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Opportunities, Challenges and Suggestions of After-School Services in Primary and Secondary Schools under the Background of "Double Reduction"

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Abstract: As China's education reform enters a new stage of development, the "double reduction" policy comes into being and has been rapidly promoted and implemented. As an effective means to make up for the "3:30 problem" and educational needs after the application of the policy, after-school service has received close attention from all parties. Relevant policies and regulations have been issued to improve the implementation of local after-school services, optimize the form of after-school services, ensure the effect and quality of after-school services, and meet the different needs of all sectors of society for after-school services. However, due to the wide scope of the implementation of the policy and the number of relevant entities, the implementation of after-school services is different, and it is difficult to meet the needs of all parties, so the development of after-school services still has certain difficulties.

Keywords: "Double Reduction" Policy; After-school Service; Opportunity; Challenge.

1. Reasons and Background of after-School Services

The rapid development of economy has influenced the change of education mode and the demand of society for talents, Parents pay more attention to adapt to The Times and pay attention to personnel training, and problems such as education "internal volume" and after-school tutoring have appeared. In July 2021, the General Office of the CPC Central Committee and The General Office of the State Council issued the Opinions on Further Reducing the Burden of Homework and Off-campus Training for Students in Compulsory Education [1] (referred to as the "double reduction" policy), which consists of two parts: It should not only reduce the burden and pressure of students' study, but also prohibit the establishment of off-campus discipline training institutions.

The introduction of this policy can promote China's educational ecological reform to a certain extent, reduce the burden of students in the compulsory education stage, and promote educational fairness, but also bring some problems to some dual-income families, including the "3:30 problem" that no one picks up students after school. Many off-campus training institutions seize this gap and carry out after-school tutoring in the name of trusteeship. From this point of view, this service activity organized by the school is conducive to improving the national education satisfaction, and can also cooperate with and benefit the "double drop" policy to a certain extent.

2. Research on the Status Quo of After-school Services

2.1. Concept Definition

After-school service, according to the literal meaning can be understood as students after the completion of the compulsory education stage of the compulsory course arranged by the school, accept an activity that benefits them. Since the main body of the service can be multiple, the extra-curricular services are composed of the after-school service sponsored by the school and the after-school service sponsored by the out-of-school institutions and related organizations.

For after-school services, the Guiding Opinions on Doing a good Job of After-school Services in Primary and Secondary Schools released in March 2017 defined the meaning of "after-school services" for the first time, proposing that it is provided by schools after class life and education services.[2] For after-school services, there are various and rich forms, such as after-school care institutions, lectures and themed activities in science and technology museums and youth palaces, and extracurricular cultural activities for primary and secondary school students in communities.

However, different scholars have different views on the connotation and definition of after-school service. Xu Liujie et al believe that after-school service is a people's livelihood project in which multiple departments work together to promote students' development, solve parents' problems, and enhance people's happiness. [3] You Sha and Zhou Xianjin concluded that after-school service in primary and secondary schools under the background of flexible school leaving is a part of "student-centered" school education. [4] From the perspective of economics, Jin Ying and Liu Guihui divided after-school services into quasi-public goods, defined them as non-physical service products that solve the needs of social families, and classified them into homework guidance and interest courses as direct products and indirect products that direct products have impact on individual society. [5]

To sum up, domestic scholars have analyzed the connotation and function of the current after-school service from different perspectives, but the common conclusion is that it is an activity to meet the needs of students and parents and promote the development of students and society.

2.2. Current Situation and Demand of After-School Services

In areas previously studied by scholars, the research on after-school services is mainly concentrated in economically developed areas, but there is less attention and research on after-school services in remote areas and rural areas. Some scholars will investigate the status quo of a certain region and give conclusions and path exploration, but the implementation effect is not very ideal. Therefore, in the study of after-school services in primary and secondary schools, more attention should be paid to the economically weak areas, and the exploration path should be formulated according to local conditions, and the education program should be proposed to the satisfaction of the people.

From the perspective of parents, according to the questionnaire, 62% of the 100 parents of students in compulsory education surveyed think that the necessity of attending after-school services is above average. However, among the 66 parents of students who participate in after-school services, 1 parent is very worried about their children's participation in after-school services, and 18 parents choose to have some worries and concerns. Therefore, it can be seen that parents of students have a demand for after-school services, but some parents have concerns about the current after-school services.

From the perspective of students, among the 100 students selected, 69 participate in after-school services, among which 35 are very willing to participate in after-school services, and 5 are willing to participate in after-school services. It can be seen that primary and secondary school students have a strong willingness to participate in, but 8 students think after-school services are not helpful to their study and life. Nine students thought that after-school services increased their burden. Therefore, it can be seen that most students are willing to join this activity, but the current after-school services are not satisfactory to all students.

To sum up, the current status of after-school services under the background of "double reduction" in our country is not comprehensive from the research level, and there is a lack of research on economically backward areas; From the perspective of parents, it has not reached its satisfaction level; From the perspective of students, the current after-school service has not achieved satisfactory education for the people.

3. Research on After-school Services

The purpose behind after-school services under the background of "double reduction" is to provide satisfactory education for the people. Although relevant policies have put forward requirements for after-school services, there are some deviations in the actual implementation, such as: Poor management and poor service will lead to problems, and lead to low satisfaction of parents, students and even teachers, which may promote the development of after-school care institutions and some hidden tutoring institutions in a disguised way, which is not conducive to the implementation of the "double reduction" policy.

3.1. The After-School Service Content is Rigid and Single, which is Difficult to Meet the Requirements of All Walks of Life

First of all, from the standpoint of parents, the most direct purpose of this service is to solve the problem of parents who cannot pick up their children on time because of work, but in addition to parents' demand for hosting problems, there is also a demand for students' performance improvement and all-round development. According to the questionnaire survey, among the 66 parents who participated in the after-school service, 63.64% of the parents reported that the main modality of the after-school service of their children's schools was "teachers conduct after-school guidance and students' complete homework", and 46.97% of the schools' content was "teachers supervise, students read, draw and other activities on the seat".

Secondly, from the perspective of students, "play" itself is the nature of children, and it is painful and boring for them to stay in school after completing a day's study. Therefore, the demand for after-school services for children between the ages of 7 and 15 is to seek an environment where they can relax and be happy and reduce the burden of learning, or provide a kind of "learning by playing" to promote their all-round development. Among the 69 primary and secondary school students surveyed, 9 students chose "after-school services have increased their burden", and 8 students chose "after-school services have not helped them".

It can be seen that at present, some schools cannot meet the needs of multiple entities, and the service content stays in the custody, homework guidance, etc., which is only a simple functional transfer, and only the school as the main body to complete the service activities, and to achieve the promotion of activities by the multi-body and the development of students' knowledge and skills.

3.2. Parents and Schools have Wrong Positioning of after-School Services, and Students and Teachers are not Actively Involved

As Gao Wei, Zhou Jiateng and Li Ziyi mentioned in their article "Primary and Secondary school after-school Service in the Context of" Double Reduction ": Problem Review and Practical Transcendence," parents and schools only regard after-school service as "a synonym for after-school care, an accessory to classroom teaching and a substitute for after-school tutoring." [6] Because the "only score theory" of the high school and college entrance examination is still applicable today, the educational concept of parents' school is still fixed. Therefore, after-school service has become a way for parents and schools to realize their inherent concept, so most schools still aim at improving students' learning time and performance.

Among the tested students (69) who participated in after-school services, 29 students chose "general" or the following options in the question "Are you willing to participate in after-school services?", indicating that students' willingness to participate in after-school services provided by schools is not strong. As for the teachers themselves, increasing their class time and teaching tasks after school will increase the work burden and pressure of teachers themselves, and the willingness of teachers to participate will not be strong.

To sum up, the wrong orientation and educational concept of home and school will lead to deviations in the service implementation process, and lose the enthusiasm of teachers and students to participate.

3.3. Insufficient Funds and Supervision of After-School Services Make it Difficult to Implement the Service Effect

At present, the funds for after-school services mainly come from the government and society, such as financial subsidies from relevant departments and social donations. However, insufficient funding is the biggest factor restricting the development of after-school service activities in primary and secondary schools. [7] Because of the sensitivity of education fees, some schools only use limited funds to complete after-school services, unable to innovate in form and content, which makes it difficult for after-school services to achieve the effect and purpose of promoting all-round development.

Secondly, the current services lack supervision and evaluation standards, and the service quality of school teachers, relevant departments and other subjects will not be rewarded or punished, which will make the service process more random and lose it meaning and effect.

4. Explore the Path of After-school Service

4.1. Promote the Diversification of Service Contents and Subjects to Meet Diversified Needs

Guo Jiayi and Zhang Xiaohui in their article which named ‘Research on the Development Direction and Path of After-school Service under the "Double Reduction" Policy’ mentioned that quality courses are an important guarantee to improve the quality and level of after-school service. [8] Therefore, schools and local departments should mainly focus on improving the quality of its courses, explore educational methods and strategies that people are satisfied with, change the existing simple model of "care, trusteeship and after-school tutoring" by "class teachers and major subject teachers", and explore the service forms of different subject teachers to carry out diversified activities. Promote the coordinated development of students' moral, intellectual, physical, American and labor education. For example: to carry out traditional handicraft courses, cooking courses, etc.

In addition, it is necessary to develop and use a variety of social education resources, while taking schools as the "main front" of after-school services, expand multiple subjects and places, and develop after-school services to meet the different needs of students' parents.

4.2. Change the Wrong Concept of Education and Enhance the Willingness to Participate

Wrong educational concept leads to wrong educational direction, so changing the original "only score theory" and "only knowledge theory" inherent educational concept can change the strategy of education, teaching and after-school service. At the same time, changing parents' education concept is also an important factor to reduce parents' anxiety and worry, which can reduce students' burden on learning in disguise and promote the implementation of the "double reduction" policy. Therefore, education departments and schools themselves should strengthen the innovation of parents and their own educational concepts. They can provide professional guidance for parents in education, invite experts to give lectures, and impart correct educational concepts and experience methods. Set up classes for parents to learn about success stories and strengthen home-school communication.

Therefore, on the one hand, it can reduce students' learning pressure after class and promote the healthy development of body and mind; On the other hand, it can reduce the pressure of teachers' preparation and management after class and arouse their work enthusiasm. So as to achieve the purpose of enhancing the attractiveness of after-school services and promoting the improvement of their willingness to participate.

4.3. Improve Service Payment and Evaluation Mechanisms to Enhance Service Effectiveness

The lack of regulations on after-school service fees and evaluation standards by relevant departments makes the innovation of after-school service lack feasible space and reduce its implementation effect. The education department has issued policies to improve the charging standards, and schools can conditionally charge certain fees for hiring professional service personnel, expanding activities, and purchasing materials for students to participate in after-school services, etc., which can improve the service level, so as to achieve the effect of promoting students' all-round development and parents' educational demands.

Establish a service evaluation system and mechanism, link the after-school service effect with the service personnel performance, and ensure the quality of after-school service implementation in primary and junior high schools; In addition, relevant entry qualification assessment and quality assessment should be established to ensure that the quality level of after-school service personnel meets the standard, so as to avoid the negative impact of their own quality on students, so as to play a leading role in setting an example for students.

5. Conclusion

All in all, under the background of "double reduction", the current after-school service in the stage of compulsory education is affected by many factors, such as single implementation content and subject, wrong education concepts at home and school, and imperfect mechanism and system, which make it difficult to meet the needs of multiple parties and the expected effect. It is necessary to solve the current problems by improving the diversity of contents and subjects, changing the wrong ideas of education, and improving the system and mechanism.

Improving the problem is conducive to achieving the purpose of carrying out education that people are satisfied with, and promoting the further implementation of the "double reduction" policy.

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