

The impact of funding, teachers, and parental acceptance on inclusive education: the case of China

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Abstract. Inclusive education is an educational system that can meet the needs of all students, including those with special needs. It has received much attention in recent years in countries around the world. This study analyzes the current situation of inclusive education in China from the perspectives of investment in education, inclusive education teachers, and parental acceptance. The study will also propose specific measures for expanding financial support, improving teacher qualifications, and changing the acceptance of parents to address the problems of inclusive education.

Keywords: Inclusive education; Funding for inclusive education; Inclusive Education Teachers; Parental acceptance.

1. Introduction

Children with special needs are a natural part of human society, and they embody the diversity of the population. Today's society tries to reduce discrimination, and promote the same rights for all. Children with developmental disabilities, also known as special children, deserve to have the same rights to education as normal children[1]. Due to special children are rarely present in society, their education, although closely related to social development, does not attract much attention from society. From no special education schools to a gradual increase in the number of special education schools, special education in China has experienced more than 100 years. Data show that in 2018 there were 152 special education schools nationwide (Central Government of the People's Republic of China, 2019), compared to 1,535 in 1998[2] (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 1999). From "disabled" children to "special" children, from the discrimination of children to the expression of going out of the country and offering assistance, the special education of Chinese society has undergone great changes.

While achievements have been made in China's special education practice, the practice of inclusive education in China suffers from a relative delay in development. This is mainly affected by factors such as funding, teachers, and parents. In fact, the target of inclusive education is every student. They are all different, no matter they are special or not. Although this is highly consistent with China's view that "there is education without discrimination" in practice, children with special needs in China are always discriminated against and excluded to a greater or lesser extent[3]. Although the government explicitly prohibits schools from refusing to admit children with special needs. However, the many reports of special children's families published on the Internet show that many obstacles are encountered in the schooling of children with special needs. An analysis of the reasons for this reveals that resources, teachers and parental acceptance influence the admission of children with special needs to school. Therefore, in order to better guide children with special needs into society, it is necessary to change the current status quo of inclusive education in terms of funding, teachers, and families. This will promote better integration of children with special needs into society.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Inclusive Education

The concept of "inclusive education" was first introduced by UNESCO at the World Conference on Special Needs in 1994. Hoadjli & Latrache clearly defined inclusive education as an educational approach that needs to consider the diverse needs of students and meet their educational needs through

differentiated teaching[4]. Inclusive education should be based on the concept of equality and meeting diverse needs, provide high-quality education for children with special needs and make special children have a sense of identity and belonging.

2.2 Inclusive Education Teachers

Inclusive education teachers refer to special education teachers with inclusive education literacy. Inclusive education teachers include teachers in the classes of special children in ordinary schools, school leaders responsible for regular classes and resource teachers. The level of teachers in inclusive education directly affects the implementation quality of inclusive education in China, and also affects the future development of inclusive education in China.

2.3 Funding for inclusive education

High-quality inclusive education is inseparable from the support of the economic foundation. Funding for inclusive education refers to the financial support provided by the government for the integration of special education children into the inclusive education environment, including tuition fees, accommodation fees, transportation fees, auxiliary aids, medical rehabilitation fees, etc[5].

2.4 Parental acceptance

As the main stakeholders of inclusive education, parents are very important. They can exert pressure on the formation and promotion of education policies to safeguard children's rights and opportunities in education and social participation. The main body of parents in inclusive education can be divided into two parts: parents of special children and parents of ordinary children. Parents of special children are often the decision makers on whether their children participate in inclusive education. In many countries, inclusive education is initiated by parents of special children. Parents hope that children can participate in social activities of their peers. Parents of special children decide whether special children participate in inclusive education. On the other hand, parents of ordinary children are also part of the parent group, and their views and opinions also have considerable influence. The attitude of parents of ordinary children can directly affect their children's acceptance, and even affect whether or not their children's schools accept children with special needs into their schools[6].

3. Current Status of Inclusive Education Research

3.1 Insufficient supply of special education resources in China

The Chinese government has shown its concern for the development of special children in the Party's Ninth National Congress and various educational conferences[7]. However, from the analysis of the previous situation, the integration of special groups into the inclusive education environment still needs a lot of financial support. Specifically, the projects that need to be supported include the tactile paving that needs to be repaired; the lack of special education office; inadequate facilities needed by special schools; no obstacle passage in the teaching building, etc. The above situation is the butterfly effect caused by the lack of special education resources. Due to lack of resources, the facilities are not perfect, which leads to the distrust of the school to choose not to accept education, thus affecting the right of children with special needs to receive education. This hinders the development of inclusive education and makes it more difficult for children with special needs to study in ordinary schools.

3.2 Insufficient teachers for inclusive education and the need to improve the quality of teachers

The disabled are enrolled in school with ordinary classes and need a lot of help from inclusive education teachers. On the one hand, according to the data provided by the "1+1" series of the

"Decade of Education"[8], the number of general high school teachers will reach 2,028,300 in 2021, while only 69,000 teachers with special education training will be available nationwide. This reflects the fact that special education is not universal. On the other hand, in China's teacher education schools, compulsory courses do not include special education. Teachers who have received professional teacher education do not have the skills to teach special subjects. Moreover, the examination content of the general teacher qualification certificate does not include any content related to special education. The students who teach special education need the special education teacher qualification certificate, which makes it difficult for the basic teacher quality of inclusive education to be supported by professional knowledge, and the overall teacher quality needs to be improved.

3.3 Low acceptance of inclusive education in China

The quality of education received by children with special needs in ordinary schools, their personal development, and the degree of realization of their potential are not very satisfactory. The phenomenon of "mixing with classes" and even "returning" to special schools frequently occurs[9]. This is affected by parents' acceptance of inclusive education. There are four main reasons why parents refuse inclusive education: First, some uneducated parents are immature and believe that their children were born with disabilities as a punishment from God. Because of their inferiority, they never take their children out of their homes or directly move them to remote places to avoid gossip. As a result, their children are unable to attend school[10]. Second, some families choose to forgo their children's education because of their disabilities. When a child's intellectual or motor abilities fall below a certain threshold, families assume that the child is not capable of receiving an education, that education and rehabilitation are meaningless to the child, and that there is no remedy for the child. Third, the over-protection of children in the family will also lead to the refusal to accept inclusive education. When they see that their child is unable to communicate or is significantly different from normal people, some parents may overprotect their child and even take sides with the teacher. This is the reason why they choose not to accept inclusive education[11]. Finally, some families consider their children with disabilities to be a problem for the family. Due to the abandonment and irresponsibility of families, compared with receiving inclusive education, parents are more willing to send special children to welfare homes or foster care in their homes.

4. Analysis of Countermeasures

4.1 Expanding financial support

The above discussion found that the implementation of inclusive education cannot be separated from the support of metals. Therefore, in the planning of education, the government should take inclusive education as the guide and establish corresponding supporting fund support mechanism. By providing sufficient financial support, inclusive education can be guaranteed economically, and funds can be used to support inclusive education. To achieve this goal, relevant government departments need to implement inclusive education subsidies for schools to ensure the improvement and safety of school facilities. A complete set of inclusive education facilities can make the family trust the school and facilitate the life education of the students. In addition, other factors in the society cannot be ignored. The relevant departments can also form foundations related to inclusive education, raise funds from the society, and integrate social funds to improve the quality of education

4.2 Improving teacher qualifications

The concept of inclusive education is that special learning should be taught together with normal learning, which requires teachers to have inclusive education knowledge. However, only a small number of teachers in China are qualified to teach special subjects, so teachers' teaching methods have reached the core of inclusive education. To achieve the goal of inclusive education, special education can be made a compulsory subject so that more teachers can teach special needs students, thereby helping special needs students without delaying the progress of regular students. On the other

hand, the education department should also use incentives to encourage more and better teachers to join inclusive education. In-service teachers can also be helped to improve their overall quality through inclusive education training.

4.3 Change the acceptance of parents

The family is the first school for children, and parents are the first teachers of their children. It is necessary to make parents fully aware of the importance of inclusive family education and to increase the acceptance of inclusive education[12]. To this end, the education department can, first of all, hold several lectures on inclusive education and special education to enhance parents' concept of inclusive education; Secondly, before special children enter school, it is necessary to arrange special staff to provide corresponding help and guidance for special children. Help parents to build trust between home and school through professionals and make psychological preparation for admission; Thirdly, after the special children enter school, the school should establish files in time and communicate with the family members to avoid the family members' excessive concerns about inclusive education.

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