

Research on Inclusive Education for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Children in Southern Jiangxi

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ABSTRACT

This article describes the characteristics of autism spectrum disorder (ASD), and analyzes the development status of inclusive education for ASD children in Southern Jiangxi and the difficulties that may be encountered in the implementation based on the development status of inclusive education for such children both in China and foreign countries.

Keywords: Southern Jiangxi, autism spectrum disorder, inclusive education

I. INTRODUCTION

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), also known as autism, mainly has manifestations including language disorder, social disorder and stereotyped behavior. The number of incidences ranks first in children with mental disabilities in China [1]. The latest "Report on the Development of China's Autism Education and Rehabilitation Industry" released in 2015 clearly pointed out that the current incidence of autism in China is as high as up to 1%, and the cause has always been a mystery, and there are no effective drugs. So, the present good treatment method is depending on long-term rehabilitation training to help the child patient gradually improve in order to adapt to normal social life. With the increasing rehabilitation needs of autistic children, pure institutional rehabilitation can no longer meet the daily needs of autistic children, and inclusive education gradually becomes the mainstream of the development of special education in the world.

The so-called inclusive education refers to letting children with special needs enter ordinary classes and receive education, maximize their potential, and grow together with ordinary children, rather than simply studying in regular class [2]. Inclusive education creates opportunities for ASD children to interact with normal children, can improve their social communication skills, imitation skills, language communication skills, reduce behavioral problems, promote their emotional expression, and improve such core problem as ASD social disorder, but the extensive development disorder of such children also poses a huge challenge to inclusive education. In recent years, China has promulgated and updated the "Special Education Promotion Plan" and "Regulation on Education for the

Handicapped" and other regulations that support special education. However, due to different provinces and regions have different social, economic, and cultural conditions, the specific implementation effect is also different and difficulties may be encountered. Based on the development of inclusive education for ASD children both in China and foreign countries, this article analyzes the current situation of the development of inclusive education for such children and the difficulties that may be encountered in the implementation.

II. CURRENT STATUS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR ASD CHILDREN IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES

Foreign countries attach great importance to the inclusive education for ASD children, and those taking the initiative to attach importance to the education of ASD children are developed countries such as the United States and Britain. Yang Xijie (2014) investigated the current education situation of autistic children in the UK and found that the inclusive education for ASD children in the UK had three characteristics, including multi-modal school running mainly based in inclusive education and placement, emphasizing providing support as per such children's needs, respecting their parents' will, and paying attention to policy guidance and resource allocation. However at present, ASD children are vulnerable to peer bullying and teachers are lack of the knowledge and skills to teach ASD children, so that ASD children become the group of students having the highest dropout rate in the UK. The United States has had a complete teaching system for ASD children's education and training. The inclusive education has four modes including consulting mode, team teaching mode, assistant mode, and limited removing mode. Although the mode system is very complete, it requires too much

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resource consumption, and inclusive education is generally only used in public education practically, and the acceptance level is also very low. In Japan, the inclusive education is also borrowed the four modes used in the United States. In Finland, non-full-time special education is adopted. The children receive the same education in ordinary classroom in most of the time, and receive special education only in the remained special time. This way reduces the diversity of students and belongs to a relatively simple and economical practice. In Switzerland, working group approach is adopted, and the assignment of teachers and personnel for special classes is under independent allocation and jurisdiction by local governments [3].

III. CURRENT STATUS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR ASD CHILDREN IN CHINA

At present, the rehabilitation of ASD children in China still mainly relies on the combination of family care and social institutions. Institutional rehabilitation education has been developed sufficiently. Xiong Jinmei (2017) mentioned that the overall status of inclusive education in China was not optimistic. For the first time, the "Five-Year Work Outline for the Disabled in China" issued by the Seventh Ministry and Commission of the State Education Commission clearly proposed the term of "studying in regular class", which can be regarded as the origin of inclusive education in China. Although there are isolated rehabilitation training institutions or 6 types of placement modes including special education school, fully studying in regular class, studying in regular class with accompany of parents or special person, semi-accompany studying in regular class, full-accompany studying in special education class and specially-arranged class, it just solves the education problems of children with mild ASD. There are still large number of ASD children whose education problem cannot be solved.

China gradually attaches importance to the research on ASD children's inclusive education. Zhang Lili's (2015) research found that after providing ASD children with guided education and inclusive education, their social, self-care, and language communication abilities are effectively improved. In addition, from the perspective of economics, the promotion of inclusive education can reduce education expenditures, especially can reduce the burden of ASD children's families with financial difficulties. From a sociological perspective, Zhang Lili (2017) found that inclusive education can reduce the stress and depression levels of parents of ASD children, reduce social problems caused by emotional and behavioral problems of ASD children, and enable them to create greater value for the society. Hence, it can be seen that inclusive education creates opportunities for ASD children to interact with normal children, can help improve their social communication

skills, imitation skills, language communication skills, reduce behavioral problems, promote their emotional expression, and improve such core problem as ASD social disorder. But the extensive development disorder of such children also poses a huge challenge to inclusive education.

Some developed regions in China have carried out inclusive education and gradually improved related policies. Zhong Jieqiong (2019) found that Hong Kong, China classified all students by culture, language, and ability, and then arranged them to study in such classes as in line with the special needs of special students and implemented a three-tier support framework model "recognition optimized teaching support, additional aid, professional and expert support" in the principle of "protecting dignity, accepting everyone, respecting rights and active participation"; since the 1870s, many educational policies began to be issued in succession, such as "early identification, early support, whole-school participation, home-school cooperation" and other policies; account management specific for support subsidiaries was set up; each school was required to arrange at least 10% of the teachers to receive a 30h basic course training so as to create a suitable education environment for students, formulate individual education scheme and guarantee an effective education. Even so, Hong Kong still has insufficient resources for inclusive education, uneven distribution of campus capital, and some schools have shortage in such resources [4]. Lian Xiang (2015) found that Macao included special education in the Macao education system, set up a special education working group, gave students with physical and mental development disabilities corresponding hardware support, curriculum arrangements, class arrangement, etc., and the society gave ASD children attention and support. Even with high degree of learning support, there were still some shortcomings: for example, teachers mainly received short-term training, there are few full-time learning forms, and the service model is single.

IV. DIFFICULTIES IN IMPLEMENTING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR ASD CHILDREN IN SOUTHERN JIANGXI

Southern Jiangxi, as an old revolutionary area, is an economically underdeveloped area. Due to historical and objective reasons, the area previously paid insufficient attention and support to special education. As the revitalization and development of Soviet Area in Southern Jiangxi has become a national strategy and promoted the rapid development of Jiangxi's economy and society, more and more attention is paid to special education. For example, in the rehabilitation of ASD children, some rehabilitation institutions have been established one after another. For example, Ganzhou Huicong Children's Rehabilitation Center, Ganzhou

Third People's Hospital set up special ASD rehabilitation clinics, etc., to provide interventions and sensory and exercise training for ASD children. But there are some issues worthy of attention. First, the cost of rehabilitation is very high. Except for the national subsidy of 12,000 Yuan a year, it is difficult for ordinary families to bear. Second, studies have shown that placing ASD children in an isolated environment, namely in a rehabilitation institution, to receive one-on-one rehabilitation training will increase their challenging behaviors, and be difficult to promote the recovery of their social communication ability. Third, although the government proposes to treat studying in regular class in ordinary school as the subject, special education school as the backbone, and "teaching at home" as a supplement and the relevant policies are being implemented, and the enrollment rate of school-age children having three types of disabilities is increasing year by year, the implementation of ASD children inclusive education in Southern Jiangxi mainly has the following difficulties due to the extreme shortage of special teachers, the rejection of parents of normal children, and the concern of ASD children's parents about the inclusive education effect and the like problems:

A. Educational concept of children's parents

Special education schools in Ganzhou mainly include rehabilitation institutions and special education schools. Hou Dan (2018) surveyed the willingness of parents of special children in Ganzhou to send their children to ordinary schools. It was found that nearly 60% of the parents reckoned that they were willing to send their children to ordinary schools if conditioned. This part of parents hoped that their children could enjoy the same educational treatment as many normal children. They also agreed that sending their children to ordinary school would be helpful to the recovery of the children's ASD. Only 20% of the remaining parents were reluctant to send their children to ordinary schools to receive inclusive education, because they were worried that their children would encounter incidents such as discrimination and bullying on campus, and thought that their children may not be able to keep up with ordinary children and lead to backwardness. There were also some parents who believed that ordinary school education could not meet the needs of their children for special education [5]. For parents of normal children, most of them have not that high degree of acceptance towards ASD children. Some parents think that including ASD children into ordinary class will have an impact on the quality of normal teaching, and that they will drag down the overall level of learning of the class. Due to the prejudice against ASD children, they reckon that their children may be negatively affected in learning, mood and personality development.

B. Ordinary school has low degree of acceptance towards special children

Although there are policies requiring ordinary schools to accept special children, ordinary children in schools cannot accept special children very well, and they still have a certain degree of discrimination against such children. ASD children have insufficient ability in communication and expression, which will directly affect their interaction with normal children in ordinary schools. And in Ganzhou, ordinary schools lack professional resources and teachers or special-need teachers, and cannot provide corresponding hardware equipment and rehabilitation facilities. According to the research on the attitude of ordinary school teachers towards the inclusive education of ASD children, only 30% of ordinary school teachers support ASD children participating inclusive education; 87.3% of teachers think that they do not have enough confidence and ability to teach such children, and cannot have enough control and understanding of the behavior and performance of such children. This will also bring a certain degree of pressure to ordinary teachers.

C. Few policy support for special education

Southern Jiangxi implements special education only in accordance with the "Special Education Promotion Plan (2014-2016)" issued by the state for special education, but this Plan doesn't mention about "inclusive education". There is neither sufficient financial support for inclusive education nor enough legal protection for special children, and the number of relevant regulations issued is small. In addition, special children have to go through a lot of formalities to enter ordinary school for inclusive education. The tedious process of handling the formalities is also a major reason hindering the development of inclusive education.

D. ASD patients' own problems

Most ASD children are generally lower in intelligence than normal children. In ordinary teaching of ordinary courses, they may not be able to keep up with ordinary children, which will bring them more sense of frustration and increased sense of inferiority.

V. CONCLUSION

Above all, there are still some difficulties in the implementation of inclusive education for ASD children in Southern Jiangxi, mainly because most ordinary schools have extremely scarce special resources so that it is impossible to provide effective treatment for special children by infrastructure. Secondly, the lack of teachers with professional special education knowledge and rehabilitation knowledge makes it impossible for each school to allocate resources for special education. Furthermore, in the

education concept of both parents of special children and parents of ordinary children, they do not accept the inclusive education somewhat. Therefore, in the future, it is needed to put forward measures adaptive to the local conditions from multiple perspectives based on a comprehensive consideration of the historical tradition, customs and cultural characteristics of Southern Jiangxi.

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