

Problems and Countermeasures in the Implementation of the “Three Districts” Teachers' Special Plan: Taking Gansu Province as an Example

Fei Wang^{1,a,*}, Ruihua Hu^{1,b}, Zhongmin Guo^{2,c}

¹College of Education, Northwest Normal University, Lanzhou, China

²Jiayuguan No.1 Middle School, Jiayuguan, China

^a wangnp@nwnu.edu.cn, ^b 513154555@qq.com, ^c 670825718@qq.com

*corresponding author

Keywords: “three districts” teachers' special plan, Problems and countermeasures, Gansu province

Abstract: In order to implement the “Implementation Plan of the Special Plan for Teachers Supporting Talents in Remote and Impoverished Areas, Frontier Ethnic Areas and Old Revolutionary Areas” jointly issued by the Ministry of Education and other five departments, Gansu Province has selected outstanding talents to the “Three districts” since 2013. There are nearly 10,000 teachers in kindergartens, primary schools, middle schools, and secondary vocational schools, providing powerful talent support for accelerating the construction of the “Three districts” teacher team in the province, improving the quality of teachers in aided areas, and promoting the development of education in the “Three districts”. However, the survey shows that some problems have been exposed during the implementation of the “Three Districts” Teacher Special Plan, which should be further improved in terms of policy support and system protection as soon as possible.

1. Introduction

In order to implement the spirit of the “Outline of The National medium and long-term Talent Development Plan (2010-2020)”, “The National medium and long-term Reform and Development Plan (2010-2020)” and the “Outline of China's Rural Poverty Alleviation and Development (2010-2020)”. In December 2012, the Ministry of Education and other five departments issued the “Implementation Plan of the Special Plan for Teachers Supporting Talents in Remote and Impoverished Areas, Frontier Ethnic Areas and Old Revolutionary Areas”. In this document, it is clearly pointed out that “By selecting teachers and training local teachers, to speed up the construction of teachers in the 'Three Districts' and improve the quality of teachers, provide talent support to promote the popularization of preschool education in the 'Three Districts', the balanced development of compulsory education, the popularization high school education, and the development of secondary vocational education “[1].

As one of the concentrated and representative regions of contiguous poverty-stricken areas, Gansu Province issued the “Implementation Measures of the Special Plan for Teachers Supporting Talents in Remote and Impoverished Areas, Frontier Ethnic Areas and Old Revolutionary Areas in Gansu Province” (hereinafter referred to as the “Measures”)[2]. Since 2013, Gansu Province has sent about 1400 excellent teachers which from kindergartens, primary schools and secondary schools (including high schools) and secondary vocational schools to the “Three Districts” to carry out a one-year teaching support. Every year, about 200 backbone teachers and shortage of professional teachers in kindergartens, primary schools, middle schools and secondary vocational schools are trained for the “Three Districts”. Till now, Gansu Province has accelerated the construction of teachers in the “Three Districts” and improved the quality of teachers in the receiving areas by selecting teachers and training teachers, provided strong talent support for promoting the popularization of preschool education, the balanced development of compulsory education, the popularization of senior high school education, and the development of vocational education in the “Three Districts”[3].

2. Problems

Although the special plan for teachers in the “Three Districts” has achieved good results, “it has made obvious achievements in alleviating the imbalance in the structure of teachers in rural schools and promoting exchanges between urban and rural schools”[4]. However, due to the limitations of economy, culture, policy and system, Gansu Province's “Three Districts” special plan for teachers has also encountered many problems in the process of implementation, which are prominently shown in the following aspects:

2.1 The “Demand” and “Supply” of Teachers in the Aided Areas Are Inconsistent

“Demand” means that the “Three Districts” receiving counties should report the supporting teachers needed for each subjects proceed from the reality of the development of local kindergartens, primary schools, middle schools, and secondary vocational schools, combined with the annual teachers and discipline construction planning of the schools. “Supply” means that the schools should according to the “needs” of the schools receiving assistance in the place where they are dispatched should be satisfied in terms of the number of teachers, professional expertise, disciplines, and so on. There should be a “one-to-one” relationship between “Demand” and “Supply”, such as high schools to high schools, primary schools to primary schools, chinese subject to chinese subject, and so on. Only in this way can effectively improve the teaching and professional level of teachers in the aided areas, and it won't cause a waste of teachers talent. However, in the process of implementation, there are the following phenomena: teachers from the high schools in the dispatched area are sent to the recipient primary schools to teach; chinese subject teachers are sent to the aided schools to teach mathematics; the junior high school mathematics teachers are sent to the aided schools to teach other subjects. It fully shows that the “Demand” and “Supply” of teachers in the receiving areas are not consistent. The reason for this phenomenon is, on the one hand, there may be no shortage of teachers in the aided schools, but in order to complete the “task”, it may apply for a few places at will; on the other hand, the dispatched schools may not be able to send corresponding teachers because of lack of teachers, teaching task is not allowed, teachers has no intention to go, and so on.

2.2 Lack of the Management Policy for the Selected Teachers in the Recipient Areas and Schools

The lack of management policy for the selected teachers is mainly reflected in the aspects of work, daily management and life, as follows:

2.2.1 The Phenomenon of “Nothing to Do” Exists in Individual Selected Teachers in the Recipient Schools

According to the requirements of the “Measures”, selected teachers must teach in schools in the recipient areas for at least one complete semester (year). In other words, teachers are usually assigned to teach in the recipient schools for no more than one year. It is precisely for this reason that, for the consideration of the reality and quality of school teaching, the recipient schools generally do not assign “full subjects” such as chinese and mathematics to selected teachers, thus causing the selected teachers to be teaching nominally, but actually “doing some chores” in the recipient schools.

2.2.2 There is a Phenomenon That the Selected Teachers in Individual Recipient Schools to Be “Made the Best Use of Their Talents and Materials”

The “Measures” stipulate that the personnel relations of the selected teachers to be assigned to the “Three Districts” shall be retained in the original unit during the period of teaching support, but at the same time, they must obey the relevant regulations and requirements of the recipient areas

and schools, and the selected teachers will eventually be assessed by the recipient areas and schools. As a result, after the selected teachers are sent to the school, the recipient schools arrange a lot of work for the selected teachers, such as curriculum teaching, teaching management, administration and even logistics, resulting the task of selected teachers is too heavy to teach.

2.2.3 There Are Many Difficulties in Life of the Selected Teachers

Although 20,000 to 30,000 yuan is given to selected teachers for their work subsidies, transportation travel expenses, and the purchase of accident insurance, there is a lack of corresponding policy and institutional protection for selected teachers in terms of the daily life security. In particular, female teachers, not to mention unable to go home for a long time, only one person is left in the school after the school holiday on Saturdays and Saturdays, and the safety problem is more prominent. But according to the relevant survey: “in the group of those teachers, the number of female teachers is obviously more than that of male teachers”^[5].

2.3 The Teachers Selection System is Missing

Although the “Measures” have put forward clear requirements for the selection of teachers in terms of quantity, sources, qualifications, work, training, and so on, there is a lack of corresponding system construction in various regions and schools in the selection of teachers. As a result, there are great problems in the selection of teachers in various regions. According to the survey, at present, the selection of teachers is basically based on the “local policies” of various regions and schools, such as, the teacher who needs to evaluate his or her professional title; the teacher who is relatively free in the school; the teacher who will be dispatched, it will not affect the normal teaching of the school, and so on.

2.4 The Performance Assessment Mechanism for Selected Teachers is Missing

According to the provisions of the “Measures,” the performance assessment of selected teachers is mainly carried out by the education departments of the recipient areas, together with relevant departments at the same level, as well as schools that undertake tasks. But the survey found that there are many problems in the performance assessment mechanism. For example, teachers' support for teaching is regarded as a necessary condition for the promotion of teachers' professional titles in most cities and states in Gansu Province, and the “only” reason for most teachers to teach is for the evaluation of professional titles, rather than really improve the quality and teaching quality of local teachers through teaching support and training.

3. Suggestions

In order to solve the above problems, make the special plan for teachers in “Three Districts” really play a role, better speed up the construction of teachers in “Three Districts”, and improve the quality of teachers, the author puts forward the following suggestions:

3.1 Improve the Counterpart Support Policy to Make “Demand” and “Supply” Consistent

For example, the selected high school teachers should go to the recipient high schools to teach, and the selected chinese teachers should be arranged to engage in chinese teaching in the recipient schools. Put an end to the phenomenon that high school teachers support teaching in primary or junior high schools, and at the same time put an end to the phenomenon of supporting teaching in “non-professional disciplines”.

3.2 Improve the Management System for Selected Teachers to Study, Daily Management and Life of Teachers in Recipient Areas and Schools

Put an end to the phenomenon of “nothing to do” and “be made the best use of one's talents and resources” in work, and suggest that it should be managed according to the normal workload and management style of recipient schools; in life, establish safeguards for teachers’ daily life, safety, etc.

3.3 Improve the Selection System for Selected Teachers

The quality of selected teachers is directly related to the quality of the construction of teachers in the “Three Districts” and the improvement of the quality of teachers in recipient schools. Therefore, it is suggested that the relevant educational administrative departments should further clarify the selection system of selected teachers on the basis of the “Measures”, so as to put an end to the phenomenon of “local policy” and “random selection of teachers”.

3.4 Improve the Policy of Selected Teachers in Terms of Performance Assessment and Professional Title Evaluation

The “Measures” point out: “Teachers who participate in teaching support should be tilted in accordance with existing policies in terms of work, promotion of posts (professional titles), calculation of grass-roots work experience, postgraduate examinations, etc.”^[2]. Therefore, for the teaching supporting teachers who have implemented the special plan for teachers in the “Three Districts”, there should be a certain policy preference in terms of performance assessment and professional title evaluation, so as to attract more outstanding backbone teachers to participate in the plan.

4. Conclusion

The implementation of the “Measures” promoted the exchange and communication between urban and rural teachers, to a certain extent alleviated the uneven allocation of urban and rural teacher resources and the shortage of teachers in rural areas, and improved the education and teaching level of teachers in the “Three districts”, promoted the balanced development of compulsory education in Gansu province. Although the policy has become more and more mature since its implementation, it should be further improved in terms of counterpart support policy, daily management system for selected teachers, teacher selection mechanism, performance evaluation, etc. If these problems are not effectively resolved, it will still restrict its implementation effect.

References

- [1] Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China. Circular of the Ministry of Education and other five departments on issuing the “ Implementation Plan of the Special Plan for Teachers Supporting Talents in Remote and Impoverished Areas, Frontier Ethnic Areas and Old Revolutionary Areas” [EB/OL]. 2012-12-18. http://www.moe.gov.cn/srcsite/A09/s7046/201212/t20121218_146367.html.
- [2] The Education Department of Gansu Province. Notice on Issuing the “ Implementation Measures of the Special Plan for Teachers Supporting Talents in Remote and Impoverished Areas, Frontier Ethnic Areas and Old Revolutionary Areas in Gansu Province” [EB/OL]. 2014-01-26. http://jyt.gansu.gov.cn/dayin-xxgk_343.html.
- [3] People's Government of Gansu Province. 1400 outstanding teachers in our province support teaching “Three Districts” [EB/OL]. 2014-03-21. http://www.gs.gov.cn/art/2014/3/21/art_36_170685.html.
- [4] Zhao Ning. The effectiveness, predicament and Breakthrough of the Policy of supporting Education--Based on the study of the “Three District Education Support Plan” in Gansu Province.

Journal of the College of Northwest Adult Education, No.3, pp.32, 2018.

[5] Fu Cui. Research on the Present Situation, Problems and Countermeasures of Implementing the “Three-region Supporting Education Measures” Policy: Based on Surveys of Teachers and Teachers of Aided Schools in Primary and Secondary Schools. Master's degree thesis of Northwest Normal University, pp.24, 2018.