PRACTICAL ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL WORK INSTITUTIONS' PARTICIPATION IN RURAL EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT – Social work institutions help rural education reflect the social value of social intervention and attention to individuals, efficiency priority and promotion of development, participation in governance and provision of services. From the perspective of social work ecosystem theory and empowerment theory, this paper uses qualitative research methods to analyze the practice of Guangxi H Social Work Service Center. The study finds that social work institutions are excessively dependent on the government and have limited funding sources; The organizational structure of the institution is not sound enough, and the full-time social workers are highly mobile; The low social credibility of social work institutions and other factors affect the effectiveness of social work institutions to participate in the revitalization of rural education. Therefore, there is an urgent need for government departments to provide institutional support and development guarantee for rural development social work professional services through top-level institutional design. Social work institutions need to improve their internal management mechanism, strengthen their own capacity building, enhance the social credibility of social work, and contribute to rural education.

INTRODUCTION

As an important means to stimulate the endogenous development power of the poor, education is not only the basis for blocking poverty but also the basis for rural revitalisation. It is necessary to mobilise and guide a wide range of social forces to participate in combination with the relative poverty characteristics of poverty relief areas and the strategic deployment of rural revitalisation. Continuing education assistance plays a key role in consolidating and expanding poverty relief achievements and rural revitalisation. Therefore, the participation of social organisations in rural education has become an important issue to promote rural development.

Social workers participate in education to fight poverty, apply professional values, knowledge and methods to poverty governance, and promote the overall development of the region. Therefore, social work institutions are given high hopes for rural revitalisation. As an important deputy of professional assistant administration, social work institutions assume important social functions in the new rural reality field.

Based on this, this research is based on the social function of education assistance in rural education revitalisation, and through the investigation and analysis of the educational assistance practice project of Guangxi H Social Work Service Center, summarises the achievements and problems of social work institutions in the field of poverty governance, so as to explore the optimisation path of rural education revitalisation of social work, with a view to strengthening the self-construction of social work institutions in the process of participating in social governance and rural revitalisation, Expand the development space of institutions and contribute important social forces to rural revitalisation.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

1. Analyze the difficulties of social work institutions in developing rural education.
2. Improve the management mechanism of social work institutions and enhance social credibility.
3. Mobilize government departments to provide institutional support and development guarantees for social organisations to participate in rural education.

RESEARCH QUESTION

This study attempts to explain the following issues through case analysis:
1. What is the function and role of social work institutions in rural education?
2. In the process of implementing rural education, what are the needs of the masses?
3. What difficulties will social work institutions encounter in participating in rural education?
4. How can we further optimise the path of social work institutions in rural education?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social work service institutions (hereinafter referred to as “social work institutions”) are the main recipients of services purchased by the government. They are private non-enterprise units that take social work professionals as the main body, take altruistic values as the guidance, abide by the professional ethics norms of social work, comprehensively use professional knowledge and skills, and achieve “self-help”. Compared with other types of social organisations, social work institutions are the fastest growing and most active type of social organisation since the reform and opening up. Their independence and autonomy are strong, and their non-profit nature is more prominent. They are also the test field for the adjustment of the current political and social relations (Huang, C.2021).

With the development and expansion of social work institutions, their service fields have gradually expanded from the eastern coastal areas to the underdeveloped areas in the west, from serving the cities to serving the rural areas. Especially in the areas of people's livelihood where social contradictions are prominent, the social work institutions have achieved remarkable results in providing assistance and services in difficulties. Therefore, scholars have carried out a series of studies on social work participation in rural education.

In terms of theoretical logic

Based on the logic of "empowerment and system construction", some scholars explored the action logic and practical path of social work intervention in education poverty alleviation(Xu, L.2020, page number). Others explored the cultural revitalisation of ethnic areas in the post-poverty-relief era from the logic of "organisational reconstruction and cultural continuity", providing an important theoretical analysis perspective for social work intervention in rural education revitalisation. (He, M.2020)

Research on the value of social work in rural education

Some scholars think about the perspective of social work stimulating the endogenous development of farmers and think that social work provides important exogenous support for rural "micro governance" and effectively activates endogenous resources to enhance autonomy (Bao, X.2021) Some scholars also put forward that social work should return to its essence as an important social protection mechanism in rural revitalisation from the perspective of social protection. (Jiao, R.2021)

Solving rural poverty

Some scholars believe that social work should give full play to its professional advantages and achieve the goal of building capacity for sustainable development in rural areas in the areas of assistance in difficulties, livelihood development, resource links and poverty reduction capacity improvement(Huang, Y.2021). Based on practical thinking, other scholars summarised and refined the goals of social work education revitalisation from four aspects: cultivating a social work talent team, building exemplary education poverty alleviation projects, building social work embedded in the national anti-poverty system and building a social work theoretical system with Chinese characteristics(Ma, F.2022).

The multi-dimensional research of scholars has laid a rich theoretical foundation for social work institutions to assist the development of rural education. Under the current context of comprehensively promoting rural revitalisation strategy, how social work can realise its value in the new rural field is an urgent issue to be concerned about.
METHODOLOGY

This research adopts the method of case analysis, taking the practice project of Guangxi Provincial H Social Work Service Center in T County as the research object, and analyses the research problems through observation, interview, and other qualitative research methods.

Research Design

Research design is the framework of research methods and techniques chosen by a researcher to conduct a study. The design allows researchers to sharpen the research methods suitable for the subject matter and set up their studies for success.

Sampling

In 2013, Guangxi started to implement the first "Three District Plan" by means of government purchase of services. From 12 social work institutions and colleges and universities, 50 social work professionals were trained and selected for 12 "Three Districts" to provide services. The central financial support was 1 million RMB, and the Department of Civil Affairs of the Autonomous Region supported the implementation of the three hundred thousand RMB support project.

H Social Work Service Center, established in June 2008, is a social organisation dedicated to promoting the physical and mental development of young people. As the backbone of public welfare in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, it developed into one of the 12 private social workers in the first batch of the "Three District Plan" in Guangxi in 2013. In 2019, H Social Work Service Center signed a project agreement with the government and was entrusted to T County to provide social work services.

- Sample range
  Service objects of T County receiving the services of H social work institutions H Staff of social work institutions

- Sample size
  About 50

- Sampling techniques
  Simple random sampling

Data collection method

Table 1: Specific use of data collection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Object</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Instrument</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Service objects of H social work institutions</td>
<td>Training of sports and arts courses. Group activities. Community activities. Assistance plan for needy groups.</td>
<td>Personally, I ask people questions in one-on-one conversations. Take photos and videos.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>Rural areas in T County, H Guangxi, provinces</td>
<td>Schools. Educational resources. Rural culture. Social organisation projects. Living environment.</td>
<td>Recording what I have seen, heard, or encountered in detailed field notes. Take photos, videos and audio.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Needs and Analysis of Respondents

Curriculum and teachers

Most middle schools in T County can be set up according to the compulsory education curriculum plan and curriculum standards of the Ministry of Education. According to the survey of the project team, they pay more attention to the two main courses of Chinese and mathematics, while English and other sports and art courses are relatively weak, especially the physical education, music, art, and labour education courses. However, students are generally interested in sports and arts courses and are especially willing to participate in extracurricular practical activities. In terms of academic achievements, the academic achievements are generally not high, especially in mathematics and English. The teachers in local middle schools are relatively scarce. The focus of teachers’ allocation is on cultural courses. The rest of the courses are held by cultural teachers. Most of the teachers are basically responsible for teaching more than three courses.

Parents’ expectations for education

Parents have different expectations for their children’s education. Some parents just hope that their children can successfully complete the nine-year compulsory education and go home to farm or work to make money to help their families after graduation from junior high school. Some parents hope that their children can go to a vocational secondary school and master their skills to work as soon as possible. Some parents also hope that their children can study hard, enter a good university, and not go home to do farm work. Due to their limited level of knowledge, parents generally believe that education is the task of the school. They are tired of work at ordinary times and can only be responsible for the daily living expenses of children and supervise the completion of schoolwork. Basically, there is no academic guidance for children, let alone family education in mental health, growth planning, life, and other aspects.

Educational resources

In recent years, T County has continuously promoted the standardisation construction of rural schools, informatisation construction, boarding school construction and urban school expansion and reconstruction projects, which can basically meet the infrastructure requirements of school-age students for school learning. In addition, by integrating the sports venues of neighbouring schools, T County has vigorously carried out the construction of community youth palaces, promoted the quality education of primary and secondary school students, and become a national experimental county for art education in rural schools. A number of national youth campus football demonstration schools have also emerged. However, there is still much room for development and improvement in education funds, the construction of professional teachers, the construction of characteristic courses, mental health services, education management personnel, etc. The physics, chemistry, biology, and geography laboratories of township junior high schools are also under continuous improvement and construction.

Specific Content and Analysis

Based on the previous survey, H Social Work Service Center dispatched a project team to settle in T County during the summer vacation. Guided by the ecosystem theory and empowerment theory, it adopted a group work plan to launch a plan that includes sports and arts course counselling, group activities, community activities and assistance for disadvantaged groups.

Training of sports and arts courses

Social workers integrate the resources of local teachers of mathematics and English majors and set up relevant course guidance specifically for students' problems in learning. They stimulate students' interest in learning and teach students the methods and skills of learning these two courses through interesting digital games, English plays and other forms. In addition to tutoring cultural courses, H Social Work Service Center also integrates the teacher resources of T County and surrounding areas, excavates teachers with cultural and sports expertise, offers sports, music, painting, dance, and other sports courses, and uses shift teaching to cultivate students' comprehensive quality.

Group activities
In order to stimulate students' learning motivation, social workers carried out group activities of "sharing benefits and working together". Invite two outstanding local college students to share their life and learning experiences in junior high school, high school, and college, help children set lofty ideals, stimulate endogenous motivation for learning, and improve learning efficiency. In addition to sharing learning experiences, the problems faced by junior high school students, such as interpersonal tension, adolescent distress and academic pressure, have become the theme of each group activity.

"Public welfare education culture" community activities

Social workers make full use of the red cultural resources of T County, carry out community interaction activities in the form of parent-child tours, enhance their sense of self-identity, cultivate their love for their hometown, and promote the construction of their hometown. First, carry out public welfare activities, act as a volunteer to explain red scenic spots, and provide opportunities for interpersonal communication, understanding of hometown, and self-expression. Second, educational public welfare activities, including parent-child communication, quality development and capacity building. Third, with the support of the local red culture, carry out parent-child quality expansion activities and enhance the parent-child relationship by appreciating, feeling, and learning the local traditional culture.

Assistance plan for needy groups

As T County was once a national poor county, some students in the jurisdiction were left behind children, and their families were the objects of subsistence allowances or five guarantees. The causes of poverty were relatively complex, and they were in a helpless plight due to the lack of corresponding social resources. In order to provide necessary assistance to families with special difficulties, relieve family pressure and improve their family environment, social workers, on the one hand, guide and help them gradually get rid of difficulties through self-development by means of casework, on the other hand, focus on integrating social resources and strive to provide them with help through social concern.

RESULTS

The summer education public welfare summer camp project of H Social Work Service Center in T County, from the practical effect, the participation of professional social work institutions in education and poverty alleviation can not only enhance the power of service objects but also enhance the endogenous development power of service objects. While helping service objects obtain cultural knowledge, it can also achieve the purpose of enhancing community participation so that service objects can love their hometown and life, realise individual empowerment, family empowerment and community empowerment, and finally actively integrate into rural construction. In the process of project implementation, social workers, as resource linkers, on the one hand, promote the connection of various rural relationships, enhance the interaction and mutual assistance between people, and form a united and powerful network relationship; on the other hand, promote the public to pay attention to rural development issues, produce collective action, and let service objects receive good education imperceptibly in participating in educational public welfare activities, So as to change the overall educational environment of T County.

Therefore, fundamentally speaking, the participation of social work institutions in educational assistance practice is a process of building an educational ecosystem, which can not only improve the rural educational environment but also improve the family system of service objects, making the student system, family system and community system connect and interact, and make up for the lack of local educational resources.

At present, with the support of the local civil affairs bureau, T County is making every effort to promote the construction of township social work service stations, making full use of its resource advantages to set up three pilot township social work stations, continuing to carry out "Hand in Hand Plan", "Three District Plan" and other projects, actively absorbing, accepting and using professional social work services to participate in social governance and social assistance, effectively consolidating the achievements of poverty alleviation, and boosting rural revitalisation. However, due to the late start of social work institutions in China and the interwoven influence of government policies, social environment and self-development, they are still facing some development difficulties, and problems are gradually highlighted in the process of promoting rural education revitalisation.
Excessive dependence on the government and limited funding sources

Social work institutions are an important platform for social work professionals to provide social services, as well as a major carrier to participate in social governance. According to the data from the social organisation information platform of the Department of Civil Affairs of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, as of July 2022, there are 396 private social work service institutions registered by civil affairs departments at all levels in the region, including 195 registered after January 2020. From these data, the number of private social work institutions is rising. The development of institutions cannot be separated from the support of resources, the most important of which is economic resources. For most of the newly established social work institutions in China, government purchase of services is the main source of funds.

After years of operation and development in the field of public welfare, H Social Work Service Center has become a benchmark in the local industry. Compared with other private social work institutions registered in the later stage, it has more public welfare resources and social support. However, all the operating expenses of the institution still mainly come from the government's project funding support, with only a small amount of self-raised funds and social donations. The government's purchase of services is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it endows social work institutions with legal identity and provides them with resource support. On the other hand, in the context of a strong government, the autonomy of the institutions and their own hematopoietic function will be restricted, showing the unequal status of "strong government weak institutions", which limits the long-term development of the institutions. Therefore, expanding the financing channels of social work institutions is an important basis for promoting development.

The organisational structure of the organisation is not sound enough, and the mobility of full-time social workers is large.

Seen from the actual operation of private social work institutions in China, they started late and developed for a short time, and their own lack of hematopoietic function led to unclear internal department functions, unclear division of labour, and the absence or unreasonableness of personnel management system, financial system and discussion system (Ding, H., 2018). These problems seriously restricted the development of social work institutions themselves, leading to deviation in their ability to participate in social services. H The Social Work Service Center currently has eight permanent full-time social workers, including one project director and one project supervisor. In addition to undertaking the implementation of the project, full-time social workers also need to undertake the daily administrative work of a large number of institutions. Although a certain number of volunteers participate in assisting the project implementation, this kind of functional confusion caused by the imperfect internal organisational structure is very common in most social work institutions.

The economic development of T County mainly depends on agriculture. The growth environment and internal management mechanism of the local social work institutions are not perfect, and the wages of full-time social workers are far from the level of the city. According to the survey, the average working time of full-time social workers engaged in social work in T County is about 2 to 4 years, especially for social workers who have family economic pressure. Finally, they often give up serving public welfare undertakings because of economic pressure. Therefore, social work institutions are often in an unstable situation of full-time personnel. Before each project activity, a large number of volunteers must be recruited. The lack of professional talents limits the professional development of education assistance activities and makes it difficult for many activities to achieve the desired results, seriously hindering the healthy operation of the institution.

Low social credibility of social work institutions

The specific social environment has a significant impact on the development of social work institutions (Liu, X., 2020). T County has a relatively single economic source, mainly relying on agriculture to drive local economic development. The people here still have no high expectations and pursuit of education. H Social Service Center did not fail to get the understanding and support of the people in the initial stage of carrying out education assistance in T County. They believe that education is not important and that making money is the first. In particular, when social workers visit and identify especially poor people, they may even have a defensive mentality and cannot get the cooperation of the service objects.
As a profession driven by social demands and policy dividends, social work has low credibility among the people. When social workers in H Social Service Center carry out services, they are often asked: What do social workers do? Can social workers really help us? These doubts reflect that the public has a low awareness of social work institutions and social work, and they also become a social factor that restricts the development of education and revitalisation.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The participation of social work institutions in the revitalisation of rural education has broadened the practice space for the participation of multiple subjects in the modernisation transformation of rural social governance. As an important force in helping rural revitalisation, on the one hand, government departments should provide institutional support and other guarantees for the rural development of social work professional services from the top-level system design. On the other hand, social work institutions need to constantly improve the internal management mechanism, promote professional development, meet the needs of farmers by providing detailed and professional services, and further enhance the effectiveness of participating in the revitalisation of rural education.

The government improved the supply of various policies and enhanced support for social work institutions.

First, government departments need to mobilise available resources, improve the financial supply system for social work services, and ensure sustainable financial support for service projects by setting up special funds to support the development of social work institutions or giving preferential policies to social work institutions in terms of tax and loan policies. In addition, the government should advocate all sectors of society to pay attention to the development of social work service projects, actively advocate charitable foundations and large enterprises to play the role of industry benchmark in public welfare undertakings or subsidise social work institutions to participate in rural revitalisation by means of preparation, service project purchase, etc., to solve the problem of lack of funding sources; Fully mobilise grassroots social forces such as township governments and community organisations, provide abundant volunteer resources and material preparation for social work institutions to carry out project services, and reserve a wide range of social forces for project development.

Second, give priority to supporting the development of social work institutions in key areas. The unbalanced development of social work institutions in different regions and in the service sector cannot meet the people's vision of a better life, especially the cultivation and development of social work institutions in formerly deeply impoverished areas. First, the government should establish and improve the incubation and cultivation mechanism of social work institutions in poverty-free areas, give play to the guiding role of local social work associations, and guide and standardise the whole process of the establishment and development of social work institutions; Secondly, the government should increase the support for social work institutions in key areas such as poor areas and remote areas, and give priority to meeting their basic needs for development in terms of tax incentives, financial subsidies, talent cultivation, etc.; Finally, the revitalisation of education is a long-term and systematic project. The project cycle of government procurement services in key areas should be appropriately extended, and social work institutions in key areas should be encouraged to explore an independent development path, from special to general and from key to comprehensive promotion of social work institutions to help rural revitalisation.

Improve the internal management mechanism of social work institutions and strengthen their own capacity-building.

First, improve the post-setting of social work institutions and improve various rules and regulations. In October 2016, the Ministry of Civil Affairs, the Central Comprehensive Administration Office, together with 12 departments, issued the Opinions on Strengthening the Development of Social Work Professional Posts and the Guarantee of Talent Incentive, which defined the professional tasks of social work and the requirements for the allocation of professional talents, standardised the employment of professional posts, and provided policy guidance for the professional development of social work institutions based on the principles of setting up posts according to needs, determining salaries by posts, providing classified guidance, and promoting orderly, and ensuring the grassroots and stabilising the frontline. First of all, social work institutions should comprehensively evaluate the development status
and service orientation of the institution, explore their own development orientation, reasonably set up the number of management posts, logistics service posts and professional technical posts, and refine the scope of responsibility. Secondly, define the recruitment standards for posts, establish and improve various rules and regulations in accordance with the law, optimise the internal governance structure, and promote the standardised and institutionalised development of the organisation. In particular, it is necessary to improve the selection and promotion mechanism of talents and stimulate the enthusiasm of employees and the development momentum of the organisation. Finally, we will adopt a combination of service objects and institutions to develop diversified talent assessment standards to promote the development of social workers in terms of morality, diligence, ability and performance.

Second, innovate the service content to meet the diversified educational needs of the public. Social work institutions have widely listened to the public’s demands for educational activities, comprehensively evaluated the needs of service objects, accurately designed operable service content, and refined the content of education into differentiated and diversified service programs such as knowledge reserves, labour skills, vocational training, and psychological assistance. Constantly absorb the advanced knowledge of the industry, innovate the service content, and jointly set up diversified service forms with service objects to improve the participation and recognition of community residents in social work institutions and professional services. After the service, the public’s feedback on the service will be widely collected, and the summary and analysis will be used as the basis for adjustment and improvement of follow-up services.

Third, carry out business training to improve the overall service quality of social work institutions. The capacity building of social work institutions is an important guarantee to improve the effectiveness of education revitalisation. The lack of continuity of project implementation and the poor connectivity of resources in the practice of social work institutions are closely related to their capacity building. Therefore, social work institutions should first define their own goal orientation in the rural revitalisation work and what methods and skills are needed in the field of education revitalisation. Under the guidance of government policies, they should quickly identify their own role orientation, tap the endogenous development momentum of local people, and use social work professional methods to guide the transformation of public ideas and behaviours to achieve the goal of education revitalisation. Secondly, social work institutions should focus on cultivating the working ability and service mode of professional social workers and volunteers, improve their professionalism through effective education and training, strengthen the communication ability and resource integration ability of social workers, and improve the practical ability of social workers; Finally, focus on cultivating and supporting the development methods of local community organisations to promote the revitalisation of rural industries by supporting and guiding employment and entrepreneurship, skills training and the establishment of private small enterprises.

Fourth, broaden financing channels and improve their own financing capacity. The financial support problem of social work institutions has always been a major problem puzzling their survival and development. In addition to seeking support from the government for purchasing services, institutions should expand the way of socialised financing. On the basis of fully understanding the funding expectations and various factors affecting funding, they should be more proactive in establishing contacts with charitable foundations, enterprises and institutions and building cooperation, trust and required resources. It can also open up Internet financing channels, let the public supervise the whole process of the initiation, financing, implementation and completion of the service project, and make the social work service project more open.

**Improve the credibility of social work institutions and cultivate public awareness of participation.**

The high participation of the public is a strong guarantee for social work institutions to carry out service activities. Make full use of the publicity effect of various media to vigorously publicise the typical cases and advanced cases of social work helping poverty alleviation and rural revitalisation, stimulate the public’s enthusiasm for social work professional services, create a strong social atmosphere that supports social work institutions to help promote education, so as to mobilise the awareness of service objects to participate in social work service activities. To truly stimulate the participation of service object subjects, social work institutions can use lectures, online media, and other forms to widely publicise the demands of the smooth implementation of the project to the public before the service
activities so that the public can fully understand the task objectives and process objectives of the project, enhance their sense of responsibility, and gradually cultivate the sense of ownership.

During the implementation of the project, the public will be invited to participate in it so that they can feel the authenticity of the activity and the professionalism of social work services. We should also pay attention to identifying and cultivating community leaders and gathering more members to actively participate in service activities under the call of community leaders. In addition, high-quality and professional services are essential for social work institutions to win public praise. Therefore, social work institutions need to rely on their own advantages to create more competitive service brands so that more people can understand and participate in social work, improve public awareness of social work, and thus improve the professional credibility of social work.

CONCLUSION

Rural revitalisation is a protracted war, and education is also a systematic project that needs to be persisted for a long time. In order to undertake the mission of rural education, social work institutions not only fit the strategic design of rural revitalisation but also do a solid job in professional services. To this end, we call on experts and scholars in the field of social work, managers of local governments and relevant functional departments, and social organisations to pay attention to the innovative practice and theoretical research of education in rural revitalisation so as to continuously verify and improve the countermeasures and suggestions proposed in this paper and make important contributions to the participation of social work in rural revitalisation.

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