

Family-School Co-Education for Left-Behind Children in the Context of Rural Revitalization: Challenges, Approaches, and Policy Analysis

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Abstract: With the acceleration of China's urbanization process, a large number of rural laborers are migrating to cities, leading to a growing phenomenon of left-behind children. The proposal of the Rural Revitalization Strategy provides a new opportunity to address this issue. This article aims to explore the current status and challenges of family-school co-education for left-behind children in the context of rural revitalization, propose corresponding solutions, and analyze relevant policies. The goal is to provide theoretical support and practical guidance for the education and growth of left-behind children. The study identifies major challenges such as the lack of effective family education due to parents working away from home, inadequate school resources and support, communication barriers between families and schools, and insufficient social support. To address these issues, the article proposes establishing effective family-school communication platforms, enhancing parents' educational quality, improving school education mechanisms, and increasing social support. The analysis of national and local policies reveals efforts to create a supportive legal and institutional framework for family-school co-education. The article concludes that coordinated efforts from the government, schools, and society are essential to provide a solid foundation for the education and growth of left-behind children, ensuring their comprehensive development and healthy growth in the context of rural revitalization.

Keywords: Rural Revitalization; Left-Behind Children; Family-School Co-Education.

1. Introduction

With economic development and accelerated urbanization, an increasing number of rural laborers are migrating to cities, resulting in a large number of children becoming "left-behind children."^[1] These left-behind children face numerous educational and psychological problems due to the lack of parental companionship and care. Family-school co-education, as an effective educational method, can largely compensate for the deficiencies in family education^[2]. However, in practice, family-school co-education encounters many challenges and difficulties. In the context of the Rural Revitalization Strategy, this article explores the current status, challenges, and solutions of family-school co-education for left-behind children, and provides a detailed analysis of relevant policies.

2. Current Status and Challenges of Family-School Co-Education for Left-Behind Children

2.1. Lack of Family Education

Due to parents working away from home, left-behind children are mostly cared for by grandparents or other relatives. These guardians, often elderly and frail with limited education, cannot provide effective family education. The lack of family education poses significant challenges to the psychological, behavioral, and academic aspects of left-behind children. These forms of guardianship often result in left-behind children living in incomplete environments, lacking sufficient understanding, support, and care. The educational level and lifestyle of the guardians do not match the needs of children's growth, making it difficult for children to communicate effectively with their guardians. This leads to sensitive emotions, low self-esteem, and self-worth issues^[3].

2.2. Inadequate School Education

Schools play a crucial role in the education of left-behind children. However, many rural schools lack educational resources, have insufficient numbers of teachers, and poor teaching conditions, making it difficult to provide comprehensive educational support for left-behind children. Additionally, teachers often lack sufficient attention and guidance for the special needs of left-behind children, leading to academic lagging. Many schools do not establish records for left-behind children, lacking systematic documentation of their personality traits, psychological health status, and other important information. The communication between teachers and parents is also insufficient, hindering effective family-school cooperation^[4].

2.3. Communication Barriers between Family and School

An important aspect of family-school co-education is communication between the family and the school. However, due to geographical distance and limitations in information technology, communication between the parents of left-behind children and schools is often inadequate. Parents are unable to promptly learn about their children's performance at school, and schools struggle to provide timely feedback on children's situations at home. This communication barrier results in many challenges in the practice of family-school cooperation, making it difficult to form a collaborative effort to promote the comprehensive development of left-behind children^[5].

2.4. Insufficient Social Support

The education of left-behind children requires not only the efforts of families and schools but also broad social support. However, in practice, the attention and support from society

for left-behind children are often inadequate. Community and social organizations do not fully play their roles in caring for and helping left-behind children, leading to a lack of necessary social support for the growth and development of these children. The inadequate social attention and support, combined with the insufficient role of community and social organizations, result in left-behind children lacking the necessary assistance for their growth and development^[6].

3. Pathways for Family-School Co-Education

3.1. Establishing Effective Family-School Communication Platforms

Family-school communication is a crucial aspect of co-education. To ensure timely information transmission and feedback, it is necessary to establish various forms of communication platforms^[7]. Specific measures include: regularly holding parent-teacher meetings to help parents understand the school's educational philosophy, teaching plans, and students' performance at school. These meetings also serve as platforms for parents to exchange and learn from each other, sharing educational experiences and methods; teachers can conduct home visits periodically or as needed to gain an in-depth understanding of students' family environments and living conditions, which helps teachers grasp the students' actual situations and enhances trust and understanding between the family and school; establishing direct communication channels between parents and teachers, such as through phone calls and emails, to ensure timely communication of students' situations and needs, facilitating daily communication and problem feedback; utilizing information technology to create communication platforms like WeChat groups, QQ groups, or dedicated family-school communication apps, which allow real-time information transmission, enabling parents and teachers to communicate at any time and share students' learning progress; schools should establish a dedicated family-school co-education committee responsible for coordinating and promoting family-school cooperation, with members including school leaders, teacher representatives, and parent representatives. This committee should hold regular meetings to discuss and solve issues related to family-school co-education.

3.2. Enhancing Parental Education Quality

Parents are the first teachers of their children, and their educational quality directly impacts children's growth and development. Therefore, enhancing parents' educational quality is a crucial part of family-school co-education^[8]. Specific measures include: regularly organizing family education lectures, inviting educational experts and experienced teachers to give lectures on topics such as parent-child communication, learning guidance, and psychological health, helping parents grasp scientific educational methods; organizing parents to attend systematic educational training classes to learn educational theories and practical skills, improving parents' educational awareness and abilities. These training classes can be hosted by schools or social organizations and should be tailored to the actual needs of parents; encouraging parents to participate in reading clubs, read educational books, share reading experiences, and exchange educational insights. Through these reading clubs, parents can continuously enrich their educational knowledge and improve their educational quality; schools can provide

educational resources to parents through family-school communication platforms, such as educational videos, lecture recordings, and educational articles, allowing parents to learn and refer to them at any time, enhancing their educational levels; schools can set up family education guidance service centers, providing one-on-one family education consultations and guidance to help parents solve specific problems encountered in the education process.

3.3. Improving School Education Mechanisms

As the primary educators of left-behind children, schools should continuously improve their education mechanisms to ensure targeted educational work^[9]. Specific measures include: establishing detailed records for left-behind children, documenting their personality traits, psychological health status, learning conditions, etc. The records should be comprehensive and detailed, enabling teachers to understand each left-behind child's specific situation and provide targeted education and guidance; formulating personalized education plans based on the specific situations of left-behind children. Teachers should adopt differentiated teaching methods according to the students' characteristics and needs to help them overcome difficulties in learning and life, improving learning effectiveness; setting up psychological counseling rooms in schools, equipped with professional psychological counselors to provide psychological support and counseling for left-behind children. Regular psychological health education activities should be conducted to help students build positive psychological states and enhance psychological resilience; strengthening teacher training to improve their professional quality and awareness of family-school co-education. Teacher training should cover educational theories, teaching methods, psychological counseling, and other areas, helping teachers master effective educational strategies and enhance educational outcomes; organizing a variety of extracurricular activities to cultivate students' interests and promote comprehensive development. Through activities like cultural performances, sports competitions, and technological events, schools can boost students' self-confidence and teamwork spirit.

3.4. Enhancing Social Support

The education and growth of left-behind children require broad support from all sectors of society. Specific measures include: the government should formulate relevant laws and regulations to ensure the implementation and promotion of family-school co-education, increase investment in rural education, improve school infrastructure and teacher resources, enhance education quality, and establish special funds to support the education and life of left-behind children; social organizations should actively participate in the education and care of left-behind children, providing necessary material and spiritual support. They can organize volunteer teams to regularly visit schools and families, conducting care activities and helping left-behind children solve practical difficulties; communities should play an active role in establishing "left-behind children's homes" to provide after-school tutoring, interest classes, and other services to enrich students' extracurricular lives. Communities can also organize family education guidance services to help parents improve their educational quality; enterprises can support the education of left-behind children through donations and sponsorships. They can also provide internship and employment opportunities to help left-behind children

understand society and enhance their social adaptability; the media should actively promote the education and growth issues of left-behind children, advocating for society-wide attention and support for these children. Through news reports, special programs, and public service advertisements, the media can raise public awareness and participation, creating a positive social atmosphere^[10].

By implementing these measures, family-school co-education can be effectively promoted, facilitating the comprehensive development of left-behind children. Family-school co-education requires the concerted efforts of families, schools, and society. Only through collaborative efforts can we provide a solid foundation for the education and growth of left-behind children.

4. Policy Analysis

4.1. National Policies

The state has issued a series of policies and measures to protect the legal rights of left-behind children and promote their healthy growth. These policies provide solid legal and institutional support for family-school co-education.

4.1.1. Law on the Protection of Minors of the People's Republic of China

The Law on the Protection of Minors is the fundamental law for the protection of minors in China^[11]. It clearly stipulates the responsibilities and obligations of the state, society, schools, and families in protecting minors. The law includes several provisions specifically for the protection of left-behind children: The law mandates that parents or other guardians must fulfill their guardianship responsibilities and are not allowed to abandon these duties for any reason. Even if working away from home, they must properly arrange for the care and education of their minor children. Schools are obligated to protect the legal rights of minors, pay special attention to left-behind children, and provide necessary psychological counseling and support to prevent harm during school. Local governments are required to establish institutions for the protection of minors, responsible for coordinating and supervising the protection of minors, with particular emphasis on the care and protection of left-behind children.

4.1.2. Opinions of the State Council on Further Strengthening the Care and Protection of Rural Left-Behind Children

This directive is a specific document addressing the issue of left-behind children, proposing a series of measures to strengthen their care and protection: Parents or other guardians must fulfill their guardianship responsibilities. Before working away from home, they must properly arrange for the guardianship of their minor children and sign a guardianship agreement to clarify the rights and obligations of both parties. Schools should establish files for left-behind children to understand and monitor their situations, regularly communicate with their guardians, and provide necessary learning and living support. Schools should also set up psychological counseling rooms and appoint professional psychological counselors to offer psychological support to left-behind children. Communities should establish facilities such as left-behind children's homes, organize various care activities, provide after-school tutoring and interest classes, and enrich the extracurricular life of left-behind children. Local governments should increase investment in rural education, improve the teaching conditions of rural schools,

and ensure left-behind children have equal access to education. Governments should also establish special funds to support impoverished left-behind children, ensuring their basic living and learning conditions.

4.2. Local Policies

Local governments have formulated corresponding educational policies for left-behind children based on local conditions, actively exploring new models of family-school co-education and achieving remarkable results.

4.2.1. Establishing "Left-Behind Children's Homes"

Many local governments have established "left-behind children's homes" to provide a safe and warm environment for left-behind children, offering various educational and care activities. For example: Several counties and cities in Zhejiang have established left-behind children's homes to provide after-school tutoring, psychological counseling, interest classes, and organize volunteers to regularly visit the homes of left-behind children to understand their living and learning conditions and offer timely help. Hunan has set up multiple left-behind children's homes in rural areas, equipped with full-time staff responsible for organizing and carrying out various care activities to enrich the extracurricular life of left-behind children and help them grow healthily.

4.2.2. Setting Up Specialized Psychological Counseling Rooms

Some local governments have set up specialized psychological counseling rooms in rural schools to provide professional psychological counseling and support for left-behind children. For example: Jiangxi has promoted the establishment of psychological counseling rooms throughout the province, requiring each rural school to have at least one professional psychological counselor who regularly provides psychological health education and one-on-one psychological counseling for left-behind children. Guizhou has established psychological counseling rooms in several rural schools through government funding and social donations, equipped with modern psychological assessment tools and equipment to provide scientific and systematic psychological health services for left-behind children.

4.2.3. Exploring New Models of Family-School Co-Education

Some local governments are actively exploring new models of family-school co-education through policy support and practical actions. For example: Fujian has implemented a "family-school co-education" pilot project, selecting several schools across the province as pilot sites to enhance parents' educational awareness and abilities through parent classes, parent volunteer services, and parent schools, promoting family-school cooperation. Shandong has conducted "family-school co-education" demonstration activities in some rural schools, inviting educational experts and psychologists to provide training for parents and teachers, helping them master scientific educational methods and improve the effectiveness of family-school co-education.

4.3. School Policies

As the primary educators of left-behind children, schools play an important role in family-school co-education. Some schools continuously explore and practice new pathways for family-school co-education, achieving significant results. For example, some primary and secondary schools in Beijing have established family-school co-education committees

responsible for coordinating and promoting family-school cooperation. The committee members include school leaders, teacher representatives, and parent representatives. The committee holds regular meetings to discuss and solve problems related to family-school co-education and formulate and implement family-school co-education plans. Some primary schools in Shanghai have also established family-school co-education committees and maintain close communication with parents through various forms such as parent meetings, home visits, phone calls, and emails, ensuring the effective implementation of family-school co-education. Additionally, some schools regularly hold parent meetings and family education lectures to help parents master scientific educational methods and improve their educational quality. For example, some primary and secondary schools in Guangzhou hold regular parent meetings every semester, inviting educational experts to give lectures on family education, and gather parents' opinions and suggestions through these meetings to continuously improve educational work. Some primary schools in Shenzhen hold family education lectures every month, covering topics such as parent-child communication, learning guidance, and psychological health, helping parents improve their educational awareness and abilities and promoting family-school cooperation. Some schools also utilize modern information technology to establish family-school communication platforms to achieve real-time transmission and exchange of family-school information. For example, some primary schools in Hangzhou have established family-school communication platforms like WeChat groups and QQ groups, where parents and teachers can communicate about students' learning situations and progress at any time, promptly solving problems encountered in students' learning and life. Some middle schools in Chengdu have developed dedicated family-school communication apps, allowing parents to access information about students' academic performance, attendance, and school activities through the app. Teachers can also use the app to maintain communication with parents, promoting the implementation of family-school co-education.

Through the implementation of the above policies and measures, the state, local governments, and schools have jointly worked to provide solid protection and support for the education and growth of left-behind children. As an effective educational method, family-school co-education plays an important role in promoting the comprehensive development of left-behind children. In the future, continued policy support and practical actions are needed to deepen the implementation of family-school co-education, creating better conditions and environments for the education and growth of left-behind children.

5. Conclusion

The Rural Revitalization Strategy provides new opportunities for the education and growth of left-behind children. Family-school co-education, as an effective educational method, plays a significant role in promoting the

comprehensive development of left-behind children. However, in practice, family-school co-education still faces many challenges. By establishing effective family-school communication platforms, enhancing parents' educational quality, improving school education mechanisms, and increasing social support, family-school co-education can be effectively promoted, fostering the healthy growth of left-behind children. The government, schools, and society should work together to provide solid protection and support for the education and growth of left-behind children.

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