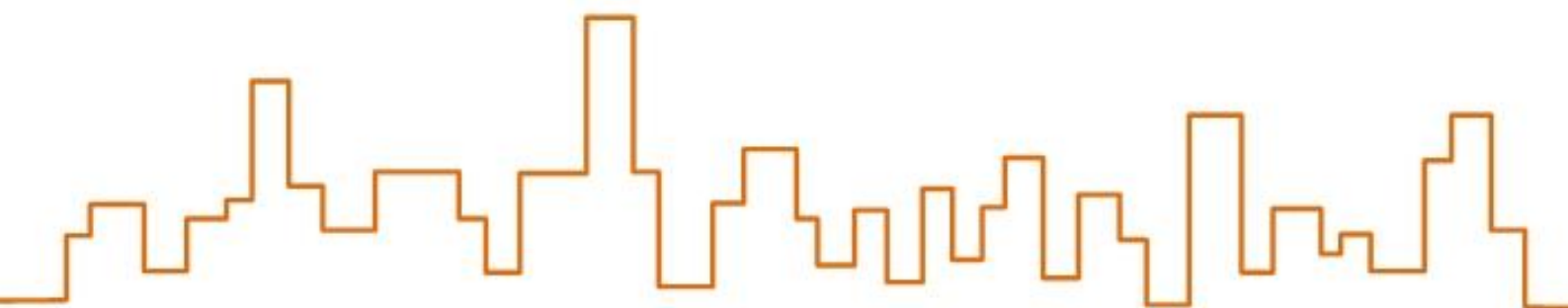


Chengdu Pujiang Research Report

--The New Role of Flexible Basic Education Mergence in
Promoting Basic Educational Resources

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The spatial layout of education, especially basic education, is essentially the problem of balanced layout of high-quality educational resources, its root lies in the contradiction between educational institutions spatial layout and population flow, also lies in the scarcity of high-quality educational resources, that is, high-quality educational resources are always concentrated in the more developed cities, so that to attract more students into cities. In the process of urbanization, this problem becomes more prominent, and brings many problems, for example, rural and township primary and secondary school teachers surplus and teacher structure deficiencies coexist, the average age of teachers is too advanced, their education level is lower, farmers resist schools mergence, the school daily management is problematic and so on. Current research more focuses on the impact of the spatial layout of basic education on providing education public goods, especially a series of problems caused by merging schools (Wu Zhihui, Shi Ningzhong, 2012), in fact, uniform mergence policy will certainly adversely affect the delivery of local social public services (Wang Dongmei, 2013), but does the space changes caused by merging schools only bring negative effect? From the research of Chengdu Pujiang, when the means is more flexible, spatial layout changes can generate additional positive effects.

As for current studies, when the spatial layout changes of rural primary and secondary schools are concerned, the researchers' attention is more focused on the impact of spatial layout changes on the efficiency of public service delivery, as well as on the methods for improving spatial layout changes. In the former case, the spatial layout changes of basic educational institutions have significant impact on educational process at least in the short term, for example, the education spatial changes caused by basic educational institutions spatial layout adjustments bring about changes of the wishes of education, students' psychological changes, and drop out of some students, management problems caused by student mix in different areas within the region in short term, meanwhile, the fact that schools gather in cities results in the number of students expands, which brings many difficulties to teaching quality and management (Wu Zhihui, Shi Ningzhong, 2011; Yu Haihong, 2012). In addition, according to research conclusion of Lei Wanpeng (2012) on China's 11 provinces, basic education spatial layout adjustments have negative effects on diverse family education needs, on the whole basic education spatial layout adjustments have significant impact on education benefits, social benefits, etc. Although many scholars mention unbalanced school scale caused by uniform school mergence policy, they note unreasonable township school resources allocation we have seen in Pujiang, few studies mention cases of flexible disposition of basic educational institutions on existing educational resources, this endows our research on Pujiang education with strong practical significance.

1. This change is based on the research of three master's thesis of He Xinxiang (2007), Fang Juan (2012) and Liu Biying (2012).

2. Benefit researchers did more qualitative research, for example, Fan Yongkun, Wu Zhihui (2013); Wu Zhihui, Shi Ningzhong (2012) did research on impact of means and policies of educational institutions layout adjustments on education benefits and social benefits.

Pujiang is a remote county of Chengdu, according to planning of Chengdu, it belongs to "third-tier city". It is more developed in agriculture, but its industry is in the early development stage. In the county, the environment is beautiful, population density is low, so the effect of school mergence is relatively small, but there are still contradictions between structural shortage and overall redundancy of educational resources in town level schools. Pujiang educational innovations are in two aspects, one is merging community schools and compulsory schools, the compulsory schools' principals serve as principals of community schools at the same time; the other is using compulsory education resources to promote community education, in Pujiang it is called "pushing down the school fence", we may take Chengjia School as an example.

Chengjia School is located in Chengjia Town, Pujiang County. Currently tea cultivation and manufacture are its major industries. In the research, we learned that the renowned Chengjia "Queshe" tea is not its native species, the early tea quality can not meet market requirements, as for companies, it is expensive to promote new tea varieties among farmers in large scale. It is noteworthy that as a compulsory educational institution, Chengjia School plays a key role in tea breeding. In the early development stage of Chengjia tea, Chengjia School became a contact between companies and farmers. According to interviews, the specific process can be simply described. Because of the responsibilities of community education, the principal of Chengjia School found tea companies and hoped them to help Chengjia community school to train the farmers. Since Chengjia School and compulsory education school are in one, it can use its influence on students' parents to reduce the cost of training, and the risk companies take in the process is almost zero. As the farmers soon found that training may significantly increase their income, they began to ask for planting new varieties, as a result, the transaction cost between companies and farmers was greatly reduced. New tea was quickly promoted and training cost of companies on farmers on cultivation, picking, frying was further reduced. On this basis, Chengjia School cooperated with companies to promote tea culture education, and introduced it into compulsory education, which enhanced the diversity of compulsory education. Overall, Chengjia School through promoting the linkage of companies and farmers, formed close contact of companies, farmers (families), communities and education, thereby reducing transaction cost between companies and farmers, promoting local economic development.

Analyze from the interview results, the reason why Chengjia School can play a role in local economy has several reasons, one is policy, as compulsory education school principals serve as community school principals, they have motivation and rights to make flexible use of compulsory educational resources (mainly parents and schoolhouses); the second is the local environment, the number of local students in Chengjia is less, the burden of compulsory education is lighter, meanwhile local natural condition is good for planting commercial crops; the third is, Chengjia School principal and Pujiang educational system have a strong sense of active innovation. We found in our research and interview that Chengjia School is only one aspect of Pujiang community education. Pujiang community education is innovative in training methods and training content.

Of course, limited by research time and the level of researchers, this research has many deficiencies. First, limited by research time, this research can not fully know about all the features of Pujiang education. Second, because of lacking sufficient

evidence, we can not comprehensively describe the effect of Pujiang community education, especially whether community education and compulsory education have adverse effects on compulsory education when they are placed in the same institution, for this we do not get more direct evidence. Third, affected by the limitation of the interview itself and lacking of more first-hand information, we lack depth understanding on the actual development process of Pujiang education, which makes this research still not enough in general, and prevents it from promotion. Nevertheless, Pujiang education still has reference significance in flexibly using educational resources by combining local special conditions so that to promote urbanization. In accordance with the "comprehensive education" philosophy launched by Pujiang Education Bureau, no longer stick to the traditional functions of education at all levels, combine education of various types and at all levels, and this will be a very important power and grantee to promote urbanization.

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