

From “Party Managing Cadres” to “Party Managing Talents”: Political Meritocracy or Economic Performance?*

1. CHEN Li-jun 2. ZHOU Yu-lu 3. FU Yan
School of Public Affairs, Zhejiang University, Hangzhou, P.R. China, 310058

Abstract Talents are so important for China to improve its competitiveness in the world as one of the largest economy. Traditionally the talents (except talents in the civil servant system) are managed by businesses rather than a political organization. Nowadays, the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) is directly involved in managing talents, leading the shift from the “the party managing cadres” to the “the party managing talents”. The party managing talent aims to create a favorable environment to attract talents for the Chinese economy development, which is different from “the party managing cadres” that the CCP holds control of the selection, recruitment and promotion of cadres. “Party managing talent” policy is actively promoted by CCP, in the meantime CCP created systems for implementations which included institutional settings, staffing and financial investment of the CCP etc. This study aims to explore the implications of “Party managing talents” policies, deeply understand the implicit political motivations behind this policy. We studied the content of 216 talent policy documents promulgated by Chinese Central Government focusing on their objectives. We also studied three key areas for the overseas talents under the umbrella of the “1000 Talents” Plan: 1) their working organizations, 2) their performance, 3) their accessibility to the political ambitions. We found that logic of “party managing talents” transformations is CCP’s ambitions in economy growth. Through talent introductions, CCP intends to create an innovation system and upgrade the Chinese economic development mode. The CCP’s efforts in transformations also enhanced the administration capacity and social stability, but no evidence show the transformation help China change to meritocracy politics.

Key words Party managing cadres, Party managing talent, Meritocracy, Economic Performance

1 Introduction

In Early twenty-first century, China has undergone dramatic changes in global competition and domestic political economy. Under this circumstance, the Chinese government advances “the strategy of reinvigorating the country through talent” and initiates the programs in the charge of China’s organization departments, which aim at attracting talents throughout the world. Indeed, departments of organization play a vital role in managing talents. On one hand, they have handed the lead to launch a series of talent policies; on the other hand, they have spared no effort in the attraction and accumulation of talents from the perspective of institutional settings, staffing and financial investment, leading the shift from “party managing cadres” to “party managing talent”. In other word, the focus of the CCP is no longer restricted to the government executives, but extends to individuals that are valuable for economic and social development in all fields outside the system of government. Further, the principle of “party managing talents” can be explained as the CCP manages the macro environment, policy, coordination and service with the system of “the party committees exercise unified leadership, the organization departments take the lead and assumes overall responsibility, the related departments perform its respective duty and work hand in glove and the social force participate extensively”. Obviously, such principle intends to create a favorable environment for talents, thereby taking advantage of talent potential to build a stronger nation. In practice, party and government departments, especially the Organization Department of the Central Committee takes the responsibility for implementing the principle of “party managing talent”, who has introduced a large quantity of policies about the attraction, nurture and accumulation of talents. Among those policies, “1000 Talents” Plan is most prestigious in terms of performance.

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Although large attentions have been paid to the practice of talent plans led by the CCP, the characteristics and intention of the shift from “party managing cadres” to “party managing talent” have remained under examined. It is true that such shift projects the changes of personnel strategy of the CCP, which can be seen as a transformation into a merit system in the politics context. However, we argue that we cannot simply attach the aforementioned shift to the transformation into meritocracy, if we analysis the background, aim and performance of these talent policies. This study examines the processes and features of the shift from “party managing cadres” to “party managing talent”, focusing on the objective and performance of that shift in order to answer whether such change is the prelude of political restructuring, i.e., the Chinese government is on the way to meritocracy or intends to promote political stability based the fact that CCP should represent more people and take talents into consideration when the governance foundation is more diverse and the working class has ceased to be the main and core segments of Chinese social strata. Furthermore, as talents are essential for a transformative upgrading of the economy after 30 years’ economic restructuring, whether the shift from “party managing cadres” to “party managing talent” still aims at economic performance to meet the needs of citizens and promote political stability via economic restructuring is also worth considering.

2 Literature review and conceptual framework

As a concept, “meritocracy” was initiated by British sociologist Michael Young in his book (“The rise of meritocracy”) in 1958, explained as the society would be organized on meritocracy, that is, the society would base on “intelligence plus effort” to maximize human potential and achieve higher levels of productivity and efficiency (Pavlicevic&Wang,2011^[1]). Meritocracy is essential to governance and efficiency (Barr, 2006^[2]; Tan, 2008^[3]; Bellows, 2009^[4]). As modern society becomes more complex and technical, in order to make effective decisions, expertise is necessary, which lays the foundation for prevalence of meritocracy (Tan, 2008^[3]).

Merit is the core of meritocracy; inter alia education qualification and expertise are the upmost merits for the ruling party (Tan, 2008^[3]). In Asia, governments target certain merit (i.e., education qualification) and are more concern about selecting the best and brightest to build strong bureaucracy, to maintain stronghold for the party in power or the rulers as envisioned in the beginning of the USA (Poocharoen & Brillantes,2013^[5]).

Poocharoen and Brillantes (2013^[5]) argued that the change of a party’s personnel system could project the tendency to meritocracy. From the perspective of CCP’s inclination to meritocracy, Konrád and Szelényi (1979^[6]) argued that old party elites would be replaced by elites professional with higher level of education in the future. But Szelényi (1986) argued education qualification as well as political loyalty is essential to be party elite with the assumption that there are different career paths between politically loyal bureaucrats and professionals. Some researches pointed out Chinese leaders are seeking bureaucratic bases of power outside party structures, shifting revolutionary cadres to technocrats (Cheng & White, 1990^[7]; Lee, 1991^[8]; Goldstein, 1994^[9]). Comparing the focus of legal framework, recruitment, personnel development, performance evaluation and promotion on competency and political reliability, Pavlicevic and Wang (2011^[1]) argued that China is in the transition to merit system.

Obviously, CCP’s efforts in promoting meritocracy is no more than the reform of party cadre system, i.e., the reform of standards, methods, procedures and openness in selecting and recruiting leading cadres. In other words, the personnel reform is restricted to the party and government system. However, the talent programs led by CCP in the beginning of 21st century not only target party and government departments, but nearly the whole human resources in society (see details below) as well. In this regard, whether the principle of party managing talents is CCP’s further struggle in promoting meritocracy is worth considering.

Meritocracy is the product of social economy environment, which implies qualities of political elites should be compatible with abilities and skills that are socially desirable. In this sense, in order to deliver better governance, political elites should be composed of individuals who grasp certain knowledge and skills that can contribute to the society. LI (2005^[10]) argued that overseas talent

programs can be seen as signals that Chinese leaders have realized that the inclusion of returnees in political sphere will intensify the race for human capital in the political system and intensify competition among Chinese elites, transforming it from a Guanxi-oriented system to a merit system. Although the number of returnees in leading position is still limited, returnees' political influences have increased (LI, 2005^[10]; 2006^[11]). LI (2005^[10]) argued that the increase of returnees in leading position or think tank project China's continuing openness and subsequently political reform, which needs further examine.

3 The characteristics of the transformation from party managing cadres to party managing talents

We think CCP have made significant changes on the talent policy, from original "party manage cadre" transform to "party use talent" and now "party manage talent", Since CCP took power in 1949. Figure1 is the flow of the transformation.

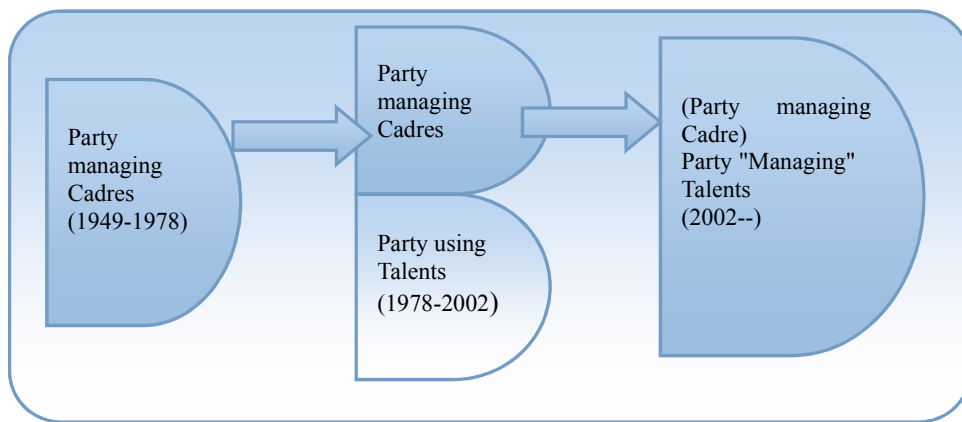


Figure 1 The evolution of Party Managing Talents

In the following session, we will review the track of changes in the area of CCP's talent policy, talent standard, organization setting, financing from CCP's Organization Department to understand the insights of transformation of Party Managing Talents and its features.

3.1 The history of CCP managing talents-a policy perspective since 1978

From China's central economic work conference in November 2001 to the 16th national congress of CCP in November 2002, "the strategy of reinvigorating the country through talent" has gradually been established. In this context, Zeng Qinghong, the member of the Standing Committee of the Politburo responsible for personnel and the secretary of the Central Committee of the CCP secretariat, initiated CCP managing talents at national organizational work conference in Dec.2002, pointing out "party committees and organization departments at all levels should obey the rule of party managing talents and establish the mechanism of linking Party cadres work to managing leading professionals, i.e., overall planning and coordinative development to form a new pattern of managing leading professionals, which characterized as party committees exercise unified leadership, organization departments take the lead and assume overall responsibility, related departments perform its respective duty and work hand in glove and social forces participate extensively"¹. Then, at the meeting of politburo (May 23, 2003) that targeted the promotion of managing leading professionals, party managing talents was officially acknowledged. And after the first national conference on managing leading professionals convened in December 2003, "The decision on further strengthening the work on talent" clearly defines the principle of party managing talents, i.e., "macro management, policy management, coordination management and service management". Afterwards, the CCP put the idea of

¹ Important literatures collection since the 16th Party congress, the speech at national organizational work conference (December 16, 2002).

party managing talent into the 11th Five-year Plan (2006-2010) and the 17th Party Congress Report. Then, on Jun. 2010, “Medium to Long-Term Plan for the Development of Talent, 2010-2020”, the guiding file of managing leading professionals was promulgated, which further addressed party managing talents and called on the CCP as well as the whole society to struggle to fulfill the “strategy of strengthening the country through human talent” After that, in 2012, “The Suggestion on further strengthening the principle of party managing talents” was promulgated. As the basic policy of party managing talents in the 21st century, it included explicit provisions about the system, mechanism and method of party managing talents.

As shown above, the principle of party managing talents is embedded in policies since its introduction. This research browses policies promulgated by party and government departments at central levels in Beida Fabao¹ with keywords (“talent” and “intellectual”). After skimming, we exclude 34 pieces of policies that focus on “cadre” or “civil servant”. As the number of policies per year is totally different, with 2003 experienced a plunge; we count the policies before and after 2002, finding that 2003 and 2011 are the years that promulgate relatively highest policies.

There are 109 pieces of policies related to party managing talents, accounting for 50.46% of policies (216 pieces) that analyzed in this research. Overall, the principle of party managing talents can be seen in the policies after 2003, when policies as well as word frequencies of party managing talents remain high and assume the trend of periodic rise, with the year 2009 witnessed an abnormal low point. In addition, the year 2003, 2010 (after) and 2012 are prominent, featured with the increase of word frequencies.

In terms of dispatch agencies, party-mass departments have formulated 121 pieces of policies, comprising 56.02% of the total. In 2002 for the sector, party-mass departments have promulgated 74 pieces (45.68%) of policies since 2003; inter alia, organization departments comprise the highest percentage, implying organization departments are the core of party managing talents.

From the above, the principle of party managing talents comes in two spurts: 2003-2010, the establishment period and then 2010 to date, the development period. Also, we can outline the prominent character of party managing talent, i.e., the CCP manages talents upholding the principle of macro-management.

3.2 The change in talent standards and talent corps upon the principle of party managing talent-a policy perspective

In 2003, China’s national managing leading professionals conference pointed out that “as long as individuals own certain knowledge or skills, can carry out creative work, and contribute to material civilization construction, political civilization construction as well as spiritual civilization construction in the process of socialism with Chinese characteristics, they are talents demanded by the party and state”, which breaks the mould that defines talents with knowledge, experience and identity standards. After that, “Decision” stated to build three talent corps, described as “political leaders and officials”, “Business entrepreneurs” and “Technical professionals”.

Then, in 2010, “Program” claimed that “talents take priority, and rooted in functions”, addressing talents are those who contribute to social and economic development. Matching with such a change in talent standards, “high-skilled talents in different industries”, “Practical talents for rural areas and agriculture” and “Professional social workers” are added into talent corps led by the CCP. Since then, all human resources that are economically and socially valuable have been incorporated into the CCP’s management domain.

3.3 The change in organizational structure upon the principle of party managing talent

In order to promote party managing talents, the CCP has adjusted its organizational structure. In 2003, the Intellectual Office of Organization Department of the Central Committee was transformed into Talent Work Bureau. Meanwhile, the Politburo established the “Central Coordinating Group on Talent” (CCGT), led directly by the Organization Department of the Central Committee, aiming at strategic plan, policy study, macro guidance and coordination of managing leading professionals and building the ranks of talents. Then, in 2004, a new CCGT was formed by an amalgamation of former CCGT and the Joint Meeting of National Intellectual Work. In addition, the Talent Work Bureau , a

¹ Policy database caters for researchers and the public set by PKU.

new organization was formed by combining functions of both Division I of Bureau of Cadres and Bureau of Education & Cadres, to dedicatedly manage professionals and intellectuals.

In response to the request from Organization Department of the Central Committee, the county party committees establishes Talent Work Leadership Team to implement talent policy. By June 2012, all 31 provinces have established “Talent Work Leadership Team” while 99.8% of Municipal Government and 98.6% of county authorities have set up “Department of Talent Work” or “Talent Office”. Furthermore, nearly 97.3 cities and 81.2% counties have built specific institutions for managing talents, with approximately 6000 full-time staffs (Ren, 2012^[10]).

With above structure adjustment, the CCP successfully organized its resources and established system to effectively lead the transformation.

3.4 Financial investment in managing leading professionals upon the principle of party managing talent—a case study of Zhejiang Province

From the perspective of financial input, we can see the transformation from party managing cadres to party managing talent .Organizational departments not only directly engaged in policies, but also actively involved in providing funds for attracting, training and stimulating talents, which make up of special funds for talents. Those funds are mainly for aiding high-level talents to start a business or to innovate, comprising allowance (such as tax returns and post allowance), project aiding bonus (such as start-up capital for scientific research and entrepreneur) and financial guarantee (such as special funds for Medicare and housing) .In recent years, local governments have set up special funds for talents. Take Zhejiang Province for example (see Table 1); from 2010 to 2012, the proportions of special funds for talents to local general budget expenditure of 11 prefectural-level cities had increased, with average 99.00%.

Table 1 The amount of special funds for talents and the proportion of that to local general budget expenditure of 11 prefectural-level cities in Zhejiang Province(million, %) ¹

	Hangzhou	Ningbo	Wenzhou	Jiaxing	Huzhou	Shaoxing	Jinhua	Quzhou	Zhoushan	Taizhou	Lishui
2012 Amount	622.847	393.23	106.4	79.08	45.01	61.728	39.619	43.82	80.95	37.45	35.85
%	6.78	2.40	1.57	1.85	1.73	1.13	0.77	1.82	2.12	2.17	2.16
2011 Amount	554.173	330	61.5	50	28.955	102.83	27.571	11.05	79.57	30.4	20.23
%	3.29	2.10	1.01	1.16	0.80	2.12	0.89	0.75	2.24	1.48	1.30
2010 Amount	414.2641	241.768	48	43.15	22.0719	51.9647	11.04	9.27	28.4	18.797	16.09
%	2.68	1.7	0.8	1.18	0.7	1.11	0.37	0.65	1.01	1.01	1.2

From the perspective of end-user departments (see Table 2), the special funds for talents charged by the Talent Office of Ningbo, Jiaxing, Huzhou, Zhoushan and Taizhou had rose from 2010 to 2011. In 2011, the special funds for talents charged by the Talent Office to the total of 11 prefectural-level cities ranged from 13.57% to 100%, with the average 46.61%. In this regard, the Talent Office has played a vital part in managing the special funds for talents, which is a breakthrough for organizational departments. Different from the past that organizational departments merely concern with personnel, at present, they manage money as well as personnel in China, which strongly prove the CCP’s role in promoting Party manage talents.

Table 2 The special funds for talents charged by the Talent Office to the total of 11 prefectural-level cities in Zhejiang Province(million, %) ²

	Hangzhou	Ningbo	Wenzhou	Jiaxing	Huzhou	Shaoxing	Jinhua	Quzhou	Zhoushan	Taizhou	Lishui
2011 Amount	185.00	224.88	33.95	10	19.5	18.03	6.5	1.5	60	30.4	7.8
%	33.38	68.15	55.20	20.00	67.35	17.53	23.58	13.57	75.41	100.00	38.56
2012 Amount	414.2641	241.768	48	43.15	22.0719	51.9647	11.04	9.27	28.4	18.797	16.09
%	38.62	34.87	58.06	19.70	54.37	29.48	54.35	28.05	57.32	31.92	40.71

1 The statistical report about work summary made by organization department, Zhejiang provincial committee.

2 Ibid.

From the above account of talent policies, organizational structure and financial input, we conclude that the CCP has implemented the reform from party managing cadres to party managing talent.

4. The aim and implicit political motivation of the transformation from party managing cadres to party managing talent

In order to shed light on the aim and implicit political motivation of changing from party managing cadres to party managing talent, we examine the talent policies’ background and purpose with context analysis, as well as the “1000 Talents” Plan from the perspective of the workplace of returnees, outcomes of such a program and political ambitions achieved by returnees.

4.1 The background and aim of talent policies-based on the content analysis of policies

With 216 pieces of polices we already have, background and purpose of policies are examined with context analysis. Two researchers put forward their own code frame via independent reading and summarizing. Then, based on reliability test, we pick up highly congruent codes and create a coding schedule made up of 5 dimensions (see Table 3) to explore changes in policies’ background, purpose, object and the focus of managing leading professionals since the outset of economic reform.

Table 3 The coding schedule for content analysis

Aim (A)	Background (B)	Policy type (C)	Object (D)	Talent management activities (E)
The reform and development of enterprises(1)	The reform and development of enterprises(1)	Outline (1)	political leaders and officials (1)	Talent introduction (1)
The transformation of economic development mode(2)	The transformation of economic development mode(2)	Opinion (2)	Technical professionals (2)	Talent training (2)
The acceleration of the economy(3)	The acceleration of the economy(3)	Notice (3)	Business entrepreneurs (3)	The use of Talents (3)
The establishment of market mechanism (4)	The establishment of market mechanism (4)	Proposal (4)	Practical talents for rural areas and agriculture(4)	Talent management system (4)
Enhancing CPC’s governing ability(5)	CPC’s governing ability construction(5)	Standard (5)	Professional social workers(5)	Talent environment construction(5)
The reform of administrative system (6)	The reform of administrative system (6)	Regulation (6)	High-skilled talents in different industries (6)	Organization and leadership (6)
Enhancing China’s international status(7)	International competition (7)	Letter (7)	Overseas talents (7)	Talent corps Construction (7)
The development of educational undertakings(8)	The development of educational undertakings (8)	Rule (8)	Undergraduates (8)	
The development of scientific undertakings (9)	The development of scientific undertakings (9)	Decision (9)	Comprehensive talents (9)	
The development of cultural undertakings(10)	The development of cultural undertakings(10)	Suggestion (10)		
The development of social undertakings(11)	The development of social undertakings(11)			
The development of social/natural environment(12)	The development of social/natural environment(12)			
The development of state(13)	The development of state(13)			
Integrated ones(14)	Integrated ones(14)			

According to statistics, since 1978, most talent policies have been in form of notices (65.74%) then followed by suggestions and outlines, which projects programmatic ideas of leaders from top to bottom. In terms of managing leading professionals procedures, the use of talents(19.04%) and the construction of talent environment(16.71%)are comparatively prominent, which imply the focus of party managing talents.

Ranking the background of policies by word frequencies, meanwhile we divided the policies into two group by 2002. The results in order are as table4. Before 2002, establishing market mechanism was most frequently cited in the background, and then followed by integrated ones and national development. But after 2002, apart from those, transforming economic development mode and accelerating the economy become prominent, so do the development of other social undertakings and the construction of the CCP's governing ability. At the same time, less attention is paid to the educational system reform and the administrative reform In addition, talent conferences and national strategies after 2002 make central government promulgate detailed talent policies to implement the spirit of conferences and carry out the national strategies.

Table 4 Changes in the background of talent policy before and after 2002

		B1	B2	B3	B4	B5	B6	B7	B8	B9	B10	B11	B12	B13	B14
Before 2002	Frequency	9	2	1	18	2	7	6	10	4	2	6	1	12	15
	%	9.47	2.11	1.05	18.95	2.11	7.37	6.32	10.53	4.21	2.11	6.32	1.05	12.63	15.79
After 2002	Frequency	8	16	16	10	8	9	13	4	5	7	21	4	58	81
	%	3.08	6.15	6.15	3.85	3.08	3.46	5.00	1.54	1.92	2.69	8.08	1.54	22.31	31.15

Sort the goals mentioned by word frequencies, and compared two policies groups before 2002 and after 2002. The results are as table5. In the economic field, the CCP put more emphasis on establishing market mechanism before 2002 while it attached more importance to the transformation of economic mode and the acceleration of the economy. In the political field, it is more often to see the enhancement of the CCP's governing ability in talent policies after 2002, which implies the CCP are more concern with reinforcing party building and consolidating the ruling status. However, compared with the change in the economic and social field where scientific and technological advance, social construction and environment protection turn into the focus of talent policies, the change in the political field is less significant. Besides, with the development of "to build a well-off society in an all-round way", "reinvigorating China through human resource development", "the concept of scientific development" and "innovative country", talent policies pay more attention to these strategic goals for the purpose of national development, which widens the gap between goals before and after 2002.

Table 5 Changes in the aim of talent policy before and after 2002

		A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	A9	A10	A11	A12	A13	A14
Before 2002	Frequency	10	0	4	4	9	7	2	6	5	2	5	0	16	5
	%	13.33	0.00	5.33	5.33	12.00	9.33	2.67	8.00	6.67	2.67	6.67	0.00	21.33	6.67
After 2002	Frequency	10	14	24	2	14	9	2	8	8	8	33	9	63	30
	%	4.27	5.98	10.26	0.85	5.98	3.85	0.85	3.42	3.42	3.42	14.10	3.85	26.92	12.82

From the perspective of policies' target objects (see Table 6), talents of most concern before 2002 were political leaders and officials and technical professionals as well. Meanwhile, overseas talents and Business entrepreneurs were policies' concerns. However, after 2002, overseas talents are less concerned while comprehensive talents apart from "political leaders and officials are more focused. In addition, policies after 2002 pay greatest attention to technical professionals, business entrepreneurs and high-skilled talents in different industries related to China's transformative upgrading. And different from the past, the CCP begins to take practical talents for rural areas and agriculture, professional social workers and undergraduates into consideration after 2002. Overall, it is the challenge of economic transformative upgrading, as well as new issues in society since 1978 that urge the expansion of targeted talent corps.

Table 6 Changes in the target object of talent policy before and after 2002

		D1	D2	D3	D4	D5	D6	D7	D8	D9
Before 2002	Frequency	25	21	8	0	0	0	14	0	1
	%	36.23	30.43	11.59	0.00	0.00	0.00	20.29	0.00	1.45
After 2002	Frequency	68	92	37	12	6	37	7	15	42
	%	21.52	29.11	11.71	3.80	1.90	11.71	2.22	4.75	13.29

According to above analysis, it is the CCP’s strategic choice to transform party managing cadres into party managing talent under the pressure of strengthening party’s governing abilities when the economy is in the transition and social problems are springing up. In terms of policy aim and target object, such a transformation aims at transforming economic mode, accelerating the economy and solving social problems for the purpose of rejuvenating China, though enhancing the CCP’s governing abilities is one of crucial goals in recent talent policies.

4.2 The working organizations of returnees under “1000 Talents” Plan

Upholding the principle of party managing talents, “1000 Talents” Plan is directly led by Organization Department of the Central Committee. This research examines the implicit political orientation from the perspective of the workplace of returnees within “1000 Talents” Plan.

Since the outset of “1000 Talents” Plan, China has introduced 10 batches of overseas high-level talents. By the end of 2013, the number of National “1000 Talents” Plan experts had reached 4183 according to official figures. There are two types of “1000 Talents” Plan experts, i.e., entrepreneurial talents and innovative talents. Based on the roster of former five “1000 Talents” Plan experts, we find that among 262 entrepreneurial talents, around 48% are in IT field while about 35% are in biochemical domain, i.e., most entrepreneurial talents are in the new economic field that is closely associated with China’s economy. Another research shows that 51.02%, 18.87% and 17.94% of experts have entered into colleges and universities, started own business and worked for a company respectively (Hei, 2012^[13]), which indicates colleges and universities have introduced the majority of “1000 Talents” Plan experts.

As listed above, returnees mainly go to colleges and universities, companies, or start their own businesses, engaging in work that directly benefits technological innovation and economic development. In this sense, “1000 Talents” Plan led by Organization Department of the Central Committee still focuses on China’s economy and social development, rather than enriches political talent corps to carry out political restructuring to a merit system.

4.3 The performance of “1000 Talents” Plan

Further, we examine the outcome of “1000 Talents” Plan to reserve the implicit orientation of party managing talent. As described above, “1000 Talents” Plan experts are made of two parts, i.e., entrepreneurial talents and innovative talents. It is reported that innovative talents play a vital role in taking charge of national programs, building national laboratories and international research centers, filling the gaps in China’s science and technology. Partly estimated, “1000 Talents” Plan experts have published 4416 profound articles or monographs after being introduced, inter alia, 50 are punished in the top international journals (Nature or Science). Furthermore, they have taken charge of 2886 national and local major scientific projects with 15.29 billion RMB funds in total, and acquired 746 considerable patents (Ren,2012^[14]), which benefit the innovation-driven economy.

From the perspective of entrepreneurial talents, they are the fresh combatant of China’s strategic emerging industries. According to previous research¹, entrepreneurial talents of the former seven “1000 Talents” Plan have accumulated 127.1 billion RMB sales incomes along with 9.86 billion RMB profits and taxes from 2009 to 2011. Take Suzhou City in Jiangsu Province for example, the talent contribution rate of 411 innovative enterprises related to leading talent programs above city level was 43.4%, equals to medium developed countries. In those enterprises, 55 have turned into national high-tech enterprises while 3 have gone public. In 2012, the prime operating revenues of those enterprises was 11.1 billion RMB, had risen 7 %, year-on-year, inter alia, 2 was over 1 billion RMB,

1 Ibid.

15 were over 0.1 billion RMB and 101 were over 10 million RMB.

From the above, “1000 Talents” Plan experts mainly contribute to the economic field. On one hand, they boost the economy through launching business; on the other hand, they promote the economic transformation and upgrading through technological innovation. In other words, “1000 Talents” Plan experts led by Organization Department of the Central Committee, do not prove their worth in the political field.

4.4 The fulfillment of “1000” talents’ political ambitions

In prior research, i.e., “The policy research on talent special zones construction in Zhejiang Province”, we interviewed 33 overseas high-level talents, finding that overseas talents can not fully fulfill themselves in the political field. In our study, 46% of interviewees expected that the government raise political trust in them and give them opportunities to participate in political activities (Chen & Yao, 2011^[15]). Similarly, “The survey about selecting leading cadres from returnees outside party system in 2006” shows that returnees have difficulties in entering politics (53.9% of interviewees hold the view that it is hard for them to enter politics), though with high enthusiasm (31.78% of interviewees are willing to give up their current job to start their official career). Besides, the results of “The research on channel problems for social talents into cadre corps” (2011) directed by Organization Department of the CCP, Wuhan municipal committee also experience similarity. In this regard, it is still hard for talents outside system to flow into system, for the growth of cadre corps largely depends on talent selection mechanism inside system, rather than absorb social talents home and abroad.

From the account of talent policies’ background and purpose with context analysis, as well as the “1000 Talents” Plan from the perspective of the workplace of returnees, outcomes of such a program and political ambitions achieved by returnees, we conclude that changing from party managing cadres to party managing talent aims at promoting the economy via innovation-driven, further achieving strategic goals of a innovative state and a well-off society.

5 Summary and discussion

In terms of policy analysis, it is found that the principle of party managing talents indeed becomes the guideline of managing leading professionals in China Since 2002. CCP has already expanded their administrative authorities from Cadres management to talents management, though Party Managing Talents has different characteristics with Party Managing Cadre.

(1) What is implicit political motivation of this change? According to the analysis of the background and objectives of these policies concerned with party managing talent, we found the first target of this change was to promote Chinese economic transform and improve the economic performance. Meanwhile, we also found that the CCP's second objective was to enhance CCP's governing capabilities and consolidates CCP's ruling status. As a matter of fact, human resource management in public sector aims to strengthen government accountability, it means government officials should account for its administrative behaviors. Romzek and Dubnic (1987^[16]) argued that accountability takes four forms based on two dimensions, the control magnitude and control source. with the combinations of two dimensions, four types of accountabilities are formed: Bureaucratic Accountability, Professional Accountability, Legal Accountability and Political Accountability. Bureaucratic Accountability focus on top down controls, Professional Accountability focus on professional opinions. Among four forms, bureaucratic accountability conflicts with professional accountability. Under bureaucratic accountability, the supervisor supervise the behaviors of subordinates in which formal authority works, under professional accountability, there is no formal controls from authorities but more like a consultant from professional to these non-professional. In China, bureaucratic accountability is strengthening through enhancing cadre personnel system, in which CCP's increases control of government authorities as well as personnel. Meanwhile due to increasingly professional problems, the Party and government departments have to increasingly rely on professional associations and expert systems in which comparatively independent, resulting in the weakening of the CCP's control. In order to avoid this situation, the party initiate policies to manage experts. After introduction of Party manage Talents, CCP find an effective way to strengthen the CCP's control and consolidate the CPC's ruling status without compromising its authorities.

(2) Regard to the second question, “whether such change is the prelude of political reform, i.e., the Chinese government is on the way to meritocracy?” In terms of “1000 Talents” Plan, i.e., the working organizations of returnees, their performances and political ambitions achieved by returnees, we find such transformation mainly focuses on economic performance, that is, promoting the economy via innovation and further achieving strategic goals of national development. Obviously, the economic development and the CCP’s ruling status are strongly connected. As a Leninist political Party, the CCP always consider the economic performance as sources of legitimacy. Nowadays, trapped in the situation of fierce competition and economy slowdown, the CCP is eager to find a new resource to transform and accelerate the economy, which results in the principle of party should manage talents.

Overall, this research confirmed that the transformation of Party Managing Talents is the CCP’s means to implement “the strategy of reinvigorating country through talent”, rather than promote the political meritocracy. Meanwhile, this research also confirmed that party managing talents intends to strength professional accountability and promote the CCP’s governing ability, but more importantly, to transform economic growth mode and realize the second economic take-off, as well as develop social services in China in order to consolidate the ruling status of the CCP.

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