

Research on the Problems and Countermeasures of Family Education for Left Behind Children in Rural Areas

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Abstract

The issue of family education for left behind children in rural areas is a very important issue in family education, and it is also a social issue that cannot be ignored in the process of urbanization in China. During the research process, this article used methods such as survey, interview, and comparison to obtain some data on left behind children in rural areas. There are roughly five types of guardianship for left behind children in rural areas in terms of family education, and the reasons for the existence of family education for left behind children in rural areas are also identified: the absence of family education subjects, and the emphasis on upbringing over education in intergenerational education; The main body of family education has outdated educational concepts and inadequate methods and methods; Lack of family education environment and abnormal behavior of parents; Due to weak awareness of home school cooperation and limited cooperative activities, solutions have been proposed: clarify family education responsibilities, establish good connections between home and school, build a high-quality education environment, achieve home school cooperation, and carry out scientific education models to ensure the healthy growth and development of left behind children in rural areas.

Key words: Rural left behind children; Family education; Home school cooperation

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1. INTRODUCTION

The issue of family education for left behind children in rural areas is a social issue that cannot be ignored in the process of urbanization in China. Left behind children refer to minors under the age of sixteen who have both parents working outside or one of them working outside while the other is without guardianship. According to data from the National Bureau of Statistics, as of the end of the 13th Five Year Plan, there are still 6.436 million left behind children in rural areas in China. Faced with such a large group of left behind children in rural areas, their education issues are particularly important, especially the almost missing family education that has become one of the focal points in the education system for left behind children in rural areas. Family education refers to the cultivation, guidance, and influence of parents or other guardians on the moral character, physical fitness, life skills, cultural cultivation, and behavioral habits of children and adolescents in order to promote their comprehensive and healthy growth. As the most basic education, family education often influences and even determines the comprehensive development of children and adolescents through subtle and exemplary means, which cannot be replaced by school education and social education. Due to the constraints of practical conditions and various factors, the family education of left behind children in rural areas has fallen into difficulties, and their growth and development have also been threatened.

2. CURRENT SITUATION OF FAMILY

EDUCATION FOR LEFT BEHIND CHILDREN IN RURAL AREAS

From the perspective of the guardianship status of left behind children in rural areas, there are mainly five types of guardianship for left behind children in China: intergenerational guardianship, single parent guardianship, close relative guardianship, self-guardianship, and peer guardianship. Generational guardianship is the main type of guardianship for left behind children in rural areas. It refers to the transfer of the child to the previous generation of parents, namely the child's grandparents or grandparents, after their parents go out to work. Most alternate guardians only focus on providing daily care for their children to ensure their health and safety, while not paying enough attention to their learning, morality, psychology, and other aspects. Single parent guardianship refers to one parent, most of whom is the father who goes out to work, while the other mother stays to take care of the family and children. In this situation, the burden of both the field and the family falls on the other party's shoulders, and the heavy pressure of life leads to a lack of patience among single guardians towards their children, often using simple and rough methods to discipline them. Close relative guardianship refers to handing over a child to relatives for care. Most left behind children in rural areas under close family supervision lack a sense of security and belonging. These children are often sensitive, fragile, insecure, and isolated, and even in some families, left behind children are not treated well and are only treated as free labor. Self-guardianship refers to staying at home to take care of oneself, while peer guardianship refers to being taken care of by older siblings. These two types of children often go to two extremes: one is strong self-care ability, old ways of dealing with people, precocious mentality, strong self-protection awareness, sensible and hardworking; Another type is self-indulgence, truancy, and poor self-control. From the perspective of the learning situation of left behind children in rural areas, it can be seen that due to their parents working outside, there is a lack of family education, and good family education can help improve children's learning level. Compared with children from intact families, left behind children in rural areas generally have lower academic performance, more violations of school rules and regulations, worse homework completion, and more frequent dropouts. From the emotional situation of left behind children in rural areas, most of them in the compulsory education stage have less communication with their next-generation guardians at home, lack communication, self-isolation, and inferiority and loneliness. Compared to non-left behind children, left behind children exhibit more emotional problems, have poorer relationships with classmates, have fewer good friends, lack communication skills, and are prone to low emotions.

3. REASONS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF FAMILY EDUCATION FOR LEFT BEHIND CHILDREN IN RURAL AREAS

3.1 The main body of family education is absent, and intergenerational education emphasizes nurturing over education

The phenomenon of lack of main body in family education and weak sense of responsibility is common for left behind children in rural areas. The core subject of family education is parents. However, in the context of population mobility, a large number of rural labor force go out to work or engage in business, causing left behind children in rural areas to generally be in a situation of lack of core body in family education, which will have many adverse effects on left behind children in rural areas. Parents who go out to work or engage in business directly affect their family structure and function, which can easily affect the physical and mental health development of left behind children in rural areas. Many left behind children in rural areas find it difficult to form a safe attachment relationship with their parents, which affects the quality of interaction with others and leads to difficulties in social adaptation. As they grow up, they may experience obvious problems such as lack of confidence and social withdrawal. Affected by the long-distance mobility of parents, the parent-child relationship of left behind children in rural areas has deteriorated comprehensively, which may threaten their physical and mental health development.

Parents go out to work, while grandparents and grandchildren stay behind, making intergenerational education the mainstream mode of education for left behind families in rural areas. There are many drawbacks to intergenerational education: the main body of intergenerational education (ancestors) is older and has a lower level of education, which can only provide basic living guarantees such as food and accommodation for left behind children, but cannot provide them with good educational support. Parents hand over their children to their grandparents when they are very young, which in the long run can affect the relationship between parents and children, and even have an impact on family relationships. Compared with the core subjects of family education, grandparents are not very high in terms of educational awareness and knowledge and cultural level, and are at a disadvantage in terms of educational concepts, abilities, methods, and methods. They do not attach importance to children's learning and education, which will inevitably affect the effectiveness of intergenerational education. Due to the influence of traditional rural concepts or outdated ideas, left behind grandparents do not attach enough importance to family education. Some grandparents dote on their grandchildren out of compensation psychology for left behind children, which has a negative impact on

their healthy growth and can easily lead to educational and psychological problems for left behind children. Generational education can easily create a “gap” between parents and children, which is not conducive to the cultivation of emotions between parents and left behind children. Although intergenerational education can to some extent compensate for the lack of parental education, it cannot completely replace parental education, which is not conducive to the education and healthy development of left behind children. Parent-child relationship is the foundation of family education and an important part of children’s growth stage. The effectiveness of family education mainly depends on communication and exchange between parents and children. Therefore, we can say that communication and exchange are the prerequisites for ensuring the effectiveness of family education.

3.2 The main body of family education has outdated educational concepts and inadequate methods and methods

Left behind children often lack the companionship of their parents, and their family education is minimal. Education overly relies on schools, valuing intelligence over morality, and valuing body over heart are prominent issues in family education in recent years. Rural school education has indeed made significant improvements under the attention of the country, but the superficial prosperity has also contributed to the inertia of rural family education. These children rely on their grandparents for daily living, and their education is relatively scarce, resulting in excessive dependence on schools for the education of left behind children in rural areas. On the one hand, the parents of children have been working for a long time, believing that education is beyond their reach, while grandparents believe that their own abilities are limited, As long as children’s food and housing are well managed, education believes that as long as children are handed over to school, they can rest assured, weaken or even give up their educational responsibilities. In addition, schools and society do not pay enough attention to left behind children, and there is a lack of theoretical and practical guidance for family education of left behind children in rural areas, which also makes it difficult to find the correct direction for family education of left behind children in rural areas. Due to the backwardness of their own educational level, most parents believe that good health and learning are the most important factors for their children, neglecting to cultivate good moral character from an early age and neglecting their children’s mental health education. In terms of intellectual education, they are overly concerned about scores. Scores represent everything, neglecting the development of children’s intelligence and creativity. This unhealthy educational concept further hinders the timely and effective resolution of a series of psychological and behavioral problems that children may encounter during their growth.

3.3 Lack of family education environment and abnormal parental behavior

The behavior of some parents of left behind children in rural areas is abnormal, and the role of role models is not strong. On the one hand, due to the generally low cultural level, rural parents often have insufficient academic education and can only provide simple academic supervision, but cannot provide effective academic guidance for left behind children in rural areas; In terms of quality education, rural parents neglect the education of their children’s moral and psychological qualities, as well as the cultivation of a sound personality, good moral character, and good behavior habits. On the other hand, some rural parents do not pay attention to their own words and actions in daily life, resulting in language failure and behavior misconduct. However, left behind children have limited ability to distinguish right from wrong, and their words and actions are subtly influenced negatively by their parents.

Family is an important battlefield for children’s growth, and a good family environment and culture will have a lifelong impact on children. The growth of children requires a stable and safe environment, and the love of parents is the safest and warmest environment for children. Growing up in a loving environment is a basic psychological need for children. However, normal family life and parent-child relationships are undoubtedly a luxury for left behind children in the new era. In the current fiercely competitive society, parents are working hard outside to make a living, leading to a weakened role in family education. Children lack normal emotional communication and parent-child interaction with their parents, and children do not have the opportunity to express their feelings to their parents. Parents also do not have the opportunity to convey their love for their children. In the long run, this will inevitably create psychological barriers between parents and children, causing children to lose basic psychological belonging and attachment.

3.4 Lack of awareness of home school cooperation and limited cooperative activities

Family school cooperation is an important factor affecting family education. Empirical research shows that home school cooperation activities have a significant impact on parents’ parenting styles; Parents provide teachers with information on their children’s situation at home and receive suggestions on how to correct their children’s various bad habits, which can help improve parenting methods and improve parenting efficiency. Family school cooperation can influence parents’ parenting styles by influencing parent-child supervision and parent-child companionship. Some rural schools’ home school cooperation mainly relies on teachers’ one-way indoctrination, with low enthusiasm for cooperation and weak awareness of home school cooperation; Parents of

migrant workers who have been away for a long time blindly shift their educational responsibilities to the school and do not actively care about their children's situation, resulting in limited opportunities for cooperation and weak interactivity between the family and school; The left behind ancestors have weak intentions and low efficiency in cooperation with the school.

4. STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING FAMILY EDUCATION FOR LEFT BEHIND CHILDREN IN RURAL AREAS

4.1 Clarify family education responsibilities and closely monitor children's growth

Through investigation, we found that children in rural areas who lack effective parent-child interaction become more outgoing and even have a significant improvement in intellectual development after receiving sufficient companionship from caregivers and guardians. Therefore, rural families themselves should effectively fulfill their family education responsibilities, and guardians of left behind children should pay attention to accompanying them more, setting an example, and subtly educating their children; Maintain close contact with the school, especially actively participate in family education guidance activities; To clarify the main responsibility of ensuring the healthy growth of children, promoting their healthy growth should be an important part of family decision-making. Parents who go out to work need to allocate more time to care for their children. They can communicate with their children online through mobile video and other means, closely monitor their children's growth status, and fulfill their family education responsibilities.

4.2 Make good connections between home and school, and build a high-quality educational environment

To solve the problem of family education for left behind children and improve the quality of family education, it is necessary to build high-quality family education links, and it is crucial to make good connections between home and school. In practical work, teachers, as important guides in the growth process of students, need to communicate with parents to make them realize the importance of family education. In practical work, special WeChat groups and DingTalk groups for class parents can be established. Teachers and parents can communicate in real-time and non real-time, allowing parents to participate and understand the importance of family education. They can also guide parents to change their outdated educational concepts in daily life. For left behind children, home visits can also be used for communication. The advantage of this method is that it can make parents pay attention

and also understand the students' status at home, so that teachers can better formulate education strategies that are suitable for the children's actual situation, laying a good foundation for their comprehensive development.

4.3 Realizing Home School Cooperation and Developing a Science Education Model

The key method to change the current teaching situation and improve the quality of family education for left behind children is to achieve home school cooperation and carry out scientific education models. In practical work, teachers must, on the premise of good communication with parents, let them understand the school's educational philosophy and methods, so that parents can use scientific family education strategies to cooperate with school education, thereby changing erroneous educational concepts and helping them return to a state of physical and mental health.

4.3.1 Smooth communication channels between home and school

Schools should actively guide guardians of left behind children to actively communicate with teachers and participate in home school exchange meetings. Require guardians of left behind children to regularly and proactively communicate with teachers about family education and children's extracurricular performance, help guardians clarify their educational responsibilities, guide guardians to supervise children's studies, strengthen emotional communication, and increase the frequency and quality of guardians' participation in family education.

4.3.2 Establish and optimize a home school communication network platform

Schools should establish and optimize a home school communication network platform, regularly communicate with parents online, share photos, videos, etc. of students' lives at school, and inform parents of the main content of school education. Breaking through the limitations of time and space in family education for left behind children, setting up a home school communication network platform, using online means to promote home school communication, and helping parents and guardians of migrant workers to timely understand their children's academic and health status. Especially for families of left behind children, online home school communication meetings should be established to enhance family education literacy and communication skills, in order to better respond to various family education issues.

4.4 Design experiential activities to achieve effective education for children

For children's education work, it is difficult to achieve effective education solely relying on school and family education, because left behind children are resistant to preaching and discipline, and if the scale is slightly inappropriate, children may develop resistance and rebellious psychology. In response to this situation, it is

possible to choose to design experiential activities for students in the class, so that they can feel the hardships of their parents and the hard work of taking care of themselves, thereby achieving effective guidance for them, allowing them to change themselves and become sensible and good children.

4.5 Coordinate social resources and establish a family education support network for left behind children

Most left behind children in rural areas live in a complex and macro social environment. Therefore, it is necessary to integrate various forces from all sectors of society, including family, school, and society, and establish a comprehensive and caring network for the growth of left behind children through joint efforts and coordinated cooperation. Education departments in various regions, as well as primary and secondary school kindergartens, should actively collaborate with Youth League committees, women's federations, and other departments to establish sound family education organizations in various communities, streets, and other areas, providing parents with public welfare family education guidance services.

5. CONCLUSION

Faced with the dilemma of family education for left behind children in rural areas, the top priority is to address the issues of "lack of educational subjects, weak sense of responsibility, outdated educational concepts, inadequate methods and methods, worrisome educational environment, weak implicit effect, multiple drawbacks of intergenerational education, and unclear substitution effect". There is less cooperation between families and schools, and poor communication between families and schools. Problems such as weak mental health education and moral education, imbalanced educational resources in urban and rural areas, and inadequate social support

systems. In this regard, families should clarify their educational responsibilities, update their educational concepts, improve the educational environment, and optimize intergenerational education; Schools should strengthen family school cooperation and communication, optimize mental health education and moral education; Society should optimize the allocation of education resources in urban and rural areas, leverage the synergistic effect of community education, and provide sufficient and powerful guarantees for the family education of left behind children in rural areas.

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