



INNOVATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL EDUCATION MANAGEMENT IN CHINA

Yongjun Lu

E-mail: 1123356121@qq.com

Abstract

China's rural education management faces many challenges, including uneven distribution of educational resources, weak teachers and insufficient infrastructure. However, in recent years, significant progress has been made in rural education management through policy reforms, technological empowerment, and the involvement of social forces. This paper discusses the innovative model of rural education management in China, analyses its development trend, and proposes strategies for sustainable development in light of international experience. At the same time, the paper analyses the impact of government policies, information technology, and social force participation in order to provide ideas for the future development of rural education.

Keywords: rural education, education management, innovative development, information technology, policy reforms

Introduction

Education, as the cornerstone of national development, plays a key and irreplaceable role in promoting social progress, economic prosperity and the quality of the nation. In China, rural education, as an important part of the education system, carries the hopes and dreams of hundreds of millions of rural people, and is of fundamental, pioneering and overall significance to the overall development of the country. According to relevant data, China's rural areas have a huge student population, and the number of rural students in compulsory education accounts for a considerable proportion of the total number of students in compulsory education nationwide. These students are the future builders of rural areas, and their education level is directly related to the development prospects of rural areas. (Shisong He, 2022)

The state of development of rural education is directly related to the economic development and social progress of rural areas. From an economic point of view, upgrading the quality of the rural labour force through education can provide strong talent support for the upgrading of rural industries and economic transformation. In some rural areas, through vocational skills training and agricultural technology education, a group of new farmers who understand technology and know how to run a business have been trained, and they are actively involved in the development of special industries in rural areas, which promotes the modernisation process of local agriculture and increases the income of farmers. At the social level, good rural education helps to improve the ideological and moral level and scientific and cultural literacy of farmers, and promotes the harmony and stability of rural society. The dissemination of advanced cultures and concepts through education can change traditional concepts in rural areas and promote the civilised progress of rural society. (Fengyun Li, 2023)

At the same time, the innovation of rural education management is also an important measure to promote education equity. Educational fairness is an important foundation of social fairness, and there is a certain gap between rural education and urban education in terms of educational resources and teacher strength. By innovating rural education management, increasing investment in rural education, improving the conditions of rural schools, and

improving the treatment of rural teachers, the gap between urban and rural education can be narrowed, so that rural children can enjoy a fair and quality education. (Hongjie Li, 2021)

Current status of research at home and abroad

Status of domestic research

Domestic scholars have conducted fruitful research on rural education management, covering a number of important areas. In the area of rural education policies and systems, scholars have analysed in depth the historical development, implementation effects and existing problems of these policies. Taking the 'two exemptions and one subsidy' policy as an example, some studies have shown that the policy has been effective in reducing the financial burden of rural families and increasing school enrolment, easing the financial pressure of rural families on education to a certain extent, and enabling more children to go to school. However, in the course of implementing the policy, problems such as regional differences and ineffective implementation have gradually emerged. Due to the differences in the level of economic development, financial situation and educational foundation of different regions, there are big differences in the degree and effect of the implementation of the policy, and in some regions, there are cases of poor implementation and untimely release of funds in the implementation of the policy. (Hongjing Gao, 2023)

Research on the allocation of resources to rural education has also been a focus of domestic research. The study found that there is a significant gap in educational resources between urban and rural areas. In terms of teacher strength, urban schools have more highly educated and experienced teachers, while rural schools have a shortage of teachers and a serious loss of excellent teachers; in terms of teaching facilities, urban schools are equipped with advanced multimedia teaching equipment and laboratories, while rural schools have relatively old and scarce teaching facilities; in terms of library materials, the number and types of books in rural schools are far less than those in urban schools. In order to optimise the allocation of resources, scholars have put forward a number of strategies, such as the establishment of an educational resources sharing platform, the sharing of high-quality curricula and teaching resources between urban and rural schools through Internet technology, so that students in rural areas can also have access to advanced educational content; the implementation of a teacher rotation system to promote exchanges between urban and rural teachers, and to improve the teaching level of rural teachers. (Fengyun Li, 2023)

The development of rural teachers has also received widespread attention. Scholars have focused on the career development, training needs and working conditions of rural teachers. Studies show that rural teachers generally face limited career development opportunities, relatively narrow promotion channels, and a lack of platforms and opportunities for professional growth; insufficient training, and the content and mode of training are out of touch with the actual needs of rural education, so they cannot effectively improve teachers' teaching ability; and the working conditions are difficult, with inadequate living facilities and inconvenient transport, which makes it difficult for excellent teachers to stay in the countryside for a long period of time to teach. To address these problems, scholars have suggested attracting and retaining excellent teachers by improving the working environment, strengthening the infrastructure of rural schools, and providing comfortable living and working conditions for teachers; providing professional development opportunities, organising targeted training, and conducting teaching seminars. (Hongjie Li, 2021)

Current status of foreign research

Foreign research on rural education is also characterised by diversification. In the study of rural education equity, foreign researchers have paid extensive attention to the specific manifestations of education equity issues in rural areas. For example, research on rural areas in the United States has found that race and class have a significant impact on educational opportunities, and that poor and minority students are more likely to be affected by insufficient educational resources and unequal treatment, and that they face many obstacles to accessing quality educational resources and opportunities for higher education. (Xiuyan Meng, 2021)

Rural education and sustainable development are also important areas of foreign research. The study concludes that rural education should be committed to cultivating talents needed for sustainable development in rural areas, and through education, it should enhance farmers' awareness of environmental protection, innovation ability and sense of social responsibility, so as to promote ecological protection and economic development in rural areas. In some rural areas, eco-agriculture education is being carried out to cultivate farmers' skills in ecological planting and breeding and to promote the green development of the rural economy. (Sujuan Xu, 2022)

Cultural diversity has also received much attention in rural education. Foreign researchers are concerned about how to respect and protect the cultural traditions of rural areas in school education, integrating the rich folk culture and folk art of rural areas into curriculum teaching and enriching the content of education; and how to make use of cultural resources to promote the development of rural education, and to stimulate students' interest in learning and creativity by means of cultural activities and cultural experiences. (Shisong He, 2022)

Innovative Practices and Exploration of Educational Management in Rural China

Innovation and change in internal school management

The headmaster's responsibility system has been deepened and improved in rural school management, giving headmasters greater management autonomy and enabling them to formulate development strategies and management measures according to the actual situation of the school. In terms of teaching management, headmasters can adjust the curriculum and optimise teaching methods according to the characteristics of the school and the needs of the students. The headmasters of some rural schools have combined the characteristics of the local agricultural industry to offer specialised courses such as agricultural technology and rural e-commerce, which have fostered students' practical abilities and vocational qualities. Headmasters also play a key role in the construction of the teaching force, as they can recruit teachers on their own, make reasonable posting arrangements according to their professional ability and teaching level, and provide teachers with training and development opportunities. (Hongjie Li, 2021)

Innovations in teacher incentive mechanisms have had a positive impact on improving teachers' motivation and the quality of education. Through the incentive mechanism, teachers' work motivation has been greatly stimulated, and they have become more actively involved in teaching, constantly improving teaching methods and raising the quality of teaching. In some rural schools that have established a perfect incentive mechanism for teachers, teachers' enthusiasm for teaching is high, teaching effectiveness has been significantly improved, and students' interest in learning and academic performance have also been significantly improved. The incentive mechanism also promotes the professional development of teachers, who, in order to obtain better incentives, continue to improve their professionalism and teaching ability, forming a favourable atmosphere for teacher development. (Lijuan Guo, 2024)

Innovative Practices in Curriculum and Teaching Methods

Vernacular curriculum development is gradually emerging in rural education as an important initiative to enrich the curriculum system and cultivate students' sense of identity and belonging to their hometowns. Many rural schools have developed vernacular curricula with strong local characteristics by combining the local natural environment, history, culture and folklore. In a rural school in a mountainous area, making full use of the rich natural resources of the area, local programmes such as ‘Plants of the Hometown’ and ‘Geography of Landscape’ have been developed. Through field observation, specimen making and research, students learn about the plant species, ecological environment and geographical features of their hometown. In the ‘Plants of Hometown’ programme, students, led by their teachers, went into the mountains and forests to identify various plants and learn about their growth habits and medicinal values. They also made plant specimens with their own hands to organise and display what they had learnt. Through these programmes, students not only learnt a wealth of natural science knowledge, but also enhanced their awareness of the protection of natural resources in their hometowns. (Sujuan Xu, 2022)

In some rural areas with a long history and culture, schools have developed local programmes such as ‘Local History’ and ‘Folk Culture’. Students gain a deeper understanding of the cultural heritage of their hometowns by learning about their historical changes, traditional customs and folk arts. In the ‘Folk Culture’ programme, students participate in local folk festivals, such as the temple fair at the Spring Festival and dragon boat races at the Dragon Boat Festival, to experience first-hand the charm of folk culture. They also learn folk arts, such as paper-cutting, embroidery and weaving, to pass on and promote the traditional culture of their hometowns. (Lijuan Guo, 2024)

The application of project-based learning in rural education has also achieved remarkable results, effectively enhancing students' comprehensive quality and practical ability. A rural secondary school carried out a project-based learning activity called ‘Rural Ecological Agricultural Practice’. Students formed a project team and went deep into the rural fields to understand the current situation of local agricultural production and discover the problems in agricultural production, such as declining soil fertility and difficulties in selling agricultural products. In response to these problems, the students worked out solutions by consulting information, asking experts and conducting field research. They tried to apply scientific planting methods, such as rational fertiliser application and crop rotation, to improve soil fertility; and made use of the Internet platform to carry out online sales of agricultural products to broaden sales channels. During the implementation of the project, students not only learnt agricultural knowledge and skills, but also practiced teamwork, problem solving, communication and other skills. (Xiuyan Meng, 2021)

In the ‘Rural Cultural Inheritance and Innovation’ project-based learning, students deeply excavated the history, culture, folklore and other resources of the countryside, and carried out inheritance and innovation of rural culture through filming documentaries, writing stories and designing cultural products. The rural documentaries they filmed show the beautiful scenery, traditional culture and folk activities of the countryside, allowing more people to understand the charm of the countryside. The countryside stories written vividly show the life scenes and characters in the countryside and pass on the cultural memory of the countryside. The designed cultural products, such as handicrafts and cultural shirts with characteristic patterns of the countryside, combine the countryside culture with modern design and realise the innovative development of the countryside culture. Through these project-based learning activities, students' innovative thinking and practical ability have been fully cultivated, and their comprehensive quality has been comprehensively improved. (Shisong He, 2022)

Future Development Trends and Prospects of Rural Education Management in China Direction and Strategy of Innovative Development

In future development, deepening the reform of the education management system is the key to promoting the development of rural education. Further clarify the responsibilities of the government, schools, families and society in the management of rural education and build a synergistic and co-operative management pattern. The government should strengthen macro-control, formulate scientific and reasonable education policies, increase investment in rural education, and ensure the equitable distribution of education resources. Local governments should formulate specific education development plans according to the actual situation of local rural areas, strengthen the supervision of education funds, and improve the efficiency of the use of funds. Schools should strengthen their own subject position, improve their independent management ability, and actively explore education and teaching modes suitable for the characteristics of rural students. Headmasters should give full play to their leadership role, strengthen the construction of the teaching force, optimise the curriculum and improve the quality of teaching. Families should actively participate in education management, strengthen communication and cooperation with schools, pay attention to their children's learning and growth, and create a good atmosphere for family education. Society should actively participate in rural education and provide support and assistance to rural education through donations, teaching support and volunteer services. (Lijuan Guo, 2024)

Strengthening international exchanges and co-operation is an important way to improve China's rural education management. Actively draw on advanced international education concepts and management experience, and combine them with the actual situation in rural China to make localised innovations. Cooperate with international organisations in rural education projects, and jointly explore new modes of rural education development. Strengthen exchanges with rural education organisations in other countries, and carry out activities such as academic seminars, teacher training and student exchanges, so as to broaden horizons and improve the level of education management. Participate in the formulation and evaluation of international education standards, demonstrate the development results of Chinese rural education, and enhance the influence of Chinese rural education in the international arena. (Sujuan Xu, 2022)

Promoting educational innovation and practice is the core driving force for promoting the high-quality development of rural education. Rural schools are encouraged to carry out educational and teaching innovations and explore teaching methods and curriculum systems suitable for rural students. Strengthen the in-depth integration of information technology and education and teaching, and make use of online education platforms and intelligent teaching tools to expand educational resources and improve the efficiency and quality of teaching. Practical teaching activities will be carried out to strengthen the cultivation of students' practical ability and innovative spirit. Establishing experimental zones for rural education innovation, encouraging schools to carry out innovative exploration in education management, curriculum and teaching methods, summing up experiences and gradually promoting them. Evaluation and promotion of educational innovations will be strengthened, and outstanding innovations will be transformed into educational practices in a timely manner, so as to promote the overall development of rural education. (Shisong He, 2022)

Opportunities and Challenges

The comprehensive implementation of the strategy of rural revitalisation has brought a strong impetus to the development of rural education management. The great importance the state attaches to rural areas has prompted a large amount of resources to converge on the field

of rural education. In terms of capital investment, the central and local governments have increased their financial support for rural education, and many rural schools have received sufficient funds to improve their infrastructure, build new modern teaching and laboratory buildings, and refurbish outdated playgrounds, providing students with a more comfortable and safer learning environment. In terms of teacher training, the government has introduced a series of preferential policies to attract outstanding teachers to rural education, and to improve the remuneration and career development space for rural teachers, injecting new vigour into rural education. The rural revitalisation strategy also emphasises the close integration of rural education with rural economic and social development, providing new development ideas and directions for rural education management. Rural schools can adjust their curricula according to local industrial characteristics and development needs, cultivate practical talents adapted to rural development, and realise the synergistic development of education and industry. (Lijuan Guo, 2024)

Technological progress, especially the rapid development of information technology, has brought new opportunities for rural education management. The rise of online education platforms has broken the time and space constraints, enabling rural students to access a wealth of high-quality educational resources. Through the Internet, rural students can synchronise their learning with the curricula of high-quality urban schools and listen to lectures by renowned experts, broadening their horizons and increasing their insights. The application of intelligent teaching tools such as intelligent tutoring systems and electronic whiteboards in rural schools has effectively improved the efficiency and quality of teaching. Intelligent tutoring systems can provide personalised learning advice and counselling according to students' learning situation, helping students to solve their learning difficulties; the use of electronic whiteboards makes classroom teaching more vivid and stimulates students' interest in learning. The application of education big data provides the basis for scientific decision-making for rural education management. Through the analysis of students' learning data, education administrators can understand students' learning status and needs, optimise teaching management and improve education quality. (Yueguang Gao & Rong Zhang, 2022)

With the society's increasing concern for education equity, the issue of rural education equity has received more attention. The government has introduced a series of policies and measures dedicated to narrowing the gap between urban and rural education and promoting educational equity. It has increased investment in rural education, improved the conditions of rural schools, raised the remuneration of rural teachers, and promoted exchanges of teachers between urban and rural areas, all of which have created a fairer environment for the development of rural education. All sectors of society are also actively involved in rural education, providing support and assistance to rural education through donations, teaching support and volunteer services, further promoting the development of rural education. (Fengyun Li, 2023)

While we see opportunities, we must also be aware of the challenges facing the management of rural education in China. The uneven distribution of educational resources remains a major problem for rural education management. The gap in educational resources between urban and rural areas and between regions is still significant, with urban schools possessing advanced teaching facilities, excellent teaching staff and rich curriculum resources, while rural schools are relatively lacking. In some remote rural areas, schools have outdated and outdated teaching equipment, insufficient multimedia teaching equipment and a shortage of laboratory equipment, which seriously affects the quality of teaching. The number and quality of rural teachers are also difficult to meet the needs of educational development, with

a serious loss of good teachers and insufficient opportunities for teacher training, resulting in teachers' teaching standards and professionalism needing to be improved. (Sujuan Xu, 2022)

The lagging concept of education is also one of the challenges facing rural education management. Some rural parents do not pay enough attention to education, believing that studying is useless and not investing enough in and paying enough attention to their children's education. This concept seriously affects students' motivation and learning effectiveness. The educational concepts of some rural schools and teachers are also relatively traditional, focusing too much on the transmission of knowledge and neglecting the comprehensive quality training and personality development of students, making it difficult to adapt to the needs of education development in the new era. Rural education management also faces problems such as an imperfect management system and an unscientific education evaluation system, which constrain the development of rural education and need to be further deepened and solved. (Shisong He, 2022)

Conclusion

This study has analysed the current situation, innovative practices, international experiences and future development trends of China's rural education management, and comprehensively revealed the importance and complexity of rural education management. With strong support from national policies and a sustained increase in resource inputs, rural school infrastructure has been greatly improved, and positive progress has been made in the building of the teaching force. In terms of innovative development directions and strategies, it will deepen the reform of the education management system, strengthen international exchanges and cooperation, and promote education innovation and practice. China's rural education management is also facing challenges such as population mobility, uneven distribution of education resources and lagging education concepts. Only by fully grasping the opportunities and actively responding to the challenges can we achieve the sustainable development of rural education and provide strong talent support and intellectual guarantee for the implementation of the rural revitalisation strategy.

References

- Fengyun Li. (2023). Research on education management of rural left-behind children (Master's thesis, Qufu Normal University). Master <https://link.cnki.net/doi/10.27267/d.cnki.gqfsu.2023.000245>.
- Hongjie Li. (2021). Exploration of educational management strategies in rural primary and secondary schools. *New course*, (30),220.
- Hongjing Gao. (2023). The status quo of professional development of generalist teachers in small-scale rural schools and the countermeasures of education management--Taking Longnan City as an example. *Journal of Gansu Higher Education Teachers* (04),107-112.
- Huibiao Wang. (2020). Innovation of rural primary school education management mode in the context of new curriculum reform. *Contemporary teaching and research series* (09),108+118.
- Lijuan Guo. (2024). Research on the status quo and countermeasures of informatisation management in rural primary education (Master's thesis, Hebei University). Master <https://link.cnki.net/doi/10.27103/d.cnki.ghebu.2024.000431>.



- Qishu Wang. (2023). Practical Research on Good Rural Primary School Education Management in the New Era. (eds.) Proceedings of the Forum on Innovative Development of Education and Teaching in the New Vision (II) (pp. 178-179). Yiyang County Chigong Town Central Primary School.
- Shisong He. (2022). Innovative Education Management Model to Improve the Quality of Rural Primary Education. (eds.) 2022 Proceedings of the Summit Forum on Future Education Development and Innovative Education Research (VII) (pp. 741-749). Tianjia Primary School, Wushan County, Chongqing, China.
- Sujuan Xu. (2022). The current situation and countermeasures of rural primary and secondary school education management in the context of rural revitalisation. *New West (Z1)*, 163-165.
- Xiuyan Meng. (2021). Deepening the effectiveness of rural education teaching management reform in the context of the new curriculum - a review of the *Journal of Tropical Crops* (02),618.
- Yueguang Gao & Rong Zhang. (2022). Compulsory education financial fund management reform and rural education development. *Financial Research* (03),74-91.