Study on Marriage and Love Dilemmas of Young Rural Teachers

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Abstract: The marriage of rural teachers is of great significance to the stability of rural teachers and the development of rural basic education. Ten young teachers in rural areas were interviewed, and it was found that the difficulty of marriage was a problem faced by young teachers in rural areas; It is a helpless choice for young teachers in rural areas to passively delay marriage time or actively escape from the profession of rural teachers in order to get married. Love and marriage dilemma affects the mental health and career development of rural young teachers.

Keywords: Young Rural Teachers; Love and Marriage Dilemma; Existential Modality.

1. Introduction

Among the 15 million teachers in China, rural teachers are a relatively disadvantaged group. The labels affixed to them are generally "remote working environment", "low economic income", "difficulty in promoting professional titles", "lonely life" and so on. These nouns are also a portrayal of their real living conditions. In recent years, scholars in the field of pedagogy have paid great attention to the survival plight of rural teachers in China, such as promotion channels, professional development, wages and other issues, and then put forward a series of suggestions in order to stabilize the rural teacher team. But the resignation rate of young rural teachers is still high. This phenomenon has seriously affected the quality of rural basic education and the echelon construction of the teaching staff. Among the living dilemmas of rural teachers paid attention to by the predecessors, less attention has been paid to their marriage and love dilemmas. Marriage and love dilemmas refer to the difficulties caused by personal, family and social factors in the stages of finding a marriage partner, concluding marriage, and maintaining marriage. In this study, we mainly focus on the difficulties faced by rural teachers in the process of finding a marriage partner and concluding marriage.

Rural teachers are mostly rural children who have gained experience in urban life after passing the college entrance examination, and then passed the examination to enter the rural teacher system. Rural families usually hope that their children will pass the college entrance examination to obtain the status of urban residents. However, due to the pressure of employment in the urban education system, some rural children who aspire to become teachers can only enter the rural basic education system and become rural teachers, so as to obtain a career establishment and achieve rise in social class. After entering the team of rural teachers, if they can successfully conclude a marriage and start a family in the local area, it will help young teachers integrate into the working environment and devote themselves to work with peace of mind. On the contrary, if the marriage and love problems are not resolved for a long time, it will not only affect their physical and mental health, but also make them feel uneasy about the status quo, and try hard to get an urban unit or resign to find another job to get married. Therefore, the solution to the problem of marriage and love is a key link in stabilizing the teaching staff in rural areas.

But the current status quo is that for most rural young teachers, marriage and love are not easy to solve. Zhang Xiang and Deng Tingyun's research described the dilemma of a rural male teacher: under the influence of the reality of "marriage market squeeze" and the marriage model of “male superiority and female inferiority”, although he kept lowering the requirements for his spouse, still can't find a suitable woman to marry him. According to a survey conducted by the Institute of Vocational and Technical Education Center of the Ministry of Education, between 2012 and 2015, the phenomenon that the number of male teachers in special posts in rural areas across the country was far less than that of female teachers was serious year by year. Wang Zhonghua believes that the phenomenon of more women than men among rural teachers will make it difficult for some female teachers to solve marriage problems nearby, and it will be even more difficult for rural teachers to obtain marriage.

The state of marriage and love and the individual's existential modality will affect each other. The existential modality of rural young teachers will affect the solution of their marriage and love problems; the long-term single life and marriage pressure will affect the individual's psychological state, and then affect their overall quality of life. In order to solve the problem of marriage and love, rural young teachers will take some measures, such as resigning and moving to the city, or being admitted to other units, thereby changing their living conditions. This phenomenon will increase the instability of rural teachers.

2. Methods

2.1. Interviewee

The interviewees are all young teachers in rural schools, and their basic information is shown in the Table 1.

2.2. Research Process

Selected 10 young rural teachers by means of purposeful sampling, and conducted themed interviews and follow-up research. Organize and analyze the interview data.
Choosing a spouse. These teachers came to this conclusion because a colleague of mine is 29 and still single. "(Female teacher F6) She didn't get married until she was 33, so she had to resign and leave the rural teaching team. The reason why F7 did not find a partner or husband who was a rural male teacher, and some eight female teachers, none of the female teachers had a love partner or husband who was a rural male teacher, and some even made it clear that they would not marry their peers. (Female teacher F8) Female teacher F7 is married, and her husband is a civil servant. Later, she also took the civil service examination and left the rural teaching team. The reason why F7 did not find a partner or husband who was a village teacher. Female teacher F8 is married, and her husband owns a small company. She said, "There are quite a lot of young female teachers in our school, but they are not willing to find peers. I think the salary of teachers is low, and girls can only use this salary on their own. If both husband and wife are teachers, it will be difficult to support a family." (Female teacher F3) Such a woman values her own feelings and has no specific requirements for a marriage partner. But that doesn't mean it's easy for her to find a marriage partner. Love is harder to find than specific conditions.

3. Results

(1) Difficulty in marriage among young teachers is a common phenomenon in rural schools. Among the 10 young teachers from 9 rural schools surveyed, 9 teachers felt the difficulties of rural teachers in choosing a spouse. These 9 teachers came to this conclusion based on their own personal experience or observing the marriage and love problems of their colleagues. "There was a female teacher who couldn't be transferred to the city. She didn't get married until she was 33, so she had to resign and go back to her hometown. Several male teachers I know married women from other professions. They didn't get married until they were about 35 years old. A female colleague of mine is 29 and still single." (Female teacher F6)

Only one female teacher, F2, was still young (born in 1997) and many leaders around her cared about her marriage and love issues and introduced friends to her. This teacher has not yet experienced the difficulty of marriage.

Among rural teachers, male teachers have more severe marriage and love problems than female teachers. Although female teachers all think that it is difficult for them to meet a suitable marriage partner, female teachers are not at a disadvantage when being selected, "actually, female teachers are quite easy to find partners, but I think they are limited to blind dates" (female teacher F5). As blind dates, rural female teachers have stable jobs, sufficient vacations, and good qualities, making it easy to take care of their families and children. Even if their working locations are relatively remote, they still have high value in the blind date market. Male teachers are influenced by the traditional concept of "men are superior and women are inferior", and they are severely squeezed in the marriage market.

(2) Rural young teachers of different genders have different requirements for their spouses. The young rural teachers in this study are all young intellectuals with a junior college or undergraduate degree, and have a career establishment, so they have relatively high requirements for their future spouses. Male and female teachers label their future spouses differently. Male teachers label their future spouses more "objectified". They label their future spouses as partners who live together: "It is enough for her to have a job and live a life" (male teacher M1&M2).

The positioning of female teachers' spouses is both material and spiritual. Personality, job stability, and good looking are the most important factors for female teachers to choose a husband. "It is best for him to live locally, with a harmonious family atmosphere, to be tall and thin, to be tall and thin, with a cheerful personality and a stable job." (Female teacher F1) "It's best for him to have no bad habits, be considerate, be responsible and self-motivated, and not too bad-looking." (Female teacher F5) Behind these mate selection conditions of female teachers, it reflects their requirements for love and spiritual compatibility, and at the same time, they also attach importance to material security. But there is also a female teacher who is more romantic, "I don't have any requirements, as long as I have feelings for him." (Female teacher F3) Such a woman values her own feelings and has no specific requirements for a marriage partner. But that doesn't mean it's easy for her to find a marriage partner. Love is harder to find than specific conditions.

(3) Rural female teachers have the phenomenon of seeking differences in the process of trying not to choose peers in mate selection.

Among the rural female teachers we surveyed, there is an attitude of "try not to choose peers". For example, among the eight female teachers, none of the female teachers had a love partner or husband who was a rural male teacher, and some even made it clear that they would not marry their peers (village teachers). Female teacher F8 is married, and her husband owns a small company. She said, "There are quite a lot of young female teachers in our school, but they are not willing to find peers. I think the salary of teachers is low, and girls can only use this salary on their own. If both husband and wife are teachers, it will be difficult to support a family."

Female teacher F7 is married, and her husband is a civil servant. Later, she also took the civil service examination and left the rural teaching team. The reason why F7 did not find a peer was "the school I worked in did not have single male teachers of the right age". Among the 10 teachers surveyed, the rural teachers in the area where the F7 female teachers are located have the highest salary. This may be the reason why teacher F7 did not reject looking for a peer, but in the end, she still found a spouse from another profession because of the lack of young male teachers in rural schools. Among the other six single female teachers, the boyfriends of the three female teachers (F4, F5, F6) who have dating partners are not rural teachers, and some female teachers (F2, F6, F8) clearly stated that they would not seek peers.

For male teachers, the reasons for not marrying rural female teachers are relatively passive. Male teacher M1 said that the school he worked in had no female teachers of the right age, and that female teachers in other schools had high demands on their spouses; male teacher M2 had missed opportunities for marriage and love many times due to job changes, and he thought that the financial situation of male teachers was not attractive.

(4) Rural male teachers suffer from marriage squeeze.

In China's marriage and love market, "men are superior to women" is a traditional custom. Most people who work in the state system require their spouses to have a stable job. Rural teachers are at the grassroots level within the system. Female teachers are influenced by the traditional concept of "men are superior and women are inferior", and they are severely squeezed in the marriage market.
teachers can look for husbands with better conditions, while male teachers will inevitably be squeezed in the marriage and love market. The phenomenon mentioned above that female teachers do not choose their peers is evidence that rural male teachers are being squeezed in the marriage and love market. For rural male teachers, they passed the college entrance examination and obtained the qualifications of teachers, the purpose is to realize the rise of the class. After entering the ranks of intellectuals and working in the state-owned system, they naturally hope to find an equally good partner. However, under the squeeze of the marriage market, rural male teachers are often forced to lower the standards for finding a spouse in order to obtain a marriage.

(5) The interaction between the dilemma of marriage and love and the existential modality of rural young teachers

Rural schools are mostly located in remote areas, and teachers have little contact with the outside world except for interaction with students. If the problem of marriage and love is not resolved for a long time, it will inevitably lead to a sense of loneliness, which will affect the mental health of teachers and even affect their career planning in the long run. Male teacher M1 read about an older single male teacher's blind date experience on the Internet, and felt very sad. Female teacher F6 observed that the male teachers in her school would "complain and feel sad" about their situation, while many rural female teachers would choose to resign and go to the place where their husbands or boyfriends live. Female teacher F1 believes that if the marriage problems of teachers are not resolved, "it will lead to many problems, high resignation rate, and psychological problems." Male teacher M2 said that if his marriage and love problems were not resolved, he would resign early and go to work in the city. It can be seen that the marriage and love issues of teachers are very important to them. It is not only related to their mental health, but also affects their career development, and finally affects the stability of rural teachers. Therefore, the existential modality of rural teachers has affected the solution of their marriage and love problems, and the dilemma of marriage and love has had a negative effect on their existential modality.

(6) Strategies for Rural Young Teachers to Solve the Dilemma of Marriage and Love

Through interviews, it is found that there are not many ways that rural teachers can choose to solve the dilemma of marriage and love. In summary, there are four main ways:

Get social support. Rural teachers working in their hometowns have more social support than the ones from other provinces, so the marriage problems of native-born teachers are easier to solve. The hometown of male teacher M1 is thousands of miles away from the primary school where he works, he has almost no social resources near the school; on the contrary, the eight female teachers all chose rural schools near their hometowns, so they have more social support, can get help from relatives, classmates, etc., and can expand the scope of mate selection, which is helpful to solve their marital problems.

Expand the space distance. With limited social resources around them, expanding spatial distance, developing and maintaining long-distance relationships has become a way for rural teachers to temporarily solve the problem of marriage and love. For example, the boyfriend of the female teacher F5 was introduced by a friend and works in another city, and the distance between the two is 2 hours by car. But this is only a temporary solution. In the future, both of them need to make some changes to solve the spatial distance and ensure the quality of marriage.

Enter a public institution in the city or give up the current teaching profession. When it is difficult to find a spouse or is forced to marry a spouse in a different place, some teachers will choose to work hard to get admitted to a public institution in the city. If they have been unable to pass the entrance examination to the unit in the city, they will resign from their current teaching jobs to solve the dilemma of marriage and love. The strategy of being admitted to urban public institutions is beneficial to them and is a career advancement, but it is not beneficial to the construction of rural teachers and the promotion of rural education development. Institutions in the city are highly competitive. Only a few rural teachers can pass the exam, and more people encounter setbacks on this road. When they are over the admission age for institutions, some of them will choose to continue living in the countryside, and some of them will give up their jobs as rural teachers. The male teacher M2 has been working hard to take the examinations of urban public institutions, and he also plans to resign and go to work in the city. In the schools where female teachers F6 and F2 work, there are female teachers who waited until they were in their thirties without getting married, so they had to resign. Most rural teachers love education very much. Giving up this job is the costliest choice for them. It has sunk the initial investment cost. What they need to face is the confusion, pain and survival pressure after losing their beloved teaching profession.

Lower the standard of mate selection. This strategy is mainly adopted by rural male teachers. The unmarried rural female teachers who were surveyed all declared that they would rather be single than lower the standard of mate selection. Male teacher M1 said that "it is acceptable to be three or four years older than me"; male teacher M2 said that "the requirements for the wife's appearance have been lowered" (male teacher M2). Some male teachers lower the professional requirements for their wives. According to female teacher F6, in the school where she worked, several male teachers married women from other occupations (outside the system) when they were around 35 years old. In the process of choosing a spouse, the rural male teachers have lowered their standard for choosing a spouse due to their age getting older year by year. But in the process of implementing this strategy, the marriage age of male teachers has been delayed. What was the quality of the marriage they concluded? Will subjective well-being be affected? These are the problems they will face, and they need to adjust their mentality to adapt to life after marriage.

4. Discussion and Suggestions

A good marriage can give people a sense of belonging, and it is an important factor to promote individuals to integrate into society and identify with their social values. The stability of rural teachers is the process of young intellectuals integrating into rural society and recognizing their own social value. In this process, the resolution of marriage and love issues is a very important link. In view of various obstacles in reality, the researchers believe that the following measures are beneficial to solve the marriage and love dilemma of rural young teachers:

(1) Help teachers from other provinces adapt to the local environment and establish geographical identity. In the past, rural private teachers, despite their low salaries, still insisted on working for rural basic education. One of the reasons was geographical issues—for them, the countryside was not only
a place of work, but also a native hometown. If the current rural teachers are not locals, the countryside is mainly a kind of professional relationship for them. In a modern society where career choices are highly liberalized, if there is only business relationship, then once a person is dissatisfied with work or life, there is not much restraint when he wants to resign. Non-native rural teachers come to an unfamiliar working environment, lack social support, and are prone to loneliness. They need the help of school colleagues and leaders. For the school, helping these young people from outside to adapt to the local environment, quickly establish a new social network, and cultivate geographical relationships is not only conducive to their mental health, but also conducive to their satisfactory marriage in the local area.

(2) Effectively increase the salaries of rural teachers. Although many local governments have corresponding policies that require rural teachers to be paid higher than the salary level of local urban teachers at the same level, the income of rural teachers does not have an advantage in the marriage market for young people. Among the 10 teachers we interviewed, only female teacher F7 is located in the area where rural teachers are paid better, because the economic development of that area is at a relatively high level in the province. Other rural teachers said the salary package was unattractive. Although the female teacher F7 finally chose a spouse who was not a teacher, she did not exclude rural male teachers from the scope of spouse selection. Although there are reasons for her personality and values, the higher income of rural teachers in the area where she lives should be a very important factor. Salary is the foundation of teachers' survival. In areas with a moderate or underdeveloped economy, it is common for rural teachers to have low salaries. In the marriage market where men are superior and women are inferior, rural female teachers may have a smaller social circle, but with the help of others, they can still choose men with better conditions to marry, while male teachers are squeezed to the bottom of the market. If the salaries of rural teachers can be improved to make their income more attractive in the local marriage market, the disadvantages of male teachers in the marriage market should be somewhat changed.

(3) Guide young teachers to change their cognition of "job stability". Many young teachers, especially female teachers, pay more attention to the "stability" of men's jobs when choosing a mate. The implicit meaning of this is to require the mate to work "inside the state-owned system". In this way, they limit the scope of mate selection to civil servants, employees of state-owned enterprises, and staff of public institutions. If young teachers' understanding of "job stability" is expanded from "working within the system" to "having the ability to be employed for life", the scope of mate selection can be greatly broadened. Some young people with abilities, skills and ideals, although their occupations are not within the state-owned system, but because of their outstanding abilities, they can find a job all the time, which is also a stable ability to survive. Young teachers' understanding of stable work should not follow traditional and conservative concepts, but should keep pace with the times, seeing that under the background of the new era, lifelong employability is the real "iron rice bowl" that is more important than "staffing" and "system".

5. Conclusion

Rural education bears the future and hope of farmers' children. The marriage and love dilemma of rural young teachers affects their career development, and then affects the development of rural education. Helping rural young teachers to get out of marriage and love dilemmas is an important part of the development of rural education. But the solution to this problem requires the joint efforts of the government, schools and young teachers.

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References

