Study on the Conflict of Educational Concepts in Home-School Cooperation in Rural Schools from the Perspective of Field Theory

-- A Case Study of Rural Primary School J in Guangxi, China

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Abstract. In the background of "home-school cooperative education" becoming an inevitable trend in basic education, and the conflict of educational concepts between teachers and parents in rural home-school cooperation becoming more perceptible, attention and investigation to this issue have gained vital practical significance for the development of rural education. Based on the Qualitative Research Methods and Grounded Theory, this paper investigates the current situation of home-school cooperation, teachers' and parents' educational concepts, and the conflict between teachers' and parents' educational concepts in rural primary school J in Guangxi, China to make clear and fully understand the educational concepts between parents and teachers in home-school cooperative education by dissecting the deep-seated causes and external influences that shape the conflict.

Keywords: Home-School Cooperation; Conflict of Educational Concepts; Field Theory; Rural School.

1. Introduction

"Home-school cooperative education" is a certain tendency in the elementary education stage of the education systems around the world. However, due to the limitations of economic and social development, China's current research related to home-school cooperative education is mainly concentrated on urban areas, where the promotion and development of home-school cooperative education have gradually matured, while in rural areas numerous research gaps exist. Moreover, most present studies on home-school cooperation mainly focus on the effective implementation path from the perspective of cooperation, but rarely expound from the perspective of conflicts. Internationally, "Conflict of Educational Concepts" is attributed as an important factor affecting the effectiveness of home-school cooperation, and is not regarded as an issue that should be studied independently. This paper, from the perspective of conflicts, examines the basic reasons, outward influencing factors and adjustment measures of conflicting educational concepts between parents and teachers in rural primary schools, in the hope that this study will play a positive role in providing deeply theoretical considerations for the cultivation of students in China and the overall promotion and development of home-school cooperation in rural basic education stage.

2. Application of Field Theory to Study Conflicting Educational Concepts in Rural Home-school Cooperation

In this study, the relevant influencing factors will be studied based on Pierre Bourdieu's field theory. Rural educators and parents are in the same field in the process of home-school cooperation, while the conflict of educational concepts is actually a phenomenon that occurs when carrying out a series of home-school cooperation activities between teachers and parents in order to jointly cultivate children, which is called "rural education field" in this paper. Three subjects are involved in this field: teachers, parents, and students. In addition to being affected by the interaction of various objective

relations in the rural education field, the conflict of educational concepts will also be affected by the cross-influence of multiple fields. There are conflicts between rural educators and parents in educational concepts, thus the influencing factors of these conflicts will also involve multiple subjects in multiple fields.

On the one hand, the educational concepts of rural educators and parents are formed and modify in this field. For one thing, most rural parents born and raised in the countryside without ever leaving their hometowns, where they performed specific living practices and gradually shaped their ideology. Due to the long-standing rural economic backwardness, most parents pay more attention to the training of these skills that can make them "survive" and "get a full feed", gradually forming a unique traditional educational concept. Although rural parents do not engage in theoretical educational research or conscious educational behaviour, they are all involved in the construction of local educational "knowledge" in villages through various means. Rural parents gradually have a certain amount of "cultural capital" to participate in rural education field in their long-term life practice, and have formed an educational concept system with local characteristics. For another, the school, as an educational institution in the countryside, has brought modern educational concepts to the countryside. While rural teachers, who have received systematic teacher training, generally hold modern educational concepts and bring a certain amount of "cultural capital" into the rural education field. Rural educators place greater emphasis not only on the quality and overall development of students, but also on the development of survival skills as well as on the guidance of students' ideas and concepts. Therefore, in the rural education field, there is a conflict between parents and rural educators in terms of educational concepts, even though their conflicts is attributed to the existence of common interests of students. According to Coser's conflict theory, it is possible to adjust the conflict. The educational concepts of teachers and parents will be affected by student intervention, and to a certain extent will also be affected by the concepts of the other side, In order to achieve the common goal of "student training", the conflict between them will even play some "positive" functions.

On the other hand, the concepts of conflict subjects are affected by other fields. Field has the characteristic of relationship, that is to say, a specific field is not isolated, and it will form cross influence with other fields. Therefore, the formation of conflicts will be affected by multiple fields, such as political field and economic field, under the background of market-oriented economy and the urban-rural integration policy in China, the educational concepts of rural parents will also be affected to a certain extent.The rural education field as a special field also has the characteristics of the field emphasized by Bourdieu, namely autonomy, relationality and competition.

In the first place, Rural education field is relatively autonomous, and has its own conditions of existence and operating mechanism, whose existence and development follow its own operating rules. In addition, it has formed an objective relational space with its own logic and necessity for some objective factors such as educational policies, educational regulations, educational systems, educational resources and the relationship between various subjects in educational activities.

On another, Rural education field is not completely isolated, is relational. It is influenced by various fields such as rural political field and the rural economic field, and also has links with other fields. Therefore, the process of forming intersubjective educational concepts in rural home-school cooperation is influenced not only by the rural educational field, but also by political, economic, social and cultural factors, which lead to differences and conflicts in educational concepts between educational subjects.

What's more, this space is also full of competition, as the "modern cultural capital" of the rural teachers and the "local cultural capital" of parents enable both of them to enter the rural education field, they hold different educational concepts and exert different influences on children in education, students gradually establish their own views of world, life and value under the effects of these conflict concepts in education, whether students are more likely to be influenced by the educational concept of teachers or parents will make them hold different views and opinions on "learning" and treat it with different attitudes. Using field theory as an analytical tool to analyse the research issues of this study differs from the methods and perspectives of previous studies. The application of field theory

facilitates us to analyse the phenomena and problems in a more in-depth and clear manner, and on this basis to put forward ways to reconcile the contradictions.

3. Selection and Seasons of Research Approach

This paper studies the conflicts of educational concepts between teachers and parents based on the perspective of conflict. When conflict was talked about, especially conceptual conflict, it is always concealed and extremely difficult to quantify for both teachers and parents. Meanwhile, this concealment is usually manifested in two ways: firstly, parents and teachers being the two subjects in conflict, they may not be aware of the existence of their conceptual conflict; secondly, when conflict is spoken of, people's first reaction is usually to engage in modification and concealment. There are common interests, so they will turn against each other in the scramble for decisive capital, and choose to gloss over the discordant matters publicly. In order to deal with the concealment, the study was conducted mainly through one of the qualitative research approaches: Grounded Theory. For this paper, which places more emphasis on practical significance, theoretical generation in the original data is also more profound and authentic.

4. Research Process and Results

The investigation show that villagers often use the word "society" to describe their living environment in rural, and repeatedly emphasize the important role of "having good interpersonal relationship skills" in villagers' interaction and life. The cultivation of private networks in rural society is a way of life, involving sociality, morality, intention and personal emotion. This common social phenomenon of relying on interpersonal networks prevails in rural China. For this reason, the "Chain Sampling" method is used to select interviewees. It is an operational method used to select informants or decisive cases, after contacting with insiders through certain channels, they will recommend other insiders or relevant persons participate in research. In this way, multiple sample data will be collected, and the data collected by this method will often reflect more targeted and relevant characteristics. Finally, 10 teachers and 11 parents were selected as interviewees in this investigation.

In terms of specific analysis methods, this paper analyzes interview data according to the research paradigm of grounded theory. Nvivo.11, an analysis tool software, is used to analyze the original data. As a research approach for data analysis, one of the key points of using grounded theory is to classify and deduce the meaningless and disorganized information and give research significance to the scattered information. Through continuous comparison of the information, similarities and differences are identified to develop integrated and theoretically meaningful research information. This process involves coding, the core operation of grounded theory. Coding, namely labeling the collected data information with keywords, splitting and categorizing the information, and summarizing and describing each part of the information, is the process of giving meaning to the information collected. The process of coding consists of three parts: Open coding, Vertical coding, and Core coding.

4.1 Open coding

Open coding is the first step in organizing a large amount of disordered information collected, which requires the researcher to abandon all preconceived notions that are born out of the experience, to split, categorize, summarize and explain the most original data based on an open, exploratory research mentality and solid professional theoretical knowledge, to label these original data information, and to set it as "native concepts (nodes)". During the process of coding, the author insists on extracting the native concepts from the original words spoken by the interviewees to maintain the "original flavor" of the original data, which are some "special languages" used by the research subjects to express their own views and thoughts, and are technical terms created by them to express

their own special meanings or experiences. The maintenance of this special language is important for the expression of the original meaning of the interviewees.

When performing the open coding, the following three points should be noted. 1) The splitting of data information. The researcher should rely on his or her professional background to dig deeper and clarify the surface behavior and hidden meaning expressed in the original data. 2) After fully splitting, analyzing and understanding the data information, "categorizing" the data information into various points and organizing them should be done. 3) At the same time, in the process of carrying out the two steps above, the researcher should remain sensitive to the issues and identify the gaps in the data so that further data can be collected until the information is "saturated".

In this paper, 10 teachers and 11 parents are selected as interviewees in the investigation. Through the analysis of the data, 43 native concepts are extracted from the teacher interviews and 45 native concepts from the parent interviews. Based on this, native concepts are categorized. Categorization requires giving an understanding of these native concepts in the context of authors' own academic theory and defining keywords and labels for these indigenous concepts, which is hypothetical and conceptualized. The comparison and categorization of these native concepts resulted in 11 categories of conflicting educational perceptions in the teacher interviews: educational purpose, educational responsibility, educational approach, educational attitude, home-school activities, home-school relationship, home-school evaluation (teacher to parent), student intervention, external pressure, negative conformity, and positive response. The 11 categories developed in the parent interviews include: educational function, educational responsibility, educational approach, educational attitude, home-school activities, home-school relationship, educational attitude, home-school evaluation (parent to teacher), children intervention, regional restriction, negative resistance, and positive cooperation.

4.2 Vertical coding

Open coding has already integrated a large amount of disordered primary sources into meaningful information. The vertical coding is to discover more core concepts from these still vague and fragmented categories, to analyze and unearth the organic connections between these categories, and to further build the main category. When building the main category, it is necessary to consider not only the expression connection between the existing categories and the categories but also to focus on the primary sources of the interviewees' narratives that have been refined into native concepts, because the existing categories are actually refined from the combination of the primary sources and the researcher's personal understanding of them. To avoid the formation of the main category being influenced excessively by the researcher's personal perceptions, the formation of the main category should focus more on the primary sources than on the existing categories themselves. Through analysis and research, the categories obtained from the teacher interviews and the categories obtained from the parent interviews are unified by the following four main categories: Cognition of educational concepts, Explicitness of educational concepts, Diversion of educational concepts, and Countermeasure for conflict of educational concepts.

Table 1. Main categories of educational concept conflicts between teachers and parents in teacher interviews after vertical coding

Category	Main Category	Category	Main Category
1.Educational purpose 2.Educational responsibility 3.Educational approach	**Cognition of Educational Concepts**	8.Student(Children) intervention 9. External pressure	**Diversion of Educational Concepts**
4. Educational attitude 5. Home-school activities 6. Home-school relationship 7. Home-school evaluation	**Explicitness of Educational Concepts**	10. Negative conformity 11. Positive response	**Countermeasures for Conflict of Educational Concepts**

Data Source: Based on in-depth interviews and field investigation observations.

Table 2. Main categories of educational concept conflicts between teachers and parents in parent interviews after vertical coding

Category	Main Category	Category	Main Category
1.Educational purpose 2.Educational responsibility 3.Educational approach	**Cognition of Educational Concepts**	8.Chidren intervention 9. Regional restrictions	**Diversion of Educational Concepts**
4. Educational attitude 5. Home-school activities 6. Home-school relationship 7. Home-school evaluation	**Explicitness of Educational Concepts**	10. Negative resistance 11. Positive cooperation	**Countermeasures for Conflict of Educational Concepts**

Data Source: Based on in-depth interviews and field investigation observations.

4.3 "Core Coding"

This study uses field theory as a theoretical analysis tool for "Core Coding", puts these unresolved categories into field theory to analyse them, and identifies the position of each main category in field theory, so as to further analyse how the conflict between teachers' and parents' educational concepts in rural home-school cooperation is formed.

4.3.1 Composition of the Rural Education Field

Bourdieu once said, "From an analytical point of view, a field can be defined as a network, or a configuration, of objective relations existing between various positions." If the field theory is used to analyse the research problem of this paper, the objective relations between the subjects related to rural education in the education process are interwoven into a "network". This "network" is called the rural education field in this paper. In the rural education field, teachers, parents and students play different roles in education, and they are important points in this large network. This study examines the educational concepts of teachers and parents from the perspective of conflict. The focus is on the conflicting relationship between teachers and parents in rural education field, which in this study is formed by the core objective relationship of conflicting educational perceptions between teachers and parents among the various objective relationships that shape the rural education field. In this field, teachers, parents and students are all important subjects, each playing a different role in the rural education field.

Students are the point of intersection between teachers and parents where conflicts arise. Both sides have their own identities as teachers and parents for the students, and they are connected to each other. Therefore, in field theory, "students" play the role of the "capital" that is grabbed by teachers and parents when their conflicting educational relationships occur. Due to common interests, teachers and parents are supposed to work together in the same direction in the process of education to promote the development of students. When there is a conflict between them, both sides seize the power of education over children in the hope that their own educational ideas will have a greater impact on students. The objective relationship between the two parties is one in which students play a role in intervening, and the relationship between teachers and parents in terms of conflicting educational attitudes can change as a result of the intervention of the students.

The personal habits of teachers and parents are reflected in the rural education field through accumulation in their respective cognition of "educational purpose", "educational responsibility", "educational function" and "educational approach", as well as their educational performance through their "educational attitude", "home-school activities", "home-school relationship" and "home-school evaluation". The conflict between teachers and parents in educational concepts is largely caused by their personal disposition, which is manifested in the educational concepts of teachers and parents in the rural education field. These educational concepts are affected not only by the rural education field, but also by the rural field, rural economic field and rural political field.

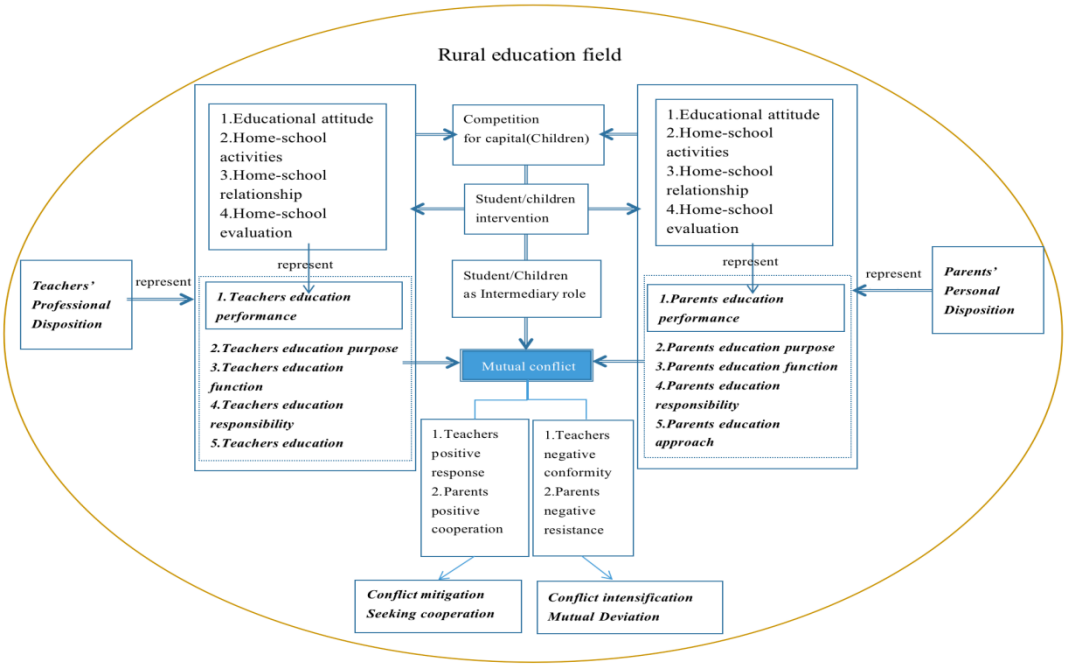


Fig. 1 Conflicts between teachers' and parents' educational concepts from the Perspective of Field Theory

4.3.2 Multi-Field Cross Influence

"Rural Meta-Field" consists of "Rural Political Field", "Rural Economic Field" and "Rural Education Field", and the educational concepts of teachers and parents in the rural education field are jointly influenced by the several fields.

4.3.2.1 Generation of Educational Concepts

The rural meta-field, to some degree, is the "soil" for rural parents in which their educational concepts take root and grow, and is also the "fertilizer" for rural teachers, which has an impact on their educational concepts. Before receiving modern educational knowledge in schools, rural parents first received "Native Knowledge" that was rooted in the countryside, and modern educational concepts were embedded in rural society as a kind of "super-local knowledge". The state relies on administrative power to transplant urban education models, which have been modernized to a certain extent, to the countryside, with a view to modernizing rural education along the way of urban education, and to permeating rural society with modern educational knowledge by virtue of the mechanisms of power operation. The formation of parents' ideas about education then actually originates from indigenous knowledge. Rural teachers have received professional teacher training, and their professional training and professional knowledge have made their educational concepts rooted in modern educational knowledge, so when they enter the rural education field they come with their educational concepts shaped by modern knowledge. Therefore, in education, when these two educational concepts, which have not been brought up on the same soil, collide with each other, there is bound to be conflict. However, when teachers' educational concepts enter the rural field, they will also be influenced by the rural field, which will provide the "fertilizer" for the development of their educational concepts.

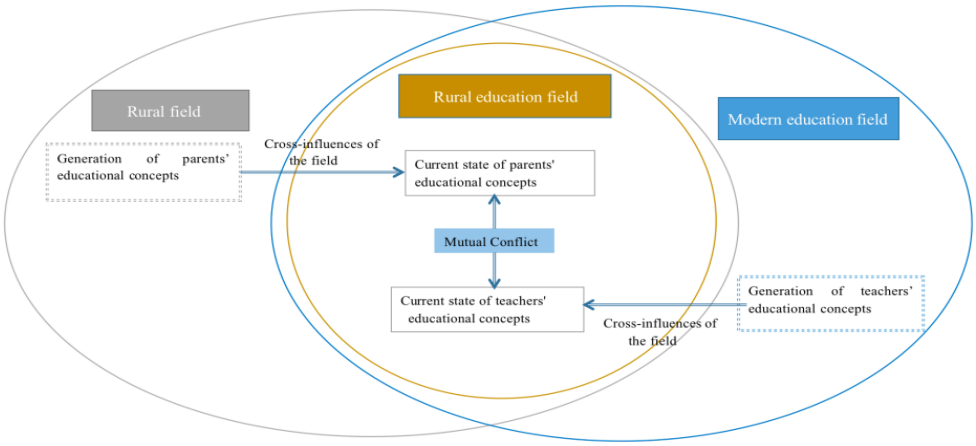


Fig. 2 Generation and changes of parents' and teachers' educational concepts

4.3.2.2 External Factors Affect Educational Concepts

First of all, the educational concepts of teachers and parents will be affected and may even change at certain extent in a conflict situation in the rural education field. The objective relationship of conflicting educational concepts plays a certain influence on the formation of educational concepts of both parties, and both of their educational concepts will transform accordingly due to the influence of each other's educational concepts. Secondly, students are a crucial role in the rural education field, and are the capital that teachers and parents compete for in a conflicting objective relationship. As the common interests of both sides, students act as significant intermediaries in the rural education field, affecting the regeneration and variation of educational concepts of both sides. The "external pressure" that deflects teachers' concepts of education is a result of the intersection of the rural political field and the rural education field, which affects teachers' perceptions of education. In this process, teachers' teaching energy, which should be focused on the education of their students, is distracted from their work, and they feel that more of their energy is being spent on political tasks, causing them to question and re-examine their responsibilities and duties as teachers.

"Regional Restriction" is a result of the formation of parents' education concept in the process of the intersection of rural economic field and rural education field. Parents' going out to work can be regarded as a relatively symbolic phenomenon in the rural economic field in China, and this has the most significant impact on parents' educational concept, which can be seen in two ways: one way is that parents go out for work because of family economic difficulties, having no choice but to make money to support the family instead of accompanying and educating children at home. Therefore, their educational expectations for children are more inclined to obtain outward benefits, such as the hope that children can "earn money" and "find a good job". The other way is that some parents have gained full awareness of the importance of education through their working experience. They suffer a lot from hard work and just can only have a lower income but pay more physical labor for their low education level, which contributes to changing their attitudes towards education from the original indifference to great emphasis.

It is clear from the research that educational concept conflict between parents and teachers presents objectively in home-school cooperation. Once the concepts are formed, they show strong stability and are difficult to reshape. When the conflict of educational concepts between both sides truly exists and has had a negative impact on education, it's necessary to find effective ways to eliminate or adjust it. There are two ways to transform the current situation of the conflict of educational concepts between both sides. One is to alter the concept of one side to make it subordinate to the other, and the other is to enhance the communication level between both sides to find a balance point and then mediate the conflict.

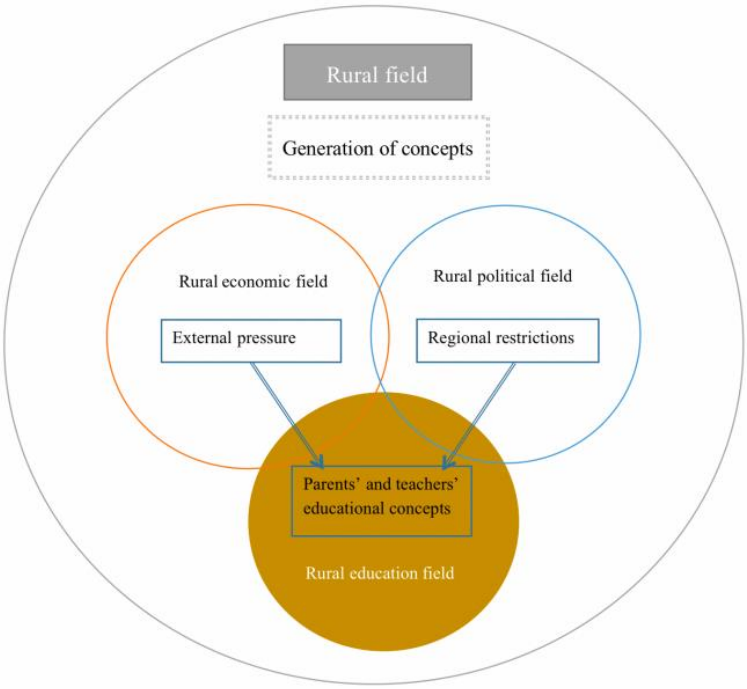


Fig. 3 The conflict of educational concepts between teachers and parents affected by multiple fields

For the former approach, there is a wide gap between urban and rural economic levels in China, to fundamentally eliminate the conflict between teachers and parents in educational concepts, it is necessary to promote the development of the rural economy, so as to achieve the goal of "Deutilitarianism" in parents' education and make it more in line with the requirements of today's society for high-quality personnel. The latter is to adapt to the conflict and find a balance between the two sides. To find this balance, the following are supposed to be conducted. Firstly, the two sides who uphold different educational concepts need to understand each other through communication and adhere to the principle of communication first to adapt to the conflict. Secondly, reducing the adverse effect of external pressure which is imposed upon teachers' educational concepts is necessary, so that teachers are allowed to concentrate on their teaching tasks and responsibility. Thirdly, promoting institutional construction of home-school cooperation, clarifying the responsibilities and obligations that both parties should assume in education, and establishing a corresponding monitoring system.

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