

## Retraction

# Retracted: An Empirical Study on the Influencing Factors of the Returning Intention of Overseas Talents

### Discrete Dynamics in Nature and Society

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This article has been retracted by Hindawi following an investigation undertaken by the publisher [1]. This investigation has uncovered evidence of one or more of the following indicators of systematic manipulation of the publication process:

- (1) Discrepancies in scope
- (2) Discrepancies in the description of the research reported
- (3) Discrepancies between the availability of data and the research described
- (4) Inappropriate citations
- (5) Incoherent, meaningless and/or irrelevant content included in the article
- (6) Peer-review manipulation

The presence of these indicators undermines our confidence in the integrity of the article's content and we cannot, therefore, vouch for its reliability. Please note that this notice is intended solely to alert readers that the content of this article is unreliable. We have not investigated whether authors were aware of or involved in the systematic manipulation of the publication process.

Wiley and Hindawi regrets that the usual quality checks did not identify these issues before publication and have since put additional measures in place to safeguard research integrity.

We wish to credit our own Research Integrity and Research Publishing teams and anonymous and named external researchers and research integrity experts for contributing to this investigation.

The corresponding author, as the representative of all authors, has been given the opportunity to register their agreement or disagreement to this retraction. We have kept a record of any response received.

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- [1] L. Liu and F. Tian, "An Empirical Study on the Influencing Factors of the Returning Intention of Overseas Talents," *Discrete Dynamics in Nature and Society*, vol. 2022, Article ID 2778287, 7 pages, 2022.

## Research Article

# An Empirical Study on the Influencing Factors of the Returning Intention of Overseas Talents

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Many scholars have carried out a large number of studies on the factors influencing the intention of returning overseas talents based on different theories. This study integrates two theoretical perspectives at macro and individual levels, puts forward a new theoretical framework for analyzing the intention of returning overseas talents, and constructs a theoretical model including the intention of returning overseas talents, talent ecological environment of the host country, prospect expectation of home country, talent growth expectation, and perceived opportunity. Based on 302 survey samples, we used correlation analysis, confirmatory factor analysis, structural equation, and other methods, and the results show that four variables, including talent ecological environment of the host country, prospect expectation of home country, talent growth expectation, and perceived opportunity, have a significant impact on the intention of returning overseas talents. The research also found that talent growth expectation and perceived opportunity had mediating effects, and the prospect expectation and perceived opportunity of origin had moderating effects, which provides a new research idea for the research on the factors influencing the return intention of overseas talents.

## 1. Introduction

With the changing globalization trend, the situation of the transnational flow of talents is also changing. For developing countries, it is crucial for the next stage of development that how to attract the talents working overseas back, which is receiving more and more attention.

Theories to explain the transnational flow of human capital include two directions. One is from the macro level, and the representative theory is the push-pull theory. The theory holds that various positive factors in the places of immigration will produce pull, while various negative factors will produce the force of push. The combined action of the force of push and pull produces the flow of human capital [1]. Studies based on the push-pull theory mainly analyze the influences of various external environmental factors on the transnational flow of human capital from the macro level. In addition, such studies generally do not involve an individual microscopic investigation. Early studies have pointed out

that the international differences in individual remuneration are an important reason for brain drain. Compared with low-skilled workers, talents are more sensitive to economic factors [2]. The long-term backward economic level will also lead to a vicious cycle; that is, a low economic level leads to low salary level, which leads to brain drain and further affects the economic development [3]. Environmental factors are also important factors leading to brain drain. When the environments of working, education, policies, and living in the source country are unfavorable for talents to make the most of themselves, they will initiatively choose to develop themselves in countries or regions that can provide stronger support and better conditions [4].

The other direction is from the individual level, and representative theories include field theory, ERG, and theory. According to the field theory, the behavior of individuals is not only determined by their own abilities and qualities but also affected by the surrounding environments. The motivation behavior of individuals in transnational

mobility is jointly determined by the “psychological life space” composed of the “psychological field” and “environmental field.” ERG theory points out that the three core needs of individual existence, relatedness, and growth jointly promote the transnational flow of talents, among which growth is the core demand of career development [5]. These studies mainly focus on the individual level to analyze individual psychological activities and perception of the macro environment. In addition, the perspective of this kind of study focuses on the retaining of talents for the region, and the objects are mainly individuals of transregional flowing. Studies show that regional environment and talent growth expectations can play a significant role in promoting regional talent agglomeration. Other studies show that the talent ecological environment and talent growth region of the host country can significantly promote the willingness of expatriates to stay abroad [6].

Based on the integration of previous theories, this paper will form a new theoretical perspective, which will analyze the influence of talent ecological environment of the host country and prospect expectation of the home country from the macro level as well as talents’ growth expectation and perceived opportunity from the individual level on overseas talents return intention under the combined effect of the force of push and pull. It is expected that the conclusions of this study can not only fill in the theoretical gaps of previous studies to a certain extent but also provide new ideas for future studies.

## 2. Research Design

### 2.1. Research Hypothesis Development

*2.1.1. Talent Ecological Environment of Host Country and Returning Intention.* Talent ecological environment refers to the external environment that can meet people’s needs directly or indirectly. According to the research ideas of McElroy [7], this study defines the extension of talent ecological environment as four aspects: economy, life, culture, and policies. The economic scale and strength of different countries are important factors affecting the international flow of talents, and higher remuneration is the main demand affecting the transregional flow of talents [8]. The living environment is an important reference for talents to consider whether to stay for a long time, and the living infrastructure represented by recreational facilities is a necessary factor to attract highly educated talents who have advantages of technic and education. As these talents grow older and become parents, the importance of education gets more and more important [9]. Openness and inclusiveness have significant influences on the transregional flow and aggregation of talents. There is a significant positive correlation between the spatial distribution of highly educated talents and the inclusive and open social atmosphere of the city [10]. Personnel policy will have a positive influence on the flow and aggregation of talents, and good policies in the destination country are one of the driving forces of the flow of talents [11]. Based on these four aspects, one hypothesis is put forward in this paper:

*Hypothesis 1.* The talent ecological environment of the host country has a negative influence on the returning intention of overseas talents.

*2.1.2. Talent Ecological Environment and Talents’ Growth Expectation.* Talents’ growth expectation refers to the psychological evaluation of talents’ growth after judging their environment based on the information and experiences they own. The talent ecological environment of the host country has a direct influence on the cultivation and development of talents. The constant improved economic development level, continuous improved living service facilities, good talent policies, and a cultural environment with strong inclusiveness and a good atmosphere of innovation can offer good learning and growing environment for talents and provide more opportunities, which positively affect the psychological expectation of talent growth [6]. Based on this, the hypothesis in this paper is proposed as follows.

*Hypothesis 2.* The talent ecological environment of the host country has a positive influence on talents’ growth expectation.

*2.1.3. Talents’ Growth Expectation and Returning Intention.* Talent is a relative concept. Compared with general human resources, talents have a stronger desire to realize their own value and a better pursuit of career development [6]. Similarly, talents’ growth is a dynamic process. If the environment cannot meet their needs for career development, the possibility of turnover will be significantly increased [12]. Studies have shown that career development plays a leading role among those factors affecting talent flow decision-making [13]. When a region can provide wider space for development, material life of higher level, and more convenient access to information than other regions, its attraction ability will be significantly improved [14]. Especially for overseas talents, it costs high for them to leave their home to a new environment for work and study. Therefore, they have a better pursuit of career development, and they are more willing to accept new tasks and new challenges with reselecting the place of development [6]. As the external environment changes, the growth expectation of the overseas talents will be constantly adjusted driven by their growing demand. When overseas talents think their current growth expectation is high, the chances to make return decisions will be reduced. On the contrary, when they think the expectation is low, the chances will be increased. Based on this, the hypothesis is proposed.

*Hypothesis 3.* Talents’ growth expectation has a negative influence on overseas talents returning intention.

*2.1.4. Expectation of Native Country Prospect and Returning Intention.* According to the push-pull theory, the expectation of native country prospects and the talent ecological environment of the host country is a pair of corresponding variables. The return of overseas talents is the result of the joint action of both native and host countries, and the

development level of the native country has a very important influence on overseas talents' decision whether to return or not. From the perspective of economics, an individual's decision is the action about the future made on the basis of current situations. In order to get the maximum utility, an individual will predict the future values of various variables affecting individual utility and take corresponding actions [15]. Overseas talents will make the decision whether to return according to their judgment on the development prospect of their native country. If they are optimistic about the development prospect of their home country, they are more likely to choose to return; otherwise, if they are not optimistic about it, they are less likely to choose to return. Based on this, in this paper, the fourth hypothesis is proposed.

*Hypothesis 4.* The expectation of native country prospect has a positive influence on returning intention.

*2.1.5. Perceived Opportunity and Returning Intention.* Theoretically, making the decision of whether to change jobs or not can be expressed as a function of the difficulties of changing jobs they perceived [16], in which the perception of external job opportunities is very important, mainly referring to perceiving the ease of finding an alternative job. It also means the ability to find a new job that matches the current one [17]. When employees make decisions of changing jobs, they will make a comparison at two levels. The first one is to directly compare all other choices and evaluate the results that may be brought by changing job. The second is to compare from the perspective of opportunity cost. If the former is higher, with satisfaction declining, the employee will finally take action to change the current situation [18]. Perceived opportunity in this study mainly refers to overseas talents perceiving the ease of returning to their native country for employment. Similarly, based on the push-pull theory, when overseas talents choose whether to return, they will evaluate and compare the two situations of continuing to work abroad and returning according to the expected development situation in the two countries and then make choices. External opportunities will psychologically prompt employees to choose leaving or transregional departure [19], which is also applicable to overseas talents, and when they think they can find a more promising job in the domestic market, there will be greater uncertainty in their career choice, and they may be attracted by the domestic opportunities. On the contrary, when they feel that there are few opportunities in the domestic market, they are more inclined to continue working abroad to avoid all kinds of uncertainty. Based on this, the hypothesis is proposed.

*Hypothesis 5.* Perceived opportunity has a positive influence on the returning intention of overseas talents.

*2.1.6. Expectation of Native Country Prospect and Perceiving Opportunity.* Employment is an important indicator to evaluate the development level of a region. The higher the

level of development and the more vigorous a region is, the better the prospect of its employment market will be [20]. Similarly, the higher the talent's expectation of the development prospects of a region, the higher their expectation of its employment prospects will be. As a group of talents more excellent than general human resources [21], they will also have a higher judgment on their own employment opportunities when they have a higher judgment on the employment prospects of a region. Overseas talents with a higher level of education and more courage to challenge themselves have a stronger identification of their talent attributes [22]. When they are optimistic about the development prospect of our country, they will be more optimistic about their career prospects returning back, while when they are not optimistic about it, they will also accordingly show a negative attitude towards their career prospect. Based on this, the hypothesis is proposed:

*Hypothesis 6.* The expectation of native country prospect has a positive influence on perceived opportunity.

*2.1.7. The Mediating Effect of Talents' Growth Expectation and Perceived Opportunity.* In this paper, it is believed that the expectation of overseas talents on the talent ecological environment of the host country and the prospect of the native country will lead to the change of talents' growth expectation and perceived opportunities and then have different influences on their returning intention. On the one hand, if overseas talents are satisfied with the talent ecological environment of the host country, they will be more optimistic about their career development prospect in the host country [21], which will have a negative influence on their returning intention. On the other hand, if they have a high expectation of the development prospect of their native country, they will also have a better judgment of the expected benefits of their return [22], which will have a positive influence on their returning intention. Based on this, the hypothesis is proposed:

*Hypothesis 7*

- (a) Talents' growth expectation has a mediating effect on the negative relationship between talent ecological environment of host country and overseas talents' returning intention
- (b) Talents' growth expectation has a mediating effect on the positive relationship between expectation of native country prospect and overseas talents' returning intention

*2.1.8. The Adjustment Effects of the Expectation of Native Country Prospect and Perceived Opportunity.* Hom et al. found that labor market conditions have an adjustment effect on the relationship between being discontented with work and voluntary turnover [23]. When the labor market is tight, it could hinder their individual development to leave the job and even make them unable to find an alternative job.

Therefore, in this case, being discontented with work has a relatively weak influence on voluntary turnover. Youngblood et al. and Gerhart (1987) found that the effect of job satisfaction on turnover was stronger when the unemployment rate was low [24]. Wheeler et al. found through empirical research that perceiving opportunity has an adjustment effect on the relationship between employees' job satisfaction and turnover intention [17]. When overseas talents have a poor judgment on their overseas career development, there will be a certain degree of returning intention, which is affected by perceived opportunity: if overseas talents' perception of development opportunity of returning is higher, they will find it more beneficial for their own career growth, which will lead a higher tendency of returning. Similarly, it is also reasonable to believe that overseas talents will have a higher tendency to return when they are not satisfied with the talent ecological environment of the host country as well as a higher expectation of the prospect of the native country. Figure 1 shows the correlation. Based on this, the hypothesis is proposed.

#### Hypothesis 8

- (a) Perceived opportunity has an adjustment effect on the positive relationship between the talents' growth expectation and the returning intention of overseas talents
- (b) The expectation of native country prospect has an adjustment effect on the negative relationship between the talent ecological environment of the host country and the returning intention of overseas talents

### 2.2. Design of Questionnaire

**2.2.1. Talent Ecological Environment of Host Country Scale and Expectation of Native Country Prospect Scale.** The scale of the talent ecological environment of the host country has been borrowed the scale of the talent ecological environment of the host country which is revised by Wang et al. and compiled by Yang [6]. On the scale, there are 4 items with "Good momentum of economic development in this region" as a representative topic. The Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of the scale in this study is 0.823. The scale of expectation of native country prospect is also designed on the basis of the ideas of Wang et al. [6] and Yang [14]. There are 4 items in this scale with "I think China's economic maintains a good momentum of development" as a representative topic. The Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of this scale is 0.823 in this study.

**2.2.2. Overseas Talents Returning Intention Scale.** The scale of overseas talents returning intention is designed based on the ideas of Yang, which has 4 items with topics such as "I will resolutely leave here if I can find a suitable job in China" [25]. The Cronbach's  $\alpha$  scale in this study is 0.796.

**2.2.3. Talents' Growth Expectation Scale.** The talents' growth expectation scale adopts the 6-item scale used by Wang, with representative topics such as "Working her, I have many opportunities for growth and development" [6]. The Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of the scale in this study is 0.875.

**2.2.4. Perceived Opportunity Scale.** The perceived opportunity scale has borrowed the perceived opportunity scale compiled by Weng [9]. There are 4 items with representative topics such as "There are many other opportunities for me to choose if I'm back to China." The Cronbach's  $\alpha$  of the scale in this study is 0.837 (as shown in Table 1).

The 5-division Likert scale is used in all questions in this study, and the options from 1 to 5 are "very inconsistent," "not very consistent," "uncertain," "relatively consistent," and "very consistent," respectively.

**2.3. Distributing and Collecting Questionnaires.** In this study, overseas talents who had worked abroad for more than two years are the investigation sample, and 324 questionnaires were distributed and collected. 302 valid questionnaires were obtained after getting rid of the questionnaires with repeated values and obvious logical errors, and thus, an effective rate of 93.2% is obtained. In this investigation, the male accounted for 53.4%, with the female 46.6%. For age distribution, 49.3% of them were 21–30 years old, 27.8% were 31–40 years old, and 22.9% aged 41 or over. In terms of educational background, 13.3% of them have bachelor's degree, 66.4% have master's degree, and 20.3% have doctor's degree.

## 3. Empirical Analysis

**3.1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis.** SPSS 25.0 software was used for correlation analysis. A confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to test the discriminant validity of the variables (host country talent ecological environment, talents' growth peak, overseas talent return intention, home country prospect expectation, and perceived opportunity). As shown in Table 2, the data fitting effect of the five-factor model is the best (CFI = 0.929, TLI = 0.908, RMSEA = 0.061, SRMR = 0.052), which indicates a good discriminative validity of the five variables in the study.

**3.2. Correlation Analysis.** AMOS 19.0 was used for correlation analysis. The results show that there is a high correlation between talent ecological environment, talents' growth expectation, and talents' settling intention in the host country. Also, there is a high correlation between the returning intention of overseas talents, the expectation of their native country prospect, and the perception of opportunities while there is an obvious negative correlation between the settling intention and the returning intention of overseas talents, which is consistent with the hypotheses of this paper (Table 3).

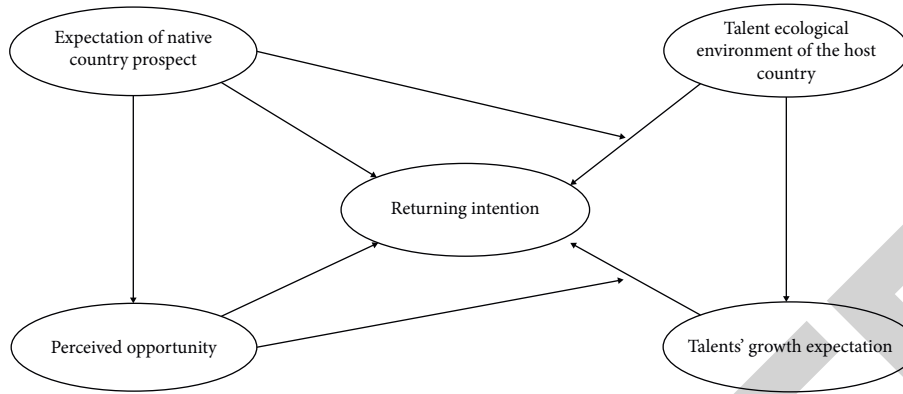


FIGURE 1: Correlativity model diagram.

TABLE 1: Perceived opportunity scale.

Scale	Options	Cronbach'α
Willingness to return overseas talents	If I find a suitable job opportunity in China, I will leave my current place immediately	0.796
	I'm thinking of coming back to China	
	I had little thought of coming back to China	
	I tried to find new job opportunities in China	
Talent ecological environment of host country	I am very optimistic about the economic situation in this region	0.823
	I really like the living conditions in this area	
	I really like the cultural atmosphere of this area	
	I am very pleased with the talent policy of the district	
Prospective home country	I am very optimistic about China's economic situation	0.823
	I really like the living environment in China	
	I really like the cultural atmosphere in China	
	I think China's talent policy is very attractive to me	
Talent growth expectation	Working here offers me many opportunities for growth and development	0.875
	My job offers quite a lot of practical opportunities	
	I can feel a sense of accomplishment and belong in my work	
	My job is full of challenges	
Perceived opportunities	My job has a smooth promotion channel and a lot of room for advancement	0.837
	I got a raise at work	
	It will not be hard for me to leave here and go back to China and find another one	
	I feel there are many opportunities for me to develop in China	
	With my current skills and qualifications, it would be easy to find a satisfying job back in China	
	Back in China, I had plenty of other job opportunities to choose from	

TABLE 2: Confirmatory factor analysis.

Model	$\Delta\chi^2$ ( $\Delta df$ )	CFI	TLI	RMSEA	SRMR
5-factor model (HE; GP; OI; AP; PO)	—	0.929	0.908	0.061	0.052
4-factor model (HE + GP; OI; AP; PO)	89.3 (1)	0.854	0.817	0.072	0.069
3-factor model (HE + GP; OI; AP + PO)	122.4 (2)	0.732	0.894	0.085	0.101
2-factor model (HE + GP; OI + AP + PO)	143.2 (4)	0.643	0.602	0.129	0.137
Single-factor model (HE + GP + OI + AP + PO)	547.9 (5)	0.505	0.474	0.197	0.199

Note. HE = Host country talent ecological environment, GP = talents' growth prediction, OI = overseas talents' returning intention, AP = anticipative prospect of native country prospect, and PO = perceived opportunity.

3.3. Path Coefficient Analysis. The test results of the structural equation model are sorted out and then shown in Table 4. The talent ecological environment of the host country has a significant influence on the returning intention of the overseas talents (−0.227, 1% level of significance),

while it has a significant positive influence on the talent growth expectations (0.289, 1% level of significance). However, talent growth expectation has a significant negative influence on the returning intention of the overseas talents (−0.309, 1% level of significance). All the above had

TABLE 3: Correlation analysis.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
(1) HE	1							
(2) GP	0.201***	1						
(3) OI	-0.114*	-0.103*	1					
(4) AP	0.021	-0.067	0.238***	1				
(5) PO	0.032	-0.053	0.189***	0.205**	1			
(6) Gen	0.056	0.029	0.021	0.045	0.037	1		
(7) Age	-0.098*	0.043	0.067	0.089	0.043	0.019	1	
(8) Edu	-0.112	0.047	0.076	0.076	0.044	0.071	0.132	1

Note. \*\*\* and \*\* stand for significant levels of 1%, 5%, and 10%, respectively.

TABLE 4: Model effect analysis.

Path	Coefficient	S.E.	P
HE → OI	0.277	0.167	<0.01
HE → GP	0.289	0.144	<0.01
GP → OI	0.309	0.149	<0.01
HE → GP → OI	0.089	0.152	<0.05
HE * AP → OI	-0.119	0.108	<0.05
AP → OI	0.459	0.094	<0.01
AP → PO	0.477	0.109	<0.01
PO → OI	0.514	0.062	<0.01
AP → PO → OI	0.245	0.083	<0.01
GP * PO → OI	-0.128	0.089	<0.01

been verified in Hypothesis 1, Hypothesis 2, and Hypothesis 3. The expectation of native country prospect has a significant positive influence on the returning intention of overseas talents (0.459, 1% level of significance), and it has a significant positive influence on perceiving opportunities (0.477, 1% level of significance), which also has a significant positive influence on the returning intention of overseas talents (0.514, 1% level of significance). Therefore, Hypothesis 4, Hypothesis 5, and Hypothesis 6 are verified.

Talent growth expectation has a mediating effect on the relationship between the talent ecological environment of the host country talent and the returning intention of overseas talents (-0.089, 5% level of significance), and because of the significant direct effect of the talent ecological environment of the host country on overseas talents returning intention, it is a partial mediating effect, of which the total response value is 0.366. The perceived opportunity has a mediating influence on the relationship between the expectation of native country prospect and the returning of overseas talents (-0.245, 1% level of significance) and causes a direct effect of the prospect expectation of native country on the intention of returning overseas talents is significant, and its total response value is 0.704. Both Hypothesis 7 (a) and (b) are verified.

Perceived opportunities have an adjustment effect on the negative relationship between the talent growth expectation and the returning intention of the overseas talents (-0.119, 5% level of significance), and the expectation of the native country has an adjustment on the negative relationship between the talent ecological environment in the host country and the returning intention of the overseas talents (-0.128, 1% level of significance). Both Hypothesis 8 (a) and (b) are verified.

#### 4. Discussions and Conclusions

In this study, a new theoretical model is established after combining previous theories. An empirical analysis is conducted by taking Chinese overseas talents who have worked abroad for a certain time as a research sample. And conclusions show that the talent ecological environment of the host country and talent growth expectation have negative influences on the returning intention of the overseas talents, and the expectation of native country prospects and perceived opportunities have a positive influence on the returning intention of overseas talents. Meanwhile, talent's growth expectation and perceived opportunities have mediating effects on the influence process.

All the conclusions have further verified the research conclusions of Everett (1966), Bhagwati & Hamada (1974), Cao (2016), and Wang (2021).

On the basis of verifying previous research conclusions, further finding in this study shows that the influences of the expectation of native country prospect and perceiving opportunities on the returning intention of overseas talents are stronger than that of talent ecological environment of the host country and talent growth expectation, which indicates that the situation of a native country is more important than that of the host country in attracting overseas talents back. At the same time, perceived opportunities and the expectation of native country prospect have an adjustment effect on the negative relationship between talent growth expectation and the returning intention of overseas talents and the negative relationship between talent ecological environment of the host country and the returning intention of overseas talents, which shows that for those who speak highly of their native country, talent ecological environment of host country and talent growth expectation have a greater effect on their returning intention.

This study constructs a new theoretical model, in which the talent ecological environment of the host country is not only a macro factor but also a thrust factor. The prospect of home country is both a macro factor and a pull factor. Talent growth expectation is both a micro factor and a thrust factor. Perceived opportunity is both a micro factor and a pull factor. The theoretical model constructed in this study discusses all kinds of influencing factors simultaneously, which expands the research space in this field and provides new ideas for future research.

Two points are to be improved in future researches. Firstly, limited by factors such as incomplete Chinese statistic data, it is difficult to learn about the overall situation of Chinese overseas talent including their population scale and structure, so it is to achieve absolutely reasonable random sampling. With both statistical level and big data technology improving, it is believed that there will be more reasonable investigation method. Secondly, restricted by research funds, time, and energy, in this study, there is a small number of samples, which makes it difficult to compare various groups of overseas talents. With the continuously updating samples, more convincing conclusions will be drawn gradually. In future studies, more control variables, such as education income and nationality, should be added to the theoretical model to analyze the influence of different control variables on the intention of returning overseas talents, so as to draw more in-depth conclusions. In addition, as overseas talent groups have multiple identities, the application of identity economics theory proposed by Nobel Prize winner Akerlof in the study of factors affecting the intention of returning overseas talents is expected to further expand the research in this field.

### Data Availability

The data used to support the findings of this study are included within the article.

### Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

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