

Research on Professional Development of Rural Teachers in Zhanjiang City Based on SWOT-PEST Analysis

Kanda Pan^{1,2}, Chunlei Su^{3*}

¹Lingnan Normal University, Zhanjiang, China

²Emilio Aguinaldo College, Manila, Philippines

³Zhanjiang Preschool Education College, Zhanjiang, China

Email: *15768506941@163.com

How to cite this paper: Pan, K. D., & Su, C. L. (2023). Research on Professional Development of Rural Teachers in Zhanjiang City Based on SWOT-PEST Analysis. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 11, 418-427. <https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2023.113030>

Received: February 20, 2023

Accepted: March 28, 2023

Published: March 31, 2023

Copyright © 2023 by author(s) and Scientific Research Publishing Inc. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0).

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



Open Access

Abstract

Under the background of rural revitalization strategy, the key of rural education revitalization lies in the construction of rural teachers, and the key of rural teacher team construction lies in the professional development of teachers. Based on the SWOT-PEST model, from the micro and macro perspective, combined with the current politics, economy, society, technology analyzes the internal advantages and disadvantages, and external opportunities and threats, which adheres to the principle of “play advantages, overcome disadvantages”, from strengthening school-based research, relying education informatization, building teacher education community, choosing the best and matching the school administrators putting forward the corresponding SO strategy, ST strategy, WO strategy and WT strategy.

Keywords

Rural Teacher, SWOT-PEST Model, Professional Development

1. Introduction

According to a press conference of the Ministry of Education, there were about 3.3 million rural teachers in 2022, accounting for about a quarter of the total number of teachers. This group of rural teachers plays an important role in the education cause of our country. As a third-tier city, the level of economic development in Zhanjiang is relatively behind in Guangdong, scattered with many remote rural schools. According to statistics, there are about 70,200 full-time teachers in basic education in Zhanjiang City, with more than 25% of rural

teachers, among them, 5027 are in kindergartens, 11,746 in primary schools and 1395 in junior high schools (Zhanjiang Daily, 2021). Generally speaking, rural teachers in Zhanjiang City are relatively weak in educational level, teaching ability, educational information literacy and teaching and research ability. The professional development of rural teachers mentioned in this paper refers to the whole process in which rural teachers gradually master their professional knowledge, improve their professional ability, and constantly internalize their professional beliefs, starting from receiving teacher education until becoming excellent rural teachers (Zhu, 2016). The research on the professional development of rural teachers in Zhanjiang city is of great significance. It can give the countermeasures to improve the professional development of rural teachers through the action research based on the current situation.

2. Basic Structure of the SWOT-PEST Model

SWOT analysis, also known as situational analysis, is a strategic analysis method proposed in the early 1980s by professor Wehrich at the University of San Francisco. The model analyzes according to its established internal conditions, and finds out its advantages, disadvantages and core competitiveness, where S represents strength, W represents weakness, O represents opportunity, and T represents threat. S and W are internal factors, and O and T are external factors.

PEST analysis method is a macro-environment analysis method, in which P refers to the political environment, E refers to the economic environment, S refers to the social environment, T refers to the technical environment, through the evaluation of the listed factors have an impact on the enterprise development strategy.

SWOT analysis focuses on the analysis of the internal micro environment, while PEST analysis focuses on the external macro environment. From a comprehensive perspective, the SWOT-PEST model systematically analyzes the advantages and disadvantages of an organization in politics, economy, society and technology, as well as the opportunities and threats it faces, so as to form the SWOT-PEST analysis matrix (see **Table 1**) and find out the key influencing factors so as to obtain the decision scheme (Liu & Xiao, 2011).

Table 1. The SWOT-PEST analysis matrix.

SWOT-PEST model		Politics P	Economy E	Society S	Technology T
Internal factor	Strength S	SP	SE	SS	ST
	Weakness W	WP	WE	WS	WT
External factor	Opportunity O	OP	OE	OS	OT
	Threat T	TP	TE	TS	TT

3. SWOT-PEST Analysis of the Professional Development of Rural Teachers in Zhanjiang City

3.1. Advantages of Professional Development of Rural Teachers in Zhanjiang City (Strength)

3.1.1. Political Advantage (SP)

In recent years, in order to solve the imbalance of supply and demand for rural teachers and optimize the pre-service training and post-service training of rural teachers, Guangdong Provincial Party Committee and Government have successively issued the “Rural Teacher Targeted Training Plan”, “Guangdong Province Millions of Talents Training Project” and “Action Plan for High-quality Development of Basic Education”. The education authorities of all counties and districts in Zhanjiang city responded positively and applied for the targeted training plan for the rural teachers according to the local conditions, injecting “new blood” into the rural teachers.

3.1.2. Economic Advantage (SE)

It is understood that from 2012 to 2021, China’s compulsory education on the basis of achieving a comprehensive popularization, only in about 10 years to achieve the basic balanced development of counties. At a press conference in June 2022 of the Ministry of Education, Lu Yugang, director of the Department of Basic Education of the Ministry of Education, said that the government spending on compulsory education has increased from 1.17 trillion yuan to 2.29 trillion yuan from 2012 to 2021, accounting for more than 50 percent of the state’s government investment in education (*The Ministry of Education, 2022*). In addition, the Guangdong provincial government continues to implement the “post refund policy” for undergraduate graduates to teach in rural schools.

3.1.3. Social Advantage (SS)

Rural schools are small, with a small number of teachers and simple interpersonal relationships, which is conducive to the formation of harmonious and cooperative relations between teachers and facilitate teaching and discussion activities (*Long, 2021*). Rural schools are usually located in the administrative villages in towns and towns. Under the background of the rural revitalization strategy, through the party’s education and assistance work, the vast majority of the villages in Zhanjiang area have simple folk customs, and respecting teachers and valuing education has increasingly become a new fashion. It is understood that from the school management to the ordinary teachers’ salary will not be too different, and both the school leaders and middle managers have to concurrently class and even serve as the head teacher work. Such a working situation helps to promote the communication between school administrators and ordinary teachers, and build a good working atmosphere.

3.1.4. Technical Advantages (ST)

The professional development of rural teachers includes both teaching and re-

search ability and information technology literacy. At present, the technical advantages of rural teachers in Zhanjiang city are reflected in the construction of pilot schools of “information technology application”. With the guidance of national macro policies and the development of Zhanjiang rural revitalization plan, some rural schools will have more opportunities to become the application field of emerging teaching tools such as “big data” and “remote classroom teaching assistance”, in which rural teachers will inevitably be trained.

3.2. Disadvantages of Professional Development of Rural Teachers in Zhanjiang City (Weakness)

3.2.1. Political Disadvantages (WP)

Due to their work and living in the grass -roots administrative village, rural teachers are far from the vision of local education administrative agencies. Under the same conditions, they will get less care. In addition, influenced by the traditional social vision, rural teachers are often regarded as having insufficient ability to teach in rural areas. They are at a corresponding disadvantage in the allocation of life and political resources.

3.2.2. Economic Disadvantages (WE)

According to one respondent, although the income of teachers in rural schools has increased year on year, the whole society is developing, especially the current prices and education costs are rising year by year, and the income growth of rural teachers is not large. This is why many outstanding college graduates would rather go to the economically developed Pearl River Delta region to plan for employment rather than apply for rural schools.

3.2.3. Social Disadvantages (WS)

With the development of urbanization and the decline of the birth rate in recent years, a large number of rural schools have been demolished and moved into urban areas, making the schools originally set up in administrative villages increasingly declining. On the one hand, a large number of high-quality teachers and high-quality students pour into the county seat, making the rural schools become weaker and weaker, and the professional development of teachers is not guaranteed at all. On the other hand, with the development of economy, more and more migrant workers go to cities, leaving their children to school with their grandparents at home. The study of these left-behind children in rural areas is often abandoned due to the lack of parents’ supervision, which then affects the teaching quality of rural teachers. The difference in the quality of the students makes the rural teachers have less opportunity to excel in teaching, and it is difficult for the teachers to get the awards stipulated in the evaluation of professional titles.

3.2.4. Technical Disadvantages (WT)

Teaching skills are an important symbol of teachers’ teaching ability, including teaching design skills, classroom teaching skills, after-school evaluation skills

and other aspects (Liu, 2015). According to the interview, there are currently new rural teachers' problems in teaching and practice: insufficient cognition of the new curriculum standards, imperfect teaching design structure, unclear thinking of class speaking or class, and low basic teaching skills. These problems will undoubtedly leave hidden dangers to the future professional development of rural teachers.

3.3. Professional Development Opportunities for Rural Teachers in Zhanjiang City (Opportunity)

3.3.1. Political Opportunity (OP)

In 2012, The State Council issued the Opinions on Strengthening the Construction of Teachers, pointing out that the construction of primary and secondary school teachers should focus on rural teachers. In 2015, The State Council issued the Rural Teacher Support Plan (2015-2020), which requires people's governments at all levels to formulate implementation measures to propose support policies and effective measures that meet the actual support of rural education according to local conditions. In 2018, the Ministry of Education and other five departments issued the Action Plan for the Revitalization of Teacher Education (2018-2022), which proposed to "implement the project of famous teachers and principals in primary and secondary schools, and cultivate a group of leading talents with great social influence who can play a demonstration and leading role in the field of basic education". In 2020, the Ministry of Education and other six departments issued the Opinions on Strengthening the Team of Rural Teachers in the New Era, pointing out that strengthening the construction of rural teachers in the new era and striving to create a team of rural teachers who love villages, have sufficient quantity, excellent quality and are full of vitality.

3.3.2. Economic Opportunities (OE)

According to the relevant press conference of Guangdong Province in 2022, the Department of Education of Guangdong Province has issued the Implementation Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening the Construction of Small Rural Schools and Boarding Schools in Towns and townships. Provincial and municipal governments invested a total of 5.6 billion yuan to improve the running conditions of rural schools, and supported the improvement of rural education and teaching quality through group running, sending classes to the countryside, and matching assistance.

3.3.3. Social Opportunities (OS)

In 2021, the Guangdong Provincial People's Government issued the "Guangdong Province to Promote the High-quality Development Action Plan for Basic Education" to implement the "New Strong Teachers Project" and counterpart assistance, focusing on strengthening the construction of the principals and teachers in east and northwest of Guangdong, and strive to resolve the province's foundation in the province inadequate development of education. In April

2022, the Ministry of Education and eight other departments issued a document, considering the hardship of teaching in rural areas, for teachers teaching in rural schools for a long time, the professional title evaluation cannot be restricted by the proportion of job structure in their schools. All of these policies will benefit the professional development of rural teachers.

3.3.4. Technical Opportunities (OT)

According to the relevant press conference of Guangdong Province in 2022, the Guangdong Provincial Department of Education will enrich the supply of digital education resources and services, comprehensively promote the construction of 17 experimental areas for basic education and teaching reform in the Internet environment in the underdeveloped areas, and continue to promote the application and promotion of the “three classrooms” (China Development Network, 2022). The improvement of the information technology education application ability of the rural school teachers in Zhanjiang area will be guaranteed by an effective mechanism.

3.4. Threats of Professional Development of Rural Teachers in Zhanjiang City (Threat)

3.4.1. Political Threats (TP)

In the context of the current normal epidemic prevention and control situation, some routine work occupies most of the time of public officials, and rural teachers are no exception. In addition to undertaking teaching tasks, rural teachers also assume the identity of fire emergency personnel and epidemic prevention and control contacts in the school area.

3.4.2. Economic Threats (TE)

At present, rural teachers' low income, heavy task and poor quality of students have become an important factor hindering their professional development. In addition, it is understood that the issue of circulation and resettlement housing is also an economic problem about whether rural teachers can teach at ease.

3.4.3. Social Threats (TS)

According to the interview, the current “plateau phenomenon” among rural teachers is more serious. Even if some rural teachers work very hard to grade first-level teachers, it is difficult for them to meet some specific index requirements under the current requirements for the evaluation of senior teachers. Therefore, there is a fear of difficulties and seeking security. In teaching work, they only seek to complete tasks and do not ask for teaching and research; accustomed to traditional teaching methods, lack of initiative to improve information literacy.

3.4.4. Technical Threats (TT)

The information teaching equipment of rural schools in Zhanjiang area is relatively backward, and the information technology application literacy of rural

teachers is uneven, and they are not active enough in receiving the new information education technology. Moreover, the theory and application tools of information education technology are updated quickly, and the social contact surface of rural teachers is relatively “closed”, and the application of information technology cannot be grasped in time (Table 2).

Table 2. List of SWOT-PEST matrix analysis of professional development of rural teachers in Zhanjiang city.

SWOT-PEST	Politics (P)	Economy (E)	Society (S)	Technology (T)	
Internal factor	Strength (S)	1. The state attaches great importance to the balanced development of basic education 2. National policy support (targeted training, etc.)	1. Rural teachers in remote areas will refund their tuition fees 2. The teacher training mechanism led by the “National Training Plan” has been continuously improved	1. Simple professional environment, and harmonious interpersonal relationship 2. The social status of rural teachers has been gradually improved	1. Rural teachers have a strong sense of self-development 2. The popularization of intelligent teaching equipment
	Weakness (W)	Rural teachers have a low social status	1. The treatment of rural teachers needs to be improved	Professional development space is limited High expectations put great pressure	Rural teachers’ information literacy is uneven Rural teachers’ academic qualifications and continuing education channels for rural teachers need to be strengthened
External factor	Opportunity (O)	1. The state attaches great importance to the construction of rural teachers 2. Action Plan for High-quality Development of Basic Education in Guangdong Province	Subsidy policy for rural teachers in remote areas Zhanjiang city professional title evaluation additional points system	Local normal colleges of higher learning help the high-quality development of basic education Zhanjiang city, a new round of primary and secondary school “millions of millions” talent training project	1. The state attaches great importance to the informatization construction of rural school education 2. Zhanjiang City organized and carried out the “Educational Technology Informatization 2.0” promotion project
	Threat (T)	1. The contradiction between work and study is quite prominent 2. Current transactional management work is sinking	Lack of financial resources The scale of running schools is small, and it is difficult to raise funds	1. Traffic and information are blocked, and the communication cost is high 2. The talent training mechanism is not sound, and talents cannot be retained	Infrastructure conditions are relatively poor Rural school network and other equipment update is not timely

4. Strategic Suggestions on the Professional Development of Rural Teachers in Zhanjiang under the Background of High Quality Development of Basic Education

4.1. S0 Strategy: Relying on the Means of Education Information Technology, Broaden the Channels of Rural Teachers' Continuing Education

It is reported that in order to improve teachers' information technology literacy, the Zhanjiang Education Bureau commissioned a third party to carry out the "Information Technology Promotion 2.0 Project" in 2022. There have been some results since the project was started, but there are also some problems. In order to further consolidate and enhance the information technology literacy of rural teachers, it should be strengthened from the following three aspects. First, when carrying out relevant information technology training programs, education authorities can classify relevant information technology training programs. Rural teachers focus on applying case learning and technical guidance. Second, adhere to the "result-oriented", adjust the form of learning assessment to teaching design application and practical results display. Third, we should adhere to the principle of resource sharing. In order to protect the rights and interests of rural teachers to the maximum extent, the information technology training program should retain the open authority of online learning resources for rural teachers to study and use them from time to time.

4.2. ST Strategy: Attach Importance to School-Based Research and Cultivate the Teaching and Research Ability of Rural Teachers

As we all know, due to the small size of rural schools, the number of teaching teachers in various subjects is too small, especially the lack of music, art, physical education and other teachers. Schools often focus on the management of the team construction, rather than the construction of teaching and research team. As a member of the training project management team, the author participated in the preliminary research of "Zhanjiang City 2022 Full Primary and Secondary School Teachers rotation Training Project". According to the survey data, 97% of the participating teachers are eager to get guidance on the program design and implementation process of school-based training. The construction of school-based research focuses on adjusting measures to local conditions, especially the rural schools should pay attention to the operability and practicality. Rural school teachers can strengthen the construction of school teaching and research team by means of "external introduction and internal training". On the one hand, we can help the teachers of the school in pairs, invite famous teachers from other schools to carry out school-based research and diagnosis, organize rural teachers to learn "new curriculum standards" and "core literacy requirements", and instill rural teachers in terms of teaching concepts and teaching evaluation. On the other hand, we can send out the academic leaders of the school out to participate in the teacher training, and then the participating

teachers can be organized to return to the school to share their experience, and organize a second study.

4.3. WO Strategy: Strive for Resource Support to Build a “U-G-S” Teacher Education Community

Lingnan Normal University, located in Zhanjiang City, as a provincial local normal university, has a profound normal education background and an excellent teacher education staff. Under the background of the high-quality development of basic education proposed by Guangdong Province, some rural schools should seize the opportunity of pairing assistance, establish the “U-G-S” teacher education practice base, and promote universities, the government and rural schools to fully integrate resources and cooperate. Actively explore the training mode of rural teachers, design personalized training programs, carry out “order-type” training, and improve the educational information literacy of rural teachers and the application level of information technology.

4.4. WT Strategy: Formulate Incentive Mechanism, Select Excellent and Match Strong Rural School Principals

“The train runs fast, and it is all pulled by the locomotive.” The professional development of rural teachers cannot be separated from the construction of teachers in rural schools, and the focus of teachers’ construction depends on the construction of principals (teaching leaders). At present, there is a natural gap between rural schools and urban schools. If even the principal as the leader can muddle along, it is devastating for the development of rural schools. You can train a team of rural famous rural teachers, or select a group of school administrators from urban schools to help promote the revitalization of rural education to serve as principals or temporary vice principals in rural schools. By the local education administrative departments at the county level, the “three-year action plan” is formulated to stimulate the construction of teachers in rural schools and strengthen the teaching ability of rural teachers.

5. Conclusion

Through qualitative analysis method, this paper analyzes the opportunities and challenges facing the professional development of rural teachers in Zhanjiang from the perspectives of politics, economy, society and technology, and proposes strategies to strengthen the professional development of rural teachers from the perspectives of teachers, schools and educational management departments. There are still some shortcomings in this paper which need to be further improved, such as the lack of quantitative questionnaire survey on the professional development level of rural teachers in Zhanjiang.

Acknowledgements

Fund Project: The 2022 Annual Planning Project of Zhanjiang Philosophy

and Social Sciences “Research on the Professional Quality Improvement of Rural Teachers in Zhanjiang City under the Rural Revitalization Strategy” (No. ZJ22YB73).

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

References

- China Development Network. (2022). *Guangdong Focuses on Promoting the High-Quality Development of Basic Education*.
<https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1737573399625842443&wfr=spider&for=pc>
- Liu, Ch. Y., & Xiao, N. (2011). Discussion on Development Model of BioEnergy Industry Based on SWOT-PEST Model. *Business Age*, No. 18, 112-113.
- Liu, Y. (2015). Study on Professional Development of New Primary School Teachers Based on SWOT Analysis. *Journal of Guizhou Normal University*, No. 6, 27-30.
- Long, Y. X. (2021). Research on the Professional Development Strategy of Rural Famous Teachers Based on SWOT Analysis Model. *Journal of Lishui College*, No. 3, 97-103.
- The Ministry of Education. (June 2022). *The Ministry of Education Held a Press Conference*. <https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1736217764519491006&wfr=spider&for=pc>
- Zhanjiang Daily. (2021). *Zhanjiang Has 70,200 Full-Time Basic Education Teachers and the Scale and Quality of Education Talents Have Been Continuously Improved*.
<http://ac.rexun.cn/tansuo/2022/0126/012663546.html>
- Zhu, P. Y. (2016). Research on the Professional Development Pathways of Rural Teachers Based on the View of Professional Standards. *Educational Theory and Practice*, No. 8, 34.