

# Hope for Girls' Education in Poverty-Stricken Areas: The School-Running Experience and Process of Huaping Girls' High School in Yunnan, China

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**Abstract:** *As a measure to eradicate poverty, education has become the choice of more and more countries in the world. The development of girls' education is an important means to break the inter-generational transmission of poverty. In the practice of poverty alleviation through supporting education, the Chinese government strives to solve the problem of poverty by developing education for girls. In this process, the government, enterprises, institutions, and individuals have made tremendous efforts one after another. Teacher Guimei Zhang used her efforts to set up the first high school for girls in Huaping County of Lijiang, the poorest western part of Yunnan Province, China, providing valuable educational opportunities for school-age girls in poverty-stricken areas for free. The school challenges the current education system. Girls can enter the school based on their will without the entrance examination. All students have achieved impressive and outstanding outcomes. This article records in detail the school-running experience, process, and propositions of Huaping Girls' High School.*

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**G**RANTING the basic right to receive education and promoting educational equity is a topic of global education. According to the statistics of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, there are currently 263 million children and adolescents between the ages of 6 and 17 who are out of school in the world, and about 60% of young people aged 15 to 17 are out of school (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2016), there are approximately 617 million children and young people in the world who lack basic math and literacy skills (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2017). Among them, the imbalance in education caused by factors such as poverty, gender discrimination, and weak infrastructure has become the biggest obstacle for countries to solve education poverty. UNICEF released the report "Addressing the Learning Crisis: An Urgent Need to Better Finance Education for the Poorest Children". Among them, through a survey of the education situation in 23 low- and middle-income countries and 19 high-income countries, it was found that the public education resources of children from the world's 20% richest families were almost twice that of children from the 20% poorest families. In low-income countries, 37.6% of public educational resources go to students from the richest 20% of families, and children from the poorest 20% of families can only get 10.3% of educational resources (UNICEF, 2020). Therefore, eliminating educational poverty and reducing educational imbalances have become new trends in global education poverty alleviation.

Since the reform and opening up in 1978, China has made remarkable achievements in the economic field. On the other hand, the difference in the degree of economic development is projected on the education level, causing huge gaps between urban and rural areas, between regions, and between schools. Restricted by the level of economic development, after the nine-year compulsory education, education development in many areas has been unable to meet the needs of the people, and a large number of middle school graduates cannot get good educational opportunities.

When facing the education needs of the people, the government, enterprises, and individuals have made a lot of effort. The most touching one is that the Huaping County Girls High School in Lijiang City, Yunnan Province, which was established by teacher Guimei Zhang and with the support of the provincial, municipal, and county governments and social donations, has become the most typical educational development story. As the first all-free girls' high school in China, the school recruits girl students from impoverished mountainous areas who are unable to continue their studies

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teacher Guimei Zhang and with the support of the provincial, municipal, and county governments and social donations, has become the most typical educational development story. As the first all-free girls' high school in China, the school recruits girl students from impoverished mountainous areas who are unable to continue their studies after the nine-year compulsory education. Since its establishment in 2008, the school has helped more than 1,700 girls realize their dreams of entering university in the past ten years (Wang & He, 2020).

Huaping County Girls' High School in Lijiang City, Yunnan Province has attracted the attention of educators from all over the country with its tenacity in running a school and unique teaching ideas and has also been widely praised throughout China. This paper uses the way of educational narrative to study the school's school-running propositions and deeds, discussing its school-running characteristics and educational teaching propositions, to provide reference and enlightenment for education equality, education poverty alleviation and women's education in China.

## **Affection for the Poor Students and Help Them Out of Poverty with Love**

From global experience, education is essential for poverty alleviation, economic growth, and sustainable development. In the policy document "Reducing Global Poverty through Universal Primary and Secondary Education" issued by UNESCO in 2017, it is pointed out that education is of great significance to alleviating poverty in various forms. And after studying the average impact of education on economic growth and poverty reduction in developing countries from 1965 to 2010, it is found that if all adults can receive two more years of education, nearly 60 million people in the world can be lifted out of poverty; Adults can complete secondary education, and 420 million people worldwide can escape poverty. In this way, the poverty population in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia will be reduced by nearly 2/3 (UNESCO, 2017).

However, affected by economic development, most countries have regional imbalances in economic development, funding and social services, and huge differences between urban and rural areas. The resulting educational imbalance has become the biggest factor affecting educational development. The United Nations published a report entitled "World Social Report 2020: Inequality in a Rapidly Changing World" that 70% of the world's people live in countries where income inequality has increased since 1990. Concerning the distribution of educational resources, due to the uneven distribution of funds, children living in urban middle- and high-income families benefit more from government education expenditures than children from low-income families in rural areas, and the gap in the distribution of educational resources continues to widen (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2020). Several studies have shown that schools in rural areas and informal settlements in urban areas receive less funding, which is not conducive for children to receive early education, enter high-quality schools and have good teachers to teach, resulting in low literacy rates, poor

academic performance, and high dropout rate, and eventually fall into the vicious circle of poverty (Xu et al., 2020; Tian & Yao, 2020; Li et al., 2019).

Huaping County is located in a state-level poverty-stricken area on the border of southwest China. It is a typical mountainous county. The county has high mountains and steep slopes, inconvenient transportation, harsh climate, backward culture, and slow economic development (Tang, 1995). According to statistics, Huaping County administers 4 towns and 4 townships, 61 villages (communities), and a total population of 175,300. There are 3 provincial-level poor townships and 27 poor villages (10 deeply poor villages); in other poverty-stricken counties in Yunnan, there are more poverty-stricken people, broader poverty, and deeper poverty in this Huaping (Li, 2020).

Affected by regional economic development, education in Huaping County started late with a low starting point. The first middle school was founded in 1937. Until 1949, Huaping County had 26 kindergartens, elementary and middle schools, with fewer than 500 faculty members. Both human resources and material resources are severely lacking. Since the implementation of the nine-year compulsory education system in 1984, education in Huaping County has developed rapidly. As of 2004, there were 340 schools in Huaping County, with a primary school enrollment rate of 92% and a middle school enrollment rate of 86.8%. By 2009, Huaping County was basically out of blindness, with 27,341 students at all levels of school and 1,833 faculty members (Chen & Yang, 2013).

However, in high school education after compulsory education, because the farmers in the mountainous areas have a weak awareness of the importance of their children's education, students drop out very seriously. Faced with this situation, Guimei Zhang, who taught at Huaping Nationality Middle School and was also the head of Huaping County Children's Home at the time, had the idea of establishing an all-free girls' high school in Huaping. To raise funds to run a girls' high school, Guimei Zhang resolutely embarked on the road of running the school. She asked for help everywhere and went to other places to raise funds and solicit donations from society as soon as the winter and summer vacations arrived. However, the road to the establishment of the school was very difficult. After 5 years, only less than 20,000 CNY was raised. This is just a drop in the bucket for starting a school. It was not until 2007 that Guimei Zhang's dream of running a school was spread to thousands of households through television screens by an accidental opportunity, which attracted the attention of the whole society and the support of the Lijiang City and Huaping County governments.

After experiencing many difficulties, in August 2008, with the support of the provincial, municipal, and county governments and extensive donations from the society, the first all-free girls' high school in the country: Huaping County Girls' High School was established. In the same year, the school enrolled 96 poor rural female students from Huaping County, Yongsheng County, Ninglang County, and Xuanwei City.

The world is full of hardships, and it is even harder to initiate. At the beginning of the school's establishment, the school faced difficulties such as poor teaching facilities, difficult living conditions for teachers and students, and a lack of money for students' living expenses. On the one hand, Guimei Zhang led the teachers and students of

the school to run the school hard and diligently. On the other hand, the Huaping County Government has called on entrepreneurs, government officials, charitable people, and other social donations to prepare a set of luggage, a suitcase, and a school uniform for each freshman to help female high school students enjoy free high school education. At the same time, it also solved the student's living expenses.

Since the establishment of the Huaping County Girls' High School, it has received the attention of the Yunnan Province and Lijiang Municipal Government and has also received extensive attention from the whole society. They worked jointly to make suggestions and donate money for the development and operation of the school. According to the data, since 2008, governments at all levels in Yunnan Province have invested 91,321,100 CNY to the school to build infrastructures such as teaching buildings, dormitories, canteens, and sports fields. Only Huaping County has invested a total of 63,321,100 CNY, including 30.183 million CNY for faculty and staff salaries, 123.656 million CNY for student expenditures (excluding the exempted student accommodation fee of 5.867 million CNY, tuition and miscellaneous fees of 4,693,600 CNY, and the use of donation expenditures of 2.79 million CNY, and half of the exemption (Wang, 2020).

Today, the girls' high school has 9 classes with 470 students. Female high school students are exempt from tuition, clothing, beds, books, materials, water, and electricity, except for living expenses, for three years. This saves tens of thousands of CNY in fees for every impoverished girl family, and this has also attracted impoverished female students from various counties in Lijiang and even other prefectures to enroll in school.

## **Pay Attention to Girls' Education and Ensure Inclusive and Fair Quality Education**

“Achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls” and “Ensuring inclusive and fair quality education and promoting life-long learning opportunities for all” were adopted at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit in 2015 to “Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” and mentioned the above two goals. The report pointed out that providing high-quality education for girls will be an effective means to eradicate poverty, fight disease, and promote economic development (Tang, 2014; Sen, 2014).

Girls' education refers to the most basic school education for girls under the age of 18. Studies have shown that the effective control of population size and the improvement of population quality largely depend on the improvement of the education level of women who account for half of the population (Wang, 2003). According to a report entitled “Missed Opportunities: The High Cost of Not Educating Girls” released by the World Bank on the occasion of the United Nations Malala Day recently, there are approximately 132 million women between the ages of 6 and 17 who are not attending school in the world. Compared with women who have never attended school, women with 12 years of education are more likely to find a job and their income is twice as

high. Women with secondary education are better able to make decisions at home, including their health care. They are less likely to suffer from partner violence and their mental health levels are improved. Their children became healthier, their malnutrition situation improved, and they were more likely to go to school. Finally, providing girls with a better education can make them more likely to fully participate in society and become active members of the community (World Bank, 2018).

Girls' education is an international problem, and it is also a prominent problem faced by developing countries, especially in remote mountainous areas where the economy is lagging. This kind of education is not only a basic right that everyone should accept but also an indispensable foundation for girls in modern life.

Looking at China's female education, tremendous development has been achieved since the reform and opening up. Before 1949, the enrollment rate of school-age children was only 20%, and the enrollment rate of boys was much higher than that of girls. In 1952, the number of elementary schools nationwide was 527,000, and the number of elementary school girls reached 16.797 million, accounting for 32.9% of all students. As of 2017, the consolidation rate of nine-year compulsory education in China has reached 93.8%, and the net enrollment rate of girls in elementary school has reached 99.9%, which is the same as that of boys (Lin, 2019).

However, in some parts of China, due to the influence of traditional culture, economy, family, and other factors, the problem of girls' education has always existed, and it is even more serious in some poor areas. In 2017, China Children and Teenagers' Fund and China Philanthropy Research Institute of Beijing Normal University jointly released the "Research Report on the Development Needs of Poor Girls in China in the Future of Vocational Education". They surveyed 10 counties in the five provinces of Shanxi, Henan, Sichuan, Yunnan, and Xinjiang in the central and western regions. It is found that in poverty-stricken areas of China, poor girls have a strong desire to get rid of the existing living environment, eager to become teachers, white-collar workers, and work in cities, but for various reasons, they cannot obtain the right to education. Even for girls in school, only 43% of parents pay attention to their children's usual learning situation, and 11% of parents never cared for, which is far behind the parents' attention to boys (Wang, 2017).

Huaping County is located in the mountainous area on the border of southwest China. It has long been influenced by backwardness and patriarchal thinking. Therefore, girls' right to education has not been well realized, and it is common for girls to drop out of school and marry at a young age. Many girls in the area only receive nine years of compulsory education, which has created a vicious circle of "low-quality mothers and low-quality children".

Huaping Girls' High School founded by Guimei Zhang broke this status quo. In 1996, Guimei Zhang, who served as a teacher in Huaping County Central Middle School and Nationality Middle School, found that girls dropped out of school frequently, and the number was much higher than that of boys. As the dean of the Huaping County Children's Welfare Institute, she has seen the misfortunes of many poor rural families from the orphans in the children's home, the tragedy of forcing their daughters to marry

early in exchange for the betrothal by parents in poor mountainous areas, and also see man, and a lot of girls had to go to work to earn a living because of poverty or no money to go to high school when they graduated from middle school. In Guimei Zhang's view, the backwardness in poor mountainous areas is mainly due to backwardness in education, among which girls have a lower level of education, thus forming a vicious circle of "low-quality girls-low-quality mothers-low-quality next generation". To solve the poverty problem in mountainous areas, we must start by improving the quality of women. As a result, she hoped to start a free girls' high school. In Guimei Zhang's blueprint, these girls' high school should be a school full of love. Girls who go out of this school should have a healthy physique, good behavior, and strong will; girls should not repeat the path that their ancestors have walked for generations, and they will be better in the future. For this reason, she visited the families of girls who had dropped out at home after graduating from middle school due to poverty or trapped by the concept of "useless schooling" and "patriarchy" and persuaded their parents to allow them to continue to learn at Huaping Girls' High School for free.

The children in the mountains yearn for knowledge and desire to change their destiny. The establishment of Huaping Girls' High School has effectively solved the problem of poor girls in mountainous areas having difficulty attending high schools, blocked the intergenerational transmission of poverty, and provided girls in poor areas with a way to realize their dreams. In the past 12 years, Huaping Girls' High School has helped with about 1,800 poor girls to change their destiny and the destiny of more than 1,000 families through education.

## **Entrance without Examination Helps Poor Students Realize Their College Dreams**

For a long time, in China, a certain trend has been formed in the education process. All levels and types of schools in China use student test scores as the only criterion for admission. Only by reaching a certain test score can you be eligible to enter a higher school. The emergence of this situation makes many gifted children lose the opportunity to go to school because of occasional poor performance in a major exam. This is a major problem that Chinese education has been unable to solve for many years.

Huaping Girls' High School founded by Guimei Zhang has made a breakthrough in this regard. Huaping Girls' High School does not set any score threshold for enrollment. Regardless of the students' academic level, they are welcome as long as they are willing to come. After entering the school, there is no distinction between high and low grades, and "individualized" education is not implemented according to the grades. Although the enrollment condition of no performance threshold allows some girls who do not have a good learning foundation to get further learning opportunities, under the unified selection criteria of China's college entrance examination, to let these students who come from different regions with different learning levels and understanding abilities meet the requirements for the college admissions, to realize a change in the

education of girls in the mountains, then more stringent education management and new ways of teaching are required.

## **Set Goals and Stimulate Potential**

The connotation of poverty is not only the lack of economic income but more importantly, “the failure of basic capabilities to reach certain minimally acceptable levels” (Sen, 2016). Therefore, education for poverty alleviation requires not only empowerment but also determination. The core of poverty alleviation through education is to mobilize the impoverished population’s motivation and vitality for poverty alleviation, improve the reading, writing, arithmetic and technical skills of the educated ones, enhance social adaptability, achieve stable employment, increase income, and eliminate poverty (Zhang & Xing, 2020). Mindfulness education is beneficial to children’s development (Xie & Tu, 2019). Most students in deeply impoverished areas lack family guidance and education, and they need to stimulate their learning drive, self-discipline, and good study habits (Wang, 2020) to improve their learning ability. Therefore, education for poverty alleviation must focus on the improvement of the self-awareness and self-ability, so that the educated can be self-reliant (Wang et al. 2017).

Huaping Girls’ High School pays special attention to the cultivation of students’ learning motivation during the teaching process. Guimei Zhang often said to students, “You must learn well when you come, and you must take the attitude of entering key universities and prestigious colleges. If you only aim to enter a vocational school, then you don’t need to come to this school.” Under the encouragement, every girl from the mountain area realized that she is the only hope for the whole family, and she must go all out to study in school, and she must not disappoint her family’s expectations.

## **Develop Good Study Habits**

Learning habits are formed and developed through repeated practice in the learning process and become an automated learning method required by individuals. Good study habits are conducive to stimulating students’ enthusiasm and initiative in learning; conducive to the formation of learning strategies and improving learning efficiency; conducive to cultivating the ability of independent learning; conducive to cultivating students’ innovative spirit and creative ability and benefiting students for life (Zhang, 2014).

At Huaping Girls’ High School, learning is a race against time. Get up at 5 a.m., rest after midnight, rush from the classroom to the canteen within 3 minutes, and finish the meal within 10 minutes. To save time for washing, the school stipulates that all female students should have a short haircut to ears, run for morning reading, run to eat, and run to sleep. In this school, every student makes the most of their time and pursues efficient learning.

## **Form a Good Feedback Mechanism**

Hattie (1992) conducted a meta-analysis of all 134 factors that may affect academic achievement and concluded that feedback is the most influential factor in academic achievement. Winne and Butler (1994) believed that feedback is information. With this information, learners can determine, add, rewrite, adjust, or reorganize the information in their memory, whether the information is professional knowledge, metacognitive knowledge, self or self-mission beliefs are still cognitive techniques and strategies. The practice is one of the forms of feedback. Van Gog et al. (2005) believed that the level of related exercises aimed at improving academic performance determines the improvement of academic performance. Such exercises require students to expand their higher performance levels and focus more on long-term efforts. This is usually practiced at a fixed number of times over many days.

Because there is no grade requirement for entering the school, many students do not meet the high school entrance examination scores. Especially in the first year, there were still some students who have not received a middle school diploma after repeating three years. Because of the poor level of the students, in the beginning, the students of Huaping Girls' High School almost failed every exam. There were more voices of doubt. At that time, many people thought that these students who were already at a poor level would fail the college entrance examination.

Facing the doubts from the outside and the pressure of the college entrance examination, the students of Huaping Girls' High School had to do their best to do the questions. A lot of practice simulation can deepen the understanding of knowledge points and strengthen the interest in learning. To this end, the school spent 180,000 CNY to buy test papers in various high schools, and started the question sea tactics, allowing students to work hard in the third year after the first and second grades of high school. Some people say that this method of brushing up questions is unscientific, but in fact, the school had a period of "democracy". Principal Guimei Zhang learned from other key high schools and organized group discussions among students. She listened by the side and found that group discussions were not suitable for the students of the school when the learning level was originally low. It would also make the entire classroom unordered and would not affect at all, so it was immediately stopped. At Huaping Girls' High School, students know that learning opportunities are hard to come by and they work hard every day. To save electricity bills, they can also concentrate on studying under the lights in the corridor; consolidate their knowledge in practice, and make up for deficiencies.

## **Establish a Good Teacher-Student Relationship**

The study showed that a good teacher-student relationship is an important factor in promoting students' learning (Yao et al., 2020). Dai & Lin (2019) explored the mechanism of learning burnout through standardized tests and questionnaire surveys of 36,248 students. The results showed that the teacher-student relationship and the key teaching support play an essential role in regulating learning burnout and performance. Therefore, establishing and optimizing a good teacher-student relationship, getting teaching sup-

port, and attaching importance to encouragement and guidance to students could stimulate students' enthusiasm for learning to a large extent, promote students' learning investment, and improve academic performance.

At Huaping Girls' High School, teachers headed by Guimei Zhang eat and live with their students, loving every student. Especially in the early days of the school's establishment, in the face of difficult teaching conditions and uneven student resources, the generally poor level of students, to give students more learning time, school hygiene was taken care of by teachers. At 6 a.m., all the teachers had to get up to clean the campus. The construction site was covered with dust everywhere, and it was muddy when it rained. The teachers had to carry water in the ditch to wash the cement board.

The teachers of Huaping Girls' High School not only guide students in their studies but also help them to the utmost in life. During the holidays, Guimei Zhang took bread and bottled water and took a bus to visit his home in the mountains. In the past 12 years, Guimei Zhang's home visit was 120,000 kilometers long, and it took 10 hours by car to reach the farthest. Every time he visits his home, Guimei Zhang tries his best to help solve the problem. She encouraged teachers to buy fruits that could not be sold together; when she saw a poor family, she left the coat she wore and the money she brought with her; there was a family with only two girls who were bullied and the land was invaded, Guimei Zhang helped them in a lawsuit.

At the same time, the teachers of Huaping Girls' High School also know that Dashan Girls' psychology needs more company. Every year when students step into the school gate, Guimei Zhang, as the principal, will give them a warm hug, and then say: "Dear, girls' high school welcomes you! From now on, this is your home, and I am your teacher. Let me take you to see the dormitory." When the students faced the psychological gap that they felt when they faced the gap with the outside, the school began to let the students dance ghost steps and wear yellow school uniform skirts. Let the students in the children's home eat hamburgers and pizzas, and change their living habits to "Western-style" so that the students can also keep pace with the times and prepare for society.

At Huaping Girls' High School, teachers are desperately teaching, students are studying hard, and students will use every minute and every second in school to the extreme. The school teachers also spend all their time in class, supervision, and companionship, so students have a strong motivation to learn, develop good study habits, and improve themselves in practice after practice. This has also become the unique teaching model of Huaping Girls' High School.

## **Excellent School Results**

Poverty is one of the common problems that have always existed in human society, and from global experience, education is essential to poverty alleviation, economic growth, and sustainable development.

At present, there is still a lot of room for China's urbanization process, the multi-center pattern is still in the early stage, and China's potential to create demand is huge.

Through education to improve population quality and skills to promote social development, the effective cycle is longer, but once an effective demand group is formed, it will greatly promote economic development (Yue & Yin, 2020). Education is exactly the best way to change this dilemma.

As the advanced stage of basic education, high school education is the interface between basic education and higher education, and it plays a role in linking the whole education system. This stage is the most important period of knowledge accumulation, and it is also a key stage of a person's development. In China, at this stage, students will have two extremes, one is struggling to enter the university, and the other is to end their academic career. Compared with the latter, the former one is quite different in terms of employment opportunities, social understanding, and personal comprehensive quality (Zhu, 2017). Especially for a child without a good family and social background, education is the most effective way to change their destiny (Zhang & Hu, 2019).

Huaping Girls' High School founded by Guimei Zhang is now well-known locally and even across China. As the first all-free publicly-run girls' high school, especially as a girls' high school in the mountains, it has achieved impressive results: from 2011 to 2020, the overall rate of the college entrance examination for Huaping Girls' High School for 10 consecutive years was 100%. The first-class undergraduate compliance rate has risen from 4.26% in the first class to 44% in 2020. The undergraduate attainment rate was as high as 94% that year, ranking first in Lijiang City. "Zhejiang University, Xiamen University, Sichuan University, and Wuhan University...", in the 12 years since the school was founded, nearly 1,800 girls from the mountains have entered these universities. It is the Huaping Girls' High School that allowed them to step out of the muddy swamp of life and walk safely and smoothly to the wonderful world outside the mountain (Wu, 2020).

Yunli Zhou is the first batch of students enrolled. At the age of one, Zhou's mother passed away. She and her sister Yuncui Zhou were brought up by their father. Their father is disabled and he often leaves early and returns late. The family's income mainly depends on growing watermelons and mangoes, raising pigs, and weeding others. The family has a hard life. The only valuable thing in the old civil structure house was a color TV. From about seven or eight years old, the sisters began to do housework and later helped with farm work, selling vegetables at the farmers' market. Because the family did not have a son, and it was a single-parent family, their family was often bullied in the village. Their father hoped that they can get out of the mountains, and he will also offer them to study no matter what happened. In 2007, the sisters graduated from middle school at the same time. There is no money in the family, and their father was very sad to raise money everywhere. Zhou saw her father standing at the entrance of the pigpen, on the edge of the yard, and in the place where the donkey was raised, smoking one cigarette after another, without saying a word.

On the eve of the high school entrance examination, Yunli Zhou heard from the homeroom teacher of the middle school that a free girls' high school was being built next door and was managed by a teacher from Huaping Nationality Middle School. There are no tuition fees, just some living expenses. At that time, the average high

school tuition fee was more than 1,000 CNY per semester, in addition to school miscellaneous and accommodation fees. Zhou ran to look excitedly after hearing this, and a brand new teaching building stood up in front of her.

Later, both sisters admitted to Huaping Girls' High School. In the summer of 2011, the first college entrance examination for Huaping Girls' High School. Yunli Zhou was admitted to Yunnan Normal University and her sister was admitted to Dehong Normal College. That summer, after learning that his two daughters were all admitted to college, their father, who had worked hard for half his life, finally opened his brows.

After graduating, the girls from the mountains walked out of the mountains to get to know the world outside the mountains and also experienced the gaps brought about by different growth environments. When faced with the gap and feel the psychological gap, students will be frustrated at first, but they are full of stamina, relying on the courage not to fear difficulties, not afraid of competition, and catch up. A 2011 graduate said that he was frustrated for a while. After going to college, she found that her classmates traveled abroad during the high school stage, and it was logical that she was admitted to the university, but her high school life was filled with boring study life, and she did her best to get rid of her status as a farmer. Feelings of injustice will come up at certain moments, but she also sees the value of striving because of this: she walked out of the mountains to stand with outstanding classmates through the college entrance examination, which in itself is worthy of joy.

Just as posted on the outer wall of the first teaching building of Huaping Girls' High School: strong (Gangqiang), kind (Cihui) and simple (Zhipu), this short school motto often encourages students, no matter how hard the process is, don't give up because of fear. Even if it fails, "the sky will not fall."

## **Conclusions**

Huaping Girls' High School in Yunnan Province, as a model of education for poverty alleviation in China, has solved the problem of many school-age out-of-school girls in Huaping and many surrounding poverty-stricken districts and counties due to its free school admissions and no academic threshold. Through its unique teaching management model, it helped students get out of the closed villages and realized their dream of going to university. This is as Guimei Zhang himself said, education can change three generations. In the twelve years since the school was founded, more than 1,800 students have come out from here, behind more than 1,800 families, and it is the continuation of countless lives and hopes.

Poverty alleviation by supporting education is a systematic project. To effectively solve the problem of education poverty, the joint efforts of all levels of society are needed. Teacher Guimei Zhang's school-running process embodies a strong sense of education and is also a portrayal of the many participants on the road of poverty alleviation through education. It is the emergence of many characters like Guimei Zhang that make poverty alleviation by supporting education possible.

In global children's education, girls have become a neglected and disadvantaged group of students due to the influence of the regional education environment and bad traditional ideas. In the process of poverty alleviation through education, the development of education for girls and women so that women have the same opportunities as men to unleash their development potential has become the focus of the world's education poverty alleviation (Zhao, 2015). Since its inception, China's educational poverty alleviation work has been focusing on the development of education in remote areas, using girls' education as a breakthrough, to constantly fill up the shortcomings of education, optimize the structure of teachers, enrich the strength of teachers, and broaden the channels of education assistance. The education level of poor girls and the quality of education development in poverty-stricken areas have been significantly improved (Niu & Xu, 2018).

In particular, it is commendable that Huaping Girls' High School's educational proposition of "education but no classification" can obtain admission qualifications based on students' willingness to study. Not relying on student performance as a condition for admission is a challenge to China's current education system. The achievements of Huaping Girls' High School showed that as long as the educational concept is correct, the educational methods are appropriate and the teaching methods are reasonable, the school is likely to transform students' learning desires into learning outcomes and realize their educational dreams.

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