

Research on Effective Supply Path of Preschool Education in Chongqing under the Background of Supply-side Structural Reform

Libin Guo

Science and Technology Department, Chongqing University of Education, Chongqing 400065, China

guolb@cque.edu.cn

Keywords: Inclusive private kindergartens; Supply-side structural reform; Path

Abstract: In the current social reality context of "it is difficult to enter high-quality and low-cost kindergartens", increasing the supply of high-quality inclusive preschool education resources has become an important part of promoting the overall supply-side structural reform. At present, the development of preschool education in Chongqing has contradictions between supply and demand of resources in terms of capital, labor force and innovation. It is urgent for the government to accurately connect the core constraints such as mismatch of supply and demand, uneven development and ineffective market operation from the perspective of supply-side structural reform, reform the mechanism of resource supply and guarantee, optimize the integration of resources to solve the decline of marginal benefits of investment, and improve the mechanism to promote the same frequency resonance between the government and the market.

The "2019 Report on the Work of the Government" clearly proposes to expand the supply of preschool education through multiple channels in 2019. As a basic, welfare and public welfare preschool education, it plays an extremely important role in improving the education level and the overall quality of our country. Although Chongqing's preschool education development after the two rounds of "three-year plan for preschool education" have been implemented with high quality, it has stepped into the fast lane of mainly extensive development, but on the whole, it is still the weakest in overall educational pattern of Chongqing. Compared with the overall situation of the development of preschool education in the whole country, it faces both common difficulties and special problems in serving the overall situation of the overall urban and rural comprehensive reform experiment. At the key historical node of building a well-off society in an all-round way and deepening comprehensive reforms, it is of great theoretical value and practical significance to examine the core issues that hinder the connotative development of preschool education in Chongqing from the perspective of supply-side structural reform, and to promote the reform and innovation of preschool education system and mechanism, expand the effective supply of preschool education, and build an ecological chain for the sustainable development of preschool education under the support of coordinated and interactive elements.

1. Accurately Docking the Mismatch between Supply and Demand and Reforming the Mechanism of Resource Supply and Security

The essential feature of inclusive kindergartens is "inclusive benefits for all". From the current stage of Chongqing's development, there are problems such as imbalance of supply and demand allocation of supply resources such as capital, labor force and innovation^[1].

(1) The financial supply is insufficient and it is difficult to match subsidies with price limits. First, the total amount is insufficient. Chongqing invested 5.3 billion yuan in preschool education in 2016, accounting for only 6% of the city's total financial investment in education that year, and 1.2% lower than the national average. Second, the proportion is too low. The financial investment in preschool education in 2016 was 1.84 billion yuan, accounting for 2.6% of the city's financial investment in education, which is not only lower than the national average, but also far from the other western provinces and cities. Third, there are too few students. In 2016, preschool students in

Chongqing invested about 5,700 yuan, which is lower than the national average of about 6,600 yuan. Fourth, the price limit does not match the subsidy. On the premise of obviously insufficient financial investment, kindergarten fees are strictly limited, and corresponding subsidies and benefits are not fulfilled, which leads to difficulties in the operation of inclusive kindergartens and the absence of incentive effect of policies on private kindergartens^[2].

(2) The layout of inclusive kindergarten is insufficient and the rate of inclusive coverage is too low. Compared with the 12th Five-Year Plan, the supply of public welfare benefits in Chongqing has increased significantly, but the problem is still significant. First, the number of inclusive kindergarten is small. The main urban area has become a "depression" for the development of inclusive kindergartens in the city. The survey found that there are about 2,000 inclusive kindergartens in the city, accounting for about 35% of the total number of inclusive kindergartens in the city, which is in great contrast to the requirements of public education services that should be provided in developed urban areas. The number of public kindergartens is about 100, accounting for only about 11% of the total number of public kindergartens in the city, which is the penultimate among similar cities in the country. Second, the inclusive rate is too low. The overall level of inclusive education is only about 50%, while Yuzhong District is below 30%, Shapingba and Nan'an are less than 40%, Jiulongpo, Yubei, Dadukou District and North New Area are less than 50%, Banan and Jiangbei are close to 60%, which is far from the target of 80% inclusive kindergarten coverage by 2020. Third, there are fewer high-quality kindergartens. For example, there are 165 kindergartens in a main urban area of Chongqing, and only 37 first-class kindergartens in demonstration kindergartens, accounting for 22.4%, which are mainly distributed in mature old urban areas.

(3) The shortage of teachers, and the anomie of structure. First, there are a large number of lacking preschool teachers. According to the forecast data of the municipal health and family planning commission, by 2020, there will be close to 1.17 million school-age children in the city. If the teacher-child ratio required by the Ministry of Education is 1:10, the gap of full-time kindergarten teachers in the city will be over 50,000, and the public kindergarten alone will have to add 5,000 each year. However, the city produces more than 4,000 graduates of kindergarten teachers at or above the junior college level every year. Second, the structure of the teaching staff is out of order. The number of female teachers is much higher than that of male teachers. The level of educational structure is relatively low, and the number of people with specialized or less academic qualifications is far higher than the above number. The structure of professional titles needs to be reasonable. There is no independent evaluation system for kindergarten teachers' professional titles. Teachers who do not have professional titles account for a large proportion. The trend is obviously increasing year by year. Third, the post of kindergarten teacher is not attractive enough. Nearly 3,000 public kindergarten teachers in the main urban area do not enjoy the same financial treatment as those in-service due to shortage of teachers. The salaries of most inclusive private kindergarten teachers are between 1,500 and 3,000 yuan, while those in rural areas do not meet the minimum wage standard of the whole city. About 50% of kindergarten teachers in the city pay social security in full, and more than 30% of private kindergarten teachers do not pay any social security. The low income treatment makes preschool teachers' professional attraction in society very low. A limited number of graduates are reluctant to be kindergarten teachers due to their low income.

Solving the problem of mismatch between supply and demand, the government should focus on target orientation and strengthen guidance.

(1) Increase the total amount of financial investment. The municipal, district and county governments will give priority to the construction of inclusive kindergartens with new education funds each year, and strive to make financial investment in preschool education in the city close to 5% by 2020. Special expenses shall be allocated, and the government shall encourage the establishment of inclusive private kindergartens and guarantee their operation by purchasing services, reducing or exempting rent, subsidizing public funds per student, subsidizing rent, etc., and gradually make up for the financial deficit.

(2) Build preschool education public service system by taking public kindergartens and inclusive

private kindergartens as the main body ^[3]. One is to expand the proportion of main urban areas. Fully strictly control the approval of high-fee for-profit private kindergartens; The system has been transformed year by year, a number of public kindergartens have been newly built, and a large number of inclusive degrees have been added. Formulate and implement standards for planning, construction and handover of residential supporting kindergartens, and hold public or inclusive private kindergartens. The second is to optimize the layout of some districts and counties. According to the financial investment and educational resources of the local government, some primary schools with mature conditions will be set up as public kindergartens in stages and batches, and at least one public central kindergarten will be built in a township. Other districts and counties continue to tap their potential. Straighten out the management relationship between kindergartens owned by enterprises and collective ones, effectively register legal persons in accordance with the "Provisional Regulations on Registration and Administration of Institutions", and gradually take over some of them to public kindergartens or entrust inclusive private kindergartens. At the same time, unified the standards.

(3) Build a "government +universities +kindergartens" collaborative innovation community, scientifically develop standards, and plan to build new kindergartens and new preschool teachers from a high starting point. First, the three parties signed a strategic cooperation agreement on joint construction, management and sharing. Through cooperation agreements, a system for the use of special funds for tripartite cooperation will be established to ensure that matching funds are put in place and that the three parties interact normally; The second is to scientifically develop relevant standards to lead the development of kindergarten and preschool teachers in the future. Grasp the key synergy points, aiming at the needs of kindergarten construction for the future social development, cooperating to study and publish the standards for future kindergarten construction, implementing the construction of a new kindergarten entity with future innovation, leading and promoting the form change and all-round reform and innovation of future kindergartens; The third is to launch a deep cooperation mode to cultivate a new type of kindergarten teachers. To organize an expert team composed of university teachers, teachers and researchers of district and county education commissions, outstanding principals and famous teachers, to establish a teaching and research guidance network covering kindergartens of all levels and types, and to improve the system of teaching and research guidance responsibility areas. Relying on the collaborative innovation community to carry out regional preschool education research, teacher training, teaching and research system innovation, teaching team building.

2. Precisely Treating the Uneven Development and Optimizing the Integration of Resources to Solve the Problem of Declining Marginal Benefits of Investment.

Compared with the public kindergartens, government offices kindergartens and demonstration kindergartens in the main urban areas of Chongqing, the "Effects of hunger" of inclusive kindergartens and private kindergartens is more significant and needs "timely help" with higher marginal benefits.

(1) The layout of inclusive kindergarten in some districts and counties is against fairness and there are potential safety hazards in quality. According to the outline of Chongqing's medium-and long-term urban and rural education reform and development plan (2010-2020), rural villages and towns in northeast and southeast Chongqing mainly hold public kindergartens, and village-level kindergartens (classes) are set up in the central kindergartens of villages and towns. However, in recent years, the development of Inclusive kindergarten in many districts and counties obviously lacks long-term consideration: First, the distribution of points is unreasonable. There are no public central kindergartens in 12 districts, counties, villages and towns, including 25 in Wuxi County, 22 in Youyang, 20 in Xiushan, 18 in steel beams, 13 in Qianjiang, 9 in Wanzhou and 8 in Yongchuan. Obviously, there are no public central kindergartens, which cannot meet the requirements of wide coverage and basic fairness. Second, the quality is poor. Some districts and counties, in order to reach the number and rate of inclusive benefits as soon as possible, intend to reduce and relax the accreditation standards of inclusive benefits, so that some kindergartens with poor conditions and

weak teachers can enter the scope of inclusive benefits. At the same time, many district and county primary school attached kindergartens (classes) are under primary school management, and the use of venues and education and teaching are not standardized. These are all likely to bring hidden dangers to kindergarten safety and even child abuse.

(2) The development level of kindergartens in different districts and counties is uneven. Kindergartens in different districts and counties show great differences, which makes children in villages and towns show the characteristics of "cross-domain" flow from rural areas to cities, and "preferential" flow from private kindergartens to public kindergartens, thus causing the real problems of "getting into good kindergartens is expensive" and "getting into public kindergartens is difficult". On the premise of fragmented policy design and vague related systems, the basic scale, structural types, kindergarten conditions, layout areas, teachers, accreditation standards, price-fixing measures, subsidy methods, information disclosure, exit mechanism, quality assessment, assessment and evaluation of inclusive kindergartens in all districts and counties lack top-level design and unified requirements, resulting in the districts and counties going their own way, developing out of order and even trying to make up the number of "assignments". At the same time, the legal guarantee of preschool education has not kept pace with the work, and the guarantee mechanism of financial funds for preschool education in the whole city is not perfect, resulting in the city, district and county governments not being able to sustain long-term investment, preferential policies and increasing new investment.

The government should compact the main responsibility of the district and county governments and push forward the implementation of relevant policies and measures.

(1) Increase financial input. We will adjust and optimize the structure of education spending, and increase education spending in favor of preschool education, so as to ensure that the average financial investment of preschool students and the proportion of preschool education investment in the total financial investment in education exceed the national average. At the same time, adjust the charging standard, according to the economic development situation, the cost of operating the kindergarten, the family's economic capacity, timely and appropriate adjustment of sub-regional public kindergarten charging standards and inclusive private kindergarten charging standards^[4].

(2) Improve the subsidy policy. We will continue to implement the subsidy policy for poor children precisely, include all children from poor households who have established cards in the kindergarten in the scope of subsidy, and waive the education and living expenses of aided children. At the same time, the nutrition improvement plan for rural preschool education children is implemented in 14 poor districts and counties, and 4 yuan's meal allowance is provided to every student every day.

(3) Establishing a mutual aid and sharing mechanism. Promote quality balance and symbiosis, and realize rapid and high-quality development of kindergartens in poor areas on the basis of narrowing the differences among kindergartens. One is to establish and consolidate the "urban demonstration kindergarten+township central kindergarten+village kindergarten" traction radiation mechanism. Promote the complementary advantages among the kindergartens, and establish a school district alliance system of urban demonstration kindergartens radiating township central kindergartens and village-level kindergartens. The second is to establish and consolidate a model leading mechanism and a twinning assistance mechanism for high-quality kindergartens to weak kindergartens. We will promote high-quality kindergartens to provide support to weak kindergartens and village-level kindergartens in terms of school facilities, teaching equipment, children's play materials, teachers and teaching and research specialties. The third is to establish and consolidate the affiliated mechanism of village-level kindergartens relying on township central kindergartens. According to the characteristics of some poor districts and counties that are scattered in large numbers and live in small communities, the management system of village-level kindergartens affiliated to central kindergartens will be implemented by drawing lessons from the operating mode of "central schools radiating teaching points".

3. Accurately Docking Market Operation Problems, and Improving the Mechanism to Promote the Same Frequency Resonance between the Government and the Market

At present, the pattern of multi-subject kindergartens in Chongqing has taken shape initially. Apart from public kindergartens and inclusive kindergartens, there are a large number of private for-profit kindergartens of various sizes and characteristics. Although the contradiction between supply and demand caused by insufficient preschool education resources has been alleviated to a certain extent, the real problems such as fairness of educational public welfare, lack of quality assurance and weak management are also prominent ^[5].

(1) Unbalanced development of preschool education in urban and rural areas. Although the state allows social participation in preschool education, both public and private, if the market mechanism fails, there will be polarization, i.e. families with strong economic ability will have higher prices and higher quality of preschool education for their children. At the same time, families with relatively weak economic ability can only choose to accept education with lower prices and lower quality, or choose not to accept preschool education. This is reflected in the higher fees charged by for-profit private kindergartens in the main urban areas and some densely populated districts and counties. Some public kindergartens charge higher fees in disguised form through donations. Developers will not hand over and hold high-priced kindergartens after the completion of supporting kindergartens in urban areas. In rural areas, the coverage of regional education services is unfair, and the overall gross admission rate in the city is directly affected.

(2) Insufficient joint supervision by the government. Although Chongqing has formulated the basic standards for operating private preschool education kindergartens, there are still problems in supervision, such as emphasizing screening over operation, emphasizing hardware over software, and weak joint supervision. The hardware conditions such as safety, hygiene, kindergarten environment and kindergarten permit have been checked for many times, which has played a role in urging the rectification. However, the software environment such as the rationality of teaching content and the quality of teaching enjoyed by young children are still easy to revive after checking. Each functional department has a clear responsibility for its own management, but it lacks a higher-level supervisory department to coordinate and supervise the overall work. It is possible for private kindergartens that pursue maximum profits to seek policy gaps.

In November 2018, the State Council issued several opinions on deepening the reform and standardizing the development of preschool education, clearly suggesting that the use of market logic to improve the fairness and quality of education and the coupling of government responsibility and market mechanism are effective ways to improve the supply of preschool education.

(1) Establish an information-based financial supervision mechanism. One is to formulate a special account policy for private kindergartens, build an information-based financial monitoring system, and use network technology to dynamically master the financial operation of private kindergartens. Financial management is the responsibility of the kindergarten's jurisdiction ^[6]. The second is to develop financial management rules for private kindergartens. In particular, the supervision of the operation of kindergarten purchasing activities, financial accounts, documents and other funds shall be strengthened, and corresponding bank reconciliation forms shall be established. To ensure that purchasing has clear responsibilities and rights in the process, and the relevant monitoring and balancing mechanisms are well established.

(2) Improve the diversified supervision system. One is to set up a government supervision organization at the overall level to supervise various fields and links in the process of marketization of preschool education through high-level supervision departments, and to allocate management responsibilities for links that do not meet the standards ^[7]. The second is to establish a third-party evaluation mechanism. The supervision department shall formulate standards and evaluation systems for the operation, management, operating of schools and education of kindergartens, and entrust a third-party specialized organization or group to carry out "one-year assessment and three-year assessment" on the management level and quality of kindergartens. The quality report shall be published to the public and serve as an important basis for annual examination,

classification and subsidy funds. Third, supporting incentive mechanism. Funds, land, taxes and other rewards will be given to kindergartens that meet the assessment standards or are excellent. Private kindergartens will be stimulated to improve their management efficiency spontaneously through incentive supervision, thus improving the overall quality of private preschool education.

(3) Improve the market for childcare services. Focus on the hot spots in the early education market for infants aged 0-3 years, and establish as soon as possible a long-term mechanism conducive to the healthy and orderly development of the childcare service system. One is to formulate the hardware standards of the nursery center, including site selection, scale, construction standards, service personnel requirements, charging standards, curriculum, etc. The second is to clarify the main responsibilities of the management department. The age of 0-3 involves both raising and education. National Health and Family Planning Commission's supervisor and the Education Commission should guide the business, the Food and Drug Administration should supervise the food hygiene in canteens, and the Maternal and Child Health Hospital should supervise the growth and development of children, so as to ensure the orderly and healthy development of the nursery market. The third is to establish an admission system for infants aged 0-3. Teachers of infant and preschool education will be included in the system of teachers' professional titles, and unqualified personnel will be promoted to improve their professional level through professional training. At the same time, the problem of shortage of teachers and unprofessional teams in childcare institutions can be solved by recruiting preschool education personnel with professional foundation or training existing personnel as full-time teachers.

Acknowledgment

This article Supported by the project “future school (infant education)” of National Center for Schooling Development Programme of China (grant no. CSDP18FC1203).

References

- [1] Zhang Jin, Liu Yunyan; Pushing Logic, Problem Representation and Realization Path of Supply-side structural reform's Structural Reform in Preschool Education [J]. Education Review, October 28th, 2018.
- [2] Chen Huan, Wang Xiaoying; Difficulties and Solutions of Inclusive Private Kindergartens——Based on the Perspective of Economics [J], Journal of Shaanxi Xueqian Normal University, February 15th, 2018.
- [3] Li Hongxia, Ma Hongxia; An Investigation on the Current Situation of Funding for Inclusive Private Kindergartens in Guizhou Province under the Background of Education in Supply-side structural reform——A Case Study of Tongren [J]. Contemporary Educational Practice and Teaching Research, September 4th, 2018.
- [4] Li Xing; Vigorously Develop Public Kindergartens and Support Inclusive Private Kindergartens [J]. Chongqing Daily, May 30th, 2018.
- [5] Ran Yuanmao, Li Zhongyi; Social Expectations and Institutional Regulations of Private For-profit Kindergartens [J]. Education Academic Monthly, September 15th, 2018.
- [6] Li Hongxia; Under the background of "classified management", the path selection for sustainable development of provincial inclusive private kindergartens [J]. Modern primary and secondary education, October 20th, 2018.
- [7] Jojo He; A Study on Government Responsibility in the Marketization of Preschool Education [J]. Master thesis of Southwest Jiaotong University, November 1st, 2016.
- [8] Du Huiping; Regulate nurseries and kindergartens in time to make infants grow up healthily [J]. Chongqing Daily, March 9th, 2019.