

Research on the Problems and Improvement Strategies of Family Education Guidance in Primary and Secondary Schools

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Abstract: In China, family education plays a crucial role in the development of primary and secondary school students. However, the current guidance for family education faces several issues: unclear responsibilities, singular modes of guidance, and incomplete content. These problems pose challenges for students in their home-based education, limiting their overall development. The inadequacies in family education guidance are also linked to factors such as school education, practical realities, teacher capabilities, and the absence of legal frameworks. Therefore, addressing these concerns and implementing corresponding improvement strategies hold significant importance in fostering the comprehensive development of primary and secondary school students. This article delves into the problems existing in family education guidance for Chinese primary and secondary schools, examines their causes, and proposes strategies for improvement. Research identifies that issues in family education guidance primarily manifest in unclear responsibilities, singular guidance methods, and incomplete content. The roots of these problems stem from improper handling of the relationship between schools and family education, constraints imposed by practical realities on educational practices, inadequate capabilities of teachers in providing family education guidance, and the lack of legal mechanisms holding individuals accountable for family education. To tackle these challenges, suggestions include the update of educational ideologies, strengthening parental involvement in school affairs, establishing parental committees, and enriching the content of family education guidance.

1. Introduction

Family education guidance in primary and secondary schools plays a crucial role in fostering the holistic development of children, aiming to guide them in forming proper learning attitudes, values, and behavioral habits. However, with ongoing societal changes and the continuous evolution of educational ideologies, family education in primary and secondary schools confronts a series of challenges and issues. Presently, family education guidance encounters various dilemmas in practice. On one hand, some parents lack scientific educational philosophies and methods, excessively emphasizing utilitarian educational objectives while neglecting the cultivation of

children's comprehensive abilities and individual development. On the other hand, intensified societal competitive pressures lead parents to overly focus on academic achievements, disregarding the holistic development of their children's physical and mental well-being. Furthermore, the advent of the information age poses new challenges for family education, requiring parents to navigate the influences of emerging technologies such as the internet and social media on their children's growth and to guide them in their proper and beneficial use of these resources^[1].

Family education in primary and secondary schools constitutes a comprehensive and complex systemic undertaking involving multiple factors such as parents, schools, and society. In the current landscape of educational development, it becomes imperative to acknowledge the existing problems in family education guidance and actively seek improvement strategies. This endeavor is not solely for cultivating a more well-rounded next generation but also for constructing a more harmonious and healthy social environment.

2. Issues in Family Education Guidance in Primary and Secondary Schools

2.1 Lack of Clarity in Responsibility for Family Education

With the development of socio-economic conditions and changes in family structures, the roles and responsibilities of parents in their children's upbringing have become increasingly ambiguous. In numerous households, parents or guardians, due to work pressures, time constraints, or other reasons, are unable to comprehensively fulfill their responsibilities in family education. This situation leads some parents to transfer their family education responsibilities, entrusting them to elders, relatives, or relying entirely on schools to assume this role. The ambiguity in the subject of family education responsibility may result in educational deficiencies and neglect of values in a child's developmental process. Absence or negligence of parents or family members might lead children to lack proper guidance in morals, behavioral norms, emotional management, etc., causing issues for them in school and societal life. Moreover, although schools possess specialized advantages in education, they cannot fully replace the intimacy, emotional support, and transmission of family values that family education provides. In such circumstances, children may encounter a gap between family education and school education, impacting their comprehensive and healthy growth. The issues and impacts of family education guidance are as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Issues and impacts of family education guidance

Problem	Impact
Parental work pressure and time constraints	Parents are unable to fully assume the responsibility of family education
Transfer of family education responsibilities	Children may lack proper moral, behavioral norms, and emotional management
Unclear family education responsibilities	May lead to a lack of education and values in children
Schools cannot completely replace family education	Children may face educational gaps and overall healthy growth issues

2.2 Singular Approach in Family Education Guidance

The singular approach in family education guidance is a significant contributing factor to the issues encountered in primary and secondary school family education. Historically, teachers primarily conducted family education guidance through methods such as home visits, phone communication, parent-school interactions, or parental committees. This traditional guidance approach possesses limitations reliant on teachers' time and resources, potentially resulting in

inadequate coverage and exclusion of some parents from effective guidance or their involvement. This method may be insufficient due to inadequate teacher resources or limited time, rendering some parents unable to receive timely and effective guidance and support. Certain parents may find it challenging to engage in school-organized guidance activities due to busy work schedules, inconvenient timing, or other reasons. This singular guidance approach may not be universally applicable to all households. Different families possess diverse backgrounds, cultures, educational beliefs, and needs, which traditional home visits or phone guidance might not comprehensively consider, failing to provide personalized and targeted educational guidance. This singular method also has limitations in its scope, failing to cover a broader range of family education domains. The effectiveness of family education not only relies on school guidance but also requires increased interaction and cooperation among society, media, and parents. A multi-dimensional, multi-channel guidance approach can comprehensively cover various aspects of family education^[2].

2.3 Incomplete Content in Family Education Guidance

Incomplete content in family education guidance constitutes a significant factor contributing to issues in primary and secondary school family education. Family education encompasses more than basic moral education and academic assistance for children; it requires broader coverage, including but not limited to moral conduct, behavioral habits, laws and regulations, environmental protection, psychological well-being, among other aspects. However, due to differences in family environments and the diversity of student personalities, simple educational guidance may fail to meet the needs of different families and students. Educational needs and values differ among various families; some may prioritize academic achievements, while others may emphasize character cultivation or psychological well-being for their children. Therefore, family education guidance content should be diverse, offering personalized advice and guidance based on the needs of different families. Consideration should also be given to students' personalities and characteristics. Each child possesses distinct characteristics, interests, and learning styles; thus, in family education guidance, a detailed understanding and consideration of each child's individuality are crucial in providing tailored guidance suggestions. Family education guidance should also encompass more comprehensive content. Apart from academics, it should address social adaptability, emotional management, interpersonal relationships, and the cultivation of responsibility, among other aspects, all of which are equally crucial for students' future development and growth. The content of family education guidance is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Content of Family Education Guidance

Categorized	Content
Moral fiber	Honesty, integrity, tolerance, politeness, respect for others, etc
Behavioral habits	Self discipline, sense of responsibility, time management, hygiene habits, etc
laws and regulations	Social norms, legal awareness, safety awareness, etc
Environmental protection	Conservation of resources, environmental protection, cultivation of environmental awareness, etc
Mental health	Stress management, emotional regulation, psychological care, self-awareness, etc
Academic performance	Learning methods, focus cultivation, homework habits, exam preparation, etc
Social adaptability	Social skills, teamwork, problem-solving skills, etc
Emotional management	Emotional recognition, coping with setbacks, regulating emotions, etc
Interpersonal relationship	Communication skills, friendship cultivation, interpersonal communication, etc
Responsibility cultivation	Take responsibility, respect agreements, and have the courage to bear consequences, etc

3. Analysis of Reasons for Issues in Family Education Guidance in Chinese Primary and Secondary Schools

3.1 Improper Handling of the Relationship between School Education and Family Education

Both school education and family education play vital roles in shaping students' character, habits, knowledge, and values. However, mishandling the educational relationship between schools and families may lead to various issues, limiting the comprehensiveness and effectiveness of education. Communication gaps and insufficient cooperation between schools and families might exist. Without effective communication channels, the timely sharing of information, student situations, and educational objectives becomes challenging, hindering collaborative efforts in nurturing students. This discrepancy might lead to conflicting information and values received by students from both educational environments, affecting their learning and development. Differences in educational goals and methods between schools and families may arise. If the educational objectives of the school diverge from the developmental direction expected by families, or if there are notable differences in educational methods, it might result in inconsistencies or contradictions in students' behavior, attitudes, and academic performance between these two environments. Schools and families play distinct roles in education, but a lack of clarity in role distribution might lead to ambiguous responsibilities. Attempts by schools to entirely replace family educational responsibilities or families overly relying on schools can result in a lack of educational resources for students between the home and school environments, causing confusion in roles.

3.2 Realistic Factors Hindering Effective Implementation of Educational Practices

The pressures of employment and further education are realistic challenges faced by students and parents. Exam-oriented education remains a crucial pathway for advancement, leading schools and parents to prioritize scores and exam results over the holistic development of students. Educational authorities commonly base school and teacher assessments on exam scores, intensifying exam-oriented approaches. Societal recognition of educational success often revolves around exam scores. In pursuit of social acknowledgment and support, parents and schools tend to emphasize score improvement rather than holistic quality education, perpetuating a vicious cycle of exam-oriented education. Educational reform requires an extended period to materialize, and the dissemination and implementation of new educational ideologies take time. During the initial phases of reform, inertia and the influence of existing systems might make it challenging to entirely alter the current educational paradigm. Parents may aspire for their children to succeed in a competitive society, thus leaning toward prioritizing their children's exam scores. These expectations and attitudes might pose obstacles to educational reform in schools and family education guidance.

3.3 Lack of Strong Family Education Guidance Competency among Teachers

In most cases, teachers receive training primarily in education-related disciplines, which often lack specialized knowledge in family education. Family education encompasses areas such as family psychology, handling family relationships, and communication skills, where teachers typically lack specialized knowledge and training. Family education is highly practical and demands the application of knowledge within actual family settings. However, teachers lack practical experience in aspects related to family education guidance, limiting their ability to provide rich case analyses and solutions within family education guidance. While teachers possess pedagogical skills, they might lack specific guidance skills relevant to family education, such as

communication techniques, listening abilities, and family relationship management skills. These skills are crucial in guiding parents to address educational issues and establish a conducive family educational atmosphere. There are significant differences between school education and family education in goals, methods, and environments. Teachers might lack a deep understanding of these distinct forms of education, leading to an inadequate grasp of the specific situations and needs of families when providing guidance in family education^[3].

3.4 Lack of Accountability in China's Family Education Laws and Policies

In China, the current laws and policies concerning family education lack a clear mechanism for accountability. This absence constitutes a significant reason for the issues present in family education guidance in primary and secondary schools. Although the Ministry of Education released the "Guiding Opinions on Strengthening Family Education Work" in 2015, these guidelines primarily offer suggestions and lack specific, enforceable legal provisions. This circumstance considerably diminishes the normativity and constraints on family education guidance in primary and secondary schools. The absence of accountability mechanisms makes it challenging for the education authorities to effectively manage and control the implementation and supervision of family education guidance. This limitation also restricts the education authorities in regulating schools and teachers effectively.

The legal framework tends to emphasize encouragement and advocacy rather than explicitly defining responsibilities and penalties, thereby exacerbating the problem. Despite regular supervision and inspections, the lack of clear legal stipulations on the responsibilities of schools and in-service teachers who fail to comply with the guidance exacerbates the weak sense of responsibility among relevant educational entities and diminishes the proactive implementation of educational guidance. Hence, there is a need to strengthen the refinement of relevant laws and regulations, specify legal responsibilities in family education guidance, establish a sound accountability mechanism, and enhance effective implementation and supervision of family education guidance in primary and secondary schools, thereby improving educational quality and ensuring holistic student development.

4. Strategies for Improving Family Education Guidance in Chinese Primary and Secondary Schools

4.1 Revise Educational Philosophies and Assume Proactive Responsibility

Revising educational philosophies and assuming proactive responsibility stands as a crucial strategy for improving family education guidance in Chinese primary and secondary schools. In the current educational landscape, schools and teachers need to continually update their educational philosophies and perceptions of their roles, transitioning from traditional knowledge transmitters to more comprehensive educators, focusing on students' mental and physical well-being, moral development, and overall qualities. This shift in educational philosophy should emphasize the roles of schools and teachers in students' comprehensive development. Apart from imparting knowledge, schools and teachers should prioritize students' moral education, emotional intelligence, and social adaptability, fostering innovation, teamwork, and overall qualities to meet societal needs. Local education departments should emphasize the importance of family education guidance responsibilities in policy formulation and implementation, devising more specific and explicit reward and punishment mechanisms. These mechanisms not only require schools and teachers to fulfill teaching tasks but also demand they assume family education guidance responsibilities. Through standardizing systems, setting tasks, reward and punishment measures, etc., schools and

teachers can be incentivized to more actively participate in family education guidance work, ensuring the comprehensive completion of educational tasks^[4].

4.2 Establish Parent Schools and Enhance Parental Qualifications

Establishing parent schools and enhancing parental qualifications represent a significant strategy for improving family education guidance in Chinese primary and secondary schools. Through this approach, schools can communicate more comprehensively with parents, provide a wider range of educational resources, and promote collaboration between schools and families to better guide students' growth and development. Parent schools serve as a platform offering parents learning opportunities. Teachers can systematically introduce the importance of family education, educational philosophies, and methods to parents, enhancing their understanding of education. Additionally, inviting university scholars and experts to conduct relevant seminars can be highly beneficial, enabling parents to delve deeper into issues related to family education, prompting more targeted and scientific approaches to educating their children. Parent schools facilitate positive interaction and communication between schools and families. Through open days and regular exchange activities, parents gain direct insight into educational information from the school and establish better communication and cooperation with teachers, fostering a strong collaborative relationship. This interaction helps parents better focus on and support their children's learning and growth holistically. Teachers play a pivotal role in parent schools. They not only impart knowledge but also help parents understand the school's educational philosophies and methods, guiding them on how to better educate at home. Through subtle influence, teachers can establish closer connections with parents, enhancing the continuity and effectiveness of family education. Therefore, establishing parent schools and enhancing parental qualifications promote positive interaction between schools and families, boost parents' proactive involvement in education, and contribute to the comprehensive growth and development of students.

4.3 Establishment of Parent Committees to Formulate Working Mechanisms

The establishment of a Parent Committee requires clarity in its responsibilities and tasks. This includes, but is not limited to, focusing on school education quality, participating in educational management, assisting in resolving educational issues, promoting family education, and collaborating with the school to formulate relevant policies. Defining these responsibilities aids the Parent Committee in more targeted involvement in school affairs, fostering comprehensive student development. Emphasizing the working mechanism of the Parent Committee is essential for its efficient operation. This necessitates planning and designing from various aspects such as organizational structure, decision-making processes, information sharing, and modes of participation. Schools should regularly convene committee meetings and parent representative assemblies to discuss issues related to school management, educational improvements, etc., and communicate resolutions to relevant stakeholders. It's critical to manage the relationship between the school and the Parent Committee appropriately. While the school should provide support and resources, it also needs to accept suggestions and opinions from the Parent Committee. Establishing a cooperative relationship benefits in maximizing the Parent Committee's role in school education. Regular assessment and adjustment of the Parent Committee's effectiveness are also crucial. Through assessment, deficiencies in their work can be identified and corresponding adjustments and improvements can be made to ensure the effectiveness and adaptability of the Parent Committee's working mechanism.

4.4 Holistic Development Focus: Enrichment of Guidance Content

Within the strategies for improving family education guidance in Chinese primary and secondary schools, enriching guidance content is of paramount importance for comprehensive student development. This strategy aims to expand educational content and approaches to provide parents with more comprehensive and diverse guidance, aiding them in fulfilling their responsibilities in family education. Family education content extends beyond academics and should encompass moral education. Parents can impart socialist core values and the essence of traditional Chinese culture to their children through daily life scenarios, guiding them to develop exemplary morals and positive behavioral habits. This moral education can permeate daily life, gradually instilling correct values in children as they grow. Guiding parents to adopt appropriate educational ideologies and providing scientific learning methods are crucial. Parents can assist children in mastering efficient study methods and techniques, offering advice on time management, aiding in creating study plans, etc., to facilitate more effective learning and growth. Family education should also emphasize practical activities, fostering parent-child interaction through experiences like revolutionary tourism or visiting sites, promoting communication and building positive parent-child relationships.

5. Conclusion

In China, there are various issues with family education guidance in primary and secondary schools, primarily involving unclear responsibility allocation, singular guidance methods, and incomplete instructional content. These problems have arisen partly due to mishandled relations between school and family education, hindrances posed by real-life factors to effective educational practices, teachers lacking skills in family education guidance, and the ambiguity in legal regulations concerning accountability. To address these challenges, a series of improvement strategies should be implemented. Firstly, updating educational ideologies is crucial, fostering an inherent sense of responsibility among individuals responsible for family education. Secondly, establishing parent schools to enhance parental educational capabilities enables them to better engage in and guide their children's development. Concurrently, setting up parent committees and establishing sustainable working mechanisms assist schools and families in better coordinating family education efforts. Lastly, emphasizing holistic development and enriching the content of family education guidance is imperative, not solely focusing on academic achievements but also considering students' overall development. Implementation of these improvement strategies can effectively mitigate the existing issues in family education guidance in Chinese primary and secondary schools, fostering collaboration between schools and families, and providing a better educational environment and support for students' healthy growth.

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