Regional Education Alliance: Innovative Management Mode of Integration of Urban and Rural Education in Chengdu

Lu Huang

School of Politic Science and Public Administration
University of Electronic Science and Technology of China
Chengdu, Sichuan, China 610000

Xi Yang

School of Politic Science and Public Administration
University of Electronic Science and Technology of China
Chengdu, Sichuan, China 610000

Abstract—In order to realize the integrative development of urban and rural education, Chengdu city innovate and explore a new model of education management, and “Regional education alliance” shall be an important grasp. Through the co-ordination of various types of quality education resources, the development of weak schools shall be radiated and driven. This paper deeply analyzes the practical path of Chengdu regional education alliance by combing a large number of relevant practice modes at home and abroad, and puts forward the construction suggestions, so as to promote the integration of urban and rural education and promote education fairness.

Keywords—regional education alliance; urban and rural education integration; educational management mode

I. INTRODUCTION

The “long-term education reform and the National Development Plan (2010-2020)” make it clear that China should basically realize the balanced development of education. Therefore, Chengdu, a national “pilot area construction of urban and rural comprehensive reform”, shall combine the characteristics of its own circle and promote the integration of urban and rural education in a “whole-area Chengdu” vision. However, from the actual situation of the development of three “circle layers” education in Chengdu, the distribution of quality education resources among the three “circle layers” is obviously not balanced. Thus, Chengdu explores the educational management model of regional education alliance, co-ordinate the education resources of urban and rural areas and promote education equity.

II. PRACTICE MODE OF URBAN AND RURAL EDUCATION INTEGRATION AT HOME AND ABROAD

A. Domestic Practice Mode

1) School district management mode

School district management is based on the county, break the urban and rural dualistic structure in the county and draw a line with township administrative region. The school district shall be divided according to the distribution of population, the economic and cultural foundation, the

location of the school, the radiation range of quality education resources, the status of educational development and other factors. Each school district shall be directly managed by county education administrative department. The school district becomes the most basic and intensive education management institution, which forms “county-level education administration department--district central school--school” three-level county area compulsory education management system.¹ The core of school district management mode is to realize the development through the exchange and integration in the learning area.

2) School bundle mode

School bundle mode is that county-level education administration department within its administrative jurisdiction, according to school location, schooling condition and level, shall unite two or more schools at different levels into a new educational unit or educational association with resource sharing and complementary advantages². At the same time, it will form the development pattern of co-construction, sharing and co-prosperity through the irregular development of special research activities, unified annual assessment standards, teaching quality standards, in-depth integration of education resources in the region. One of the most important features is the realization of resource sharing among educational association.

3) Merger and reorganization mode

Merger and reorganization is a mode of development, that is two schools or more in the same administrative area make association and merger or adopt other forms to reconstruct and establish new school with better conditions and educational quality.³ After the merger and reorganization,

¹ An Xiaomin, Wu Zhuohui. *An Analysis of the Integrated Development Mode of Urban and Rural Education in the Region* [J]. Shanghai Research on Education, 2012, (06): 18-21.

² Xu Lin. *On the Integration of Urban and Rural Education—Is merging “urban and rural school bundled development” equal to “urban and rural education integration”?* [J]. Contemporary Educational Science, 2009, (08):4-7+11.

³ An Xiaomin, Wu Zhuohui. *An Analysis of the Integrated Development Mode of Urban and Rural Education in the Region* [J]. Shanghai Research on Education, 2012, (06):18-21.

the school will break the original pattern of running school, unify leadership team, teacher deployment, teaching management and quality assessment, to achieve the mutual complementation and common development between high-quality schools and weak schools.

4) Group running mode

The group running mode is based on the famous school part and property rights as a link, , connecting three and more than three schools with independent legal entities through joint ventures, cooperation or equity investment. It is to improve the overall level of education in the region for the purpose of the formation of a new educational union of the school⁴. This mode can promote school resources sharing, save the cost of running schools, form complementary advantages and enhance the efficiency of school operation and management.

B. Foreign Practical Experience

1) Japan

Japan has a perfect input system of basic education, and its compulsory education funds are mainly burdened by state, including the direct contribution from the state part of the financial and shared in the form of transfer payments in local finance⁵. Japan has also established a complete financial system, especially the "local delivery tax" system.⁶ It can eliminate the imbalance of education funds caused by different levels of economic development in different regions, thus promoting the balanced development of education in different regions.

Japan has a regular teacher flow system, with an average of about seven years of replacement for each teacher. This exchange is generally conducted in the same county or in the same city, including urban teachers to rural schools to teach. As a national civil servant, the salary of the teacher is not changed because of the change of school⁷.

Japan implemented central highly centralized teaching management mode, and the school learning content is based on the learning guidelines developed by the Ministry of Education. The education and teaching activities of each school are based on this, which is composed of teaching subjects, moral education and special activities.

2) America

The United States attaches great importance to education legislation. In order to lay a legal guarantee for the balanced development of basic education, the United States

successively promulgated the United States 2000 Education Strategy, No Child Left Behind, Strategic Plan for 2002-2007.

The United States establishes a high center of education financial input system. The basic education financial funds are shared by the federal government, state government and school district, and state government is the first investor⁸. From the trend of development, the financial input system of basic education shows a gradual upward trend in investment rights. The central and state governments' macro-control and investment guarantee of basic education can guarantee the national standard of education and maintain the unity of educational goals.

The United States government attaches great importance to the reform of teachers' level. Therefore, a balanced flow mechanism has been established to gradually promote teachers level in weak schools and rural schools. In addition, the United States government has actively advocated and encouraged colleges and universities to work closely with local schools and local educational administrative institutions to improve the professional quality of rural school teachers⁹.

In order to solve the problems of the polarization between the rich and the poor and quality difference in education, the United States has established education voucher system. "Education Vouchers" are the tuition fees subsidized by the government and are issued to parents in the form of vouchers. Parents can use educational vouchers to pay for the tuition of the selected school, or the courses chosen by the students or the educational programs they participate in. The issuance of educational vouchers also helps students in low-income families to enjoy equal opportunities.

3) England

In the allocation of education funds, the British central government through the transfer of payment has been able to laterally guarantee the balance of financial capability. Next, the Department of Education directly subsidizes remote area schools and weak schools in the form of special funds for education to ensure the adequacy of the provision of educational resources in these areas.

Britain also adopts the "chain school" model, which enables schools to break the limits of administrative divisions, and cross regional knot to develop. The government provides financial and technical assistance to the development of "chain schools". Chain schools expand cooperation in the sharing of resources, student exchanges, professional development of teachers and other aspects.

In view of the serious differences in rural teachers' resource loss caused by differences in wages and benefits between urban and rural areas the state has set strict wage

⁴ An Xiaomin, Wu Zhuihui. *An Analysis of the Integrated Development Mode of Urban and Rural Education in the Region* [J]. Shanghai Research on Education, 2012, (06) : 18-21.

⁵ Li Hui. *A Comparative Study on the Investment Mechanism of Rural Compulsory Education in China and Japan* [J]. Education and Teaching Research, 2014, (03):24-28+90.

⁶ Wang Yuanjing. *Research on Local Government Debt from the Perspective of Tax-Sharing System* [J]. Economic Research Guide, 2013, (32):172-173+194.

⁷ Chen Yuanhui. *A Probe into the Settlement Strategy of the Binary Separation of Urban and Rural Education -- The Enlightenment of Japanese Teacher's Rotation System* [J]. Teaching and Management, 2009, (15):156-157.

⁸ Wang Yuanjing. *Research on Local Government Debt from the Perspective of Tax-Sharing System* [J]. Economic Research Guide, 2013, (32):172-173+194.

⁹ Guan Songlin. *The Equilibrium Allocation of Compulsory Education in the Region: Problems and Solutions* [J]. Educational Research, 2013, (12):46-51+67.

standards. "Equal pay" makes the basic salary of teachers in different regions roughly the same, which clears the way for the realization of teachers "global mobility".¹⁰

III. AN ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION OF CHENGDU REGIONAL EDUCATION ALLIANCE

A. The Definition of Regional Education Alliance

"The regional educational alliance" is an educational alliance established on the three principles of equality and complementarity, linkage and sharing and characteristic development under the leadership of the administrative department of education under the leadership of education administrative department. It aims at deepening the interactive development of urban and rural education and promoting the balanced development of "three-circle-one" education. It includes two aspects: the first is the regional macro-alliance, that is, regional government level cooperation and joint, and the specific form is "one to one" district education alliance; the second is in the district and county education alliance internal, that is, the cooperation and exchanges between schools, and the specific form includes "one-to-one" school knot alliance, entrust management alliance and "one-to-many" quality radiation alliance.

B. Practice Path Analysis

1) Intercollegiate twinning

a) *Connotation*: In the mutual alliance between the counties, the two schools in a certain period made plans to form a pair of helping each other after they at the same stage through the two-way choice reach a consensus. The interactive exchange of the schools makes the best use and integration of all kinds of resources, and promotes themselves in the reciprocal mutual assistance, thus promoting the optimal development of the two sides. In 2016, the number of pairs of schools in Chengdu amounted to 207 pairs and they located in 11 pairs of counties and cities within the Union "Fig. 1".

Fig. 1. The Total Number of Educational Alliance Pairs in Chengdu.

¹⁰ Li Gen, Ge Xinbin. *The Dilemma and Breakthrough of Performance Salary Policy for Compulsory Education Teachers*[J]. Research in Educational Development, 2014, (04):41-46.

b) *Advantage*: Intercollegiate twinning is the most interactive and intensive approach. It includes the idea of confrontation school collision, teacher teaching and research, school management and student exchange activities and so on. Twinning schools are generally two-way choice and can complement each other. The most important feature of intercollegiate twinning is to achieve mutual development and common progress under the background of mutual radiation.

c) *Deficiency*: First of all, the mutual enthusiasm of the two sides is insufficient. Secondly, the development of the two schools is limited by the resources ability of both sides and the development speed is relatively slow. Finally, the high quality radiation available to the intercollegiate twinning is limited and may be complacent.

2) Leadership and trusteeship

a) *Connotation*: There is no essential difference between leadership and trusteeship in practice, only the trusteeship school is hanging on the brand of leadership school. If they are hanging, they are the leadership school. In the leadership and trusteeship, the management and teaching staff of the quality schools are dispatched to replace the management staff of the original school. Meanwhile, they must redesign the development programs, management, teaching and research activities of the high quality schools. The city has a total of 27 leadership and trusteeship Schools, 16 are commissioned by the management, 11 are led by elite schools.

b) *Advantage*: Leadership and trusteeship has broken through the barrier of cross regional flow of high-quality educational resources to some certain, effectively improved the management level and teaching effect of the aided school, and promoted the speed of the education.

c) *Deficiency*: First of all, leadership and trusteeship in a large extent is a one-way radiation of high quality schools. It's difficult to have two-way interaction. Second, leadership and trusteeship are the highest cost of all paths in a short period of time. Finally, if the managed schools are not flexible enough to use high-quality schools to develop the planning and strategy, and it's likely to come to naught.

3) Elite group

a) *Connotation*: According to the relevant planning of Chengdu, compulsory education stage elite group will be set up in accordance with the promoting principle of "first city, later countryside" and "dividing the spheres and dividing the year". The radiation effects of high quality schools shall be strengthen and simultaneous development of urban and rural schools shall be achieved through "elite school + agricultural school", "elite school + new school", "elite school + weak school", "elite school + private school" and other ways.

b) *Advantage*: Running school by means of collectivization make the radiation field expand continuously, and the quality education coverage is

continuously improved. And it has gradually completed the leap from the extension to the connotation, making the original weak school quality greatly improved. The elite group has developed a number of excellent teachers and management talents for the weak schools, which enable the teachers to grow rapidly.

c) *Deficiency*: First, education “homogenization” problem is prominent; Second, the internal motive force of sustainable development is sufficient; Third, elite schools within the school cohesion is not strong; Fourth, the enthusiasm of the school is not enough; Fifth, elite schools are easy to quick success.

4) Information resource sharing

a) *Connotation*: We should use the information technology to establish a diversified platform. High quality schools share the relevant quality education resources on the platform for weak schools to or discussion, , thus forming a virtuous cycle of resources. By the end of 2016, A total of 568 interactive classrooms have been built and 12711 sections have been taught in distance teaching. 651 resource sharing platform including websites, video service platforms, micro-blog, QQ group, Wechat group have been built "Fig. 2".

Fig. 2. Chengdu City Information Resources Sharing Result Map.

TABLE I. STATISTICAL TABLES OF URBAN AND RURAL CADRES AND TEACHERS OF CHENGDU CITY IN 2016

Time Category	Total number	Within half a year	Six months to a year	A year to two years	Two years to three years	More than three years
Cadre	667	201	166	35	109	13
Teacher	886	310	252	17	15	5

b) *Advantage*: The multi-level teacher exchange has promoted the teacher professional development. Meanwhile, it can also make the teachers face their own problems, open up the vision, learn the outstanding teaching method and the teaching experience and directly impact and improve the quality of teaching. Teachers of two schools jointly research, condense the two schools of wisdom and enhance scientific research ability of the teachers in weak school.

c) *Deficiency*: First of all, the enthusiasm of the teachers is not enough. The second is that the lack of supervision and management lead rotational communication to empty words. The third is that vacancy phenomenon is prevalent in high-quality schools and teacher vacancy becomes a problem. Finally, there will be exclusion between parents and students.

6) Student hand in hand

a) *Connotation*: The whole Chengdu city is carrying out the activity of millions of students hand in hand in city and countryside. In the activity, urban and rural students can exchange and help each other by writing a letter, giving a

b) *Advantage*: The advantage is that the radiation range is large, the efficiency is high, and the resources level is many. Meanwhile, it can promote the self-improvement of schools and teachers and students.

c) *Deficiency*: First of all, there is a higher demand for the initiative of the communication subject and the acceptance subject. Second, the period formed by its effect is long. Finally, the depth of interaction between the various subjects on the platform is not enough.

5) Rotational communication of principal and teachers

a) *Connotation*: Chengdu city fully started principal teacher exchange rotation system. And it vigorously promotes the exchange of teachers and principals between “one circle layer” and “two or three circle layer” , between urban and rural schools, between quality schools and weak schools, between the township central primary school and the village small teaching point. It also implement “school management and appointment” to break the “school ownership” of school on teachers and further promote teacher exchange. In 2016, the total number of cadre and teacher exchanges reached 1553, and specific data were available in "Table I".

friendship card, doing a good deed, exchanging visits, making a phone call, etc. Besides, high quality schools and weak schools through practical courses or remote interaction organize students together to study and discuss and promote students thinking collision.

b) *Advantage*: Student hand in hand activity can make the students in weak schools learn the method and living habits of the students in high quality schools. The classroom interaction between the two places can not only make the collision of thinking, but also enhance the emotional communication and increase the insight and broaden the horizons.

c) *Deficiency*: First of all, remote communication methods require higher information facilities and equipment, and weak schools and students families may be difficult to afford. Secondly, it is very difficult for the two schools to exchange and study on the spot because of the traffic and safety factors in the same city. Finally, the effectiveness of interactive communication between students is low and the

radiation effect is difficult to present. Based on this, schools have made less effort in this respect.

IV. THE OPTIMIZATION OF REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL ALLIANCE MODEL IN CHENGDU

A. Establish A Perfect Education Alliance Twinning Mechanism

We should form the preferential participation mechanism and make the participation in interactive alliances and twinning work become a symbol of school and personal achievement, rather than just finish the tasks under the external pressure; strengthen the free selection mechanism and encourage schools to choose the twinning objective independently; establish the exit mechanism and assess the twinning effectiveness. We should award these excellent performances in the assessment, and can end up the bilateral twinning relationship with these people who have achieved the anticipated target and allow them to have a new twinning application with other schools. We should criticize or rectify the substandard school and can end up the twinning relationship if the cases are more serious "Fig. 3".

Fig. 3. Schematic Diagram of Twinning Mechanism.

B. Improve the Incentive Mechanism of Regional Education Alliance

Improve the incentive mechanism, including treatment incentives, such as protect the basic working funds, issue special allowances, and issue special incentives for preferential schools and individuals encourage schools to adopt the interactive work into school performance evaluation system, enjoy the priority of learning benefits in academic leave and other aspects; develop the incentive mechanism, the remarkable effectiveness of cadres and teachers in alliance work enjoy the priority on appraising the best and first person and job promotion.

C. Strengthen the Co-Construction and Sharing of Regional Educational Alliance Resources

The survey manifests that 49.89% of cadre teachers believes that resource integration should be enhanced in the regional education alliance, which reveals the significance of resource integration and its importance and recognition. 63.23% suggests that the twinning schools should provide resource library such as quality classes, micro courses and other resources in the future. 56.9% selects the experts (famous teachers) resources, and 55.48% chooses teaching courseware, and 51.37% selects school-based curriculum.

D. Improve the Assessment and Evaluation System of Regional Education Alliance

The assessment and evaluation have three stages: initial stage (recognize reality and research problems), medium stage (tracking supervision and dynamic diagnosis) and final

stage (summarize experience and foresee the future by reviewing the past). The staff of the assessment is a district (city) county research center, and can organize a special team of experts. However, the methods of evaluation include investigation method (questionnaire survey, interview investigation), observation method and literature research method. The content of the assessment can include: personnel integration, management integration, resource integration, research and integration, and innovative projects. The implementation of rigorous evaluation is aimed at promoting the active participation of the various executive subjects in the interaction between urban and rural teachers, earnestly accomplishing their tasks and jointly promoting the integration of urban and rural education "Fig. 4".

Fig. 4. Diagrammatic Sketch of Assessment and Evaluation Stage.

V. CONCLUSION

Chengdu city is a national integrated urban and rural comprehensive reform pilot area. Solving the development of urban and rural education integration is the most important. By coordinating the educational resources of urban and rural areas and establishing the educational management mode of regional education alliance, the six main paths are gradually established in practice exploration. Through the thorough analysis of the merits and demerits of the practice path, it plays a positive role in the continuous improvement and promotion of the regional educational alliance model in Chengdu. Optimizing the mode of regional education alliance in Chengdu can not only promote the integration of urban and rural education in Chengdu, but also demonstrate the balanced development of urban and rural education in all regions at home and abroad and promote educational fairness.

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