

Analysis of Development Obstacles and Countermeasures of Primary School Students Voluntary Service: Based on a Survey of Primary Schools in Foshan

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Abstract: Voluntary service is an important way to train primary school students to practice public values. In order to promote the development of primary school students voluntary service, this study analyzes the developmental obstacles and put forward some countermeasures. This study selected one high, middle and low level of primary school in Foshan to observe. And a questionnaire was used. At present, the main obstacles to the development of primary school students voluntary service include the lack of scientific planning of service activities, and the lack of security and effect evaluation mechanism. Primary school students voluntary service should be positioned as the cultivation of social responsibility consciousness and the learning of service ability. To develop primary school students voluntary service, it is necessary to make scientific planning and organization, enrich service forms, establish safety and effectiveness guarantee mechanism, cultivate students' sense of social responsibility and promote students' ability growth.

1. Introduction

There is a growing concern about students voluntary service in schools at all levels. In 2015, the Ministry of Education issued "The Interim Measures on the Management of Students Voluntary Service", which defines students voluntary service as a public welfare behavior in which students volunteer their time, intelligence, physical strength and skills to help others and serve the society without the purpose of getting compensation. Minor students over the age of 10 May apply to be student volunteers with the consent of their guardians. For the first time in the document, the age of the volunteers is regulated, and primary school volunteers are in the public eye. This document stipulates the working organization, organization and implementation of voluntary services, identification and record, education and training, and guarantee of conditions, starting the institutionalization and systematization of student voluntary service [1].

In 2015, the Community Volunteer Committee of China Volunteer Association established the "National Primary and Secondary School Students Community voluntary service Team" and issued the "Proposal on the Participation of Primary and Secondary School Students in Community Voluntary Service". In 2016, the Ministry of Civil Affairs issued "The Opinions on the

Implementation of Voluntary Services in Public Cultural Facilities to Learn from Lei Feng”, which pointed out: "Young students are encouraged to participate in voluntary services within their capacity in public cultural facilities, cultivate their awareness of voluntary services, improve their social practice ability and enhance their sense of social responsibility. ... Minors under the age of 18 May, with the consent of their guardians or accompanied by their guardians, participate in voluntary cultural service activities appropriate to their age and physical and mental conditions [2]." It points out the direction for the content of primary school students voluntary service. “The Guangdong Voluntary Service Regulations”, which came into effect in 2021, also mention that minors can participate in voluntary service activities with the consent of their guardians.

A series of policies related to students voluntary service have been introduced from the national to the local level. Meanwhile, some researchers have explored the ways and methods of primary school students participating in voluntary service based on practical experience [3-5]. So after several years of development, the current situation of primary school students participating in voluntary services? How do students and parents perceive volunteering? What factors are affecting the development of primary school students voluntary services? How to combine voluntary service with the cultivation of future talents of the country? This paper tries to answer the above questions through field research.

2. Research Design

The study takes Foshan as an example. Foshan was selected as the third batch of national pilot cities of "Volunteer City". By the end of 2018, Foshan had more than 860,000 registered volunteers, accounting for 11.5% of the permanent resident population, with more than 10 million hours of voluntary service and more than 2,000 voluntary service groups. In this study, one school was selected from high, middle and low level schools to issue questionnaires. And the questionnaire was distributed to ensure that the respondents of each school were evenly distributed among all grades, and the gender ratio of the respondents was also relatively equal. The questionnaire was divided into student and parent questionnaires to investigate the attitudes of students and parents respectively, and the answers of parents and students could also confirm each other. Finally, a total of 641 questionnaires were collected from students and 785 questionnaires from parents.

In addition to the questionnaire survey, the author also conducted a focus interview. The interview with the parents of students was mainly about the problems found in the questionnaire survey that needed to be further understood. The interview with the teachers is mainly to understand the school's attitude towards primary school students' participation in voluntary service. And from the perspective of teachers, whether primary school students' participation in voluntary service can have a positive effect on the cultivation of primary school students' quality. Finally, we visited the community and interviewed the community staff about the possibility of providing volunteer positions for primary school students.

3. Research Results and Discussion

3.1. Questionnaire Survey Status

3.1.1. Volunteer Infrequently

The frequency of participating in voluntary service is the primary reflection of primary school students voluntary service. As shown in Figure 1, only 3.31% of parents answered that their children often participated in voluntary service, 53.76% occasionally and 42.93% never. Can see from the questionnaire survey, the proportion of parents answer never attend higher, because the

parents more strict definition of voluntary service, but the parents and students answer roughly proportion is the same, more than half of the students are occasionally attending, and more than a third of the students are never attend, often to participate in voluntary service of the students are much rarer.

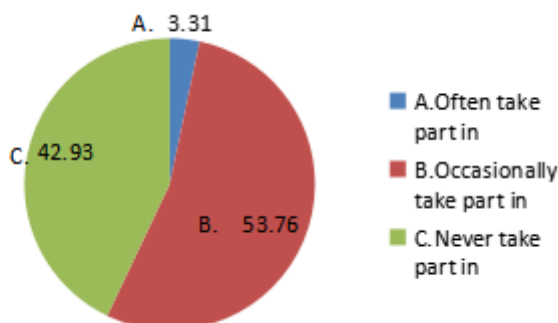


Figure 1: Frequency of voluntary service among primary school students

3.1.2. Volunteer for Shorter Periods of Time

In addition to the frequency of participating in voluntary services, the duration of each voluntary service is also a reflection of the status of primary school students voluntary services. And the length of each service activity reflects the depth of voluntary services to a certain extent. As shown in Figure 2, only 2.93% volunteer for more than 4 hours, 7.64% volunteer for 3-4 hours, 29.94% volunteer for 1-2 hours, and 23.57% volunteer for less than 1 hour. That is to say, most primary school students spend less than two hours in voluntary service, half of them spend less than one hour, and few of them spend more than three hours.

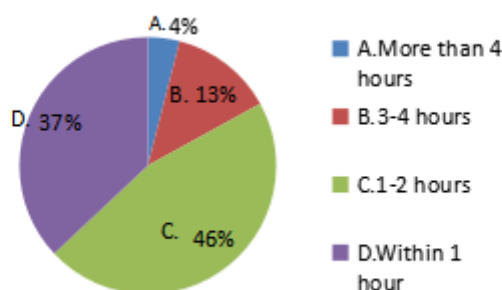


Figure 2: The number of hours primary school students volunteer

3.1.3. There is a Single Preference for Forms of Volunteerism

As shown in Figure 3, the most popular volunteer service among students is charity sale donation, with 77.2% of student respondents most willing to participate in this volunteer service. Environmental cleanliness was second, chosen by 48.8 percent of student respondents. The number of students who chose home visits, pair assistance and docents was about the same (27%, 26.5% and 22.3%, respectively). A further 21.4 percent of student respondents chose a different format. On the other hand, as shown in Figure 4, charity sale donation is also the most popular volunteer service among parents, and 78.9% of the respondents are most willing for their children to participate in this volunteer service. Cleaning the environment was second, chosen by 63.2 percent of parents. The number of parents who chose home visits, pair assistance and docents was about the same, 39.7%, 36.2% and 39.2% respectively. Parents and students ranked the types of services in

almost the same order.

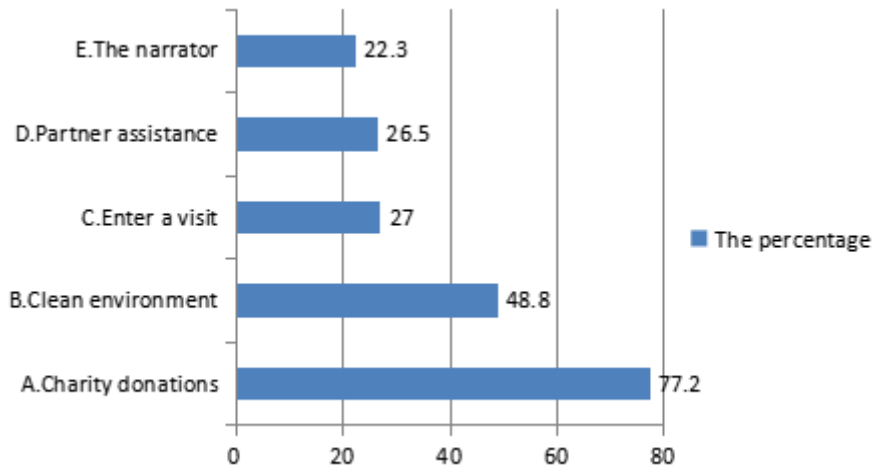


Figure 3: Student preference for forms of volunteering

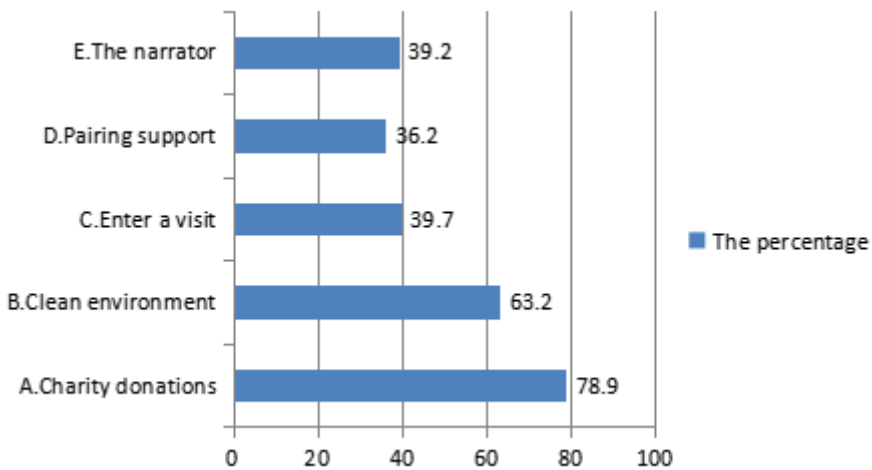


Figure 4: Parent preferences for forms of volunteering

3.1.4. The Value of voluntary service is More Recognized

As shown in Figure 5, for primary school students, being able to help others is the biggest motivation for them to participate in volunteering. More than half of primary school students are also interested in volunteering because of the content. At the same time, the requirements of parents, teachers or the participation of friends also had a small impact on students' participation in voluntary services, which were selected by 17.6 percent and 15.1 percent of respondents, respectively. Only 1.9% did not plan to participate.

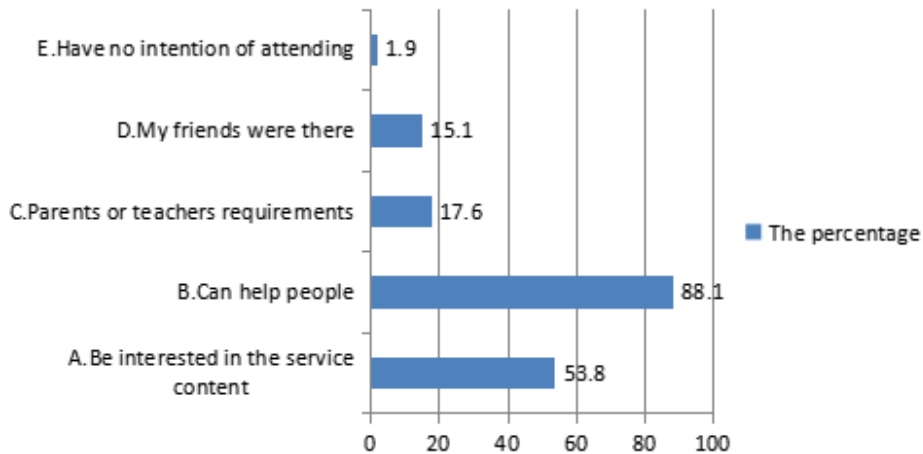


Figure 5: Students' motivation for volunteering

As shown in Figure 6, for parents, the biggest consideration for supporting their children's participation in volunteer service is to let their children learn to be grateful and give back to the society, and 92.4% of the surveyed parents choose this option. In addition, parents also hope that their children can take volunteer service opportunities to participate in social practice 89.4%. In other words, parents may expect more from the content of volunteering. Volunteering is not only to serve the society, but also to let children learn more practical knowledge. On the other hand, a small number of parents let their children participate in volunteer services because of school requirements or policy encouragement, with 15.5 percent and 14.3 percent of respondents choosing these two options, respectively. Parents were even more determined than their children in their desire to volunteer, with only 0.5 per cent saying they did not intend their children to do so.

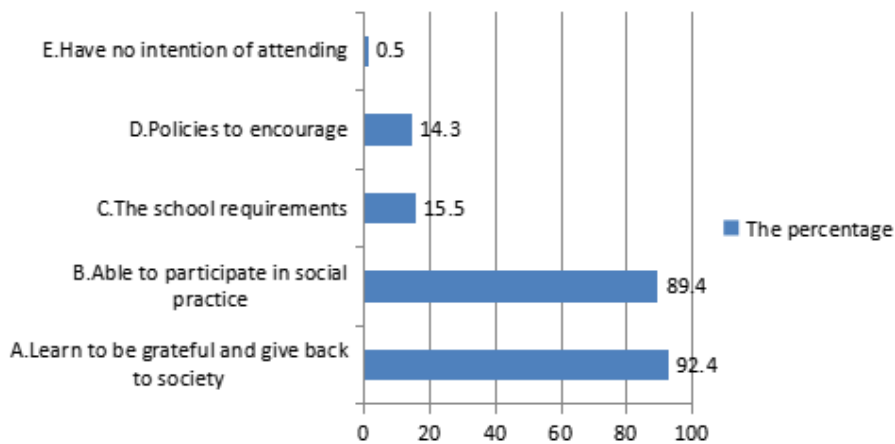


Figure 6: Parents' motivation for volunteering

3.1.5. Factors That Discourage Students from Volunteering

As can be seen from the answers to the previous questions, both students and parents are very willing to volunteer, but why do not so many primary school students actually volunteer? Next, the author investigates the factors that influence participating in voluntary service. As shown in Figure 7, the survey is conducted from the perspective of students. First, whether students know what voluntary service is, the survey results show that only 12.5% of students do not know what

voluntary service is. The second is whether the students are not interested in the content of voluntary services. In the survey results, only 13.1% of the students are not interested in the content of voluntary services. The third question was whether parents prevented students from participating in volunteer services. Only 1.9 percent of respondents said they did not participate in volunteer services because of parental opposition. In other words, the above factors are not the main reason for the low proportion of primary school students participating in voluntary services. According to the survey results, 40.4 percent of students said they wanted to participate but did not know how, and 45.4 percent said they wanted to participate but did not have time. Poor participation channels and insufficient time are the main reasons that hinder primary school students from participating in voluntary services.

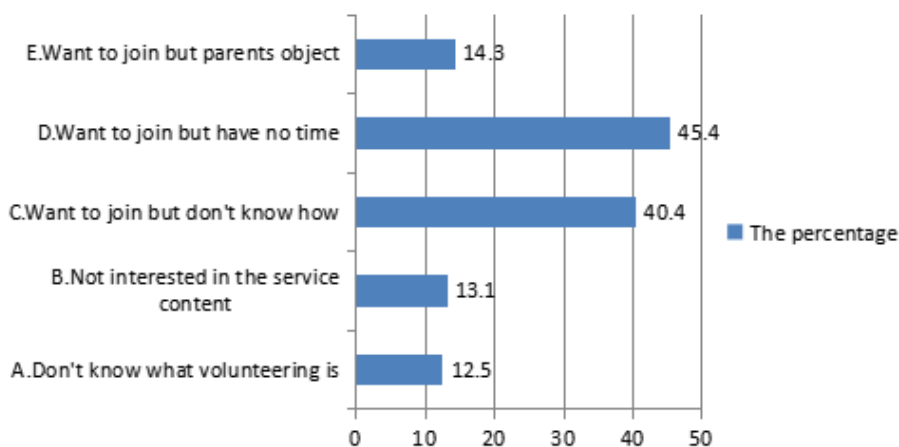


Figure 7: Reasons cited by students as impediments to volunteering

So from a parent's point of view, what are the factors that prevent primary school students from volunteering? As shown in Figure 8, only 13 percent of respondents said their children were too young to volunteer. Only 16.2% of parents said volunteering would take time away from school. Thus, age and study are not the barriers to participating in social services. The survey results show that parents are generally concerned about safety issues, with 61.7% of parents concerned about safety issues. At the same time, 56.7 percent of the surveyed parents think there is no suitable form of volunteer service for primary school students.

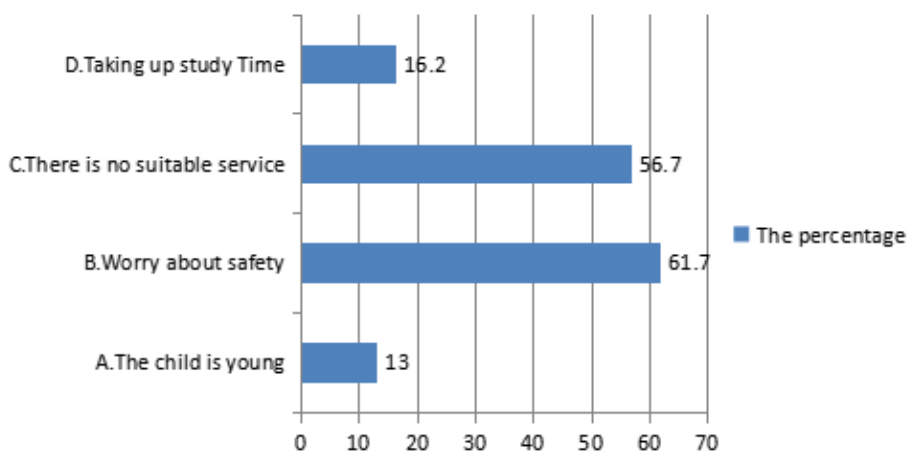


Figure 8: Reasons cited by parents as impediments to volunteering

3.2. Focus Interviews

3.2.1. Interview with Parents

As can be seen from the results of the questionnaire, parents have great concerns about the safety issues and forms of volunteering in the process of volunteering. To get a deeper understanding of parents' concerns, the author invited several parents to conduct interviews. In terms of ability, parents think their children are still young, lack of courage, weak independence ability, and can't participate alone without parents. Parents also think that their children do not have enough knowledge and skills to help others. They hope that their children can have professional training before serving. In terms of safety, parents are not only worried about health and traffic safety, but also generally believe that society is too complex and unpredictable. Children are too young, have a low sense of self-protection and are easily misled. In terms of time, although most parents believe that volunteer service and study are not contradictory, some parents surveyed said that they have too much homework and study pressure. At the same time, parents have limited time, it is difficult to take time to accompany the participation. On the other hand, some parents think that compared with middle schools, primary schools have less homework pressure, there are suitable service activities can still participate.

During the interview, parents raised more questions about organization. First of all, there is no professional team leading the volunteer service, and no one is responsible for safety issues, which requires the attention and guidance of teachers. Second, there is no suitable volunteer group, can trust the voluntary service organization, at the same time, there is no classmate companion, lack of interest in participating alone; Third, volunteer service is not convenient enough, there is no channel to learn information, there are not many opportunities to participate; Fourth, the form of the single, too much attention to form rather than substance, lack of systematic, sustainable, the effectiveness of participation cannot be reflected.

The interviewed parents also pointed out that the current volunteer service publicity is insufficient, there is no atmosphere. Parents can not set an example, the true dedication of the parents are not many. Lacking guidance from parents, schools, etc., some children still don't know what volunteering is. For example, students don't understand why to do it? What is the purpose of volunteering? Some even argue that all the obstacles stem from parents' overindulgence of their children.

3.2.2. Teacher Interview

The surveyed teachers generally approve of volunteering. "It is always happier to give than to give. No matter how much happiness, need to fight for their own, to create. If we can extend this kind of happiness to people in need around us, so that more people can create happiness and enjoy happiness together, this is the most noble spirit of dedication, is the purpose of volunteering. It is the belief of volunteer service providers that there will be harvest if there is effort ". "Children should be trained to care about people around them, observe life more, feel others' feelings more, understand others' difficulties and have empathy, so that children can get exercise in volunteer service".

In addition to the recognition of volunteerism, some teachers have concerns about safety and the definition of responsibility. Some of the interviewed teachers suggested that volunteer service is not the task of compulsory education in schools, and the education department should guide teachers. At the same time, teachers also put forward their own opinions on the form and content of voluntary service, such as the general lack of continuity of voluntary service. If the volunteer service for an elderly person is only once or twice, then the symbolic value is more than practical, and the elderly

will be of little help. If one to one long-term volunteer help can be formed, the practical effect of helping the elderly can be improved, and it is also a new experience and test for students.

3.2.3. Community Interview

For students, the most convenient service place is the community where they live, and the community where they live will be more intimate. Are there any volunteer positions available in the community for elementary school volunteers? With this question in mind, we interviewed social workers who work in community organizations. The social worker said that volunteering is part of the daily service in the community, and it is very important to build a volunteer team in the community. But the volunteers are mainly adults, or college students volunteer, primary school students are mainly some parent-child volunteer activities. The social workers interviewed believe that elementary school students are also very good volunteers, and there are elementary schools in the community, but no one is organizing and tapping into these resources. When it comes to organizing special volunteer services for primary school students in the future, social workers think it is better to organize them together with schools. Because when they do, they usually advise parents to participate because of safety concerns.

3.3. Discussion of Research Results

First, both students and parents agree with voluntary service and have a good sense of social service. They are willing and believe that they should participate in voluntary service.

Second, although both students and parents recognize the necessity of participating in voluntary services, the frequency of primary school students participating in voluntary services is not high at present, and the majority of them are scattered, single and short-term voluntary services.

Third, both students and parents have obvious preferences for the forms of voluntary services, which tend to be charity sales and environmental cleaning. But this preference is based on the judgment that students are not capable enough to perform higher level services.

Fourth, students' participation in voluntary services lacks scientific planning and organization, resulting in fragmented services. At the same time, the lack of job design, ability training, effectiveness evaluation, incentive measures and other arrangements, the effect of voluntary service and the growth of students themselves are difficult to reflect.

Fifth, there is a lack of policy guidance on how to ensure the personal safety of students in the process of service activities and how to define the safety responsibility. Schools and voluntary groups have balked at organizing pupils into volunteering.

4. Suggestions on Promoting the Development of Primary School Students Voluntary Services

4.1. Clarify the Positioning of Primary School voluntary services

Compared with the older middle school students or college students, the primary school students' volunteer service should be defined as the cultivation of social responsibility consciousness and the learning of service ability. First, the cultivation of social responsibility consciousness. The education department prepares the volunteer service manual for primary school students. Volunteer service education should be added in the school's thinking class or comprehensive practice class to enhance pupils' sense of social responsibility [6].

Second, the learning of service ability. In the survey, some students reported that parents and teachers never told them how to volunteer, so they didn't know how to do it even if there was one. It is recommended that students be trained before service activities are carried out. Compared with the

older volunteers who have a comparable level of ability, the primary school volunteers should focus on the development and expansion of their ability.

4.2. Enrich Service Forms and Open Up Service Positions

At present, there are not many posts suitable for primary school students to participate in the service. Therefore, it is suggested that schools can set up some posts within their capacity for students by linking communities, cultural activity venues or voluntary groups. It can be divided into beginner, intermediate and advanced by degree of difficulty. Younger or inexperienced students can start with low-level services. When the quality and frequency of service improves, one can be promoted to a higher level. Higher level students can lead lower level students to serve. With reference to the opinions of parents and the ability of primary school students during the investigation, the following posts can be considered:

A librarian. In recent years, a large number of self-service libraries have appeared around the city, but due to the lack of manpower, the books are damaged and messy. Primary school students can repair broken books and organize them [7].

Pair up with the children of new citizens. At present, a large number of migrant workers entering cities are called new citizens. The children of new citizens come to strange places with their parents and need to integrate into the new environment, so their study is often troubled. Students with higher grades can pair up with them and help them integrate into the new environment while helping them study.

A docent at a cultural site. At present, most of the explanation services in cultural places such as museums need to be charged, and free services are very scarce. Primary school students could be trained and free interpretive services offered to those in need.

Clean homes for elderly people who live alone. There are many elderly people living alone in the daily life of the community, especially the elderly need someone to help clean the home, which is also the work within the capacity of primary school students. For safety reasons, parents can be invited to participate.

4.3. Establish Safety and Effect Guarantee Mechanism

First, establish a security mechanism. Safety is the biggest concern for parents and teachers. Primary school students are too young to carry out service activities alone, and it is difficult to define who is responsible when an accident occurs. Therefore, the author suggests developing a guide book for volunteer service activities. The organizer of voluntary service activities should design the service content before each service, carry out safety education for students participating in the service, and have special personnel responsible for safety work.

Second, change the evaluation criteria of students. Currently, primary school students' participation in volunteer services is not evaluated for the performance of volunteers. Are there any other criteria besides length of participation? The author thinks that the students' performance can be evaluated from the aspects of service attitude, service quality, positive degree and whether they use polite terms. Scientific evaluation can reduce the arbitrariness of service and promote the growth of students [8].

4.4. Establish Appropriate Incentive Mechanism

Incentive mechanisms are roughly divided into two categories: spiritual incentive and material incentive [9]. Spiritual motivation is mainly the use of different kinds of badges, the more famous of which is the Scout organization in the United States. Badges will be differentiated according to

different activities. If you accumulate a certain number of badges, you can advance. The highest level of insignia is the Eagle Insignia, which is awarded instantaneously and in the presence of all scouts and parents. Students and parents consider it a supreme honor [10].

In addition to the mental rewards, there are also a moderate amount of material rewards. For example, a \$4,725 scholarship will be awarded for 1,400 hours of service. Some schools also make volunteering hours a requirement for a diploma [11]. In Singapore, volunteers can enjoy free parking in their service area, and students can also have priority in choosing a university. These are the experiences that can be used for reference when establishing the incentive mechanism of primary school students voluntary service.

4.5. Improve the Organization Degree of Primary School Students Voluntary Service

The primary school volunteer association has been set up, which is specialized in the planning of primary school voluntary services, formulating relevant guidelines, developing service posts, cultivating service capabilities, and designing various guarantee mechanisms. In addition, information related to primary school students voluntary services can be collected, and a unified information release platform can be established.

5. Conclusions

Through the empirical analysis, the main obstacle of primary school students' participation in voluntary service lies in the lack of scientific planning, security and effect evaluation mechanism. To promote the development of primary school students voluntary service in the future, it is necessary to have a clear positioning of voluntary service for primary school students, attract more students to participate in it through scientific planning and efficient organization, cultivate students' sense of social responsibility, and promote the growth of students' ability.

Through the empirical analysis, the main obstacle of primary school students' participation in voluntary service lies in the lack of scientific planning, security and effect evaluation mechanism. To promote the development of primary school students voluntary service in the future, it is necessary to have a clear positioning of voluntary services for primary school students. Through scientific planning and efficient organization, more students will be attracted to participate. In the volunteer service to cultivate students' sense of social responsibility, promote the growth of students' ability.

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