
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Study of the dimensions of and countermeasures for improving the administrative efficiency of primary and secondary schools in western China: Taking MX Middle School as an example

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| ABSTRACT

With the deepening of education reform, improving the administrative efficiency of primary and secondary schools in Western China has become the key to promoting the balanced development of education. Taking MX Middle School as the research object, this paper analyzes the difficulties of administrative men in primary and secondary schools in western China in depth, including rigid management systems, uneven resource distributions, low information levels, insufficient incentive mechanisms and low participation of teachers and students. In view of these problems, this paper proposes a series of targeted counts and suggestions, such as optimizing the organizational structure, establishing a fair and transparent resource allocation mechanism, increasing the information input, improving the performance appraisal system and establishing a participation mechanism for teachers and students. th Improving the administrative efficiency of primary and secondary schools in Western China to promote educational equity, improve educational quality and promote the balanced development of regional education.

| KEYWORDS

Western Region; primary and secondary school administration; administrative effectiveness

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

ACCEPTED: 02 November 2024

PUBLISHED: 08 December 2024

DOI: 10.32996/jhsss.2024.6.12.5

1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background

In contemporary China, the vigorous development of education is an important cornerstone for the realization of long-term national development and social progress. Especially in the western region, the development of education is related not only to the balance of the regional economy but also to national unity and frontier stability. However, owing to historical, geographic, and socioeconomic factors, educational development in the western region is facing a series of challenges and difficulties. As a vast inland belt of China, the western region has rich natural resources and diverse ethnic cultures. Moreover, this region faces problems such as relatively lagging economic development and insufficient infrastructure construction. As an important force in promoting social progress, education plays a vital role in the development of the western region. Especially in primary and secondary schools, the effectiveness of administrative management is directly related to the rational distribution of educational resources, the steady improvement in the quality of education, and the realization of educational equity.

MX Middle School, as a school with a long history and profound cultural heritage in M County, Dingxi City, Gansu Province, has witnessed the development of education in the west. Since its establishment, the school has undergone many relocations and name changes, has always adhered to the original aspiration of education, is committed to improving the quality of education and teaching, and has trained many outstanding talents in the local area. However, with the deepening of education reform, schools are also faced with some urgent problems in administrative management, such as rigidity of the management

system, unbalanced resource distribution, insufficient informatization levels, imperfect incentive mechanisms and a lack of cooperation between teachers and students. The slump in participation, etc. The existence of these problems not only affects the efficiency of school administrative management but also constrains the further improvement of education quality. Therefore, in-depth analysis of the current status of the administrative management effectiveness of MX middle schools, exploration of the existing problems and their causes, and the proposal of effective solutions have important practical significance and far-reaching strategic influence in promoting the balanced development of primary and secondary education in the western region. Through optimizing the management structure, innovating management mechanisms, and improving management efficiency, new vitality can be injected into education development in western China, and positive contributions can be made to the realization of education modernization and the construction of a harmonious society.

1.2 Research significance

1.2.1 Theoretical significance

Through the analysis of the current status of MX middle school administrative management, the present study reveals the common problems and special difficulties in the administrative management of primary and middle schools in the western region and provides valuable first-hand information and research perspectives for subsequent researchers. Moreover, this study aims to construct a set of administrative management effectiveness evaluation systems for primary and secondary schools suitable for the western region to provide a theoretical basis and methodological tools for evaluating and improving school management ②. In addition, the research results will play a positive role in promoting the development and improvement of educational administration theory, especially providing theoretical support in exploring educational equity, improving education quality, and promoting the balanced development of regional education.

1.2.2 Practical significance

From the perspective of practical application, the aim of this study is to provide feasible improvement strategies and practical guidance for the administrative management of primary and secondary schools in the western region, which has significant practical guidance value. The research results will directly serve the management practices of the MX Middle School and similar schools, helping the school optimize its management structure, improve management efficiency, and thereby improve the quality of education and teaching. Moreover, this study helps education administrative departments better understand the actual needs and potential problems of the administrative management of primary and secondary schools in the western region and provides the basis for the formulation of relevant policies and measures to promote the healthy development of regional education.

2. Definition of relevant concepts

2.1 Administrative management of primary and secondary schools

Primary and secondary school administrative management refers to a series of organization, coordination, decision-making and control activities implemented by school management to achieve educational goals and improve the quality of education within the school scope. It covers all aspects of the daily operation of a school, including but not limited to education and teaching management, human resource management, financial management, facility and equipment management, and safety management. The core goal of administrative management in primary and secondary schools is to ensure the rational allocation and use of educational resources and create an environment conducive to student learning and teacher teaching through effective management practices, thereby improving the quality of education and teaching in schools.

2.2 Administrative management effectiveness

Administrative management effectiveness refers to the comprehensive reflection of the efficiency, effect and effectiveness of administrative management activities in the process of achieving established goals. In the field of primary and secondary administrative management, improved efficiency means the optimization of school management activities, which can better serve education and teaching, meet the needs of students and teachers, improve the use efficiency of educational resources, and ultimately promote improvements in overall school education quality. ③. The evaluation of administrative management effectiveness usually covers multiple dimensions, such as scientific decision-making, implementation effectiveness, the rationality of resource allocation, service quality, and the adaptability of the school to the internal and external environments. In the practice of primary and secondary school administrative management, attention should be given to the following aspects to improve efficiency. First, a scientific decision-making mechanism should be established to ensure that school management decision-making is based on sufficient information and data and reflects the interests and needs of teachers and students. Second, the building of execution capacity should be strengthened to ensure that decisions are implemented quickly and accurately, and problems in the implementation process can be discovered and resolved in a timely manner through effective

supervision and evaluation mechanisms. Third, resource allocation should be optimized through refined management, ensuring that educational resources are allocated and used in accordance with educational laws and the actual needs of schools. In addition, to improve service quality, attention should be given to the satisfaction and feedback of teachers and students, and the management and service processes should be continuously improved to enhance the sense of gain and happiness of teachers and students.

3. Analysis of the current status of MX middle school administrative management

3.1 Basic information on MX Middle School

MX Middle School is located in M County, Dingxi city, Gansu Province. It is a school with a long history, and its predecessor can be traced back to the Teacher's Training Institute of M County, which was founded in 1928. The school has experienced many rounds of reform and development, which has witnessed the evolution of modern education in China. At present, MX Middle School has become a business card of education in the region, known for its excellent teaching quality and rich campus culture. Currently, the school has 49 classes and 236 teaching staff members, including a professional teaching team with senior teachers and first-level teachers as the backbone. The school attaches great importance to the development of the teaching team and is constantly committed to improving the professional level and teaching ability of teachers to meet the needs of education in the new era.

3.2 Administrative organization of the school

MX Middle School has a sound administrative management system, which includes the Party branch, three offices and two offices (the Office of Academic Affairs, the Office of Political Education, the Office of General Affairs, the Office of School Affairs, and the Teaching and Research Office), as well as three grade departments and 12 teaching and research groups, to ensure the efficient operation of administrative work. The school attaches great importance to democratic management and mass participation and has established mass organizations such as the trade union, the Communist Youth League, and the Women's Commission, which provide diverse services and support for teachers and students. By holding regular meetings and organizing activities, school management constantly optimizes the management process and improves management efficiency to adapt to the new requirements of education reform.

3.3 Administrative Management Effectiveness of MX Secondary School

MX Middle School has achieved significant results in terms of administrative management effectiveness. Through internal management system reform, the school has realized system transformation and mechanism innovation and has comprehensively improved the education quality and management level. The school pays attention to improvements in scientific decision-making and the effectiveness of implementation and has established a sound supervision and evaluation mechanism to ensure the effective implementation of all management measures. In addition, the school actively introduces modern management concepts and technologies, such as digitized management methods, to improve management efficiency and service quality. In terms of resource allocation, the school strives to achieve fair and reasonable distribution to ensure that educational resources can serve teaching and student development to the maximum extent. Through these measures, the administrative management efficiency of the MX Middle School has significantly improved, laying a solid foundation for the sustainable development of the school.

4. Problems in the administrative management efficiency of MX Middle School

4.1 Rigid management system

The rigidity problem in the management system of MX Middle School is reflected mainly in too many management levels, a lengthy decision-making process, and a lack of flexibility. Although this system has ensured the stability of school operations to a certain extent, it has also led to a slow response speed and a lack of innovation ability. For example, the introduction of new educational concepts and teaching methods requires multilevel approval, which not only delays the pace of reform but also dampens the enthusiasm of teachers. In addition, owing to the poor communication among the management level, teachers, and students, the voices and needs of the grassroots level cannot be fed back to the decision-making level in a timely manner; as a result, the school's decision-making is out of touch with the actual needs. This situation is not unique in the education field. The rigidity of the education system has become an important factor constraining the development of education. In the context of current education reform and school development, it is difficult for this rigid management system to adapt quickly to the new educational environment and challenges, and it is unfavorable for the innovation and improvement of school education and teaching. The rigidity of the management team not only reduces the efficiency of decision-making but also affects the enthusiasm of teachers and students^④. For example, teachers may have innovative ideas in teaching, but owing to the

cumbersome and rigid management level, it is difficult to implement these ideas quickly, affecting the teaching effect and students' learning experience. In addition, poor communication among the management team, teachers and students has led to uneven distribution and inefficient use of educational resources. Sometimes, management decisions do not fully consider the actual needs of teachers and students, resulting in a waste or shortage of educational resources. For example, the necessary teaching facilities and materials were not replenished in time due to delays in management's decision-making, which affected normal teaching activities.

4.2 Unequal distribution of resources

At MX Middle School, the unbalanced distribution of educational resources was particularly prominent, which was reflected not only in the hardware facilities but also in the allocation of teachers. According to relevant data, in the allocation of hardware resources, such as books and experimental equipment, schools often prioritize meeting the needs of graduating classes or key classes. For example, a school's computer labs, multimedia classrooms and other modern teaching facilities are often prioritized by key classes, while students in nonkey classes are less likely to have access to these resources. In addition, the distribution of faculty is uneven. High-quality teacher resources tend to be concentrated in graduating classes or key classes, and these classes usually receive more attention and resource input. School teachers reported that teachers in nonkey classes often have to bear a greater workload and do not receive equal treatment in terms of teaching resources and support. This difference not only affected teachers' enthusiasm for teaching but also had a negative effect on students' learning experience and achievement. The uneven distribution of resources is also reflected in the organization and support for various activities by schools. Students in key classes are more likely to have the opportunity to participate in various competitions and activities, whereas students in nonkey classes have fewer opportunities to show their talents. This unbalanced resource distribution not only weakens the overall education quality of the school but also exacerbates the gap among students, affecting the realization of educational equity.

4.3 Low level of informatization

MX Middle School has obvious shortcomings in informatization construction, which to a certain extent restricts the improvement of school education quality and management efficiency. The school's informatization infrastructure is relatively lacking. For example, campus network coverage is not comprehensive, which has resulted in unstable network connections in some classrooms and functional rooms, affecting teachers' use of network resources in teaching and the development of students' information literacy. In addition, outdated teaching equipment, such as outdated computers and multimedia equipment, can hardly meet the needs of modern information technology teaching and directly affects the application of information-based teaching methods and students' learning experience. The lack of digital teaching ability among teachers is also an important problem facing schools. Some teachers lack the necessary information technology training and do not have enough understanding of how to effectively use information technology to improve teaching methods, which limits their ability to integrate information technology effectively with teaching content (6). For example, teachers fail to make full use of electronic teaching resources and online platforms to enrich teaching content and improve teaching interactivity. Schools lack systematic training and support mechanisms for promoting the professional development of teachers and improving their digital teaching ability. In addition, schools face the problems of an uneven distribution of resources and low application levels in the application of education informatization. High-quality digital education resources and advanced digitized teaching methods may be concentrated mainly in some classes or subjects, while it is difficult for other classes and subjects to enjoy the advantages of these resources and methods, affecting educational equity and improving the overall digitized teaching level in schools.

4.4 Insufficient incentive mechanism

According to "Research on the Incentive Mechanism of Secondary School Teachers", as a core part of the talent development strategy of schoolteachers, the current incentive system often fails to fully meet the diverse needs of teachers, resulting in teacher burnout. In MX Middle School, the performance evaluation and reward system for teachers are still not perfect. Teachers' work performance and effort do not receive timely and fair rewards, which directly weakens teachers' work motivation. In addition, schools lack effective career development and promotion channels, which limits professional growth and the realization of the personal value of teachers. For example, Mr. S has been engaged in geography teaching at MX Middle School for 19 years. Although he has won the honorary titles of outstanding teachers and advanced workers many times and achieved excellent results in provincial and national competitions, these successful stories have not been translated into. Specific incentives should be provided to encourage more teachers to pursue excellence.

4.5 Low Teacher and Student Participation

MX Middle School faces several challenges in terms of teacher-student engagement. First, the effective participation of teachers and students in education management and decision-making processes is insufficient; as a result, school decision-making may not fully reflect the actual needs and expectations of teachers and students. For example, if a school fails to

extensively solicit the opinions of teachers and students when developing a curriculum reform plan or evaluating teaching quality, the implementation plan may be out of touch with the actual needs of teachers and students, thus affecting the educational effect and the satisfaction of teachers and students. Second, schools lack effective mechanisms and platforms to promote the participation of teachers and students. Although teachers and students may have an interest in participating in school decision-making and management, due to a lack of appropriate channels and support, their willingness and ability to participate have not been fully mobilized and utilized. For example, the school may not have established a formal teacher–student representative meeting or a regular opinion collection mechanism, which limits the voice and participation of teachers and students in educational decision-making. In addition, schools may lack the necessary incentives to encourage the participation of teachers and students. If there is a lack of clear incentive and recognition when teachers and students participate in school management, they may feel that their participation has not been valued enough, thus affecting their enthusiasm for participation and willingness to continue to participate. For example, if teachers are not reasonably compensated or recognized for their time in teaching and research activities or school management, their teaching and research work may be affected, thus affecting education quality in schools.

5. Countermeasures for improving the administrative management efficiency of the MX middle school

5.1 Optimizing the organizational structure and strengthening cross-departmental cooperation

To improve the administrative management efficiency of the MX middle school, the optimization of the organizational structure is key. At present, there are too many levels of school management, and the complexity of the decision-making process severely restricts management efficiency and response speed. To optimize the organizational structure, we must first simplify the management level and promote flat management. By reducing the middle management level and shortening the management chain, decision-making can be communicated to the executive level more quickly, while the transparency of decision-making and the participation of teachers can be improved. Second, the responsibilities and powers of each management position need to be clarified to ensure the consistency of powers and responsibilities. Through the development of detailed job responsibility statements, each manager should be clear about the scope of work and where his responsibility lies to avoid unclear duties and abuse of power. In addition, cross-departmental collaboration should be strengthened. Through the establishment of an interdepartmental collaboration group, communication and cooperation between different departments should be promoted to improve work efficiency. Finally, schools should establish a dynamic organizational structure adjustment mechanism to evaluate the rationality and effectiveness of the organizational structure regularly and make timely adjustments according to the needs of school development and changes in the external environment. Through these measures, MX Middle School can build a more efficient, flexible and transparent management organizational structure, laying a solid foundation for the long-term development of the school.

5.2 Resolving resource allocation and establishing a fair and transparent mechanism

The problems that the MX middle school has in terms of resource allocation need to be solved by establishing a fair and transparent resource allocation mechanism. First, schools should establish a resource allocation committee consisting of representatives from multiple parties, including school leaders, teacher representatives, student representatives, and parent representatives, to ensure diversity and fairness in resource allocation decision-making. Second, schools need to develop clear resource allocation standards and procedures, covering the principles and methods for the allocation of various educational resources, such as funds, equipment, and books. These standards and procedures should be open and transparent and subject to the supervision of the whole school. At the same time, schools should regularly announce the details of resource allocation, including the details of fund use and equipment procurement and distribution, to enhance the transparency of resource allocation. In addition, schools should establish a resource demand feedback mechanism^{8 50} that teachers and students can reflect the resource demand and use status in a timely manner and provide a reference for resource allocation. Through these measures, the MX middle school can ensure the fair and reasonable distribution of educational resources, improve the efficiency of resource use, and promote improvements in education and teaching quality.

5.3 Introducing advanced systems and increasing investment in informatization

MX Middle School has deficiencies in informatization construction and needs to increase investment in informatization and introduce advanced information management systems. First, schools should upgrade their campus network infrastructure to ensure full coverage of the campus network, improve network speed and stability, and provide basic support for the digitization of teaching and management. Second, schools need to introduce advanced teaching management systems and office automation systems, such as e-educational administration systems, online learning platforms, and teacher performance evaluation systems, to improve the efficiency and quality of teaching management. These systems make it easier for teachers to perform teaching preparation, student assessment and resource sharing, and administrators to perform administrative affairs

and decision support more efficiently. In addition, schools should strengthen informatization training to enhance the informatization application ability of teachers and administrators. Through regular training and workshops, teachers are equipped with the skills of production and use of electronic learning resources, and administrators are taught the skills of operation and maintenance of the information management system. Through these measures, MX Middle School can make full use of modern information technology to improve the modernization level of education teaching and management.

5.4 Improving performance appraisal and establishing a dimensional incentive system

MX Middle School urgently needs to establish a comprehensive performance appraisal system to stimulate the work enthusiasm of teachers and administrators and thus improve work quality. First, schools should establish scientific performance assessment indicators, which cover teaching quality, scientific research results, degree of student satisfaction and other aspects, to ensure the comprehensiveness and fairness of the assessment. Second, it is very important to establish a regular performance appraisal mechanism. Continuous evaluation and feedback can help teachers and administrators clearly understand their own performance and improvement directions. The assessment results should be linked to incentive measures such as rewards, punishments, and promotions to ensure that outstanding talents receive the rewards and incentives they deserve. In addition, schools need to establish appeal and review mechanisms for performance assessment to protect the rights and interests of teachers and administrators and prevent unfairness and errors in the assessment process. Through the above measures, the MX middle school will establish a fair, just and transparent performance appraisal system, which can effectively stimulate the enthusiasm of teachers and administrators and comprehensively improve the school's work quality and efficiency.

5.5 Advocating the participation of teachers and students and encouraging the reform of management decision-making

MX Middle School urgently needs to establish a teacher–student participation mechanism to stimulate the enthusiasm of teachers and students in school management and decision-making. First, schools should establish organizations such as teacher–student representative assemblies to provide platforms and opportunities for teachers and students to participate in school decision-making. Through these organizations, teachers and students can express their opinions and suggestions on the school's development planning, teaching reform, campus culture construction and other issues. Second, schools need to establish effective communication mechanisms, such as regular school leaders' reception days and an opinion collection system, to ensure that the voices of teachers and students can be heard in a timely manner and receive attention and response from school management. Through these channels, schools can better understand the needs and expectations of teachers and students and make decision-making closer to the interests of teachers and students. In addition, schools should encourage teachers and students to participate in specific management projects and reform pilots, such as curriculum development and teaching method reform, so that teachers and students can use their expertise and creativity in practice and contribute to the development of the school. Through these measures, MX Middle School can create an open, democratic and collaborative management environment to promote the common growth of teachers, students and schools.

6. Conclusions

In this paper, through an in-depth analysis of the current status, existing problems and causes of MX Middle School's administrative management efficiency, a series of countermeasures and suggestions for improving schools' administrative management efficiency are proposed. Research shows that the MX middle school has urgent problems to be solved in terms of the management system, resource allocation, informatization construction, incentive mechanism, and teacher–student participation. To improve the education quality and management efficiency of schools, it is necessary to optimize the organizational structure, establish a fair and transparent resource distribution mechanism, increase investment in informatization, improve the performance appraisal system, and establish a teacher–student participation mechanism. The implementation of these measures can not only solve problems in current school management but also lay a solid foundation for the long-term development of schools. In the future, MX Middle School should continue to pay attention to the dynamics of education reform, constantly explore and implement new management methods and strategies to meet the new requirements of education development, achieve the continuous improvement of school administrative management efficiency, and contribute to the education management of primary and secondary schools in the western region and even the whole country. Experiences that can be used for reference are provided.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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