Balanced Disposition of Compulsory Education Teachers in Rural Areas: Layout of Schools and Innovation of Teacher Turnover Model

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Abstract. The teachers disposition for compulsory education in the urban and rural areas is not balanced, with the level of urban teachers much higher than that of rural teachers, which has become an important factor restricting the balanced development of urban and rural compulsory education. Teachers are important educational resources and the first wealth of a school. Promoting the balanced development of teachers is an important part of the balanced development of urban and rural compulsory education. In promoting the balance between urban and rural compulsory education teachers, the key is to give play to the leading role of governments at all levels and education departments, integrate the educational resources of urban schools and local colleges and universities, and innovate the supply and supplement mechanism of rural teachers.

Introduction

Providing public services is the most basic function of government. In promoting the equalization of basic public services, governments at all levels act as the core subject and shoulder the major responsibility. In recent years, balanced development of basic education has become the focus of the whole society. Promoting balanced development of basic education is the basic way to deepen educational reform and ensure educational equity. It is the key to scientifically integrate educational resources and reform the mode of teacher allocation. By designing a scientific, reasonable and humanized teacher flow mechanism, teachers in rural areas and remote mountainous areas can be guaranteed.

The Evolution of China's Urban and Rural Compulsory Education Resource Allocation Policies

Since the beginning of the new century, various localities have adjusted the layout of rural compulsory education schools, and removed and merged some of them in order to improve the conditions and raise efficiency. But at the same time, such problems as insufficient rural boarding schools, large class size of some urban schools and too small classes in rural schools emerged. For this reason, the general office of the state council issued the opinions on regulating the layout adjustment of rural compulsory education schools in September 2012, meaning to stop the blind removal and merger of rural compulsory education schools. The governments at the county level were required to formulate a special plan for the distribution of rural compulsory education schools, rationally determine the distribution of teaching sites, village primary schools, central primary schools and junior middle schools within the county, as well as the proportion of boarding schools and non-boarding schools, and ensure that the distribution of schools is in line with the construction of villages and towns and the residential distribution of school-age population. In July 2016 the state council released an opinion about the plan as a whole to promote the reform and development of the integration of urban and rural compulsory education. It requires reasonable planning of urban and rural compulsory education schools layout construction, hoping to meet the objective of urban and rural teachers' basic equilibrium configuration by 2020. Table 1 lists the evolution of relevant policies and reflects the change of value orientation.
Teachers to Students in both Areas Have been Narrowed

Rural Areas has been Improved, and the Gap of the Number of Schools and the Ratio of Teachers to Students in both Areas Have been Narrowed

As the number of children of migrant workers in cities increases year by year and the birth rate in rural areas continues to decrease, the number of school-age children in rural areas continues to decrease. In 2000, there were 440,000 rural primary schools with 85,037 million students. By 2012, there were 155,000 rural primary schools with 36.525 million students. The number of rural primary schools decreased by 285,000, or 64.77%. In 2000, the number of junior middle schools in rural areas was 39,300, and the number of students was 34.2847 million. In 2012, there were only 13,700 junior middle schools left in rural areas, and the number of students was only 9.741 million. The number of rural junior middle schools decreased by 25,600, or 65.14%. The number of junior middle school students dropped sharply by 24.5437 million or 71.59%. On the whole, the number of rural primary schools and junior middle schools and the number of students in school decreased by a large margin over the national average, as shown in table 2. In recent years, due to policy correction, the number of teaching sites and students have increased. From the perspective of educational equity, compulsory education in rural areas has been developed. Table 2, Table 3 and Table 4 tell more.

Table 1. Evolution table of policy documents on layout adjustment of schools in rural areas.

| Year  | Document | Key content                                                                 | Value orientation         |
|-------|----------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2001  | Guofa(2001) no. 5 | rationally adjust the layout of primary and secondary schools in rural areas, remove and merge small schools and teaching centers, and improve the efficiency of rural schools. | Efficiency first         |
| 2002  | Guofa(2002) no.28 | adjust the layout of primary and secondary schools in rural areas step by step in line with local conditions, and strictly control students dropping out of compulsory education | Efficiency prior to equity |
| 2004  | Jiaoji(2004) no.4 | follow the principle of keeping primary schools nearby and junior middle schools relatively concentrated, and steadily promote the structural adjustment of rural schools | Efficiency & equity       |
| 2006  | Jiaoji(2006) no.10 | Nearby enrollment, construction first and retreat next, and stop adjustment for those without the conditions | People first              |
| 2010  | Jiaofa(2010) no.7 | adjust the distribution and structure of schools in a scientific and orderly way, rationally determine the size of schools, and make it easier to go to school nearby | Efficiency & equity       |
| 2012  | Guofa(2012) no.48 | strictly standardize the procedures for the removal and merger of rural compulsory education schools, restore those removed and merged but really needed | Equity prior to efficiency |
| 2016  | Guofa(2016) no.40 | arrange compulsory schools in rural areas with convenient transportation and public services. | People first, equity first |

The Present Situation of the Compulsory Education Resources Disposition in Rural Areas in China

The Amount Equalization Degree of Compulsory Education Resources between Urban and Rural Areas has been Improved, and the Gap of the Number of Schools and the Ratio of Teachers to Students in both Areas Have been Narrowed

As the number of children of migrant workers in cities increases year by year and the birth rate in rural areas continues to decrease, the number of school-age children in rural areas continues to decrease. In 2000, there were 440,000 rural primary schools with 85,037 million students. By 2012, there were 155,000 rural primary schools with 36.525 million students. The number of rural primary schools decreased by 285,000, or 64.77%. In 2000, the number of junior middle schools in rural areas was 39,300, and the number of students was 34.2847 million. In 2012, there were only 13,700 junior middle schools left in rural areas, and the number of students was only 9.741 million. The number of rural junior middle schools decreased by 25,600, or 65.14%. The number of junior middle school students dropped sharply by 24.5437 million or 71.59%. On the whole, the number of rural primary schools and junior middle schools and the number of students in school decreased by a large margin over the national average, as shown in table 2. In recent years, due to policy correction, the number of teaching sites and students have increased. From the perspective of educational equity, compulsory education in rural areas has been developed. Table 2, Table 3 and Table 4 tell more.

Table 2. Changes in the number of primary schools, junior middle schools and students in rural areas from 2000 to 2012 (unit: 10 thousand).

| Item                          | 2000  | 2012  | reduction(%) |
|-------------------------------|-------|-------|--------------|
| Number of primary schools     | 44    | 15.5  | 64.77        |
| Primary enrolment             | 8503.7| 365205| 57.05        |
| Number of junior middle schools | 3.93  | 1.37  | 65.14        |
| Junior middle school enrolment | 3428.47 | 974.1 | 71.59        |
Table 3. Number of urban and rural compulsory education schools, teachers and students in Hunan province from 2012 to 2016.

| Item               | Number of school | Teachers | Enrolment |
|--------------------|------------------|----------|-----------|
|                    | Urban | Rural | Urban | Rural | Urban | Rural |
| Junior middle school | 2012  | 1634 | 1662 | 115922 | 55275 | 1543445 | 567655 |
|                    | 2013  | 1694 | 1607 | 117448 | 51956 | 1608019 | 534828 |
|                    | 2014  | 1728 | 1586 | 119275 | 50809 | 1679614 | 526730 |
|                    | 2015  | 1773 | 1558 | 120737 | 47498 | 1719899 | 504239 |
|                    | 2016  | 1861 | 1461 | 125754 | 43525 | 1790853 | 459650 |
| Primary school     | 2012  | 3327 | 6838 | 139254 | 107605 | 2862425 | 1875495 |
|                    | 2013  | 3390 | 5880 | 144771 | 101502 | 2985340 | 1692762 |
|                    | 2014  | 3319 | 5241 | 149078 | 99040 | 3106409 | 1631994 |
|                    | 2015  | 3356 | 5056 | 154404 | 94711 | 3304544 | 1584054 |
|                    | 2016  | 3550 | 4722 | 163922 | 88796 | 3539195 | 1478916 |

Table 4. Teacher-student ratio of urban and rural compulsory education in Hunan province.

| Item               | Junior middle school | Primary school |
|--------------------|---------------------|----------------|
|                    | Urban   | Rural | Urban   | Rural |
| 2012               | 13.31%  | 10.27%| 20.55%  | 17.43%|
| 2016               | 14.24%  | 10.56%| 21.59%  | 16.55%|

The Equalization of the Quality of Compulsory Education in Urban and Rural Areas is a very Tough Task—the Quality of Teachers In these Two Areas is Far from Balanced

The improvement of rural teachers’ quality and team stability is the key to promote the balanced allocation of urban and rural teachers. For a long time, rural teachers quality has been worrying. Because of the poor working and living conditions as well as transportation and salary problems, few teachers are willing to go to rural schools or stay there. Quality teachers allocation between the vast rural areas and urban areas is seriously unbalanced. In terms of discipline structure, professional teachers of music, fine arts, information technology, mental health and other subjects in rural areas are seriously insufficient. These subjects can only be held concurrently by other teachers or head teachers, and the teaching quality is greatly reduced. It is true that qualified Chinese teachers are not necessarily qualified music teachers. This situation seriously affects the construction level of rural teachers.

On the other hand, there is a problem of inadequate use of rural compulsory education resources and there is some waste. The utilization rate of primary and secondary school education resources in rural areas is not high, mainly reflected in the following aspects. First, the layout of some primary and secondary schools in rural areas is not reasonable, resulting in the lack of scale efficiency. Rural teachers with backgrounds in music, fine art, chemistry, physics, or calculus may be unable to teach these courses because the student body is too small to support advanced courses—or one teacher may require much preparation to teach multiple small classes.

On December 6, 2018, the website of Hunan Provincial Department of Education released a report that there was only one student in a teaching center in Yongzhou city, Hunan province. The primary school has been remodeled, but most of the rooms are shuttered, leaving only one classroom for first and second graders. In 2013, a 54-year-old teacher named Tang Bingyuan came to teach here and became a general practitioner, teaching Chinese, mathematics and moral education. These years there are only four or five students, two grades in a class. When one grade has class, another grade do homework, This is typically a waste of resources that lacks scale.
The Countermeasures to Promote Equal Quality of Compulsory Education Teachers in Urban and Rural Areas

Highlight the Main Role of the Government and Improve the Layout of Rural Schools and Teaching Centers

Isolation and small student populations make it difficult for rural schools to attract and keep highly qualified professional teachers. Governments of the county level and relative departments have to combine country’s rural policy support to speed up the extension of road, water and electricity and other infrastructure construction projects, form reasonable layout of compulsory education schools and teaching centers with good transportation and the public services, ensuring both students conveniences and moderate school scale. It is good to make schools or teaching centers the center of the local community, convenient for parents and school communication, and to better realize the combination of school education and family education.

It is necessary to formulate a comprehensive utilization plan for idle school buildings, strictly standardize the procedures for the confirmation of ownership, change of use and disposal of assets, and activate funds for the construction of the school environment and the improvement of the treatment of teachers.

Strengthen Cooperation with Universities and Create New Models for Supplying and Supplementing Teachers with Compulsory Education in Rural Areas

In view of the sufficient quantity but low quality of rural compulsory education teacher disposition, measures must be taken to deal with the problem of teacher supply and supplement system. The traditional compulsory allocation has a lot of disadvantages. On the one hand, teachers assigned to rural schools may work in a negative way because of reluctance, which will affect the daily teaching work; on the other hand, they will try their best to leave and go to urban schools. In recent years, the policy of teacher rotation has been implemented all over the country, and some results have been achieved, but it is not obvious, and the problem cannot be fundamentally solved. Therefore, new thought should be created in new era. The desire of the people to pursue a better life is reasonable, and teachers should be given the expectation that they won’t be restricted in rural schools for lifetime once they go there. Governments won't let them take root in the rural life if they themselves are not willing to. It will be easy go out for rural teachers based on a good rotation arrangement, which brings fresh blood to the school, provides for students fresh, knowledge and ideas, avoids long-term face fatigue from the same teacher, and also reduces teachers’ job burnout. New teacher allocation model requires comprehensive co-operation between governments that take on the responsibility of providing such basic public services as compulsory education and higher education institutions that need internship schools and training places. Table 5 presents a new model for the supply and supplement of compulsory education teachers in rural areas.

Table 5. New modes of supply and supplement of compulsory education teachers in rural areas.

| Term      | Types of teacher                                      | Teaching method                      | Reference number |
|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| 8 years   | Principal with caring sentiment                       | management                           | 1                |
| 5 years   | Responsible special post teachers                    | Having classes                       | 2                |
| 3 years   | Aspiring normal university graduates                  | Having classes                       | 2                |
| 2 years   | Young and middle-aged teachers applying for promotion to senior titles | Having classes                       | 3                |
| 1 year    | Experienced senior teachers                           | Having classes                       | 1                |
| 6 months  | Normal intern students                                | Having classes                       | 3                |
| 3 months  | Intern music, fine arts and physical education students | Having classes after-class instruction | 3                |
| 1 month   | Caring volunteers                                     | after-class instruction               | 1                |
| 15 days   | Retired teacher with ability and integrity            | Course of lectures                    | 1                |
For different types of teachers, different periods of mobility are set, which can be said that one arrow with three eagles, whether for teachers, schools or students. Only in this way can we build a contingent of rural teachers who can really "get in", "stay" and "teach well".

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