

The Training of Targeted Normal Students in Rural Areas of China: Research on Contract Employment

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Abstract

This article aimed to construct a theoretical model for rural teacher recruitment to address the common challenges of insufficient numbers, low quality, and poor stability among rural teachers. It integrated the concepts of "comprehensive evaluation perspective centered on training quality," I-E-O (Input-Environment-Output), and process management theory to form its theoretical framework. Adopting a qualitative research paradigm, the study focused on in-depth interviews to explore significant measures undertaken by local colleges and universities in cultivating rural normal students. It sought to rationalize their initiatives, evaluate their impact, highlight developmental necessities, and propose optimization pathways for implementation. Empirical findings underscored the imperative to enhance the training quality of rural normal college students and critically reflect on their educational journey. The study analyzed the inevitability of targeted training for rural teachers from the perspective of societal needs, addressing implementation disputes or issues while aligning with stakeholder demands from local governments, training institutions, and rural primary and secondary schools. It emphasized the strategic positioning of rural normal students and advocates for practical recommendations in policy design, training plans, curriculum systems, rural education, and teacher development. The overarching goal was to optimize the training trajectory for rural normal students and elevate the overall quality of their education.

Keywords: Normal Student Orientation, I-E-O Theory, Student Attraction, Training Process, Training Results

1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Importance of the Problem

To establish a team of rural teachers with a robust structure, commitment to rural areas, and high quality, Guangdong Province responded to the national initiative in 2018 by issuing the "Implementation Plan for the Construction of 'New Normal Schools' in Guangdong." This plan proposed the "Implementation of Public-Funded Targeted Normal Students Training Plan" and commenced student recruitment that year to train teachers for rural areas. Ensuring the training quality of public-funded normal education students is crucial for the advancement of rural basic education and represents the core objective of policies aimed at augmenting rural teacher numbers.

Palmer (2017) highlighted in "teaching courage" that "truly effective teaching arises from the teacher's own identity and growth." If normal students lack interest in teaching or exhibit low

motivation to teach, they may not be adequately prepared for rural education in the future. Therefore, willingness to teach serves as a pivotal metric for assessing the training outcomes of normal college students, directly indicating the effectiveness of targeted policy implementations.

1.2 Research Question

1) How does the current targeted training program in Guangdong Province effectively measure and foster the willingness of normal school students to teach in rural areas?

2) What are the primary factors influencing the employment outcomes of targeted normal school students in the eastern region of Guangdong Province, and how can these factors be optimized to ensure effective retention and quality teaching in rural schools?

3) What specific mechanisms and strategies are employed during the training process to enhance the retention and professional development of targeted normal school students, particularly in terms of adapting to rural teaching environments and fulfilling educational objectives?

1.3 Research Objective

1) To assess the impact of Oriented Normal College students' willingness to teach in rural areas on their employment outcomes and retention in teaching positions.

2) To examine the effectiveness of employment preparation programs and initiatives provided to Oriented Normal College students during their academic tenure.

3) To identify and analyze the factors contributing to successful employment placements and potential contract breaches among Oriented Normal College students, aiming to understand and improve retention rates and teaching quality in rural areas.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Related Concepts and Theories

Since the promulgation of the "Overall Plan for Deepening the Reform of Educational Evaluation in the New Era," attention to training quality from the perspective of comprehensive evaluation has gradually become a significant focus (Zhu Y.F. et al., 2021). This article primarily explores the training process of rural orientation normal students in colleges and universities in eastern Guangdong, China. Therefore, the evaluation will encompass the entire process, focusing on key factors in comprehensive evaluation such as the starting point characteristics of learning, interpersonal interactions in the educational process, learning attitudes, and investment in learning (Fan G.R., 2020).

Based on Astin's "I-E-O" model, this study constructs an empirical analysis framework to analyze existing problems and propose solution strategies for various factors in the training process. It examines their influence processes and action paths.

This theoretical framework includes three dimensions: input, environment, and output. It posits that students' learning derives from their inputs as the source, which, under environmental

influence, leads to personal achievements and learning effects. "Input" variables are defined as factors influencing learning and personal growth, primarily involving the educational backgrounds and individual characteristics of targeted normal school students before they enter the educational system. In this study, "input" will be defined as the attractiveness of policies aimed at rural-oriented normal school students, encompassing enrollment policies, student quality, and the significance and value of training.

2.2 Literature Surveys

Astin (1985) discussed the importance of environmental factors in higher education that influence student learning outcomes, aligning with the Input-Environment-Output model.

Yang and Wang (2015) explored a comprehensive evaluation framework for educational quality, emphasizing inputs, processes, and outputs, which resonates with Astin's model.

Smith and Johnson (2018) examined challenges and opportunities in teacher training specifically in rural areas, discussing strategies to improve teacher quality and retention.

Liu and Zhang (2020) reviewed the application of comprehensive evaluation in enhancing educational quality, focusing on how assessments of inputs, processes, and outcomes contribute to educational improvement.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

Independent Variables

Comprehensive Evaluation Perspective: This includes factors related to the quality of training such as curriculum design, teaching methods, educational resources, and assessment practices.

1) I-E-O (Input-Environment-Output) Model: Input variables could include the educational background and characteristics of rural normal college students before they enter the training program. Environment variables encompass the educational setting and support systems provided during training. Output variables relate to the outcomes and achievements of students post-training, such as teaching effectiveness and retention in rural schools.

2) Process Management Theory: This refers to the strategies and procedures implemented by colleges and universities to manage the training process effectively, ensuring efficient delivery of educational services and support to rural normal students.

Dependent Variable

Training Quality of Rural Normal College Students: This represents the overall effectiveness and success of the training program in preparing rural normal college students to become competent and effective teachers in rural schools. It includes measures of teaching skills, knowledge acquisition, attitudes towards rural education, and readiness for teaching in rural settings.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This article will adopt a qualitative research method. Specifically, documentary analysis and in-depth interview methods were used. Taking the Normal College in the eastern part of Guangdong Province, China as the site of pastoral investigation, the research objects involved include not only the targeted normal students at school but also relevant personnel of the education administration department, normal college administrators, teachers, etc.

3.2 Population and Sample

Interviews were conducted with teachers, principals, and teachers from cooperative primary and secondary schools. A total of 460 questionnaires were distributed, and 352 valid questionnaires were recovered.

3.3 Research Instruments

This qualitative study employed in-depth interviews to investigate the strategies and impacts of initiatives aimed at improving rural teacher recruitment and training. The interview guide explored how local colleges and universities approach the cultivation of rural normal students, focusing on measures aligned with the "comprehensive evaluation perspective centered on training quality," I-E-O framework, and process management theory.

3.4 Data Collection

Data collection for this study employed a qualitative approach centered on in-depth interviews with key stakeholders involved in rural teacher recruitment and training initiatives. Participants included administrators, faculty members, and educational policymakers from local colleges and universities. The interview protocol was structured to explore the implementation of strategies aligned with the "comprehensive evaluation perspective centered on training quality," I-E-O framework, and process management theory. Questions focused on understanding the rationale behind current initiatives, assessing their impact on addressing challenges of teacher shortages, quality, and stability in rural areas, and identifying critical developmental needs.

3.5 Statistics Used for Data Analysis

Quantitative data, including descriptive statistics and possibly inferential statistics such as correlation analysis, was utilized to examine numerical trends and relationships between variables, such as the correlation between training quality indicators and retention rates of rural teachers. This mixed-methods approach provided a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing rural teacher recruitment and training, helping to inform policy recommendations and optimization strategies for enhancing the overall educational outcomes of rural normal students.

4. Data Analysis and Findings

4.1 Introduction

One of the keys to realizing the policy goal of rural public-funded normal college students is that rural public-funded normal college students can fulfill their contract and return to work as scheduled. The willingness of public-funded normal school students to fulfill their contract reflects their self-identity as a rural teacher. This willingness is not only related to the learner's learning investment but also a manifestation of the school's training effect.

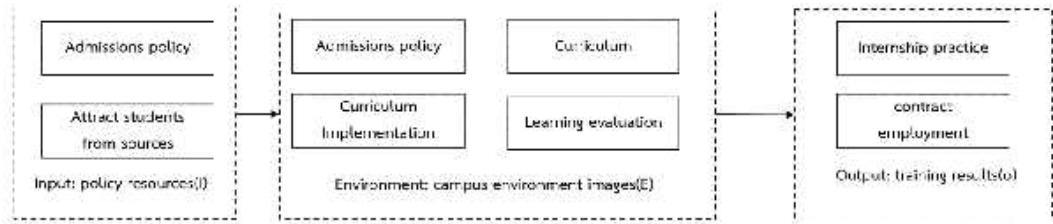


Figure 1 "I-E-O" Theoretical Model

The question in Figure 1 is "Do you know the basic situation of your designated employment service place?" The results show: "Don't know much" and "Very unclear" accounted for 43.33%, while "Comparatively understood" accounted for 26.67%. "Very knowledgeable" accounted for only 32.23%. This is because students fail to know their accurate employment location and school before graduation. Another important reason is that the school where normal students attend is in a city and is separated from the rural living environment. In addition, some students are not in high school because of their high school age. In the first stage, the management method of the boarding system was adopted, and the place of living was transferred from the original countryside or town to the city, they had little understood of the customs and customs of the countryside. When students do not understand the basic conditions of their employment location, it will harm their employment aspirations.

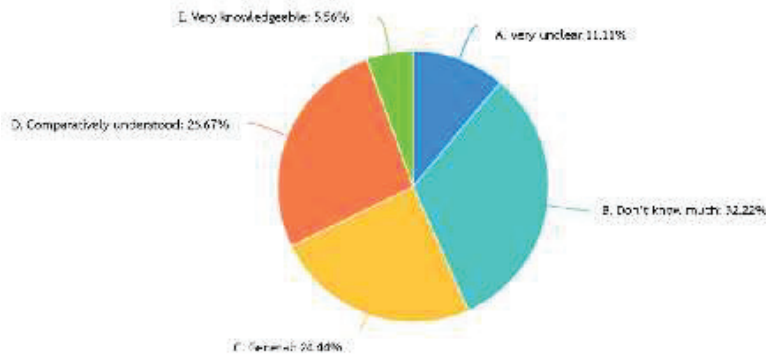


Figure 2 Attitudes of Public-Funded Normal College Students

The question in Figure 2 is "Oriented normal college students' willingness to fulfill their employment contract ". The results show that "very willing" and "More willing" accounted for

26.67% and 55.56% respectively, while "less willing" and "very unwilling" proportions are very small, 6.67% and 1.11% respectively. Most students have a very high degree of identification with the teaching profession, which can be reflected in the employment rate. However, in previous surveys, some scholars pointed out that normal school students have a high degree of professional identity, but the motivations of students' employment security and career enthusiasm coexist. This can, to a certain extent, explain the current situation where a small number of publicly funded normal school students' default.

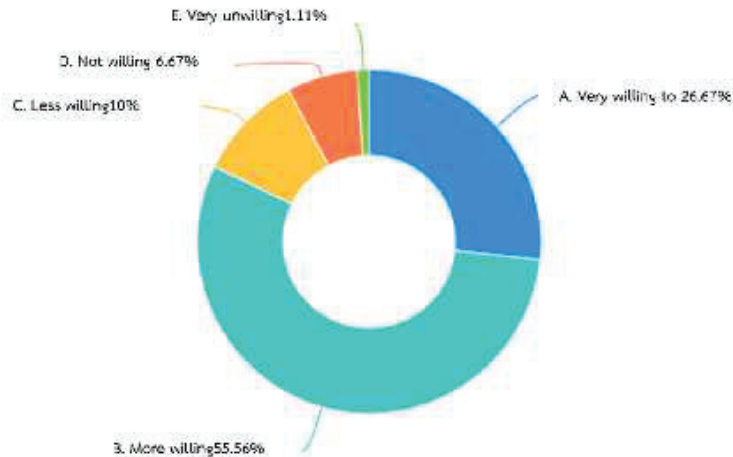


Figure 3 Oriented Normal College Students' Willingness

Zhao H.Y et al., (2012) proposed to use intrinsic value identity, extrinsic value identity, and volitional behavior identity as a three-dimensional structural model to study the professional value identity of free normal college students. Among them, intrinsic value recognition refers to the internal motivation of recognizing the intrinsic characteristics of the teaching profession; extrinsic value recognition refers to the external attraction of other external benefits that accompany the teaching profession but is independent of the content of the teaching profession; volitional behavior recognition It refers to behaviors or behavioral tendencies that maintain the teaching profession. In this regard, the question is set as shown in Figure 3 " Publicly funded normal school students' views on teachers' professional identity" The results show that in terms of teacher professional identity, the teaching career of public-funded normal school students in the eastern region of Guangdong Province Overall, the degree of recognition is not very high, and external value recognition is relatively higher than intrinsic value recognition. Among them, teachers who are motivated by "loving education and liking the teaching profession" have a low degree of professional identity, accounting for only 47.78%, less than half. However, "the contract stipulates that you must return to your place of origin to teach, and you do not want to bear the responsibility for breach of contract." Responsibility", "Rural teachers have relatively little pressure in work and life", and "Rural teachers have posts and staff, stable jobs, and decent remuneration" are relatively high motivations for external value recognition, accounting for 65.56%, 36.67%, and 71.11 respectively. %.

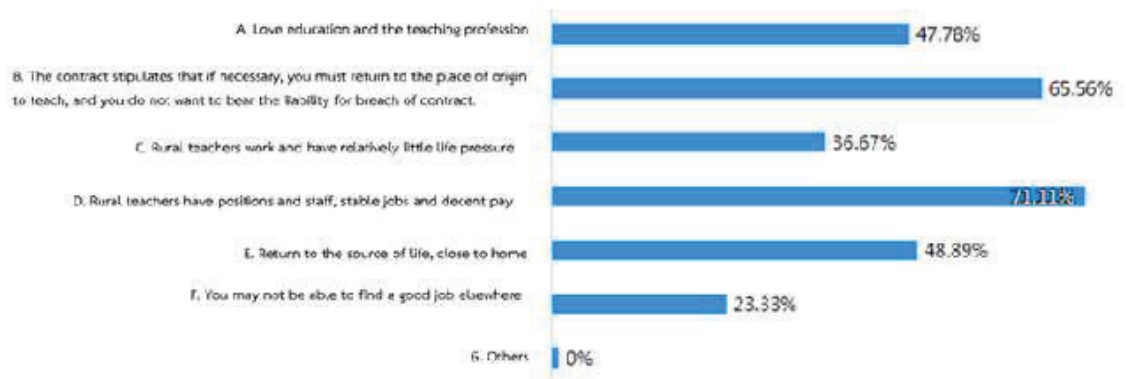


Figure 3 Publicly Funded Normal School Students' Views

Through in-depth interviews, we learned that the main reason is that if there are better job development opportunities, they are willing to pay liquidated damages to choose a breach of contract, a better workplace, or better career development. This also coincides with the previous attitude towards professional identity. The motivations of employment security and professional enthusiasm for public-funded normal education students coexist. When the motivation for professional enthusiasm decreases and there are higher employment opportunities, it will lead to the orientation of normal education. The student chooses to give up the career with the original agreement.

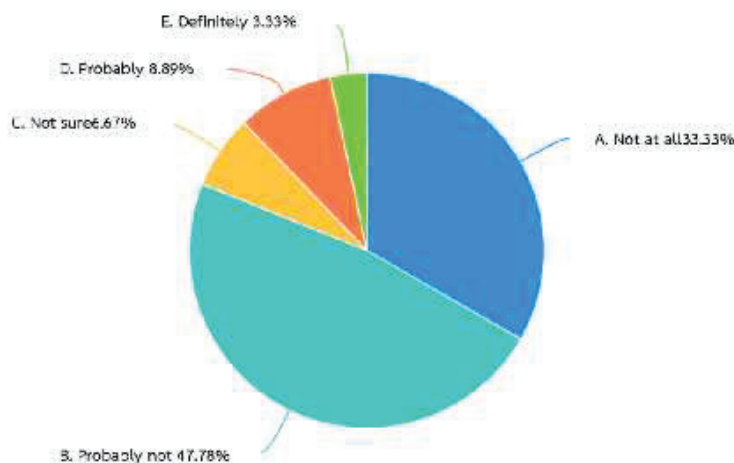


Figure 4 Proportion of Teachers

Since the results obtained from the questionnaire and in-depth interviews were that external value recognition is the highest, we further investigated the students' "If you find other jobs after graduation, would you choose to give up the teaching position you have been targeting?" The results are shown in Figure 4. The proportion of teachers who have been targeted is as high as 81.11%, and the proportion of teachers who have been targeted will or may be given up because they find other jobs after graduation. The positions accounted for only 8.89% and 3.33% respectively. The willingness of public-funded normal school students in eastern Guangdong Province to fulfill their contracts is still very optimistic. Most students will not easily give up the established employment of

rural teachers.

What factors are they most concerned about when teaching in designated rural schools? This is to analyze the logic behind students' willingness to perform and their tendency to default. The results are shown in Figure 5. The factor with the largest number of choices is "teacher's salary", accounting for 92.22%. Future job income is the most important factor considered by graduates. This will directly affect the employment willingness of public-funded normal school students. During the interview, some students said, "If there are other units that offer far better benefits than the schools designated for employment, then they will decisively give up the position of orientation teachers." Many students also pointed out that "the employment of public-funded orientation normal school students in eastern Guangdong Province is Most of the salary levels in the area where I am located are relatively low, but because I am a teacher on staff and my job is stable, I don't have to worry about unemployment and other issues, so I will still choose to fulfill my employment contract." Secondly, 85.56% of students have considered the issue of personal future development. Some students said that they chose public-funded normal education students to successfully find a job in an environment where employment is difficult and to become a regular teacher, but they are not willing to work for a long time. If they stay to teach in rural areas, they hope that once the contract period is over, they will have the opportunity to work in the county through selection and other opportunities; many students also said that the teaching conditions and living conditions of rural schools are also important factors to consider because various equipment in rural areas They are relatively simple and have poor conditions, which will affect the development of their career space and the improvement of their quality of life. They are full of worries about their future employment life.

The conclusion shows that most students' motivations for fulfilling the contract are external, mainly because they are unwilling to bear the responsibility for breach of contract based on the provisions of the agreement, and they believe that the teacher's job is stable and well-established. However, most people are still worried about going to rural areas to work in the future. If there are better options, most students will not choose to go back to rural areas to teach.

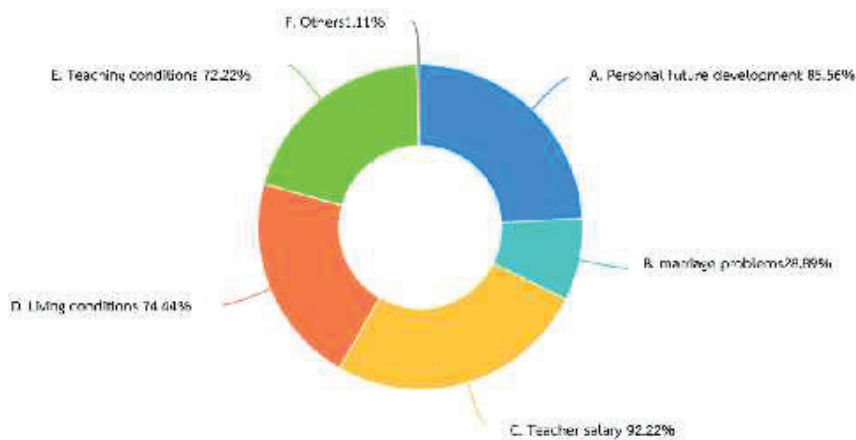


Figure 5 Factors for Public-Funded Normal School Students

4.2 Data Analysis of the Qualitative Data

According to the data and survey information provided by the Employment Guidance Center of the designated colleges and universities for the training of public-funded normal students in the eastern region of Guangdong Province, an analysis of the employment situation of public-funded normal students in the eastern region of Guangdong Province found that the employment rate of public-funded normal students is very high and stable. of. Guangdong Province implemented a policy of targeted training of primary and secondary school teachers in 2018. The first batch of targeted graduates in 2022 has successfully graduated and started working. A total of 430 students have graduated in the eastern region; the second batch of graduates in 2023 has also the employment assignments have been completed, and there are a total of 400 graduates waiting for employment. Like graduates from public-funded normal schools across the country, there is currently a low level of default in public-funded education in the eastern region of Guangdong Province. Judging from the contractual employment situation of undergraduate graduates from the 2022 and 2023 public-funded targeted training education in the eastern region of Guangdong Province, 817 of the 830 graduates fulfilled their contracts and took up their posts. They all served in schools assigned by the Education Bureau by the agreement. The employment situation is very good, accounting for 98.43%. The proportion of breach of contract, failure to obtain teaching qualifications as required by the agreement, or termination of the contract due to physical reasons is very low. The targeted employment areas planned by these two graduates are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1 Orientation Area for HS Normal College’s 2022-2023 Public-Funded Normal Students

Orientation Area for Public-Funded Normal Students of Hanshan Normal University in 2022					
Major	Number of People	Orientation Area	Major	Number of People	Orientation Area
Primary Education	15	Chaonan District, Shantou City	Primary Education	20	Chenghai District, Shantou City
	1	Nan'ao County, Shantou City		10	Chaonan District, Shantou City
	22	Huidong County, Huizhou City		1	Nan'ao County, Shantou City
	15	Boluo County, Huizhou City		46	Yangshan County, Qingyuan City
	32	Fogang County, Qingyuan City		23	Raoping County, Chaozhou City
	15	Qingyuan City Qingxin District		Physical Education	6
Physical Education	8	Chenghai District, Shantou City	6		Chaonan District, Shantou City
	8	Chaonan District, Shantou City	1		Nan'ao County, Shantou City
	1	Nan'ao County, Shantou City	6		Dabu County, Meizhou City
	3	Xingning City, Meizhou City	6		Haifeng County, Shanwei City
	4	Shunfeng County, Meizhou City	5	Luhe County, Shanwei City	

	8	Wuhua County, Meizhou City		5	Chao'an District, Chaozhou City
	5	Chao'an District, Meizhou City		5	Raoping County, Chaozhou City
	5	Raoping County, Meizhou City	Music	10	Chenghai District, Shantou City
	8	Huilai County, Jieyang City		10	Chaonan District, Shantou City
Music	10	Chaonan District, Shantou City	Fine Arts	1	Nan'ao County, Shantou City
	1	Nan'ao County, Shantou City		9	Lufeng County, Shanwei City
	3	Longmen County, Huizhou City		5	Chao'an District, Chaozhou City
	5	Chao'an District, Chaozhou City		5	Raoping County, Chaozhou City
	5	Raoping County, Chaozhou City		10	Chenghai District, Shantou City
	10	Huiyang County, Jieyang City		10	Chaonan District, Shantou City
	2	Yunan County, Yunfu City		1	Nan'ao County, Shantou City
	14	Yun'an District, Yunfu City		9	Lufeng County, Shantou City
Fine Arts	10	Chaonan District, Shantou City		5	Chao'an District, Chaozhou City
	1	Nan'ao County, Shantou City		5	Raoping County, Chaozhou City
	3	Longmen County, Huizhou City			
	5	Chao'an District, Chaozhou City			
	5	Raoping County, Chaozhou City			
	10	Huilai County, Jieyang City			
	6	Yun'an District, Yunfu City			

Table 2 Orientation Area for HS Normal College’s 2022-2023 Public-Funded Normal Students

Employment Area for 2022 Jiaying College Public-Funded Normal Students									
Orientation Area		Primary Education	Music	Art	Orientation Area		Primary Education	Music	Art
Meizhou City	Xingning City	5	3	3	Meizhou City	Meixian District	20	2	2
	Dabu County	20	4	4		Xingning City	5	3	3
	Fengshun County	25	3	2		Jiaoling County	2	0	0
	Wuhua County	0	10	10		Dabu County	20	11	12
Heyuan City	Dongyuan County	6	3	3	Heyuan City	Wuhua County	5	10	10
	Longchuan County	0	10	10		Fengshun County	0	2	2
	Lianping County	20	0	0		Dongyuan County	10	0	0
	Zijin County	7	0	0		Longchuan County	10	0	0
	Heping County	5	0	0		Zijin County	7	0	0
Qingyuan City	Fogang County	3	0	0	Shanwei City	Heping County	5	0	0
	Yingde City	9	0	0		Haifeng County	0	0	6
Yunfu City	Xinxing County	0	17	8	Shaoguan City	Luhe County	0	0	5
						Lufeng City	0	12	0
						Xinfeng County	16	0	0

Among the 352 targeted teachers surveyed, only 13 were unable to perform their employment by the agreement. Moreover, in the process of interviews with relevant education administrative department personnel in the eastern region of Guangdong Province and principals of rural schools with designated positions, they said that they compared targeted teachers with ordinary teachers and believed that if targeted teachers were locals, their stability will be higher. Even if you are admitted to a county school after the service period expires, you will still serve the education of the county or city. As a staff member of the Chaonan District Education Bureau of Shantou City said:

“Less than 20% of teachers recruited from centralized schools can stay in their jobs until the expiration of their service period, and even fewer can persist for a long time, because most of the teachers recruited by schools come from other cities and counties in various provinces across the country, and they are quite big mobile. Even if they break the contract or are admitted to the county after the expiration of their service period, they will not leave the Chaoshan area. They just want to work in a better school.”

A staff member of the Guangdong Provincial Education Research Institute said: "If the candidates for targeted training come from rural areas, they have a better understanding of rural children and the current situation and needs of rural education, and are willing to contribute to the countryside and their hometowns. Furthermore, students who graduate from local normal colleges have employment expectations relatively low, they come from rural areas and maintain a simple professional enthusiasm for teaching. Another important factor is that they are bound by the agreement, the employment situation is also very stable, and the default rate is very low."

In interviews with students, it can be found that they have a certain understanding of the situation of rural education and can recognize the significance and value of policies and their role in changing rural education. As Oriented Graduate WYF says:

"It is difficult to offer all non-conventional cultural courses such as music, art, and physical education in rural schools, but the music skills I have learned can at least play an "enlightenment" role for these students (2023-05-WYF).

I still remember the feeling in my heart when I heard the word "enlightenment". Just imagine, that when a newly graduated teacher can realize her "enlightenment" effect on students, she will cherish her identity as a teacher. Moreover, local employment pays attention to the emotional needs of teachers. Due to the emotional dependence between their families, their willingness to stay is stronger. It can be said that the targeted training policy is based on geographical relationships, permeates irrational factors, guides value actions and emotional actions, and attracts and retains teachers.

According to the Guangdong Provincial Publicly Funded Oriented Normal Education Policy, free-oriented normal students who fail to fulfill the agreement during the service period must have a one-time refund of the training funds they have enjoyed, and pay a one-time penalty of 30% of the total training funds; public funds have announced the breach of contract records of directed normal college students shall be recorded in their personnel files. Faced with such harsh default costs, some publicly funded normal school students will still default. Among the 13 students who performed by the agreement, in-depth interviews were conducted with three defaulting graduates. The main information is as follows:

Student Z, majoring in music, was originally from Shaoguan City. The reason why he was unable to attend the job according to the agreement was that the place of employment was not the place of origin, and the sending school was a rural primary school, which did not meet the employment expectations. Student Z chose to give up his career as a rural teacher because his pursuits were incompatible with his feelings for his hometown, and his plans for future work were incompatible with the targeted teaching position.

Student S, majoring in primary school education, was born in Meizhou City. He resigned after joining the company as agreed. The main reason is that they cannot adapt to life in rural areas. The local dialect culture is very rich and they cannot integrate into the living circle. Another important reason is that they feel that girls must work in rural areas for six years after graduation, and their marriage problems may not be solved in the place of employment.

Student L, majoring in physical education, failed to complete his studies by the agreement and could not be dispatched normally. The main reason was that he failed to pass the teacher qualification certificate examination and all the written and interview subjects of the teacher qualification certificate at the corresponding school stage. Unable to obtain qualifications for

employment.

According to data from university employment centers and interviews, this study believes that a small number of oriented normal college students default on their contracts, and the main reason is that the length of service brings psychological obstacles to the normal employment of normal college students. Intuitively, the six-year service period for public-funded normal college students has the greatest impact on whether outstanding candidates apply for the exam. When candidates weigh the free education policy for oriented normal college students, the six-year service period is one of the responsibilities they must bear. Oriented normal college students will be believed that the six-year service period was too long, and he had a rebellious attitude toward the policy and would default on the contract if given the opportunity. Another reason is that the place of employment is in rural primary and secondary schools, and the living conditions are relatively backward and cannot meet students' expectations for future life. Therefore, for the sake of their personal development, they will be transferred to places with better conditions through selection and other methods during the service period or after the service period. Find a job in a good unit or directly choose a career that better meets your requirements.

4.3 Summary of the Results

Empirical findings underscored the imperative to enhance the training quality of rural normal college students and critically reflect on their educational journey. The study analyzed the inevitability of targeted training for rural teachers from the perspective of societal needs, addressing implementation disputes or issues while aligning with stakeholder demands from local governments, training institutions, and rural primary and secondary schools. It emphasized the strategic positioning of rural normal students and advocates for practical recommendations in policy design, training plans, curriculum systems, rural education, and teacher development. The overarching goal was to optimize the training trajectory for rural normal students and elevate the overall quality of their education.

5. Conclusion, Discussion, and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion

The findings reveal several critical issues affecting the orientation of normal school students towards serving rural areas and the development of post-vocational education. Firstly, there is a pervasive lack of awareness among students regarding the realities of rural education, including inadequate knowledge of rural school conditions and misconceptions about educational resources and support. Moreover, the study highlights a deficiency in understanding rural culture and communication barriers with rural students and parents, which diminishes the effectiveness of teaching in rural settings.

Secondly, the research underscores constraints in the post-vocational development of young teachers, primarily stemming from the utilitarian focus of targeted training policies. The policies often overlook personal development considerations, exemplified by lengthy service obligations and restricted opportunities for further education or career advancement. This situation is compounded by the absence of pathways for academic improvement and professional growth, thereby stifling the aspirations and potential of targeted normal school students.

In conclusion, addressing these issues requires a comprehensive approach that enhances students' awareness of rural education challenges, promotes cultural understanding and communication skills, and revises policy frameworks to prioritize both service obligations and professional development opportunities for young teachers.

5.2 Discussion

The discussion delves deeper into the implications of the findings on orientation normal school students and the broader educational policy landscape. Firstly, it examines the root causes behind the weak awareness of rural service among students, emphasizing the need for targeted educational interventions that foster a deeper understanding of rural contexts and the socioeconomic challenges facing rural schools. Strategies such as immersive rural placements and cultural exchange programs are proposed to bridge the knowledge gap and enhance teacher-student relationships in rural settings.

Furthermore, the discussion explores the structural barriers within post-vocational education policies, particularly the rigidity of service obligations and restrictions on further academic pursuits. It critiques the current policy stance that prioritizes immediate workforce needs over long-term professional development, advocating for policy revisions that balance service commitments with opportunities for career advancement and continuous learning. Suggestions include flexible service terms, incentivized educational pathways, and mentorship programs to support the holistic development of young teachers in targeted education programs.

Overall, the discussion highlights the complexities of navigating educational policy reforms to better support rural education initiatives and empower young teachers to thrive in diverse educational environments. It calls for collaborative efforts between policymakers, educators, and stakeholders to enact sustainable changes that promote equitable educational opportunities and professional growth for all students and teachers alike.

5.3 Recommendation

The process of formulating policy objectives should consider the multiplicity of national, social, and individual interests. Reasonably determining the service period, focusing on development during this period, and implementing incentive policies are effective ways to simultaneously realize personal and national interests. When deciding the length of service, it's essential to consider not only educational and teaching regulations but also the personal development, marital status, and family circumstances of targeted teachers. One approach could be designing and refining the service period system to allow students to reassess their commitment after enrollment, providing flexibility by linking service years with the duration of their public education benefits.

Managing the balance between stability and development during the service period is crucial for the training of public-funded normal students in Guangdong Province. Two key considerations are recommended: Firstly, it's vital to facilitate pathways for improving the academic qualifications of orientation teachers. Academic enhancement is more than just gaining knowledge and skills; it serves as intrinsic motivation for active engagement. However, many local normal schools tasked with orientation training lack the authority to grant professional master's degrees in education, hindering academic progress for targeted normal students. Collaborative efforts with universities offering targeted master's degree programs could prioritize academic advancement opportunities for these teachers. Graduates from targeted normal schools meeting eligibility criteria and performing well should be eligible to apply for targeted teacher training programs at the master's level.

Secondly, opportunities such as on-the-job training and career mobility should be provided. These could be included in specialized plans by government education departments, offering tailored training courses to meet the specific needs of targeted teachers, thereby accelerating their professional growth.

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