

The Purpose of After-School Education and Its Realization

Lei Yuerong

Taiyuan Normal University, Jinzhong, 030619, China

Keywords: After-school education; after-school education purpose; realization of after-school education purpose

Abstract: According to the conceptual analysis of "after-school education" and "the purpose of after-school education", we believe that the purpose of after-school education refers to the general conception or stipulation of the specification of the quality of students' education, the content and extent of the development of after-school education, based on the needs of the development of after-school education and the development of primary and secondary school students. On the basis of a clear concept of the aims of after-school education, the basic aims of after-school education should include the promotion of the all-round development of primary and secondary school students and the sustainable development of after-school education. The realization of the purpose of after-school education requires a correct understanding of the connotation of the purpose of after-school education and a clear understanding of the core content of the specific purpose of after-school education.

Purpose is what distinguishes human activities from animal instinctive activities, which guides our actions and motivates us to pursue our goals. After-school educational activities also have a purpose, and this purpose guides the work of after-school education. Only by formulating a scientific purpose of education, pointing out the direction for all educational forces, stimulating the self-education of the target of after-school education, and promoting a deep understanding of the purpose of after-school education by all parties can the efficiency of after-school education activities be improved, and the quality of after-school education be enhanced.

1. Definition of the purpose of after-school education

To define the concept of the purpose of after-school education, it is necessary to first analyze the terms "after-school education" and "purpose of after-school education".

1.1 What is after-school education?

The definition of the concept of after-school education at home and abroad mainly has the following two perspectives:

One is the definition from a broad and narrow perspective. The definition from this perspective can be summarized as follows: First, "specialized after-school educational activities". Based on the

basic view that "education in the narrow sense is school education", most researchers refer to the carriers of after-school education as specialized after-school educational institutions. For example, researchers believe that after-school education specifically refers to after-school educational institutions, such as youth palaces and youth activity centers, which carry out diversified educational activities for students.^[1]Second, "planned social education". Japanese after-school education is collectively categorized as social education, also known as planned social education.^[2]

The second is the definition from the perspective of the relationship between after-school education and school education. At present, it can be divided into the following two points of view: first, "non-formal education". It is believed that after-school education is outside of school education, and students need to register for it through enrollment.^[3]Secondly, "formal education activities outside the curriculum". It is believed that after-school education takes place outside the scope of the daily school curriculum.^[4]

Based on the definition of the broad and narrow perspectives, it is mainly from the aspects of educational institutions, objects and implementation scope to screen whether after-school education is "broad" or "specialized", the former is suspected of being confused with social education, and the latter fails to highlight the special characteristics of after-school education. The definition based on the relationship between after-school education and school education points out the essential difference between after-school education and school education in terms of formality, but fails to analyze in depth the essential or inherent attributes that reflect the connotation of after-school education.

As can be seen from the above explanations of after-school education, the targets of after-school education are expressed as "children and youth", "adolescent students" and "minors", indicating that after-school education is mainly for primary and secondary school students (or minors). This indicates that after-school education is mainly aimed at primary and secondary school students (or minors). Summarizing the definitions of after-school education at home and abroad, we believe that "after-school education in the broad sense refers to the influence and educational activities that students are exposed to in the time and space outside of school teaching. After-school education in the narrow sense is a kind of non-formal education, that is, it is carried out by special after-school educational institutions, and it is a diversified educational activity for primary and secondary school students in a purposeful, planned and organized way."^[5]

1.2 What is the purpose of after-school education

The so-called purpose of after-school education refers to the general conception or stipulation of the specification of the quality of students' education and the content and extent of after-school education development based on the needs of after-school education development and the developmental needs of primary and secondary school students. Like other educational activities, after-school education activities are not unplanned and purposeless, but conscious and goal-oriented. Prior to the activity, there are clear expectations and goals as to what qualities should be developed in students and in which direction the after-school educational institution should develop.

It is important to note that after-school education encompasses different levels and types, and its educational aims vary according to the expectations of individuals and groups. From educators, governments, out-of-school educators to students, everyone has their own expectations and propositions about what after-school education should achieve. These purposes are both common and unique, reflecting different perceptions and needs. The aims of after-school education may be proposed by an educator and recognized by the society, or they may be formulated and promoted by the state authorities, or they may be understood at the level of out-of-school educators and after-school education teachers. In pedagogical research, we need to pay attention to the definition

of the purpose of after-school education at different levels, not only at the simple micro level, but also at the level of the society as a whole to study the purpose of after-school education with universal significance.

2. What should be the purpose of after-school education?

The above definition of after-school education in fact includes an understanding of the basic purposes of after-school education, namely: to improve the quality of primary and secondary school students' comprehensive development, to promote the all-round development of primary and secondary school students, and to promote the sustainable development of the cause of after-school education.

2.1 Promoting the all-round development of young people and children

Realizing the all-round development of human beings is the core content of the purpose of socialist education in the new era of China. Promoting the all-round development of children and young people is the concrete embodiment of the Marxist idea of the all-round development of human beings in after-school education. The all-round development of young children is mainly reflected in two aspects:

First, the all-round development of young children means the overall improvement of their quality in ideology and morality, modern concepts, vocational skills, cultural learning, physical health, psychological personality and other aspects. After-school education usually includes culture, art, science and technology, sports and other fields, which can help students broaden their knowledge and improve their cultural literacy and comprehensive quality. After-school education usually focuses on students' autonomy and innovativeness, encouraging students to think independently, make decisions and solve problems on their own, which can cultivate students' autonomy and innovativeness and lay a foundation for their future career development. Through participation in after-school education activities, students can achieve success and accomplishments in their areas of interest, and enhance their self-confidence and self-esteem. This positive self-concept and sense of self-worth can help students better face future challenges and difficulties.

Secondly, the all-round development of young children and adolescents implies the overall improvement of individual modern civic literacy. Through participation in after-school educational activities, students can come into contact with a wider range of social environments and people and gain a better understanding of the social and professional world. These experiences and insights can help students better adapt to their future working environment and improve their social adaptability. The formulation of the aims of after-school education needs to reflect the actual needs of contemporary society, including the requirements for the development of after-school education and for the development of children and young people. In order to adapt to the international and domestic political, economic and cultural development of the new era, the purpose of after-school education must promote the comprehensive quality of children and youth. At the political level, it is necessary to cultivate citizens with a sense of responsibility, a sense of justice and an international outlook; at the economic level, it is necessary to cultivate law-abiding, honest and modern people who know how to develop the economy; at the cultural level, it is necessary to cultivate "cultured people" who are eclectic and inclusive with both a Chinese style and an international spirit; at the social level, it is necessary to cultivate "civilized people" who abide by and practice socialist core values. At the social level, it is necessary to cultivate "civilized people" who abide by and practice the core socialist values.

2.2 Promoting the sustainable development of the after-school education enterprise

The "development of after-school education" is one of the major sources for the formulation of the aims of after-school education, and the sustainable development of after-school education must be a key theme of the aims of after-school education.

Sustainable development refers to a development path in which population, economy, society, environment and resources are in harmony with each other, and which is able to satisfy the needs of the present generation without jeopardizing the ability to satisfy the needs of future generations. From the perspective of time, sustainable development should not only focus on the development of the present, but also take into account the development needs of future generations. From the dimension of space, sustainable development involves all parts of social development, covering economic, political, cultural, social and environmental aspects. Therefore, the sustainable development of after-school education is a holistic and integrated development within a certain spatial and temporal scope, from the present to the future, and from education to the economic, political and social elements.

The essence of sustainable development is development, but never one-sided development. It is a comprehensive development based on the harmony between human beings and nature, and a comprehensive and coordinated development that harmonizes the economy, society, population, resources and environment. Sustainable development involves many factors, including economics, politics, science and technology, culture and ecology. While material development is important, human development is the ultimate goal, and improving the comprehensive quality of people and the civilization of society as a whole is the key to achieving sustainable development. As an important form of organization, after-school education is an inevitable choice for promoting the all-round development of young people and children. Through after-school education, human quality and quality of life can be improved, thus promoting the sustainable development of after-school education.

3. How to realize the purpose of after-school education

Whether or not the purpose of after-school education is realized is affected by many factors, such as facilities, teachers, curriculum development, teaching organization and management. Reasonable development and effective cooperation of the above factors are the necessary conditions for the realization of the purpose of after-school education. Among these factors, the leading, monitoring and evaluating role of the objectives is the most important guarantee of the effectiveness of after-school educational activities. It can be said that the scientific nature of goal design is the most important factor affecting the realization of the purpose of after-school education. Therefore, by correctly understanding the connotation of the basic purposes of after-school education and clarifying the core content of specific after-school education purposes, we can form specific indicators suitable for after-school education activities at all levels and in all kinds of fields, and then reasonably guide the development of activities.

3.1 Correctly understanding the connotation of the basic purpose of extramural Education

The purpose of after-school education refers to the state or result expected to be achieved by the educated through after-school education activities, and it is a stipulation of the overall direction of after-school education. After-school education aims to realize two fundamental purposes: to promote the all-round development of off-campus youth and children and to promote the sustainable development of after-school education. Only through a deep understanding and precise grasp of the concept of the fundamental purpose of after-school education can we effectively

transform the high-level purpose of after-school education into specific after-school education goals, and then contribute to the step-by-step realization of the purpose of after-school education.

Firstly, the main target of after-school education is children and youth, and it should satisfy the real developmental needs of educated people of different ages. In reality, after-school education has long been included in the scope of pedagogy in the form of "supplementary school education", which not only confuses the difference between college students and primary and secondary school students, but also ignores the different educational needs of primary and secondary school students at different ages. How is the "school" of after-school education defined? Is it the "school" of "regular school" or the "school" of "campus wall" in the general sense? Is it a "school" in the sense of "formal school" or a "school" in the general sense of "campus wall"? There is no consensus in the academic community on the above issue. In our opinion, the target group of after-school education includes not only young children such as primary and secondary school students, but also kindergarten and university students, and after-school education should be committed to the comprehensive development of all primary and secondary school students and kindergarten children outside of primary and secondary schools and kindergartens.

Secondly, comprehensive human development includes both individual and social aspects. From the individual's perspective, comprehensive development refers to the joint development of the individual's moral, intellectual, physical, social and other qualities and innate endowments; from the social perspective, comprehensive development should include the individual's comprehensive quality that meets the requirements of individualization and the civic literacy that meets the requirements of socialization. On the one hand, it is necessary to cultivate students' comprehensive quality in terms of knowledge, skills, emotions, attitudes and values through participation in various practical activities and independent learning, so that students can better adapt to the needs of social development and personal growth. On the other hand, it is necessary to cultivate students' sense of social responsibility and civic awareness by guiding them to pay attention to society and others, so that they can become qualified socialist builders and successors.

3.2 Clarifying the core content of specific after-school education purposes

Although the objectives of after-school education are expressed differently at all levels and in all types of after-school education, the "development of children and young people outside the school" and the "development of after-school education" are the two common features of after-school education at all levels and in all types of after-school education, which are the same as the "promotion of the all-round development of children and young people". This is consistent with the basic requirements of the two main purposes of after-school education, namely, "promoting the all-round development of children and young people" and "promoting the sustainable development of after-school education".

First, the development of children and youth in after-school education. "Out-of-school children and young people's development" in terms of content, including ideology and morality, culture and knowledge, physical and mental health, personality development, civic literacy and other aspects of content, specifically, the main include: the first is the development of the personalities of children and young people. Through the provision of diversified educational resources and activities, we meet the interests and needs of students, and help them to discover and explore their own potential and strengths, so as to promote their personalized growth. The second is the development of comprehensive quality of children and youth. Through participation in a variety of practical activities and independent learning, students develop their comprehensive quality in terms of knowledge, skills, emotions, attitudes and values, so that they can better adapt to the needs of social development and personal growth. The Third is the cultivation of innovativeness of young children

and adolescents. After-school education encourages young people to try new things and explore unknown fields, stimulating their innovative spirit and creativity. This kind of education is conducive to the cultivation of young people's innovative thinking and practical ability, laying a foundation for future scientific and cultural development. Overall, the purpose of after-school education is to promote the all-round development and personalized growth of students, so that they can become idealistic, capable and responsible future builders and successors.

Secondly, the development of after-school education. The development of after-school education covers the environment, organization and culture of after-school education. As an important part of community culture, the development of after-school education is actually the construction of after-school education culture. The development of contemporary Chinese society is mainly centered on the construction of "learning community culture", and the development trend of after-school education is also centered on the community, which reveals that after-school education should be committed to promoting the establishment of after-school education learning organization and the formation of lifelong learning culture.

Under the background of building a "learning society", "learning communities" and "learning after-school education positions" have become important goals for community education and after-school education. Learning organizations have common goals, mutual learning and creativity. The fundamental sign of learning after-school education is the formation of after-school education learning culture, which is deeply rooted in after-school education organizations and members, and embodied in a strong sense of learning and conscious action. Therefore, after-school education should focus on building a learning organization with a common vision, team spirit and creative vitality, and on forming a lifelong learning culture that includes such elements as "learner-oriented, independent learning, lifelong learning, organizational learning, innovative learning and enjoyable learning".

Acknowledgement

Firstly, "Research on the Development and Utilization of Community Moral Education Resources for Primary School Students", Shanxi Province Education Science "14th Five Year Plan" 2022 Annual Planning Project, No. GH-22093;

Secondly, "Research on the Integrated Development of Moral Education in Schools, Families, and Communities for Shanxi Junior High School Students under the Learning Society Vision City", the 2023 Special Project on Graduate Education Reform of Taiyuan Normal University, titled "Basic Education Teaching Reform Project", with reference number YJSJCJY-2362.

References

- [1] Zhang Yincheng. *Extracurricular and Extramural Education* [M]. Beijing: Beijing Normal University Press, 1997: 20.
- [2] Specialized Committee on after-school education for Children and Youth, China Education Society. *Modern after-school education* [M]. Beijing: China Children's and Teenagers' Publishing House, 2001: 2.
- [3] Xie Weihe. *Sociological Analysis of Educational Activities* [M]. Beijing: Educational Science Publishing House, 2000: 256.
- [4] Lu Naigui. *The Development of Adolescents--An Introduction to the Nurturing Role and Function of after-school education* [J]. *Youth Studies*, 2002(7): 29-38.
- [5] Hou Huaiyin, Lei Yuerong. *Analysis of "after-school education"* [J]. *Educational Science Research (Education Science Edition)*, 2017(5): 27-31.