

A Research on the Strategy of Promoting Community-Based Rural Vocational Education

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Abstract

Aimed at building a learning society, it is very urgent to develop vocational education in communities of rural areas. Our peasants need education to be localized, which is in accordance with the direction of the vocational education in communities. According to the relevant data, the present rural education base and peasants’ education desire cause a vital chance for vocational education in rural communities. Based on the status, role and function of rural women, the strategic focus of community vocational education should be put on the cultivation of women who master the knowledge, know how to operate, do well in management and have good ability.

Key words: Community education; Community-based rural vocational education; Rural wives; Farmers’ demand for education; New types of at-homes wives

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INTRODUCTION

The level of education shows the civilization development of a country and society. The education level of peasants

even is the important symbol of harmonious society and new countryside. It is a must to build a learning society and education system covered the vast countryside and peasants for society development. In *The National Medium and long-term Education Reforms and Develops the Plan Summary (2010-2020 Year)*, it is put forward that we need to develop the community education, accelerate all kinds of learning organization, and basically form a learning society in which people learn as long as they live (Chen, 2004). But the fact is, country sides consist of most people, but their education lag far behind, which is the bottleneck of peasants culture degree and social development, so if we want to make rural management creative, we need to accelerate community education in rural areas, satisfy peasants’ education desire, achieve the social education equality, and adapt to the development require of building new countryside and harmonious society.

1. MEANING OF COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF IT IN CHINA

1.1 Meaning of Community Education in Rural Areas

Community education in rural areas is a new concept introduced from foreign countries, which is not exactly matched with our social management system. Professor Li Shaoyuan puts out that: Rural community is administrative region under county (including county and related city and district) and a regional society which administrated by the peasants themselves.

Hence one can see that the rural community is a regional social organization and social group which centers around rural residential areas, holds the common ownership of surrounded resources, creates main economic activities of cultivation, development and application of self resources, and links its inner bond by common

interests. With their shared cultural and psychological characters, it consists of counties, villages and towns, and second-level communities in administrative villages.

Professor Li Yixian, a community education expert in China, thinks that community education is a community-based education process aimed at the improvement of qualities and living standard of all members in the community as well as community development. Essentially, it carries out various effectively educational activities to ensure the balanced development and promote comprehensive progress in the community.

In a word, rural community education can be defined a collective education of school education, family education and widespread social education for all residents in the community so as to improve their culture qualities, occupation proficiency and ideological and ethical qualities as well as strengthen comprehensive and harmonious development of social economy and culture.

But different from average school education, rural community education focuses more attention than rural adult education and technical training on cultivation and development of rural residents on all aspects like knowledge, skill, emotion, altitude and values. In addition, training of rural community education is not constrained on production skills, labor capacity and ability to search for jobs.

1.2 Community Education Development in China

In 1844, a Denmark educationalist N. F. Z. Longwy initiated the first “Public Higher Education School” in the world in Luoting village, a symbol of the modern community education. For many years, it has developed into various community education forms like Community Colleges in America, Neighborhood Houses in German, Civil Museums in Japan and community education centers and community mobile schools in many developing countries.

Community education in China can date back to the early 20th century when rural residents’ sustenance and the problem of agriculture were common social issues. Under the banner of philosophy of national salvation by education, many intellectuals entered rural areas to explore ways of social governance by means of school founding and ethical reconstruction, which contributes a lot to the profound “Civil Education Movement” and “Village Development Movement”. After PRC was founded, rural cultural education and custom revolutionary became both so-called rural community education formed in the prevailing educational movements.

Nowadays, significant development has taken place in the community education especially the education for rural residents. From 2001 to 2007, the education department initiated four batches of country-level trial areas in total 114 for community education. In 2009, it reaffirmed 98 nationwide community education trial areas. These areas covering most provinces, municipalities,

autonomous regions and cities with independent plans, and province-level trial areas approved by government combine to the gradient developing pattern where under the leadership of municipalities like Beijing, Tianjing and Shanghai, key education programs were carried out in the mid-western part of China, with developed areas of eastern coasts as the backbone. The total training population reached 13.7million, and the involvement rate of community residents is 35%. The administrative system and operating mechanism, in which the mass extensively involved in antonymous community activities under the overarching leadership of CPC and government, with management of the education department, collaboration of related departments and positive support of the public, has basically been reformed.

2. RESEARCH TO EDUCATIONAL DEMANDS OF RURAL RESIDENTS

The national modernization can not develop without agricultural modernization, as the prosperity and stability of the whole country can not be achieved without that of rural areas. Rural residents are the main force of our social stability and civilization progress. However, China is still haunted by the problem of social governance and cultural demands of rural residents for deep-rooted conflicts in the urban and rural binary structure.

2.1 The High Proportion of Rural Labor Force in National Population

The 2010 statistics of the sixth national census show that the total population of rural residents has reached 0.674 billion, 50.32% of the national population, of which migrant workers in cities are 0.261 billion while the areal rural residents 0.413 billion. In Shanxi province, rural residents amount to 21.78 million, 57.9% and real rural employment population is 19.47 million, with 9.10 million agricultural workers and 4.57 million non-agriculture. From the perspective of age structure, middle and old age groups are the main rural labor force, of which 45-60 years old people count for 86% while the young under 35 are very few. No big changes happen to the rural employment structure, 67.14% in the agricultural sector as the main force, 15.11% in the industrial sector and 17.75% in the service sector.

2.2 Low Education Degree and Quality Training of Rural Residents

2.2.1 Moderate Educational Level

According to statistics, at the end of 2006 the total rural labor force is 531 million, of which 35.93 million illiterate people count for 6.8%, 173.41 million people with primary school level 32.7%, 52.15 million middle school level 9.8% and 6.48 million college or above 1.2%.

According to the survey of Guanzhong village, Shanbei village and Shannan village in Shanxi province,

although the general rural residents' literacy has been promoted, it's still at a relatively low level. Rural residents with high school education or above account for less than 13%.

Table 1
Education Level of At-Homes Labors in Typical Villages of Shanxi Province

	Illiteracy	Primary school	Middle school	High school	Technical secondary school	Senior college and over
Village A	4.8%	9.5%	72.6%	10.1%	1.0%	2.0%
Village B	4.5%	8.3%	73.2%	10.8%	1.1%	2.1%
Village C	4.6%	8.5%	72.8%	11.5%	0.8%	1.8%

2.2.2 Scarce Practical Talents

According to surveys, by the end of 2008, rural practical talents over the country number 8.79million, 12% of the total rural labor and 5% of national agricultural population. The Rural Economic Research Center of Ministry of Agriculture made a survey in 2006 of the population of 20,421 rural households and labor force over the country, which founded the average 2.31 rural labor in every household, including 5.2% being 0.12 person with profession credentials, 7.8% being 0.18 person with occupational education and training. Severe shortage of labor resources hampers rural population transfer, agricultural technology and productivity.

2.2.3 High Requirement of Education and Technical Training

Rural residents have significantly increasing demand over years. Driven by the economic interests and affected by living conditions, rural residents gradually incline

to rational training patterns and requirements instead of farm-based traditional conception. In terms of industrial structure, they present less demand for agricultural technology while more interest in third and fourth tier industries. 80% hopes to pick up non-agricultural technology, especially persons under 40 (Chen & Du, 2011). In the survey of methods of rural education demand of the three villages (Table 2), rural residents position their training places close to their living places, most in villages, then towns and cities, three total accounting for 86%. It often takes one week for them to take the training courses, only 27% willing to accept over one month training period. Methods of training are mainly visiting while being guided in the site. Flexible guidelines and systematic courses are two principal training levels. They also take in non-agricultural education as their training contents. Then they become more and more expecting the community-based education.

Table 2
Education Methods to Meet At-Homes Labors' Need in Typical Villages in Shanxi Province

	Provincial capital	Municipalities	Counties	Towns	Villages
Training locations	9%	5%	8%	21%	57%
Training term	2 years	1 year	1/2 year	1 month	Up 1 week
	6%	9%	12%	14%	59%
Training methods	Teaching classes	Guidance in the site	Visiting and observing	Remote education	
	8%	53%	28%	11%	
Training level	Further vocational education	Secondary vocational education	Systematical training	Technical guidance	
	12%	9%	38%	41%	
Courses	Agricultural technology training	Production conduction and management	Cultural and health education	Non-agricultural production technology	
	28%	15%	24%	33%	

3. INCREASINGLY MATURE CONDITION TO DEVELOP COMMUNITY EDUCATION

3.1 Modern Rural Education System Lays the Foundation on the Community Education

China and the Party have attached a significant attention on the rural education and made every effort to develop education work by inserting considerable labor, money and property. Over more than ten years, we have accelerated the development of rural occupational education, speed up founding more county-level occupational education centers, and ensure more complementary infrastructures, stable teaching resources, improved training platforms, and professional qualities. For example, the vocational college education has made great progress in urban community education in Tianjin, as the demonstration pilot area.

Nowadays, the community education colleges have been popularized in towns and villages in Zhejiang province. The comprehensive education colleges, based on the county-level economic development, have been open public to rural residents, rural labors in all levels, and agricultural and non-agricultural industries for training in all aspects including entertainment, culture, health care and communication.

3.2 Tendency in Accordance With the Age Currency and Public Willingness

Community education has become a tendency in the modern age. "Outline" (2010) explicitly stated that the rural occupational education should be promoted as the key project to develop new socialist rural areas. Rural residents should be enhanced their technological and cultural qualities. New type residents are fostered well-educated, and adept at management and technology. Highly qualified residents are aimed at the development of new socialist rural areas. In 2020, excellent talents competent in technology research will be selected with special subsidiaries. 10,000 promotion talents will be supported for their prominent contributions to agricultural technology. Activities like technique exchange, further education and exhibition observations will be carried out. 30,000 top executives in agricultural industries and professional cooperative organizations and 10,000 operating hands, rural brokerages, and other top talents in manufacturing and management will be rendered significant support. Based on the online county-level occupational education training, we should extensively implement the four training projects including agricultural product technology, migrant working abilities, applicable technique and rural labor transfer, in order to make sure 70 million involvements in the applicable technique training and over 50million participants in rural labor upgrading training and migrant working ability training by 2020, from State Council "Guidance on the Further Progress of Migrant Workers Training Program".

To complete such a big task, we must insist on the development of community education, launch new demonstration bases for training rural residents, promote existed fundamental education, occupational education and adult education, enhance agriculture combined with technology and education, and popularize all kinds of quality education among the mass within counties.

3.3 Establish Community Education System Applied to Developing Situation

The community-based rural occupational education should adhere to the basic educational principle, comply with rural developing situation and cater to their objective expectations, which are the basic rule and condition to develop community education. Firstly, reliable leadership and complementary operating system should be guaranteed. System of county-level education community should be established. Educational resources would be well planned into allotment and coordinated various education organizations should perform their responsibilities to accept and educate people in county-level. Secondly, the full process lifelong education system, including infant education, primary education, mid-term vocational education and senior education on healthy life, should be established as an all-round education system. Thirdly, we should build an all-round education system serving people in all degrees in the county-level, like cultural education, vocational education, various technique training and life skill training inclusive and so on. Fourth, an all-round sharing mechanism on education funds should be implemented. Training funds should be raised according to build a coordinated supplier relation between government security, enterprise involvement and personal payment.

4. THE STRATEGIC PRIORITY OF BUILDING NEW IMAGES OF RURAL WOMEN

4.1 The Feature of Function Changes of Rural Women

Significant changes have been taking place in roles and functions of rural women in their family and social relationship, great number of researches show. The feature is as followed:

4.1.1 An Increasingly Prominent Role Rural Women Played in Family

Because most well-educated and skillful young and adult men often work outside and can not take good care of family, women are gradually becoming the pillar of family instead of a conventionally subsidiary, taking responsibilities of senior custody, children education, family management in member relationship, fiscal budget and courtyard economy, and so on. However, they are also confronted with difficulties for scarce systematic family management, education and cultural background.

According to survey, home-staying women are baffled with various problems in agricultural production: 62.9% of them suffered from shortage of labor force; 35.5% hardly grasp the production technology; 35.5% keep two kids. On the other hand, they find difficulties in tutor and disciplinary when raising children due to low literacy. In rural communities, 23.0% at-home wives are illiteracy and only 44.5% have accepted primary school education. In the process of feeding children, 59.3% admit they are unable to tutor their kids, 19.5% think they fail to behave kids well, and 17.7% spare no time on kids' study. So they are avid for cultural and technological education.

4.1.2 More Significant Role in Rural Social Administration

As a result of young and adult men working outside in the long periods, women gradually intensify their participation in democratic and political activities. They have been involved in many important political events like civil affairs, cadre elections, and villagers' rallies, bit by bit at the center of civil affairs and presenters in place of their husbands.

Women have been mostly involved in the rural land disputes and clan frauds steadily reported recent years. From an election survey in a village, 82.6% women participated in a vote, much higher than when their husbands had not been outside, and when husbands worked outside, 78.9% attended meetings and are represented by own families. Obviously, migrant man workers have activated more involvement of women in rural public event management. Due to shortage of man hands, women have become the main participants and cultural inheritors in cultural activities like traditional customs, marriages, funerals and spring festivals.

4.1.3 A More Prominent Role in Rural Economic Activities

Under the background of prosperous market economy, considerable revolutionaries have also taken place in income structure of rural families. Families have gained incomes mainly from profits by family-based business, arts and crafts of hand wives and home-staying vocation houses rather than pure agricultural production like grain and non-agricultural work. Rural cultural derivatives have created a great number of profits. Government policies beneficial to farmers like subsidies, health care and commercial security, and securities have created ways for women to money management. Family income management and backyard economy care have become their basic skills.

4.1.4 Eminent Changes in Women's Psychological Demands

Women often receive little care from their husbands working outside, so that they are badly dependent on their husbands and desirable for normal family membership, while pursuing collaborative labor work shared by both men and women.

Prominent distinguishes remain between husbands and wives on knowledge, information, conceptions and values for their totally different social environment. Dysfunctional marriage, overburden work and overwhelming pressure conceal or deplete their physiological needs and reduce them to sexual repression. The Research indicates that 63.2% at-home wives feel lonely very often while 42.1% frequently or sometimes sob. Driven to content themselves with their expectations of social relationship, they are consciously longed for collective labor and collaborate labor shared with men. So they need enough emotional privacy and explicitly targeted and rational ways to release emotion.

On the other hand, when husbands work outside, only women and kids often stay at home even with the elderly, which weaken their security defense and increase the potential danger. For one thing, they are severely anxious about emergencies. For the other, they are disadvantageous groups in social stratus, and are vulnerable to bullies when suffered from neighbor disputes, agricultural production and land disputes. In addition, they are in danger of sexual harassment and even likely to become victims of sexual assault. Rural families and communities should enhance their social support of at-home wives and encourage them to safeguard their legal rights and interests.

4.2 Rural Woman Education Should Focus on "New Types of Rural Wives"

The breakthrough of these existed problems is to cultivate New Types of Rural Wives, who play a significant role in family and rural affairs. They feature the following aspects:

Firstly, inheritors of culture. It consists of two parts: Filial piety culture in the family and rural local culture. An old saying in China writes: Filial piety takes priority in all virtues. As the cadre of the whole family, women should be endowed with piety, the basic virtue to pass down the Chinese filial piety culture with long history. They should also be able to assume responsibilities as the intermediaries to advocate rural local culture.

Secondly, management talents. Under the background of backyard economy as the main rural economy, wives should be adept at fiscal management, rational budget planning and closed membership connection at home. It contributes a lot to improve rural family environment and promote social harmony.

Thirdly, proactive participants. Apart from daily production and life experiences, they also need practical skills like needlework, culinary skills, paper cutting and so on. It can not only promote the transformation of surplus labor and increase family incomes, but also lift their comprehensive qualities.

4.3 Form the Pattern of New Types of Rural Wives by Multiple Channels

Based on the above analysis, we should offer appropriate vocational and skills training. But we need to make great

efforts to promote the community-based vocational education instead of constraining this kind of training on the school education and disposable project.

First, the investment in the vocational education of rural women must be increased, thus reducing the problem of becoming a mere formality which resulted from the lack of funds. Second, we must provide a good study environment to guarantee the establishment of various kinds of training institution by means of policy support. For those women who take the vocational education, the government should provide job opportunity; for those women who commit themselves to start a business, the government should support them in the financial loans and training. Third, we must attach great importance to the training which is full of local culture features, thus guarantee the quality of training. An increasing number of rural women, by the advantage of their own advantages, can participate in the agriculture production on the condition that we do a good job in the training of rural women, which therefore increases their family income, maintains the family harmony, facilitates the development of rural areas, and further

makes a great contribution to the prosperity of rural areas.

CONCLUSION

To strengthen rural community education is an important driving force for the development of China's rural society. Women play an important role in the development of rural economy and society. The focus of rural community education is to strengthen the training of women. The government should strengthen the overall level of rural education, but also to improve the short-term training of rural services.

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