

# Investment in people, talent revitalization and organizational performance among agricultural employees in China: Basis for talent retention framework

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## Abstract

China's agricultural sector, while a cornerstone of national food security and economic growth, faces a crucial challenge: talent retention. Despite significant investments in technology and modernization, skilled young employees are increasingly drawn to urban opportunities, leaving rural areas with an aging workforce and a widening skills gap. This talent drain threatens the long-term sustainability and productivity of Chinese agriculture. This research delves into the critical relationship between investment in people, talent revitalization, and organizational performance among agricultural employees in China and developed a talent retention framework for agricultural companies in China. The research investigated a relatively unexplored area and the specific relationship between talent revitalization and performance in the Chinese agricultural context. A descriptive design allows to document and describe the current situation in the agricultural sector. A descriptive design provides a flexible framework to explore these complexities and gain a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. Survey questionnaire was used as the data gathering instrument as it was relatively cost-effective and efficient way to gather data from many participants, particularly geographically dispersed agricultural employees in China. Five agricultural companies were used as the research locale of the study and 385 respondents were used as participants. Employees from five leading agricultural companies from Lanzou City, Gansu province were used as the respondents for this study. Based on the results, the respondents agreed that their respective companies invest in people in terms of training and development, compensation and benefits and rewards and recognition. They also agreed that their respective companies revitalized their talents as to engagement, work-life balance and well-being. The respondents strongly agreed to their respective organizational performance as to organizational innovation, and agreed as to employee satisfaction, and change management. There is no significant difference between organizational performance and talent revitalization. There is no significant difference between talent revitalization and investment in people, but significant differences were found in talent engagement and work life balance. Same was found between investment in people and organizational performance though, significant difference was found

on the change management and a talent retention framework for agricultural companies in China was developed. The study will hold the potential to significantly impact the way talent development, talent retention, and performance improvement were approached within the Chinese agricultural sector. By effectively communicating findings and recommendations to different stakeholders, this research can contribute to building a more resilient, productive, and sustainable agricultural future for China.

**Keywords:** investment in people, talent revitalization, organizational performance, talent retention framework

## **Investment in people, talent revitalization and organizational performance among agricultural employees in China: Basis for talent retention framework**

### **1. Introduction**

In the dynamic landscape of China's agricultural sector, the significance of investing in people, talent revitalization, and organizational performance has never been more pronounced. Agriculture, the backbone of China's economy, employing over 200 million individuals and contributing approximately 10% of the country's GDP, faces a critical juncture (Liu et al. 2020). The sector's aging workforce, shortage of skilled labor, and dwindling productivity pose significant challenges that demand innovative and strategic solutions. To address these pressing issues, the Chinese government has embarked on a transformative journey of investing in human capital, fostering talent revitalization, and enhancing organizational performance within the agricultural sector. This commitment stems from a deep recognition that the sector's future prosperity hinges on the capabilities, motivation, and retention of its workforce. The agricultural sector in China grapples with several pressing challenges that hinder its growth and productivity. An aging workforce, with an average age exceeding 50, threatens the loss of valuable skills and experience, leading to a knowledge gap as experienced workers retire. This demographic shift further exacerbates the shortage of skilled labor, particularly in specialized areas like precision agriculture and agricultural technology. The consequences of these challenges manifest in a decline in productivity, hindering the sector's ability to meet the growing demands of a burgeoning population. This downward trend can be attributed to factors such as the aging workforce, the skills gap, and a lack of investment in innovation and technology.

Investment in people according to Wang et al. (2019) is a crucial aspect of success for agricultural companies. It involves developing and nurturing the skills, knowledge, and capabilities of employees to enhance their productivity, innovation, and overall contribution to the company's growth and competitiveness. This investment encompasses various forms of training, education, development opportunities, and initiatives that aim to empower employees and foster a culture of continuous learning and improvement. A study by Liu et al. (2020) found that investment in people in agricultural companies through training and development programs significantly improved employee productivity and innovation. The study confirmed that these programs enhanced employees' skills, knowledge, and problem-solving abilities, enabling them to contribute more effectively to the company's operations and contribute to new ideas and solutions. Further, the findings of Qian et al. (2021) confirmed that investment in people in agricultural companies through competitive compensation, benefits packages, and a supportive work environment led to higher employee retention and engagement. The study found out that these practices fostered a sense of value and belonging among employees, increasing their motivation and commitment to the company.

Talent revitalization in agricultural companies refers to a comprehensive strategy aimed at attracting, developing, retaining, and motivating a skilled and competent workforce to support the company's growth and sustainability. It encompasses a range of initiatives and practices that address the challenges of an aging workforce, a shortage of skilled labor, and the need to adapt to technological advancements in the agricultural sector (Liu et al. 2020). The findings of the study revealed that talent revitalization initiatives in agricultural companies, such as training programs, mentorship opportunities, and knowledge-sharing platforms, effectively enhanced employee skills and knowledge. The study concluded that these initiatives provided employees with the necessary tools and resources to stay up-to-date with industry advancements and adapt to the evolving demands of the agricultural sector. Moreover, the study by Wang et al. (2019) found that talent revitalization strategies in agricultural companies, such as encouraging employee participation in innovation initiatives and providing support for technology adoption, fostered a culture of innovation and adaptability. The study concluded that these strategies enabled companies to harness the creativity and problem-solving abilities of their

workforce, leading to new ideas, solutions, and enhanced responsiveness to market changes.

Organizational performance in agricultural companies as confirmed by Wu et al. (2022) refers to the overall effectiveness and success of an agricultural company in achieving its goals and objectives. It encompasses a range of metrics and dimensions, including financial performance, operational efficiency, productivity, product quality, market share, customer satisfaction, and employee satisfaction. It is worth to note that employees in high-performing companies are more likely to be satisfied with their work, feel valued by their employer, and have a higher intention to remain with the company (Wu et al., 2022). Moreover, Zhang et al. (2023) proposed talent management strategies for enhancing organizational performance in China's agricultural sector. The authors found that effective talent management strategies, such as attracting and retaining skilled talent, providing training and development opportunities, and fostering a supportive work environment, are positively associated with organizational performance. Despite the growing recognition of the importance of talent retention in China's agricultural sector, there remains a need for a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that influence talent retention, the effectiveness of talent revitalization strategies, and the long-term impact of investment in people on organizational performance.

Additionally, there is a lack of research on the effectiveness of talent retention frameworks specifically tailored to the Chinese agricultural context and the variation in talent retention strategies and practices across different agricultural regions of China. China's agricultural sector is a critical component of the national economy, providing food security for a vast population and contributing significantly to employment and livelihoods. However, the sector faces challenges in attracting, developing, and retaining skilled talent, which threatens its long-term sustainability and growth potential. Investment in people, talent revitalization, and organizational performance are interconnected variables that play a crucial role in talent retention within the agricultural sector. By understanding these relationships, organizations can develop effective talent retention strategies that enhance employee satisfaction, engagement, and productivity, ultimately contributing to organizational success. As an agricultural college faculty member, understanding the challenges and opportunities faced by the Chinese agricultural sector is important as well as the critical role of talent retention in ensuring the sector's long-term sustainability and growth. This study will not only contribute to the advancement of knowledge in the field of agricultural human resource management but also provide practical guidance for organizations in the Chinese agricultural sector to address their talent retention challenges.

**Objectives of the Study** - The study aimed to examine the investment in people, talent revitalization and organizational performance among employees in agricultural companies in China and was made the basis in developing a talent retention framework for agricultural companies. Specifically, the study assessed the companies' investment in people as to training and development, compensation and benefits and rewards and recognition; described the talent revitalization as to talent engagement, work-life balance and well-being; determined the organizational performance as to employee satisfaction, organizational innovation and change management; tested the significant relationship among investment in people, talent revitalization and organizational performance and developed a Talent retention framework for agricultural companies in China.

## 2. Methods

**Research Design** - Descriptive research is a valuable tool for understanding the relationship between investment in people, talent revitalization and organizational performance in the Chinese agricultural sector. The insights gained from this study can inform the development of effective talent retention strategies that can help agricultural companies attract, retain, and develop top talent. Descriptive research was used to explore and describe a particular phenomenon or situation, and it is particularly well-suited for studying organizational performance in the context of Investment in People, Talent Revitalization and Organizational Performance among agricultural employees in China. **The study is exploratory in nature and the researcher was interested in gaining a general understanding of a complex phenomenon, and descriptive research is well-suited for this purpose (Creswell et al. 2018). The study is focused on current practices and behaviors.** Descriptive research

is ideal for gathering data about the current situation, and it can provide valuable insights into the factors that influence talent retention.

**Participants of the Study** - Five agricultural companies were used as the research locale of the study and 385 respondents were used as participants. Employees from five leading agricultural companies from Lanzhou City, Gansu province were used as the respondents for this study on investment in people, talent revitalization, and organizational performance because they have firsthand experience with these issues. They provided valuable insights into the impact of human capital management practices on their work lives, their career development, and the overall performance of their companies. Also, employees are directly affected by human capital management practices. Employees are the ones who receive training and development, who are evaluated by performance management systems, and who are compensated and rewarded by their companies. They provided direct feedback on the effectiveness of these practices. Another reason is that they have a vested interest in the success of their companies. Employees want their companies to be successful, and they understand that human capital is a key factor in achieving this success. They are motivated to provide honest and accurate feedback that can help their companies improve.

Agricultural employees also can provide a variety of perspectives. Agricultural companies employ a wide range of workers, from entry-level laborers to experienced managers. This diversity of perspectives can provide valuable insights into the different needs and expectations of employees at different levels of the organization. In addition to these reasons, it is also important to note that employees of agricultural companies are often willing to participate in research studies. They are typically proud of their work and their companies, and they are interested in sharing their knowledge and experiences with others. This makes them a valuable resource for researchers who are studying human capital management in the agricultural sector.

**Instrument of the Study** - In the context of the study on investment in people, talent revitalization, and organizational performance in agricultural companies in China, a self-made questionnaire can be an effective tool for gathering data from employees directly involved in the agricultural sector. It allows researchers to tailor the questionnaire to the specific context of Chinese agricultural companies and address the study's research questions in a comprehensive and nuanced manner. Self-made questionnaires can be a valuable data-gathering instrument for studies exploring employee experiences and perceptions in the agricultural sector, particularly when tailored to the specific context and research questions of the study. The first part of the questionnaire focused on the investment in people indicators with three dimensions namely training and development, compensation and benefits and rewards and recognition. The second part involves the indicators for talent revitalization specifically for talent engagement, work-life balance and well-being. The third part of the questionnaire is about the organizational performance with dimensions about employee satisfaction, organization innovation and change management. The Likert scale used were Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1).

Reliability testing is essential to ensure that the self-made questionnaire consistently measures the perceptions and experiences of employees regarding investment in people, talent revitalization and organizational performance. A reliable questionnaire provided consistent and dependable data that can be used to draw valid conclusions about these critical aspects of agricultural workforce management. By conducting appropriate reliability testing, researchers can ensure that the self-made questionnaire produces consistent and dependable data, allowing them to draw accurate conclusions about investment in people, talent revitalization and organizational performance in Chinese agricultural companies.

Based on result, the Investment in People, Talent Revitalization and Organizational Performance instrument has an Excellent consistency as exhibited by the Cronbach's Alpha value of (.954). This was validated by the Good remark from Investment in People (.864); it was confirmed by the Good result from Training and Development (.856), Excellent result from Compensation and Benefits (.901), and Acceptable result from Reward and Recognition (.731); This was also validated by the Good remark from Talent Revitalization (.890); it

was confirmed by the Excellent result from Talent Investment (.930), Good result from Work life balance (.832), and Acceptable result from Wellbeing (.745); Further, it was validated by the Excellent remark from Organizational Performance (.919); it was confirmed by the Good results from Employee Satisfaction (.811), and Change Management (.899), and Excellent result from Organization Innovation (.956) which shows that the instrument at hand passed the reliability index test. Thus, the researcher proceeded to the actual survey using the instrument.

**Data Gathering Procedure** - Data for this study was collected through a self-made questionnaire administered to a sample of 385 employees working in agricultural companies in China. The questionnaire was designed to measure employee perceptions of investment in people, talent revitalization and organizational performance. The questionnaire was piloted with a small group of employees to ensure clarity and comprehension before being administered to the main sample. The questionnaire was administered online and offline depending on the preference of the participants. Employees were given adequate time to complete the questionnaire and were assured of the confidentiality of their responses.

**Data Analysis** - Weighted mean and rank were used to assess the company's investment in people as to training and development, compensation and benefits and rewards and recognition; describe the talent revitalization as to talent engagement, work-life balance and well-being; determine the organizational performance as to employee satisfaction, organizational innovation and change management. The result of Shapiro-Wilk Test showed that p-values of all variables were less than 0.05 which means that the data set was not normally distributed. Therefore, Spearman rho was used as part of the non-parametric tests to determine the significant relationship. All analyses were performed using SPSS version 28.

**Ethical Consideration** - The researcher adhered to a set of ethical principles to ensure the well-being of participants and the integrity of the research. These principles include obtaining informed consent, safeguarding confidentiality, maintaining objectivity, respecting participants, demonstrating cultural sensitivity, and responsibly disseminating findings. By upholding these ethical considerations, the researcher can contribute to a positive and impactful study that benefits both the agricultural sector and its workforce.

### 3. Results and discussion

**Table 1**

*Summary Table on Company's Investment in People*

Key Result Areas	Composite Mean	VI	Rank
Training and Development	3.49	Agree	2
Compensation and Benefits	3.47	Agree	3
Rewards and Recognition	3.50	Strongly Agree	1
Grand Composite Mean	3.49	Agree	

*Legend: 3.50-4.00=Strongly Agree; 2.50-3.49=Agree; 1.50-2.49=Disagree; 1.00-1.49=Strongly Disagree*

Table 1 summarizes the company's investment in people. It can be observed that respondents generally agreed on the three dimensions of investment in people with a grand composite mean of 3.49. Among the three dimensions, reward and recognition ranked first and the respondents revealed strong agreement on the dimension.

Rewards and recognition might be more tangible and immediate than other forms of investment in people among agricultural employees. This could make them more appealing to agricultural workers who are often focused on short-term results. Further, agricultural work can be physically demanding and isolating. Rewards and recognition programs can help to boost morale and motivation, and make workers feel valued and appreciated. Also, agricultural workers may be more likely to respond to extrinsic motivators, such as rewards and recognition, than intrinsic motivators, such as the satisfaction of doing a good job. The specific rewards and recognition programs offered in the study might have been particularly appealing to agricultural workers.

The findings of Barreto et al. (2019) suggest that rewards and recognition programs can be a valuable tool for improving employee performance in the agricultural industry. However, the effectiveness of these programs depends on several factors, and careful consideration should be given to their design and implementation. Moreover, Fadzil, et al. (2020) provided further support for the effectiveness of rewards and recognition programs in the agricultural industry. The study also highlights the importance of considering factors such as program design, managerial support, and cultural context when implementing these programs.

**Table 2**

*Summary Table on Talent Revitalization*

Key Result Areas	Composite Mean	VI	Rank
Talent Engagement	3.49	Agree	1
Work-life Balance	3.46	Agree	2.5
Well-being	3.46	Agree	2.5
Grand Composite Mean	3.47	Agree	

*Legend: 3.50-4.00=Strongly Agree; 2.50-3.49=Agree; 1.50-2.49=Disagree; 1.00-1.49=Strongly Disagree*

Table 2 presents the summary of talent revitalization using three dimensions. It can be observed that all the three dimensions were agreed by the respondents having a grand composite mean of 3.47. Among the dimensions used, talent engagement got the highest score. Agricultural work can be physically demanding, monotonous, and often lacks opportunities for advancement. Talent engagement initiatives can address these needs by providing employees with programs that promote employee ownership, skill development, and contribution to organizational goals can increase employee motivation and engagement. Creating a positive work environment that fosters collaboration, teamwork, and social interaction can combat feelings of isolation and loneliness common in agricultural work. Also, providing training, mentorship, and career advancement opportunities can give employees a sense of purpose and direction, leading to higher engagement and retention.

Research by Lee and White (2017) shows that talent engagement initiatives often have measurable outcomes such as increased productivity, reduced turnover, and improved employee satisfaction. This tangible evidence of success can lead to further investment in these initiatives and create positive feedback loops that reinforce employee engagement.

**Table 3**

*Summary Table on Organizational Performance*

Key Result Areas	Composite Mean	VI	Rank
Employee Satisfaction	3.48	Agree	2
Organizational Innovation	3.50	Strongly Agree	1
Change Management	3.47	Agree	3
Grand Composite Mean	3.48	Agree	

*Legend: 3.50-4.00=Strongly Agree; 2.50-3.49=Agree; 1.50-2.49=Disagree; 1.00-1.49=Strongly Disagree*

Table 3 summarizes the level of organizational performance as to employee satisfaction, organization innovation and change management. The grand composite mean is 3.48 and generally agreed by the respondents. Among the dimensions of organizational performance, organization innovation got the highest composite mean. Agriculture is heavily reliant on external factors like weather, climate change, and market fluctuations. Organizations that prioritize innovation are more likely to be adaptable and resilient in the face of such challenges. They can develop new technologies, crop varieties, or farming practices to cope with changing conditions and improve efficiency. Innovation can lead to more efficient production methods, new products and services, and improved access to markets. This can directly translate to increased productivity and profitability for agricultural businesses, ultimately benefiting employees through better job security, wages, and benefits. Innovative organizations might invest in automation, technology, and ergonomic solutions to improve working conditions for agricultural employees. This can make their jobs safer, easier, and more enjoyable, leading to higher job satisfaction and motivation. A focus on innovation can create a sense of progress and excitement

within an organization. Employees may feel more engaged and motivated when they see their company investing in the future and exploring new possibilities. This can foster a more positive and dynamic work environment.

Findings of Verburg (2019) emphasize the urgency of transforming food systems to become more resilient to climate change while reducing their own emissions. This requires a holistic approach that combines technological advancements, policy reforms, and inclusive governance, considering the local context and ensuring equitable outcomes for all stakeholders. Moreover, the study of Schultz (2017) emphasized the potential of new technologies to modernize traditional agriculture and improve the lives of small-scale farmers. However, he cautions against a one-size-fits-all approach, highlighting the importance of context-specific solutions, inclusive development strategies, and supportive policies to ensure equitable and sustainable technological advancements in the agricultural sector. Likewise, the study of Van der Heijden et al. (2018) suggest that the impact of automation on farmers' work and social lives is complex and multifaceted. While automation offers potential benefits like improved efficiency and work-life balance, it also raises concerns about job displacement, social isolation, and psychological stress. The authors emphasize the need for careful planning and support mechanisms to ensure that the transition to automation in agriculture benefits both farmers and society as a whole.

**Table 4**

*Relationship Between Investment in People and Talent Revitalization*

Variables	rho	p-value	Interpretation
<b>Training and Development</b>			
Talent Engagement	0.121*	0.018	Significant
Work-life Balance	0.052	0.308	Not Significant
Well-being	0.040	0.433	Not Significant
<b>Compensation and Benefits</b>			
Talent Engagement	-0.011	0.826	Not Significant
Work-life Balance	-0.105*	0.039	Significant
Well-being	0.059	0.246	Not Significant
<b>Rewards and Recognition</b>			
Talent Engagement	-0.017	0.746	Not Significant
Work-life Balance	0.018	0.728	Not Significant
Well-being	-0.020	0.699	Not Significant

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 4 presents the relationship between investment in people and talent revitalization. The computed rho-values ranging from 0.040 to 0.121 indicate a very weak direct relationship between training and development and the sub variables of talent revitalization. There was a statistically significant relationship between training and development and talent engagement because the obtained p-value was less than 0.05. Effective T&D programs equip employees with the knowledge and skills needed to perform their jobs more effectively and efficiently. This increased competency can lead to a sense of accomplishment, confidence, and job satisfaction, all of which contribute to higher engagement. Well-designed T&D programs often offer opportunities for career advancement and professional growth. This can give employees a sense of purpose and direction, motivating them to remain engaged and committed to their work.

The findings of Albrecht et al. (2018) confirms that training and development programs can train agricultural employees on proper safety procedures and risk management techniques, leading to a safer work environment and higher morale. The agricultural industry is increasingly adopting new technologies. T&D programs can help employees stay up-to-date with these advancements, enabling them to work more efficiently and effectively. T&D programs can train employees on sustainable farming practices, promoting environmental responsibility and long-term benefits for the agricultural sector. Overall, the statistically significant relationship between T&D and talent engagement among agricultural employees is driven by a complex interplay of factors that improve skills, career prospects, value perception, communication, autonomy, and well-being. By understanding these factors and designing effective T&D programs, agricultural organizations can foster a more



The computed rho-value of -0.011 indicates a very weak indirect relationship between compensation and benefits and talent engagement. Likewise, the computed rho-value of -0.105 indicate a very weak indirect relationship between compensation and benefits and work-life balance. While the computed rho-value of 0.059 indicates a very weak direct relationship between compensation and benefits and well-being. There was a statistically significant relationship between compensation and benefits and work-life balance because the obtained p-value was less than 0.05. Agricultural work often involves long hours and physically demanding tasks. Fair compensation and benefits can act as a form of "compensation" for these demanding aspects of the job, improving employees' morale and willingness to put in the extra effort, potentially leading to a better work-life balance. According to the recent study of Allen et al. (2017), the agricultural industry can be highly seasonal with unpredictable work hours due to weather and other factors. Flexible work arrangements and paid time off policies can help employees manage these uncertainties and maintain a sense of control over their work-life balance. Some agricultural jobs might have limited career advancement opportunities. Competitive compensation and benefits can act as an incentive for employees to stay motivated and engaged despite limited career growth, potentially improving their work-life balance. Overall, the adequate compensation and benefits can contribute to a better work-life balance, especially for agricultural employees who face demanding work conditions and unpredictable schedules.

The computed rho-value of -0.017 indicates a very weak indirect relationship between rewards and recognition and talent engagement. Likewise, the computed rho-value of -0.020 indicates a very weak indirect relationship between rewards and recognition and well-being. While the computed rho-value of 0.018 indicates a very weak direct relationship between rewards and recognition and work-life balance. There was no statistically significant relationship between rewards and recognition and the sub variables of talent revitalization because the obtained p-values were greater than 0.05. The provided rewards and recognition might not be perceived as valuable or meaningful by the agricultural employees. Perhaps financial bonuses hold little value for employees facing long hours and physically demanding work, while non-monetary rewards like praise or public recognition might not be effective motivators.

The study of Gilley et al. (2017) revealed that rewards and recognition might be designed to incentivize immediate performance or task completion rather than long-term revitalization, including development, growth, and commitment. The importance of intrinsic factors like autonomy, mastery, and purpose in job satisfaction and motivation might be neglected. Focusing solely on external rewards might not address the deeper needs of agricultural employees for meaningful work and career advancement.

**Table 5**

*Relationship Between Investment in People and Organizational Performance*

Variables	rho	p-value	Interpretation
<b>Training and Development</b>			
Employee Satisfaction	0.008	0.879	Not Significant
Organizational Innovation	0.051	0.321	Not Significant
Change Management	0.013	0.798	Not Significant
<b>Compensation and Benefits</b>			
Employee Satisfaction	0.014	0.781	Not Significant
Organizational Innovation	0.038	0.456	Not Significant
Change Management	0.058	0.253	Not Significant
<b>Rewards and Recognition</b>			
Employee Satisfaction	-0.087	0.087	Not Significant
Organizational Innovation	0.099	0.053	Not Significant
Change Management	-0.114*	0.025	Significant

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 5 describes the relationship between investment in people and organizational performance. The computed rho-values ranging from 0.008 to 0.051 indicate a very weak indirect relationship between training and

development and the sub variables of organizational performance. It shows that there was no statistically significant relationship between training and development and the sub variables of organizational performance since the obtained p-values were greater than 0.05.

Employee satisfaction, innovation, and change management can be subjective concepts, making them difficult to measure accurately. The impact of T&D on these variables might take time to manifest, requiring longer-term studies to capture the full effect. Short-term assessments might miss the lasting impact of effective T&D programs. It was revealed in the study of Al-Ansi et al. (2020) that not all T&D programs are created equal. Ineffective programs with low quality content, poor delivery methods, or irrelevant topics might not have a significant impact on performance. T&D programs need to be aligned with the specific needs and goals of the organization. Generic programs or those not tailored to the unique context might not yield desired results. Providing training is not enough. Organizations need to create an environment that encourages employees to apply their newly acquired knowledge and skills to their work, fostering transfer of learning.

The computed rho-values ranging from 0.014 to 0.058 indicates a very weak direct relationship between compensation and benefits and the sub variables of organizational performance. It shows that there was no statistically significant relationship between compensation and benefits and the sub variables of organizational performance since the obtained p-values were greater than 0.05. Compensation and benefits may not directly cause changes in agricultural employee satisfaction, innovation, or change management. Instead, they can influence these variables indirectly through improved morale and reduced turnover. Fair and competitive compensation can boost morale, decrease stress, and encourage employees to stay longer, impacting the team dynamics and overall performance. Comprehensive benefits like health insurance and financial support can improve employee well-being, reducing stress and distractions, potentially leading to better focus and productivity. Providing benefits like training programs can directly equip agricultural employees with skills and knowledge necessary for innovation and change management.

The computed rho-value of -0.087 indicates a very weak indirect relationship between rewards and recognition and employee satisfaction. Likewise, the computed rho-value of -0.114 indicates a very weak indirect relationship between rewards and recognition and change management. While the computed rho-value of 0.099 indicates a very weak direct relationship between rewards and recognition and organizational innovation. It shows that there was a statistically significant relationship between rewards and recognition and change management since the obtained p-value was less than 0.05. Effective rewards and recognition can motivate employees to engage with and adapt to change initiatives. These practices can show appreciation for employee efforts, foster a sense of ownership in the change process, and encourage them to actively participate in its success. Agricultural work can be routine and traditional, making employees apprehensive about new practices. Rewards and recognition can alleviate resistance by making the change process more rewarding and encouraging open-mindedness towards new ideas.

As stated in the findings of Van der Putten et al. (2018), agricultural work can be physically demanding, unpredictable, and subject to external factors like weather. Rewards and recognition can help boost morale and motivation in these challenging conditions, fostering resilience and a positive attitude towards change. Some agricultural jobs might offer limited career progression, potentially dampening motivation. Focusing rewards and recognition on skill development and future potential related to the change initiative can provide a sense of advancement and increase engagement.

Table 6 presents the significant relationship between talent revitalization and organizational performance. As seen in the table, the computed rho-value of -0.039 indicates a very weak indirect relationship between talent engagement and employee satisfaction. Likewise, the computed rho-value of -0.004 indicates very weak indirect relationship between talent engagement and organizational innovation. While the computed rho-value of 0.027 indicates a very weak direct relationship between talent engagement and change management. The talent revitalization programs implemented might not be tailored to the specific needs and challenges of agricultural

employees. They might focus on generic strategies that are not relevant to their context, leading to limited impact on their satisfaction, innovation, or adaptability to change. While extrinsic rewards like training opportunities might be offered, the programs might not address intrinsic motivators crucial for agricultural work, such as autonomy, skill development, and connection to the land. This can limit their effectiveness in revitalizing employees and influencing performance.

**Table 6**

*Relationship Between Talent Revitalization and Organizational Performance*

Variables	rho	p-value	Interpretation
<b>Talent Engagement</b>			
Employee Satisfaction	-0.039	0.446	Not Significant
Organizational Innovation	-0.004	0.936	Not Significant
Change Management	0.027	0.595	Not Significant
<b>Work-life Balance</b>			
Employee Satisfaction	0.010	0.851	Not Significant
Organizational Innovation	-0.096	0.059	Not Significant
Change Management	0.021	0.682	Not Significant
<b>Well-being</b>			
Employee Satisfaction	-0.020	0.701	Not Significant
Organizational Innovation	-0.039	0.451	Not Significant
Change Management	0.037	0.468	Not Significant

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

The findings are inconsistent with the result of the study of Boriko et al. (2019) where they found out that targeted training programs addressing their specific needs could significantly improve the motivation and productivity of agricultural producers. Farmers who participated in training reported increased confidence, adoption of new practices, and higher yields. The research also highlighted the importance of linking training to market opportunities and access to inputs and resources to maximize its impact. Agriculture is often characterized by long hours, demanding physical labor, unpredictable weather conditions, and reliance on external factors like market fluctuations. These challenges might create inherent tensions between work demands and personal life, making it difficult to achieve a perfect balance regardless of organizational policies. The nature of agricultural work, especially for farmers and seasonal workers, may offer less flexibility in scheduling and working hours compared to many office jobs. This limited control can undermine the effectiveness of work-life balance initiatives. In some agricultural communities, prioritizing work and dedication to the land might be ingrained in the cultural context, and employees might not prioritize work-life balance as much as other aspects of their lives.

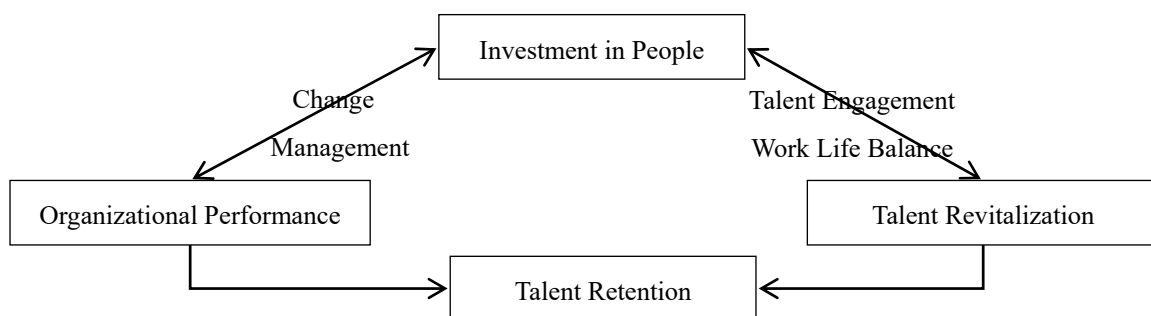
On the other hand, the computed rho-value of 0.010 indicates a very weak direct relationship between work-life balance and employee satisfaction. Likewise, the computed rho-value of 0.021 indicates a very weak direct relationship between work-life balance and change management. While the computed rho-value of -0.096 indicates a very weak indirect relationship between work-life balance and organizational innovation. Changes in work-life balance practices may not directly result in substantial enhancements or challenges in implementing change management projects. The effectiveness of change management is likely influenced by other aspects outside solely work-life balance, including leadership communication, employee involvement tactics, and the inherent characteristics of the change being implemented. As disclosed by Upham et al. (2020) the primary focus of change management is typically to ensure the effective implementation of new procedures or frameworks. The prioritization of work-life balance in the agricultural industry may not be a main focus during the early stages of transformation. Change can induce stress, causing employees to initially concentrate navigating the change rather than concentrating on achieving a healthy work-life balance. This has the potential to diminish any possible advantages of implementing appropriate work-life balance practices during periods of change.

The computed rho-value of -0.020 indicates a very weak indirect relationship between well-being and employee satisfaction. Likewise, the computed rho-value of -0.039 indicates a very weak indirect relationship

between well-being and organizational innovation. While the computed rho-value of 0.037 indicates a very weak direct relationship between well-being and change management. It means that in the study, there was not enough evidence to demonstrate a clear direct connection between how well agricultural employees feel (their "well-being") and how effective they are in their work (as indicated by satisfaction, innovation, and adapting to changes). Well-being encompasses physical, mental, emotional, and social aspects, which can interact in complex ways and vary between individuals. This complexity makes it challenging to measure and analyze its impact on specific performance indicators. Agricultural work is often susceptible to external pressures like weather, market fluctuations, and economic instability, which can significantly impact employee well-being independently of organizational factors.

The findings oppose the findings of Bakken et al. (2017) where it found out that long hours, physically demanding work, unpredictable schedules, and financial uncertainty are inherent to agricultural work. These factors can put significant strain on employee well-being, potentially obscuring the impact of organizational initiatives. Agricultural work often involves less control over schedules and work-life boundaries compared to many office jobs. This lack of autonomy can negatively impact both well-being and performance. Lack of adequate healthcare, mental health support, and other resources within rural communities can further hinder efforts to improve employee well-being. Further, initiatives like flexible work arrangements, stress management programs, and employee assistance programs might not be adequately tailored to the unique needs and context of agricultural workers, limiting their effectiveness. Employee satisfaction, innovation, and change management are complex constructs with multifaceted influences. Standardized assessment tools might not capture the full picture in the agricultural context. Overall, it shows that there was no statistically significant relationship between talent revitalization and organizational performance since the obtained p-values were greater than 0.05.

### Talent Retention Framework



*Figure 1 Talent Retention Framework*

Based on the result, significant relationship is evident between investment in people and talent revitalization as confirmed from talent engagement and work-life balance. Agricultural employees who feel valued and invested in are naturally more engaged in their work. They demonstrate higher levels of initiative, creativity, and a willingness to go the extra mile. Revitalized employees experience reduced stress and burnout, leading to better focus, clearer decision-making, and fewer absences. This translates to increased productivity and enhanced output. A positive and supportive work environment fostered by talent revitalization encourages collaboration and teamwork. This shared sense of purpose and camaraderie further boosts engagement and collective performance.

As demonstrated in the study of Rothwell et al. (2018), employees who feel their skills are being actively nurtured are more engaged and motivated, leading to better performance and retention. Further, Ng et al. (2018) in their study found out that providing clear career paths and advancement opportunities creates a sense of purpose and fosters revitalization, particularly for experienced employees. To add, Maslach et al. (2019) disclosed that fostering trust, autonomy, and respect through flexible work arrangements and work-life balance initiatives enhances employee well-being and engagement.

Significant relationship was also evident between investment in people and organizational performance as validated from change management. Training and development equip agricultural employees with the skills and knowledge necessary to navigate change effectively. This adaptability fosters a positive attitude towards change and reduces resistance. Moreover, effective communication channels and collaborative practices instilled through people investment ensure everyone is informed, heard, and involved in the change process. This builds trust and ownership, facilitating smoother transitions. When agricultural employees feel valued and empowered, they're more likely to contribute innovative ideas and solutions to overcome challenges during change. This fosters a culture of continuous improvement and adaptability.

According to the findings of Van der Ploeg et al. (2019), investing in employee well-being, work-life balance, and job satisfaction fosters engagement and keeps workers motivated, leading to increased productivity and performance. A culture of employee engagement encourages information sharing and collaboration, promoting innovation and knowledge exchange within the workforce. This can lead to the development of new farming methods, improved sustainability practices, and higher yields. With skilled agricultural workers often in high demand, investing in their development and well-being helps retain valuable talent and attract new recruits. This ensures continuity of expertise and long-term performance for the organization.

Investing in people takes on particular significance within the agricultural sector. By equipping employees with the necessary skills, fostering adaptability, and promoting engagement, organizations can achieve greater performance, resilience, and innovation in the face of challenges and changing environments. This ultimately contributes to the success and sustainability of both individual farms and the agricultural sector. However no significant relationship was established between organizational performance and talent revitalization. Revitalization often involves intangible aspects like employee motivation, creativity, and problem-solving skills. These can be challenging to quantify and may be interpreted differently by researchers and organizations. Agriculture often faces high employee turnover, especially among lower-wage roles. This makes it difficult to maintain consistent investment in employee development and measure the long-term impact of revitalization efforts. Small farms and agricultural businesses might have limited financial and logistical resources to invest in extensive training and development programs, hindering potential revitalization efforts. Some revitalization initiatives focus on upskilling employees for technological advancements. However, adoption of new technology can be slow in agriculture due to various factors like cost, accessibility, and lack of training infrastructure. However, according to Davis et al. (2018), it is crucial to note that the lack of a readily evident direct relationship does not necessarily negate the potential benefits of talent revitalization in agriculture.

Agricultural performance encompasses various aspects like yield, quality, profit, and sustainability. Measuring these comprehensively can be difficult, making it hard to isolate the specific impact of revitalization efforts. Revitalization often aims for long-term improvements in employee engagement, knowledge, and skills. These effects might not be immediately reflected in performance metrics, making it difficult to establish a direct relationship. Revitalization involves intangible aspects like employee motivation, creativity, and problem-solving. These can be challenging to quantify and may be interpreted differently by researchers and organizations. It is important to note that while the research highlights the potential benefits of talent revitalization in agriculture, the complexities of the sector and the challenges in measuring both interventions and performance make it difficult to establish a clear and direct link in every case. Nonetheless, the overall evidence suggests that investing in employee development, adaptability, and well-being can play a valuable role in enhancing the long-term success of agricultural businesses.

The results implied that Talent retention framework will work even in the absence of significant relationship between organizational performance and talent revitalization. Further, results confirmed that relationship existed between the variables. It is just that the relationship is not statistically significant. It is important to remember that the absence of a statistically significant relationship in research does not necessarily imply that there is no practical benefit to investing in talent revitalization for agricultural employees in China. Investing in human

capital remains a crucial strategy for long-term success and building a resilient and innovative agricultural industry in China.

#### 4. Conclusions and recommendations

The respondents agreed that their respective companies invest in people in terms of training and development, compensation and benefits and rewards and recognition. The respondents agreed that their respective companies revitalized their talents as to engagement, work-life balance and well-being. The respondents strongly agreed to their respective organizational performance as to organizational innovation, and agreed as to employee satisfaction, and change management. Talent retention framework for agricultural companies in China was developed. HR specialist of agricultural companies may conduct a needs assessment to identify skill gaps, employee engagement levels, and areas for performance improvement. The HR managers may offer diverse training programs addressing both technical skills (e.g., machinery operation, crop management) and soft skills (e.g., communication, teamwork, problem-solving). Managers may encourage a culture of lifelong learning by providing agricultural employees with opportunities for self-directed learning, professional development activities, and knowledge sharing initiatives. Managers of agricultural companies may collaborate with government agencies and research institutions to access funding, resources, and expertise for talent development initiatives. The talent retention framework may be offered for reference and use in the agricultural companies. Future researchers may contribute to a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of talent revitalization and its impact on agricultural performance in China. This will ultimately support the development of evidence-based solutions and interventions that empower agricultural companies, optimize talent management, and contribute to the long-term success and sustainability of China's agricultural sector.

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