the 18th National Congress, the CPC Central Committee has repeatedly underscored the need to strengthen Party building and service management for the new employment groups. It calls for close attention to emerging business models, the integration of online and offline approaches, and effective ideological guidance and cohesive services for new employment groups. It also demands an improved social-security framework for flexible employment and stronger protection of the lawful rights and interests of new employment workers.

2.1.2 Multiple subject collaborative cooperation is gradually becoming a trend

Synergetics holds that, despite their differing attributes, diverse systems within an overall environment interact and cooperate with one another. Accordingly, government, social organizations, enterprises, and other subjects are gradually forging a pattern of collaborative engagement. The government plays a leading role in policy guidance and resource allocation; Social organizations rely on their professional advantages to provide diversified service projects, and enterprises have also begun to assume social responsibility. Some Internet platform enterprises provide safety education training and career development planning guidance for delivery staff and online ride-hailing drivers. Together, these actors provide comprehensive support for new employment groups.

2.1.3 Services are expanding in both content and form

Social-work services for new employment groups now cover every dimension of life, from daily life and employment to mental well-being. At the daily-life level, “service stations” offer new employment groups—food-delivery riders and couriers alike—spaces to rest and grab a meal. Professionally, vocational training and career guidance are used to enhance their employability. Psychologically, counseling and stress-relief sessions ease work-related pressure for new employment workers. Domestically, family-mediation and parenting support foster a harmonious home life for them.

2.1.4 The construction of professional talent team is steadily advancing

With the increasing attention to social work, the training of relevant professional talents has been strengthened. The practical setting of social work majors in universities is gradually tilting towards serving new employment groups, and several regions now run targeted workshops that equip practitioners with the specialized skills needed to support these workers. Community-based social work services are also reaching deeper into new employment groups, using professional interventions to help these workers integrate into the community and take part in its governance. In addition, the government collaborates with social organizations to promote the integration of social work education with practical services, cultivating professionals who command both sound theory and hands-on expertise. At the same time, incentives for social workers are being expanded to heighten their professional identity and sense of honor, drawing more talent into serving new employment groups.

2.1.5 The leading role of Party building has become increasingly prominent

Various regions are actively exploring new employment group service models under the guidance of party building, making party organizations a bridge connecting new employment groups with social resources. For example, Ordos launched a city-wide sweep of the social sector and a targeted campaign focused on “two types of enterprises and three new areas” (Mixed ownership enterprises and non-public enterprises, plus new economic organizations, new social organizations, and new employment groups). After mapping every relevant entity, the city established industry Party committees and organizations, creating branded Party-building initiatives that extend the Party’s reach and work in innovative ways.

2.2 The Current Predicaments in Social Work to Empower New Employment Groups

In response to the yes-or-no question “Have you ever heard of social work?”, 43.7 % answered yes, while 56.3 % said no. This points to a low public awareness of social work, with many new employment

groups holding misconceptions about its services and value, leading misunderstandings and concerns about receiving services. In addition, social work services require financial support and venues and facilities to serve new employment groups. If there is a cash-crunch, it will be difficult to meet the actual needs of new employment groups.

In the multiple-choice question “What help do you think social work can provide you?”, the largest proportion is the need to enhance social identity and sense of belonging, accounting for over 80%. The second largest proportion is to provide support and services in daily life, accounting for 79.3%. The demand for solving difficult problems in work reaches 72.8%, and the need for career development and skill improvement accounts for 54.9%, all of which account for more than half. It can be seen that the work of new employment groups is complex and distinctive, covering workers of different ages, genders, and occupations. Their needs are diverse, spanning psychological counseling, material assistance, employment support, and other areas, which requires social workers to possess a wide range of knowledge and skills. Yet some social workers lack in-depth knowledge of the new employment field, so their expertise may not precisely meet the needs of new employment groups. Moreover, the sheer size of these groups far outstrips the number of qualified social workers, resulting in low service coverage and an inability to satisfy their diverse demands.

In response to the question “What is your biggest difficulty at work?” more than 80 % cited unstable income as the primary source of stress, followed by heavy workloads and long hours that impose serious physical strain. In addition, lack of social security, low social recognition, high job safety risks, and restricted career development were issues widely reported by service recipients. Low public awareness of social work, combined with the dispersed and highly mobile nature of new employment groups, creates multiple obstacles. Workers have little time to learn about available services, and traditional, fixed-schedule programs fit poorly with their routines, stalling outreach. At the same time, the services themselves are constrained by scarce resources, funding shortfalls, and a shortage of qualified professionals, preventing them from reaching these workers in depth.

3. Factors Influencing Social Work Empowerment of New Employment Groups

3.1 Individual Factors

In terms of employment concepts and skill levels, the new employment group’s perception of and aspirations for their occupation, together with their professional and general skills, shape both their willingness and effectiveness in accepting empowerment. Conservative mind-sets or limited skill make it hard for them to adapt to new employment patterns and harder still to benefit from empowerment efforts. Self-efficacy—the belief in one’s ability to accomplish a task—determines engagement. New employment group members with high self-efficacy are more willing to try new things, actively join empowerment programs, and cope better with setbacks.

3.2 Organizational Factors

On the one hand, the professional level, service experience, and resource integration ability of social organizations are directly related to the quality and effectiveness of empowerment. Organizations with strong professional capabilities can provide more accurate and effective services. On the other hand, the degree of collaboration between social work institutions and government departments, enterprises, other social organizations, etc. can also affect the effectiveness of empowerment. Good collaboration pools resources and creates a unified service force. ^[3]

3.3 Environmental Factors

The relevant employment policies and labor security regulations issued by the government ^[4] provide institutional guarantees and development space for new employment groups, and also affect the direction and focus of social work empowerment. At the same time, how society understands and accepts new forms of employment, together with the support these workers receive from communities and families, shapes their professional identity and sense of belonging, which in turn affects the impact of empowerment efforts.

3.4 Service Factors

In terms of service content, whether the empowerment service meets the actual needs of the new employment group—such as whether it covers vocational skills training, psychological counseling, and rights protection—directly affects whether they can benefit from it. In terms of service methods, whether the adopted service methods are flexible, diverse, and easy to accept—such as the combination of online and offline training methods, the combination of group work and case work service models, etc.—will affect the enthusiasm and experience of new employment groups to participate.

4. Policy Recommendations for Social Work Empowerment of New Employment Groups

4.1 Building a Demand Research Matrix and Uncovering the Basic Size of the New Employment Population

To accurately determine the size and composition of the new employment group, a multi-dimensional demand-research matrix is required. Its objectives are to capture total numbers, structural distribution (region, industry, enterprise type) and employment characteristics (flexible work, income stability). The methods combine literature review, sample surveys, in-depth interviews and on-site observation, covering emerging sectors such as the platform economy and gig work. By integrating quantitative statistics with qualitative research, the matrix generates core data on group size, gender and age-based stratification, and occupational mobility trends. Outputs include a dynamic database, visual distribution maps, and policy recommendations, providing a scientific basis for optimizing employment services and formulating targeted support policies that facilitate effective service.

4.2 Empowering Skills Training Policy and Assisting the Career Development of New Employment Groups

The empowering skills-training policy aims to lay a career-development path for new employment groups. By precisely matching market demand and designing diversified, practical training courses, it is dedicated to enhancing the professional skills and comprehensive qualities of new job seekers. This policy not only lights the way for their careers but also injects strong impetus into the vigorous development of the social economy.

4.3 Safeguarding Social Rights and Solving the Practical Difficulties of New Employment Groups

In safeguarding the rights of new employment groups and resolving their difficulties, government and social-work professionals each play distinct roles. The government must refine policies and regulations, clarify labor relations, set sector minimum-wage standards, mandate that platforms contribute to workers' social-insurance schemes, and strengthen labor inspections to ensure full compliance. Meanwhile, the government should increase funding to build service stations that give workers places to rest and recharge. Social work professionals should leverage their professional advantages, deeply understand the needs of the group, and provide targeted psychological counseling to alleviate their work pressure. They should also link resources, cooperate with public welfare organizations to provide living material assistance to disadvantaged workers, and organize skill training to help them broaden career development paths and comprehensively safeguard the growth of new employment groups.

4.4 Caring for New Employment Groups' Psychological Health and Guiding Their Stress Transformation

Government, social work professionals, and communities join forces to safeguard the psychological and social well-being of new employment groups. The government establishes a special fund to subsidize professional psychological services for new employment groups and to underwrite regular online mental-health lectures. Social workers move into the field to deliver targeted help, crafting stress-reduction plans tailored to the distinct pressures faced by food-delivery riders, couriers, and other sub-groups. They could also facilitate peer-support groups where participants share strategies for easing stress. Communities leverage their local strengths by using Party-Mass service centers and other venues to host friendship-building and parent-child events, creating platforms for new employment groups to connect, boosting their sense of belonging, and turning pressure into motivation.

4.5 Linking Life-Service Systems to Help New Employment Groups Create a Virtuous Cycle

Amid the thriving digital economy and sharing models, new employment groups have risen rapidly. Building a “Internet + Life Services” digital platform that integrates accommodation, mobility, and training resources can create a one-stop service network for them. On one hand, the life-service system lowers operating costs and boosts efficiency, helping them adapt quickly to market shifts. On the other hand, vocational training and legal aid sharpen their competitiveness and resilience, forging a virtuous cycle of “service empowerment - ability improvement - sustained income increase” that keeps new employment groups steady amid economic tides.

4.6 Integrating the Benefits of Multiple Subjects and Creating a Harmonious Atmosphere for New Employment Groups

In the new economic form, the new employment group continues to grow, and there is an urgent need for multiple subjects’ collaboration to build a high-quality development environment. Create a four-way matrix—government, enterprises, platforms, and communities—working in concert: government introduces targeted policies to lower start-up hurdles; enterprises provide training resources for skills upgrading; platforms harness data to match resources efficiently; and community groups host networking events that deepen social bonds. All subjects create comprehensive benefits through cooperation, not only enhancing the sense of belonging of new employment groups, resolving work pressure and identity anxiety, but also creating a harmonious and inclusive atmosphere through mutual assistance and trust, injecting strong vitality into the new employment ecosystem.

5. Conclusion

The study reveals that social work holds unique value in addressing the social-security gaps, career-development bottlenecks, and mental-health challenges of new employment groups; its essence lies in an empowerment mechanism that equally emphasizes building external support systems and unleashing the group’s own intrinsic motivation. In the future, we need to further improve the policy support network, strengthen the training and capacity building of social work professionals^[5], deepen the precise alignment and integration of social work with the needs of new employment groups, continue to explore more inclusive and sustainable empowerment models, and ultimately achieve the organic unity of personal development and social progress of new employment groups, contributing professional strength to the construction of a fair, resilient, and shared new pattern of urban development.

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