

Research on the Job Satisfaction Evaluation of Henan Volunteer Teachers in Xinjiang

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Abstract: *Volunteer teachers are the main implementers of policy of education aids to Xinjiang, and their job satisfaction directly affects the work enthusiasm and the quality of the task. Based on the particularity of the task of education aids to Xinjiang, this paper designs the questionnaire and comprehensively studies the job satisfaction of Henan volunteer teachers in Xinjiang. The survey results show that the overall satisfaction of volunteer teachers is high, but the evaluation in terms of work satisfaction is low. In addition, the satisfaction of volunteer teachers with the improvement of their ability is also relatively low. The paper analyzes the reasons for the low satisfaction of volunteer teachers and puts forward relevant suggestions and measures.*

Keywords: *education aids to Xinjiang; volunteer teachers; job satisfaction*

1. Introduction

Education aids to Xinjiang is a way of support under the leadership of the national unified organization. The central and eastern provinces with more advanced education level will concentrate human and material resources to help remote areas and ethnic minority areas in Xinjiang improve local education level. In September 2020, The Third Central Xinjiang Work Symposium pointed out that the counterpart aids to Xinjiang should be adhered to for a long time, and take more long-term strategies and more solid action. Since education is the fundamental for Xinjiang's economic development, social progress and long-term stability, as well as the basis for expanding employment and improving people's livelihood, education has become the top priority of the counterpart aids to Xinjiang.

According to the unified deployment by the CPC Central Committee and the State Council, Henan Province has been assigned the responsibility of providing support to Hami. During 2020-2022, Henan Province invested 414 million yuan and facilitated the construction of 158,100 square meters of school buildings, which significantly enhanced educational infrastructure in Hami. Simultaneously, Henan Province organized excellent volunteer teachers to engage in educational assistance to Xinjiang. Compared to the construction of educational facilities, the intellectual support provided by volunteer teachers holds greater significance. The volunteer teachers can introduce advanced educational concepts and teaching methods to Hami, and train a number of high-level local teachers. This process can transform the nature of education aids from “transfusion” to “hemopoiesis”, and promote the high-quality development of education in Hami. Consequently, it is of great significance to fully mobilize the enthusiasm of the volunteer teachers and make them devote themselves to the work of education aids to Xinjiang.

At present, there are many research results on teachers' job satisfaction. The research subjects mainly involve rural teachers^[1-2], preschool teachers^[3-4], primary and secondary school teachers^[5], and college teachers^[6-7], etc. The academic community has examined the factors influencing teachers' job satisfaction from various perspectives. According to He Wenjie, the cultural atmosphere of a school had a significant impact on teachers' initiative, which indirectly affected their job satisfaction^[8]. Similarly, Li Xiaohong reached the same conclusion. She pointed out that it was beneficial for enhancing the job satisfaction of junior high school science teachers to create a harmonious and democratic school atmosphere^[9]. Meng Jingyi discovered that a flexible organizational and management structure in schools could foster cooperation, trust, and communication, thereby influencing teachers' job satisfaction^[10]. Gong Jing discussed strategies for improving teachers' job satisfaction in the new context of distributed leadership in school governance^[11]. Zhu Jinjie conducted an in-depth study on the relationship between teachers' teaching autonomy, teaching effectiveness and job satisfaction^[12]. Cheng

Gang found that organizational commitment had a significantly positive impact on job satisfaction, with career depletion serving as an intermediary factor^[13].

However, there is a scarcity of literature that specifically focuses on volunteer teachers who undertake the task of education aids to Xinjiang. Since volunteer teachers are the specific executors of education assistance, their work satisfaction directly impacts their enthusiasm, which consequently affects the completion of education aid efforts. Additionally, Compared with ordinary teachers, the working environment, tasks and content of volunteer teachers have certain particularity. Consequently, it is imperative to understand the job satisfaction of volunteer teachers in Xinjiang and to identify existing issues. This will effectively mobilize volunteer teachers' enthusiasm and provide valuable guidance for the work of education aids to Xinjiang.

2. Job Satisfaction Survey of Henan Volunteer Teachers in Xinjiang

2.1 Survey Overview

Currently, there are 256 volunteer teachers of Henan in Hami, who are distributed in various schools. The survey was conducted in June 2023 and respondent included all volunteer teachers from Henan Province. A total of 256 questionnaires were distributed, all of which were successfully collected and analyzed.

The questionnaire comprises five parts, consisting of a total of 16 questions. Apart from the initial section that investigates the basic information of volunteer teachers, the remaining sections focus on aspects such as work environment satisfaction, work completion satisfaction, self-evaluation satisfaction, and overall satisfaction. The questionnaire is designed using a Likert scale. The respondents can use a scoring system ranging from 1 to 5 to indicate their satisfaction levels. The scale includes five options: very dissatisfied, dissatisfied, neutral, satisfied, and very satisfied.

2.2 Analysis of Survey Results

2.2.1 Survey results of work environment satisfaction

According to Table 1, volunteer teachers under current working conditions expressed poor satisfaction, with a score of 2.68 points. The social and economic development gap between Xinjiang and central and eastern regions still persists. In particular, this discrepancy is most evident in the remote Balikun and Yiwu Counties, and work, life, and transportation facilities are considerably less convenient than central and eastern regions. However, the recipient schools have been actively taking various measures to provide the best care for volunteer teachers, particularly in the logistical support aspects, to enable them to feel the organization's warmth in remote places. The volunteer teachers also experienced the careful arrangement and care of the recipient schools in life, and gave a high score of 4.19 to the logistics services of the recipient schools, with high satisfaction. Although the majority of the teachers and students in the recipient schools are ethnic minorities, the volunteer teachers get along well with the local teachers and students. Such integration is reflected by a high score of 4.22, given by volunteer teachers for the recipient schools' working atmosphere. It is clear that volunteer teachers have successfully integrated into the recipient schools. However, that volunteer teachers' satisfaction with the work arrangements of the recipient schools is low with a score of only 3.26, which is considered unsatisfactory. This issue is critical and requires immediate attention and consideration.

Table 1: Survey results of work environment satisfaction

Survey project	Average score
What do you think of the current working conditions?	2.68
What do you think of the work tasks of the recipient unit?	3.26
What do you think of the working atmosphere of the recipient unit?	4.22
What do you think of the logistics service of the recipient unit	4.19
Overall average score of work environment satisfaction	3.59

2.2.2 Survey Results of Job Completion Satisfaction

Regarding the work completion satisfaction, the findings presented in Table 2 indicate that volunteer teachers generally expressed low levels of satisfaction. Specifically, the completion of talent training, discipline construction, and teaching and scientific research cooperation yielded average scores of 3.15,

3.24, and 3.18, respectively. These scores average out to 3.19, slightly above the mean, but still unsatisfactory. Due to the lack of teachers, the recipient schools frequently arrange volunteer teachers as front-line teachers, and make them undertake a lot of teaching work. As a consequence, volunteer teachers have little time to lead local teachers to carry out teaching and research activities and discipline construction. Their role as facilitators and mentors remains largely unfulfilled. Consequently, they cannot significantly enhance the teaching abilities of local teachers and improve the self-development ability of the recipient schools. It is primarily these factors that contribute to the generally low satisfaction levels reported by volunteer teachers during the survey.

Table 2: Survey results of job completion satisfaction

Survey project	Average score
How do you think of the completion degree of the talent training task?	3.15
How do you think of the completion degree of the discipline construction?	3.24
How do you think the degree of teaching and research cooperation?	3.18
Overall average score of work completion satisfaction	3.19

2.2.3 Survey Results of Self-evaluation Satisfaction

Due to the deviation of the role positioning of volunteer teachers by recipient schools, most volunteer teachers were not satisfied with their work. However, when asked about the satisfaction of self-evaluation, volunteer teachers were generally satisfied with their work effectiveness, self-identification and social recognition. Table 3 shows that the scores are 4.19, 4.58 and 4.74 respectively. This is mainly due to the excellent teaching ability and skilled teaching skills of volunteer teachers. Their profound teaching knowledge, flexible and diverse teaching methods, and rich teaching content have been recognized and praised by Hami students, whose learning interest and academic performance have been significantly improved. In Hami, "Going to school to find a teacher from Henan" has become a beautiful wish in the hearts of the local people of all ethnic groups. All sectors of society have generally given high praise for the contributions of volunteer teachers. Every weekend, volunteer teachers are always invited to visit their homes by the parents of local students, so that volunteer teachers can also feel the warmth of home in the distant border. Everyone had reported that their hard work had been recognized by the local people of all ethnic groups, and they should continue to make greater efforts to make greater contributions to the social development and long-term stability of Xinjiang. Therefore, the average satisfaction of volunteer teachers has reached 4.50 points.

Table 3: Survey results of self-evaluation satisfaction

Survey project	Average score
What do you think of your work achievements?	4.19
How do you think of the degree of self-identity?	4.58
What do you think of the social recognition?	4.74
Total average score of self-rated satisfaction	4.50

2.2.4 Survey Results of Other Satisfaction

Regarding the satisfaction survey of other aspects, volunteer teachers generally reflected that they received good welfare treatment during their work. These benefits included high living allowances as well as reimbursement for round-trip travel expenses. Various activities are organized by the recipient schools during ethnic minority holidays such as Corban Festival, as well as traditional holidays like the Dragon Boat Festival and the Mid-Autumn Festival. The welfare treatment was highly recognized by everyone, with a score of 4.21, as shown in Table 4. Additionally, volunteer teachers received high political honors and comprehensive humanistic care from organizations at all levels. To alleviate the concerns of volunteer teachers from family and enable them to devote themselves to their work in Xinjiang, relevant departments have also implemented preferential policies related to their title promotions and the enrollment of their children. The organization's care towards volunteer teachers was also highly rated, with a score of 4.35.

However, the score for the improvement of their own ability among volunteer teachers is only 3.25. Due to the working environment limitations of the recipient schools, there is a general consensus among everyone that their professional knowledge level and ability have declined. Throughout the period of work in Xinjiang, there was a lack of opportunities for volunteer teachers to pursue further studies, resulting in a complete reliance on their existing knowledge. To illustrate this, let's take a vocational and technical college as an example. Up until now, this college has not provided access to CNKI and the

library lacks books. The volunteer teachers working in this college have never been given the opportunity to participate in training or professional development. Meanwhile, the colleagues who work in the original dispatched unit actively enhance their professional abilities and skills through continuous engagement in diverse learning and training opportunities. There is a concern among all individuals that, upon completing the task of working in Xinjiang, a skill gap may emerge between them and their colleagues in future endeavors.

Table 4: Survey results of other satisfaction

Survey project	Average score
What do you think of the benefits ?	4.21
How do you think you have improved your ability ?	3.25
How do you think the degree of care?	4.35
Total average score of other satisfaction levels	3.94

3. Suggestions to Improve the Job Satisfaction of the Volunteer Teachers

Education aids to Xinjiang has emerged as a prominent initiative for Henan Province's counterpart support to Xinjiang and garner widespread acclaim in Hami. In order to further do a good job of education aids to Xinjiang, the following measures can be introduced to enhance the job satisfaction of volunteer teachers.

3.1 Improve the Ideological and Political Position of Volunteer Teachers and Strengthen Their Sense of Responsibility

Before teachers are dispatched to Xinjiang, relevant departments should provide thorough ideological and political education to enhance the volunteer teachers' understanding of the importance of education aids to Xinjiang. This can strengthen their sense of mission and responsibility, as well as their initiative and enthusiasm in carrying out their work. It is essential to help volunteer teachers fully comprehend that education aids to Xinjiang is a significant political task. They should also understand and implement the instructions given by the Party Central Committee regarding the work in Xinjiang. Additionally, relevant departments should actively improve the working conditions for volunteer teachers in Xinjiang, encourage them to integrate into assisted schools and carry out their duties diligently. By doing so, volunteer teachers can make valuable contributions to the education aids to Xinjiang and continuously enhance their sense of mission, honor, and achievement.

3.2 Effectively Change Ideas and Actively Create Conditions for Volunteer Teachers to Play a Role

Both sides, especially the recipient schools, should effectively change their ideas and prioritize the current long-term goals. They should effectively integrate "supporting teaching" and "long-term development", while harnessing the power of volunteer teachers sufficiently. On one hand, the issue of subject teacher shortages can be addressed through "supporting teaching". Simultaneously, the concept of "long-term development" should guide efforts to transform the role of education aids to Xinjiang from mere "blood transfusion" to "blood transfusion and haematopoiesis", thereby facilitating the leapfrog development of assisted schools in Xinjiang. All recipient schools must actively create opportunities and establish a platform for volunteer teachers to play a role. They should delegate job responsibilities, tasks, and performance evaluations to volunteer teachers and allow them to demonstrate their abilities and achieve outstanding results. Additionally, volunteer teachers should proactively assume responsibility, fearlessly explore new approaches, and strive for remarkable achievements during their working in Xinjiang.

3.3 Accurately Locate the Responsibilities of Volunteer Teachers and Give Full Play to Their Exemplary and Leading Role

The primary responsibility of volunteer teachers should involve disseminating advanced educational concepts and teaching methods, while also assisting recipient schools in enhancing the professional abilities and teaching proficiency of their teachers. Volunteer teachers should mainly play the role of master, rather than simply playing the role of "blood transfusion". This approach will not only address immediate needs but also maximize the effectiveness of the volunteer teachers by fully harnessing their expertise in pedagogical concepts and teaching skills. When the task is completed, their teaching ideas

and teaching methods can really stay in the recipient schools, and the function of "hematopoietic" of assistance will really be achieved. Recipient schools should implement measures to facilitate exchanges and collaborative activities between volunteer teachers and local teachers. Volunteer teachers should lead the teachers of recipient schools to design talent training plans, develop curriculum systems, establish curriculum standards, and conduct joint teaching and research activities. These activities will give full play to their advantages and demonstration role in talent training, discipline construction and scientific research, and improve their sense of achievement and satisfaction during work in Xinjiang.

3.4 Innovate the Incentive and Care Mechanism and Fully Mobilize the Enthusiasm of Volunteer Teachers

An effective incentive and care system would fully mobilize the enthusiasm of volunteer teachers, enhance the efficiency of implementing education assistance policies, and facilitate long-term development of education aids to Xinjiang. To address problems identified in the job satisfaction survey of volunteer teachers, relevant administrative departments should enhance the incentive and care system, alleviate the ideological pressure on volunteer teachers, and fully evoke their work enthusiasm. Regular commendation and summary conferences for education aids to Xinjiang could be held to acknowledge and recognize excellent teachers who have made remarkable contributions and achievements. Additionally, in view of the actual problems reflected by volunteer teachers, such as the working conditions and learning conditions of the recipient schools are not as good as those of the original dispatched unit, relevant departments should fully understand the worries of volunteer teachers, and provide special learning opportunities during or after working in Xinjiang to help volunteer teachers improve their professional ability.

4. Conclusion

To achieve long-term social stability in Xinjiang, it is crucial to make counterpart assistance a national strategy and to be upheld for a long time. Education assistance, in particular, serves as a solid and long-term approach. Volunteer teachers play a pivotal role in implementing the policy of education aids to Xinjiang. The satisfaction level of volunteer teachers directly impacts their enthusiasm, which, in turn, affects the quality of educational aid tasks completion. By utilizing a specially designed questionnaire on education aids to Xinjiang, this paper deeply investigates the job satisfaction of volunteer teachers from Henan Province. The survey results indicate high overall satisfaction among volunteer teachers, but lower satisfaction regarding task completion. Additionally, volunteer teachers are also less satisfied with their own skill improvement during the working in Xinjiang. The paper conducts a thorough analysis of the factors contributing to the low satisfaction and proposes relevant suggestions and measures accordingly. Specifically, it emphasizes the need to accurately define the responsibilities of volunteer teachers, create conducive conditions for their work, and fully leverage their exemplary and leading role. Simultaneously, it is imperative for management departments at all levels to innovate incentive mechanisms to alleviate concerns among volunteer teachers and promote sustainable development in education aids to Xinjiang.

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