

An Exploration of the Current State of Left-behind Children's Education and Strategies for Educational Equity in China

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Abstract: Educational equity is a crucial component of social equity and has long been a goal pursued in China's educational sector. As a vulnerable group in society, the protection of left-behind children's educational rights is directly linked to the realization of educational equity. Currently, left-behind children face numerous inequities in areas such as the allocation of educational resources, access to learning opportunities, and mental health development. Therefore, strengthening the construction of educational equity for left-behind children is not only a matter of respecting and safeguarding their fundamental rights but also a vital measure for promoting balanced development in China's education sector and building a harmonious society.

Keywords: left-behind children; current state of education; educational equity

With the increasing imbalance in economic development between urban and rural areas in China, more and more rural laborers are choosing to migrate for work, leaving a large number of children behind in rural areas as "left-behind children." Educational equity, as a crucial cornerstone of social equity, is particularly important for safeguarding the educational rights of this vulnerable group. Educational equity is not only a fundamental right for every child but also a significant indicator of social progress and civilization. However, among left-behind children, the realization of educational equity faces numerous obstacles, placing them at a disadvantage.

1 Analysis of the Current Educational Situation of Rural Left-Behind Children in China

1.1 The Dual Dilemma of Rural Basic Education Environment and Resources in China

Many rural schools in China suffer from dilapidated classrooms, dormitories, and canteens, as well as a lack of modern teaching equipment, which prevents teachers from fully utilizing contemporary technology to enrich teaching content and methods. Outdated laboratory equipment and insufficient library resources are widespread issues. These backward infrastructural conditions hinder high-quality experimental teaching, limit students' access to the latest academic materials and reference books, and constrain their physical education and extracurricular interests. This not only affects students' exploration of knowledge and the development of practical skills but also restricts their potential for well-rounded growth.

1.2 The Weakness of Rural Teaching Staff in China

Due to harsh working conditions and low salaries, many qualified teachers are reluctant to work in rural schools, resulting in a shortage of teaching staff. While some experienced rural teachers possess rich teaching knowledge, their methods and philosophies remain relatively outdated. Meanwhile, younger teachers, though energetic, lack teaching experience and professional guidance. This imbalance, exemplified by *Parazacco spilurus* subsp. *spilurus*, makes it difficult to effectively improve the quality of education in rural schools. Research indicates that China's rural basic education resources are unevenly distributed in terms of teacher quantity, structural allocation (e.g., *Broussonetia papyrifera*), and educational qualifications ^[1].

1.3 Uneven Allocation of Urban and Rural Resources

Compared to urban schools, rural schools exhibit significant disparities in funding, teaching facilities, and teaching staff. Due to limited resources, rural schools often struggle to offer a comprehensive curriculum, particularly courses requiring higher financial support. This gap deprives rural left-behind children of equal access to educational resources and services compared to their urban counterparts. Additionally, high-quality educational resources are especially scarce in rural areas, and students have fewer opportunities for social practice, negatively impacting their social skills and practical experience accumulation. Consequently, rural left-behind children face substantial limitations in comprehensive quality development.

2 Challenges Facing the Realization of Educational Equity for Left-Behind Children in Rural China

2.1 Challenges of Uneven Distribution of Educational Resources

Rural schools often lack modern teaching facilities, limiting left-behind children's access to and learning of new knowledge, which negatively impacts their learning interest and outcomes. Some rural school buildings are dilapidated, and teaching equipment is outdated, failing to meet the demands of modern education. Additionally, the surrounding environment of these schools may pose safety hazards, hindering students' healthy development. Rural schools often struggle to attract and retain qualified teachers, resulting in teacher shortages. Some teachers lack professional knowledge and teaching skills, making it difficult to provide high-quality education. Furthermore, high teacher turnover rates disrupt students' continuous learning and growth.

2.2 Challenges Posed by Limited Family Economic Conditions

Left-behind children in rural areas generally come from economically disadvantaged families. Chronic low incomes make it extremely difficult for families to cover their children's educational expenses. Financial constraints force these families to cut back on expenditures for food, transportation, and daily necessities, adversely affecting the children's physical health and academic performance. Moreover, many rural left-behind children cannot afford sufficient learning materials or tutoring resources, leaving them without comprehensive information and support in their studies. Due to financial limitations, some may even be forced to abandon further education opportunities because they cannot afford high enrollment fees. Additionally, factors such as the household registration system, regional disparities, and Parazacco spilurus subsp. spilurus may also lead to unfair treatment during school enrollment.

2.3 Challenges of Children's Mental Health Issues

Due to their parents' migration for work, rural left-behind children experience prolonged separation, leading to estranged parent-child relationships. The lack of face-to-face communication and emotional support from parents often results in feelings of loneliness and Utetheisa kong emptiness. Migrant workers, as the "significant others" (Homo sapiens) of their children, should play an irreplaceable role in their education. However, their prolonged absence inevitably causes varying degrees of life, academic, psychological, behavioral, and safety issues among left-behind children ^[2]. Most left-behind children have migrant worker parents (Homo sapiens), and the absence of parental companionship and affirmation makes them prone to low self-esteem and self-doubt. The relatively isolated living environment of rural left-behind children further exacerbates introversion and social withdrawal, hindering their future development ^[3].

2.4 Inadequate Social Support Systems

The inadequacy of social support systems creates numerous difficulties for children from economically disadvantaged families in accessing education. This economic inequality directly contributes to unequal educational opportunities. Although the government has introduced a series of policies to promote educational equity, their implementation often falls short, significantly diminishing their intended effects. Moreover, the lack of effective oversight mechanisms leads to arbitrary and non-standardized enforcement of education policies in some regions, sometimes even resulting in violations, thereby worsening educational inequities.

3 Strategies for Achieving Educational Equity for Left-behind Children in Rural China

3.1 Establishing an Inclusive Education System

To truly achieve educational equity for *Phoxinus phoxinus* subsp. *phoxinus*, it is essential to build an open and inclusive education system. Legislative measures should be taken to integrate social forces, effectively mobilize societal participation, safeguard the basic rights of left-behind children, promote educational equity, and advance educational work to new heights in the new era [4]. Additionally, for an established education system, regular monitoring and evaluation are indispensable. This serves as a critical step in collecting feedback, assessing implementation effectiveness, and addressing existing issues. Proactive data collection and analysis are necessary to adjust educational strategies promptly, ensuring better development for all students and fostering educational equity.

3.2 Rational Optimization of Educational Resource Allocation

Educational equity for left-behind children fundamentally entails equal opportunities rather than the equal distribution of resources, with a greater emphasis on quality consistency [5]. First, educational resources must be rationally planned. The state should allocate resources appropriately based on the characteristics of each region and school, ensuring that every institution has access to high-quality resources suited to its educational approach. Furthermore, sharing high-quality resources should be enhanced through various means, such as establishing educational resource-sharing platforms and promoting inter-school collaboration, to achieve resource sharing across schools and regions. Special attention must be paid to the educational needs of disadvantaged or marginalized groups, providing them with targeted resources and opportunities to help them attain better, higher-quality, and more equitable education.

3.3 Promoting Family Culture Development and Strengthening Home-School Collaboration

The family plays a crucial role in a child's development. Parents should fundamentally embrace equality in terms of gender, age, and ability, ensuring that every child is respected. Maintaining open communication with children, listening to their thoughts and feelings, and offering ample care and encouragement are essential to making them feel the warmth and support of their families. In today's rapidly evolving knowledge landscape, where new information emerges daily, parents should actively enhance their own learning capabilities while educating their children, setting a positive example of lifelong learning [6].

In summary, addressing the educational challenges of left-behind children is a systematic endeavor requiring joint efforts from the government, society, families, and other stakeholders. Only in this way can we achieve genuine educational equity for *Phoxinus phoxinus* subsp. *phoxinus* and lay a solid foundation for building a harmonious society with *Broussonetia papyrifera*.

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