

# The Development Situation, Existing Problems and Countermeasures of Rural Basic Education in Jiangxi Province – Take H County in Nanchang as an Example

Junwen Wang\*, Yingjie Chen

School of Humanities and Social Sciences, East China Jiao tong University, Nanchang, Jiangxi, China

\*Corresponding Author.

## **Abstract:**

The development of basic education in rural areas is an important foundation for realizing national modernization. At present, there are outstanding problems with the development of basic rural education in Jiangxi, such as the unreasonable structure of teacher teams, the decrease in the number of students, the need to improve the teacher-student ratio, the contradiction between vacant facilities and the lack of hardware, etc., which have seriously affected the sustainable development of basic rural education. This article takes H County in Nanchang, Jiangxi Province, as an example. It comprehensively analyzes the development status and any existing problems in rural elementary education in H County. It puts forward countermeasures and suggestions for the development of rural elementary education in Jiangxi

**Keywords:** Basic rural education, Development status, Teacher structure.

---

## I. INTRODUCTION

The development of basic rural education is related to the overall situation of the country's modernization. It is the only way to revitalize the nation. Therefore, we should attach great importance to basic rural education. Compared with other developed coastal areas, Jiangxi is slightly behind in terms of social and economic development. There are still many problems in the development of basic education in rural areas. This raises the question of how to develop basic education in rural parts of Jiangxi. The industry is an urgent issue to be solved when it comes to the reform of Jiangxi's basic education. Overall, when it comes to the development of basic education in rural Jiangxi, there is a large gap in comparison with developed areas, and there is still room for considerable progress when it comes to rural school conditions, teachers, educational resources, and teaching facilities. Therefore, it is of great practical and

theoretical significance to study the present state of basic education in Jiangxi and to propose practical countermeasures and suggestions.

Studying and sorting out the relevant literature of rural basic education problems. On the problem of rural basic education, the theoretical community mostly studies the problem of dropout and learning layout of rural basic education. However, the research from the "spontaneous endogenous demand" level of rural basic education development is relatively scarce. In fact, the two levels of "institutional arrangement" and "spontaneous and endogenous demand" for the development of rural basic education are "cross-penetration" and "complement each other". Therefore, this paper takes H County, Nanchang, Jiangxi Province, based on the perspective of "spontaneous endogenous demand" of rural basic education development, and beneficial discusses the current development of rural basic education in Jiangxi Province, and tries to find out the method and experience for reference.

## **II. ANALYSIS OF THE STATUS QUO OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF BASIC RURAL EDUCATION IN H COUNTY, NANCHANG, JIANGXI**

H County is a county under the jurisdiction of Nanchang City, the provincial capital. In 2018, H County was rated as a "Jiangxi Province Rural Basic Education Development Demonstration County" and a "Jiangxi Province Rural Basic Education Reform Pilot Area". Therefore, this article chooses H County as the research sample because it is representative of similar areas in the province of Jiangxi. Currently, H County has 42 elementary schools and 6 junior high schools. The total number of teachers is 655, of which 510 are elementary school teachers and 145 are junior high school teachers. The number of female teachers in primary schools is 327 (64.12%), and the number of female teachers in junior high schools is 60 (41.38%). The educational structure of primary school teachers is mainly those with junior college education or below, with junior college education accounting for 51.18%, and their professional titles are mainly assistant level or below, accounting for 68.62%. Most junior high school teachers have been educated to the level of an undergraduate or associate degree. 73.79% of teachers have a bachelor's degree, and 64.82% have a professional title at an intermediate level or below. In order to more objectively and accurately understand the development situation of rural basic education in H County, Nanchang, Jiangxi Province, members of the research team of the "Educational Economy and Education Development Research Center" conducted a review of the educational development status of forty-eight primary and secondary schools in H County from June to September 2020. An in-depth investigation was conducted. The survey results show that the current status of basic rural education in Nanchang H County has the following three characteristics:

(1) With regards to teachers: first, the age distribution of teachers is uneven, showing the coexistence of younger and older. Second, the gender structure, educational background structure, and title structure of the teaching staff need to be optimized. Specifically, the proportion of female teachers in rural primary

schools is too high, as is the proportion of male teachers in rural middle schools. Third, the number of middle school teachers has shown a sharp downward trend compared with elementary school teachers.

(2) With regards to students: first, the loss of the sources of primary and secondary school students is becoming more serious. Second, the enrollment rate of rural girls is relatively high, and compulsory education is mostly universal in rural areas. Third, there is a serious waste of teachers in basic rural education, especially elementary school education. The ratio of teachers to students in both primary school and junior high school far exceeds the relevant national regulations.

(3) With regards to infrastructure: first, both hardware and software facilities are idle and lack of both contradictions. Second, there is a problem with hardware facilities. For example, the schools' floor space, sports field areas, classroom occupancy, multimedia classroom occupancy, fixed assets, and the number of computer students per capita are much higher than schools in townships, but school hospitals, psychological counselling rooms, full-time school doctors, and full-time health personnel are very scarce. The equipment is also inadequate. Third, there is a problem with software facilities. For example, the campus networks are fully equipped, but in the allocation of electronic books, information talent is very lacking. Many rural primary and secondary schools are almost "a barren".

From these three points, it is clear that there are problems with the level of development of basic rural education in Nanchang H County. Although nine-year compulsory education has been implemented nationwide, and every child has an equal right to education, there are still inequalities in rural areas and towns in H County, especially in terms of teachers and educational infrastructure. There is a big gap in comparison with urban schools.

### **III. THE MAIN PROBLEMS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF BASIC RURAL EDUCATION IN H COUNTY, NANCHANG, JIANGXI**

The development of basic rural education is directly related to the vital interests of farmers, and it is also key to improving the quality of labourers, promoting the transformation of traditional agriculture to modern agriculture, and solving the problems of agriculture, rural areas, and farmers. By combing the survey statistics, this study shows that the current development of basic rural education in Nanchang H County faces the following challenges.

#### **3.1 The structure of the Teaching Staff Needs to be Improved.**

First, the age structure of teachers is not reasonable, and the age structure of rural basic education in H County has the obvious coexistence of youth and aging. The proportion of teachers under the age of 29 in elementary school is 33.53%, accounting for about one-third of the total number of teachers in elementary

school. The proportion of teachers aged 24 and under is as high as 23.78%, which is a high proportion. These young teachers have just stepped out of the ivory tower. Teaching experience is generally lacking. Also, students in rural areas are more prone to psychological deficiencies due to being left behind, and it is difficult for young teachers to manage the complex psychological problems of children who have been left behind.

Second, the gender structure of teachers is problematic. The main problem is that the proportion of female teachers in elementary school is too high, whereas the proportion of male teachers in junior high school is too high. The "polarization" of this gender structure is not conducive to the cultivation of students' healthy personalities.

Third, the structure of teachers' academic qualifications and professional titles is problematic. Rural elementary education in H County involves a "double low": low academic qualifications and low professional titles. Academic qualifications reflect the education of teachers, while professional titles reflect teaching ability. The teachers in rural elementary education schools in H County are mainly college graduates and below, whereas urban teachers are mainly college graduates and above. There is a trend towards fewer teachers with bachelor's degrees in H County.

### 3.2 There are Fewer Students Each Year, and the Teacher-Student Ratio is Unreasonable.

First, according to relevant statistics from the education administrative department of H County, from 2018 to 2020, there was a downward trend in overall students for basic education in H County each year. The loss rate in rural elementary schools and rural junior high schools reached 26.56% and 15%, respectively. The loss of students at the basic education stage in County H has formed the "Matthew effect", in which a large number of rural students enter the city to study, the number of rural teachers is reduced, and teachers who are transferred to the county (township) to work. Compared with the original unit or the education system in the region, 96.6% of the teachers compared with the original unit or the regional education system are more excellent, high title, high teachers. This has led to a weakening of the strength of rural teachers and an overall decline in the quality of schools. It has encouraged rural students to study in cities, which in turn creates a vicious circle of student loss.

Second, basic education in rural areas has begun to implement small classes. As a result, while the teacher-student ratio has increased, teaching resources are also being wasted. According to the "Notice on Unifying the Staffing Standards for Urban and Rural Primary and Secondary Schools and Staff" issued by the Central Editing Office, the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Finance, the Central Editing Office Fa [2014] No. 72 stipulates that the teacher-student ratio at elementary schools should be 1:19. At junior high schools, the teacher-student ratio should be 1:13.5. But the current teacher-student ratio for rural elementary education in Nanchang H County is 1:8.23, and that of middle schools is 1:14.14.

Therefore, teachers cannot obtain satisfaction from their jobs, which severely restricts the sustainable development of basic rural education.

### 3.3 There is Idleness and a Lack of Hardware and Software Facilities.

First, the idle resources of rural basic education in Nanchang H County cover area, sports fields, and classrooms. The per capita use area of students is 89.33 square meters / person, 21.44 square meters/ person and 0.11rooms / person, far exceeding the per capita use of students in H County and Town. Far exceeds the per capita use of students in H County and Township.

Second, there is a lack of auxiliary facilities for basic education in rural H County. There is a relative scarcity of auxiliary facilities, such as school hospitals and psychological counselling rooms. According to relevant statistics provided by the Education Bureau of H County, only 20.8% of rural primary and secondary schools are equipped with these auxiliary facilities, while the proportion of auxiliary facilities in township primary and secondary schools is 50.4%. That is a difference of 29.2% between the two.

Third, there is a serious shortage of full-time school doctors and full-time health personnel in rural primary and secondary schools in H County. They are almost in a "blank" state. Also, the informatization construction of rural primary and secondary schools in H County, especially rural primary schools, is relatively lacking.

## **IV. COUNTERMEASURES AND SUGGESTIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF BASIC RURAL EDUCATION IN JIANGXI**

The overall development of basic education in rural areas in Jiangxi has been relatively slow. After entering the 21st century, it has been affected by factors such as urbanization and policy changes. Therefore, to break the current bottleneck restricting the development of basic rural education in Jiangxi, it is necessary to combine the objective and actual conditions of the development of basic rural education in Jiangxi to find a new path of development that is practical and feasible.

The first step is to improve the teaching structure and strengthen the construction of the teaching team. This would involve improving the treatment of rural teachers. 1) Increase the salaries of rural teachers. Attract teachers to take root in the countryside, stay in the countryside, and teach for a long time. The flow of teachers generally runs from underdeveloped areas to developed areas, from low-level education to higher schools, and from rural schools to urban key schools. The general factor that drives the flow of teachers is often the level of economic income. This model of "different pay for equal work" has led most teachers engaged in basic rural education to "seek another job" after accumulating a certain amount of teaching experience. 2) Optimize the living, working, and learning environments for basic rural

education teachers. To understand the actual needs of teachers regarding housing, cultural life, heatstroke prevention and warmth, and promote the "warm project construction" of teachers. By installing water purifiers, providing free heating, leisure and entertainment facilities and other specific measures, the actual needs of teachers can be addressed. This should allow teachers to experience spiritual and material happiness in their spare time.

The second step is to improve relevant systems and measures. 1) It is necessary to treat teacher mobility rationally. The flow of teachers and the development of education are complementary to each other. The better the development of education, the higher the requirements for the optimal allocation of teachers, which will inevitably involve a rational flow of teacher resources. The fundamental measures to solve the problem of the mobility of basic rural education teachers should improve the teacher rotation and mobility mechanism and other related institutional measures to improve the treatment of basic rural education teachers and ensure their reasonable survival and development needs. 2) The Education Bureau and other relevant departments should guide the benign flow of rural teachers, establish a reasonable teacher flow mechanism from top to bottom, and guide the flow of basic rural education teachers. Multi-channel and multi-subject attraction should be used so that outstanding talents flow into rural schools. This should continue to inject fresh blood into the basic education system, optimize the knowledge structure of the teacher echelon, better play the potential of teachers, and realize the optimization of the teacher team and the overall quality improvement[1].

The third step is to increase the enrollment rate of students and promote the improvement of teaching quality. One could focus on improving the quality of subject teaching. 1) Adjust the number of basic rural education classes, reduce large-class teaching, and achieve better teacher-student interactions through small-class teaching. This would improve the level of teaching and improve teaching quality. 2) As well as focusing on the balance of urban and rural education, efforts must also be made to ensure the balance of internal education in rural areas, gradually reducing or eliminating the emergence of "key schools" and "key classes". Strict management and control should be achieved to maintain the internal balance of basic rural education. 3) Recruit students in strict accordance with relevant national regulations to prevent the class size from exceeding the standards due to transfers, exchanges, and more. A reasonable threshold should be set for the number of students in the school and the number of students in the class. Except for special circumstances, the parts below the threshold should be deleted and merged to ensure the opening rates and avoid the waste of educational resources caused by the small class sizes[2].

The fourth step is to pay full attention to the education of children who have been left behind. 1) To solve the problem of children being left behind, there should be an effort to ensure that their parents are employed. Relevant government departments should guide enterprises to set up in the countryside, provide more jobs for rural communities, and transfer labour-intensive industries to the countryside. Keeping the labour force in the countryside would solve the problem of children being left behind. 2) To prevent



children who have been left behind from having psychological problems, schools should hire professional psychologists to provide counselling services to help children solve their psychological problems. At the same time, they should maintain close contact with parents to form a benign interaction between parents and students, students and schools, and schools and parents. Children who have been left behind should feel the warmth of their parents and school, which will help their physical and mental development. 3) Call on more social welfare organizations to pay attention to children who have been left behind in rural areas, give them more opportunities to experience new things and learn other skills outside the classrooms. These organizations should focus on improving the physical fitness of children and broadening their horizons. They should actively protect the legal rights and interests of children who have been left behind[3].

The fifth step is to improve the teaching infrastructure. 1) It is necessary to ensure the funding of rural schools, to continue to reform the urban and rural funding distribution methods, and to improve the distribution system. School leaders and relevant government departments should continue to pay attention to basic rural education funding and basic education construction. They should establish an audit and accountability mechanism to ensure that funds for basic rural education are in place, thereby avoiding violations. 2) Regarding the standard of funding input, a more reasonable indicator should be established, and the number of students should not be used as the only indicator. The gap between China's urban and basic rural education stems primarily from the inequality of the system of education finance. Therefore, per the "education compensation theory", the government should use profits to create equal distributions and ensure the fairness of education[4].

The sixth step is to integrate teaching resources. 1) A unified plan should be made for idle resources to make them contribute to teaching. Facing the idle problem of informatization infrastructure, professional informatization talents should be allocated or temporarily hired to solve the problem of the lack of informatization talents. At the same time, basic rural education should use informatization methods in teaching to enrich its teaching methods and improve the quality of teaching. 2) The remaining infrastructure should be rented out or renovated. For example, in idle empty classrooms, cooperation agreements can be established with county and township hospitals. The hospitals could arrange for on-duty doctors and psychologists to serve as on-duty doctors in schools, thereby helping teachers and students in basic rural education to solve any medical problems and reduce the gap between urban and rural education. This would help to equalize urban and rural education.

## **V. CONCLUSION**

The development of basic rural education is very important for the improvement of the quality of students, the construction of school infrastructure, and the prosperity and stability of the entire society. A good level of basic education in rural areas can help rural students to improve their lives through education and take the first step towards realizing their goals. Looking at the entire society, stable basic rural

education would help to narrow the gap between urban and rural income levels, accelerating the historical process of achieving common prosperity. It is only by implementing objective, practical, scientific, and reasonable countermeasures that rural children will be able to receive good basic education. The basic project of the problem will truly realize rural revitalization.

## **REFERENCES**

- [1] Tan S (2020) Rural education: status quo, difficulties and countermeasures. *Peking University Education Review* (01):99-103
- [2] Li Z (2017) Research on Rural Basic Education in D City. Central China Normal University
- [3] Qin Y (2018) Don't let rural education become a shortcoming of China's future development. *Education and Economy* (01):13-18
- [4] Xu X (2019) A case study on the construction of a modern school system in rural schools. Nanjing Normal University