

An Analysis of the Dilemma of Rural Education and its Path in the Context of Rural Revitalization

Yizi Guo

School of Education China West Normal University, Nanchong, Sichuan, 637002

Abstract: The development of rural education is an inherent requirement and a practical need for rural revitalization. The report of the 20th Party Congress proposes to solidly promote the revitalization of rural talents. Education is the key to solving livelihood issues, and the construction of the countryside requires talent strength. Therefore, it is of great significance to analyze the various challenges and problems faced by rural education in the context of rural revitalization, and to propose development paths in a targeted manner for the existing problems.

Keywords: Rural revitalization; Rural education; Challenges; Development path

1. The Relationship between Rural Revitalization and Rural Education

Rural revitalization inevitably means the revitalization of rural education, and the revitalization of education will also drive the overall revitalization of rural society. The two are complemented and promote each other. On the one hand, the revitalization of rural education is the content of rural revitalization. With the revitalization of the countryside, rural schools will naturally have a large number of students, excellent teachers, fine culture, beautiful campuses, and advanced management organizations. In this way, education will naturally be revitalized. On the other hand, rural education revitalization is a means and approach for rural revitalization. It is necessary to solve some problems in rural areas through rural education revitalization. With the development of rural education, it will naturally provide the needed talents and culture for rural areas, thereby promoting the revitalization of rural industries, ecology, and organizations, and ultimately realizing the goal of rural revitalization. Rural teachers in the new era should act as “cultivators of rural industrial talents, disseminators of rural ecological civilization, guardians of rural culture, assistants of rural governance and leaders of rural life transformation”¹

2. The Problems faced by Rural Education in the Context of Rural Revitalization

Based on the goals of rural revitalization and the specific reality of rural education targets, there are some obvious practical dilemmas in current rural education. Only by clarifying these dilemmas and conducting in-depth and specific analysis can we seize the breakthrough of rural education revitalization.

2.1 The Shortage of Teachers and low professional Competence of Teachers

At present, there are two problems in the rural teacher team, namely insufficient quantity and low professionalism. On the one hand, rural teachers have a low sense of professional identity and high mobility. Due to the inconvenient transportation, poor living and working conditions in rural areas compared to urban areas, as well as the fact that salaries and development prospects are not as good as those in towns, rural teachers have a low sense of professional well-being and they lack the understanding and identification with rural culture. This has led to the instability of rural teacher teams and a shortage of teaching staff. On the other hand, teachers are not professional enough. Some old teachers in rural schools are not sufficiently dynamic; some young teachers have just graduated and started teaching in rural areas, so they are not experienced enough. At the same time, rural teachers have a low level of specialization, a lack of professional development awareness, and weak teaching and research abilities. Moreover, rural teachers have fewer opportunities to go out for professional training, which is not conducive to their professional exchange and growth. There is still a phenomenon of imbalanced subject proportion among rural teachers in rural schools, and some subjects are severely weak in teaching.

2.2 Teaching Content and Curriculum out of Localization

The urban-oriented knowledge selection mechanism makes the rural teaching system gradually ignore and forget the local knowledge. Both the teaching content, curriculum and teaching process are basically aligned with urban education, with subject curriculum and classroom teaching as the main focus. This leads to a lack of scientific content and a single curriculum model, which is gradually detached from localization. The local culture formed in the countryside is unique, and direct reference to urban textbooks, curriculum objectives, and teaching methods will make rural education lose its unique characteristics and vitality, and make it detached from the actual life of students. The education detached from the localization makes the students lack organic connection between what they see and feel in their daily life and what they learn, resulting in the learning content becoming mere words and symbols. Students are difficult to develop the sense of identity and belonging that they should have. Rural students should learn and explore independently in this rural area with its unique cultural resources and vast practical space, relying on local knowledge. Local culture and local knowledge should not be marginalized, but should be inherited and developed on the basis of “taking the essence and removing the dross”.

2.3 Low Participation of Rural Family in their Children’s Education

Family education is the most basic place for students’ socialization, and it is the classroom for students’ early social behavior norms and moral education. Students need to acquire basic life skills and moral requirements through the subtle influence of family life. There are many left-behind children in rural families, whose parents work outside the hometown. These parents believe that the responsibility for their children’s education lies entirely with the school, and they have very little involvement in them. This breaks the educational cooperation between schools and families, which is not conducive to the better growth of children. The lack of participation and guidance of family in students’ lives weakens the communication and cooperation with the school, making it difficult to obtain parental support for the implementation of various school activities and achieve the expected results.

3. The development Path of Rural Education in the Context of Rural Revitalization

Based on achieving the goal of revitalizing rural education, we need to deepen rural curriculum and teaching reform by strengthening the construction of teacher teams, rooting in the countryside and providing education oriented towards practical life, and carrying out home-school cooperation, in order to comprehensively promote the high-quality development of rural education.

3.1 Strengthening the construction of teacher teams

As an important position in China’s education, rural education needs to be strengthened as urbanization accelerates.²In order to solve the problem of teacher team construction, on the one hand, it is necessary to improve the professional identity of rural teachers and enhance the attractiveness of rural teachers’ positions. Rural teachers should form the belief that engaging in rural education is both an honorable and meaningful thing. The government should effectively improve the salaries and benefits of rural teachers, implement a good subsidy policy, and strengthen housing security. It should also improve rural public services and public culture, so that the basic social living needs of rural teachers can be met. On the other hand, the professionalism of rural teachers should be improved. When recruiting rural teachers, it would be possible to raise the entry threshold for positions to a certain extent, such as expanding the recruitment proportion of undergraduate or master’s students. Provide more opportunities for rural teachers to go out for training, which can be done through a combination of online and offline training method, so that rural teachers can be exposed to more high-quality educational resources.

3.2 Root in the countryside and provide education oriented towards practical life

Local culture is the fertile soil for the implementation and development of rural education, and rural education is an effective mechanism for inheriting and innovating local culture.³ Education should be rooted in the countryside and be oriented to the actual life of the countryside with rural characteristics. On the one hand, school-based curriculum can be developed according to the cultural characteristics and local features of the countryside. Exploring the unique local resources of the region and building a curriculum that combines students’ hobbies and life experiences can not only improve the quality of teaching, but also show the characteristics of rural schools. On the other hand, comprehensive practical courses can be developed in conjunction with the actual production life of the countryside. Teachers can combine textbook knowledge with real life and guide students to conduct independent practice and exploration in the countryside, which will not only enable students to better understand and master knowledge, but also cultivate their practical and hands-on skills. Since rural education is different from urban education in terms of living environment and the growth experience of rural students is different from that of urban students, it is more important not

to cut the connection between education and actual life in the countryside, and also to properly handle the relationship between subject knowledge and local knowledge.

3.3 Enhance the Awareness of Family-School Cooperation and carry out it

Parents should understand that their children's education is not just a matter for the school, but their participation in the process of students' growth and learning also plays a crucial role. Therefore, parents need to actively cooperate with the school. On the one hand, since the concept of family education in rural areas is backward and the quality of parents is not high, relevant government departments should establish a family education guidance service system and strengthen the construction of professional platforms for rural family education. Provide diversified educational resources, technical support and methodological guidance for family education, and change unscientific family education methods. For example, parents can be taught about Pedagogy and Psychology through a combination of online and offline lectures. This can not only help parents learn some scientific methods of educating their children, but also help them understand the importance and necessity of their own participation in their children's education. On the other hand, as the leading party of home-school cooperation, schools should actively carry out home-school co-education activities. For example, teachers can hold parent-teacher conferences or home visits to gain a deeper understanding of students' personalities and home life conditions, so that school education can be more targeted. Through these methods, home and school can work together better, establish common educational goals, strengthen their emotional ties, identify and solve their children's growth problems together, and thus better promote their healthy growth.

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