

Education Quarterly Reviews

Peng, Bo, Xu, Xiao-Jie, Zheng, Nong-Yi, Peng, Feng, Sun, Xue-Zhong, Tian, Xia-Yu, He, Lu-Lu, Ma, Xiao-Rui, Sun, Yang-Fang, Pang, Rui-Hua, Li, Jin-Tiao, Wang, Quan-Xiu, Zhou, Wei, and Yuan, Hong-Yu. (2019), Investigation and Research on the Living Status and Professional Development of Biology Teachers in Southern Henan and Their Development Strategies. In: *Education Quarterly Reviews*, Vol.2, No.4, 704-714.

ISSN 2621-5799

DOI: 10.31014/aior.1993.02.04.100

The online version of this article can be found at:
<https://www.asianinstituteofresearch.org/>

Published by:
The Asian Institute of Research

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Investigation and Research on the Living Status and Professional Development of Biology Teachers in Southern Henan and Their Development Strategies

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Abstract

In order to effectively investigate the current situation of biology teachers in Southern Henan, this study used the method of interviews and questionnaires to investigate and analyze the current situation of biology teachers in Southern Henan from their living status and professional development. The survey results show that: (1) The overall satisfaction of biology special post teachers in southern Henan is general, the office conditions can meet the teaching needs, the salary and housing conditions need to be improved, and the spare-time and family life needs of biology special post teachers attract attention; (2) Professional development is generally satisfactory. Specialized biology teachers in Southern Henan are willing to participate in educational and teaching reform, but their participation in teaching and research activities needs to be further strengthened. Specialized biology teachers have a large workload and high labor intensity. In view of the above findings, this paper puts forward some countermeasures for the development of biology special post teachers in Southern Henan, with a view to providing theoretical reference for the follow-up research on biology special post teachers, as well as providing important information for improving the living status of specialty post teachers, promoting professional development and improving the quality of education and teaching.

Keywords: Southern Henan, Biology, Special Post Teachers, Living Status, Development Strategies

1. Introduction

In order to thoroughly implement the opinions of the central committee of the communist party of China on promoting the construction of a new socialist countryside and encouraging the employment of college graduates at the grass-roots level, we should gradually solve the problems of weak teachers in primary and secondary schools, especially in rural schools, and unreasonable teacher structure, so as to improve the overall quality of the teaching staff and promote the balanced Exhibition. On May 15, 2006, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Personnel and the Central Editorial Office jointly issued the Notice of the Special Job Plan for

School Teachers at the Stage of Rural Compulsory Education, hereinafter referred to as the "Special Job Teacher Plan." The aim of the plan is to innovate the mechanism of rural teachers' supplement, strengthen the effective supplement of rural teachers (Hu, 2010), solve the problems of insufficient total teachers and unreasonable structure in rural areas (You et al., 2017), and continuously improve the quality of rural school education.

Since the implementation of the "special post teacher plan" in 2009, Henan Province has attracted a large number of outstanding university graduates, especially the undergraduate graduates of teachers' major, to join the special post teacher industry (Yang, 2017; Feng et al., 2018). This has effectively promoted the employment of college students in Henan Province, improved the quality of basic education in rural areas, and played an important role in promoting the balanced development of compulsory education in Henan Province. From the beginning of the implementation of the "special post teacher plan" in Henan Province to September 2012, a total of 300,000 special post teachers (Tian et al., 2013) were recruited in Henan Province. So far, the total number of special post teachers recruited in Henan Province has exceeded 100,000, and the number of special post teachers recruited in Henan Province in 2017 alone reached 15,300 (Feng et al., 2018). These special post teachers have injected fresh blood into rural schools and brought strong aftereffect for the sustainable and healthy development of rural education.

In 2019, the "Special Post Teacher Program" has been successfully implemented in southern Henan for ten years. It has gradually solved the problems of insufficient teachers and unreasonable structure of teachers in rural schools in southern Henan, improved the overall quality of teachers in the vast rural areas of southern Henan, and effectively promoted the balanced development of urban and rural educational resources. It has played an important role. However, at the same time, the co-existence and development of special post teachers, on-the-job teachers and new special post teachers have emerged. Many special post teachers are more entangled on the issue of whether to stay or not after their expiration, and various contradictions about special post teachers are constantly highlighted (Zhang, 2016; Wang et al., 2013). The overall level of economic and social development in southern Henan is relatively low, and the rural education hardware facilities are still relatively backward. At the same time, the population base in southern Henan is relatively large, especially the huge agricultural population, which will lead to a considerable difficulty in the implementation of relevant education policies, and its education is also more difficult. The overall enrollment rate of students in southern Henan is relatively low, and the overall quality of education and teaching is not optimistic (Tian et al., 2013). Therefore, many excellent Biology Normal Graduates are reluctant to teach in Southern Henan. The recruitment of excellent biology teachers in Southern Henan is much more difficult than that in other provinces and municipalities.

What is the present situation of teaching and living of biology special post teachers in Southern Henan, and what difficulties they have in the process of professional development? The real situation of these problems is not clear to all sectors of society, and there is still a lack of corresponding solutions. Therefore, in order to effectively investigate the current situation of biology special post teachers in Southern Henan, this study adopted a combination of interviews and questionnaires (112 valid questionnaires). Three representative counties (Gushi County, Luoshan County and Tanghe County) were selected to investigate and analyze the current situation of biology special post teachers in Southern Henan from two aspects of living conditions and professional development. In order to improve the living conditions of special post teachers in Southern Henan, promote professional development, and improve the quality of education and teaching to provide reference.

2. Investigation and analysis of the living status of biology special post teachers in Southern Henan

Teachers in special posts usually work in counties or towns. Schools in which they teach are usually in remote rural areas, which make them far away from their families, inconvenient transportation, and poor living and board conditions. Therefore, special post teachers are often difficult to adapt to life and their spare time is relatively monotonous, which requires more attention to the living conditions of special post teachers. In this study, we investigated the working conditions, housing environment, salary and treatment, family life, spare time and social status of biology teachers in southern Henan in order to find out the real-life state of the biology special post teachers in southern Henan, and provide reference for the policy formulation, adjustment and optimization of specialty post teachers in later period.

2.1 Working conditions of biology special post teachers

With more and more attention paid to education, knowledge and talents by the state, more and more special post teachers are invested in their working environment and conditions. This makes the special post teachers' working environment knowledge atmosphere strong, there are office and dormitory areas, and equipped with modern office equipment. So, what are the working conditions of the rural primary and secondary schools where the biology teachers are located? With such a problem, this interview and questionnaire specifically investigated the working conditions of biology special post teachers in southern Henan. The results of the survey showed that: 87.5% of the Specially-Appointed teachers of biology indicated that their schools had modern multimedia equipment and could use it normally, 12.5% of the Specially-Appointed teachers of biology indicated that the teaching school had multimedia equipment, but it could not be used normally. According to statistics, 87.5% of teachers are satisfied or basically satisfied with the school's office conditions and equipment. It shows that the office conditions of rural schools in southern Henan can basically meet the teaching needs of biology teachers.

2.2 Housing of biology special post teachers

The schools where special post teachers teach are usually in rural areas far away from home, and the transportation is inconvenient. Especially in rural junior high schools, there are usually morning and evening self-study arrangements, so special post teachers need to live in school or rent housing near the school. In the life of special post teachers, the most important concern is the housing problem, which is related to whether special post teachers can safely teach. Through the investigation, it is found that there are mainly the following solutions to housing problems for special post teachers: schools provide free housing (62.5%), schools provide preferential housing (6.3%) and live in their own homes (31.2%) (Fig. 1). A further survey on the satisfaction of the special-post teachers of biology who provide dormitories free of charge in schools shows that 80.0% of the special-post teachers of biology are satisfied or basically satisfied, and 20.0% of the special-post teachers of biology are not satisfied with the housing provided free of charge in schools. Therefore, the survey found that the current South Henan biology teachers' satisfaction with housing situation is general.

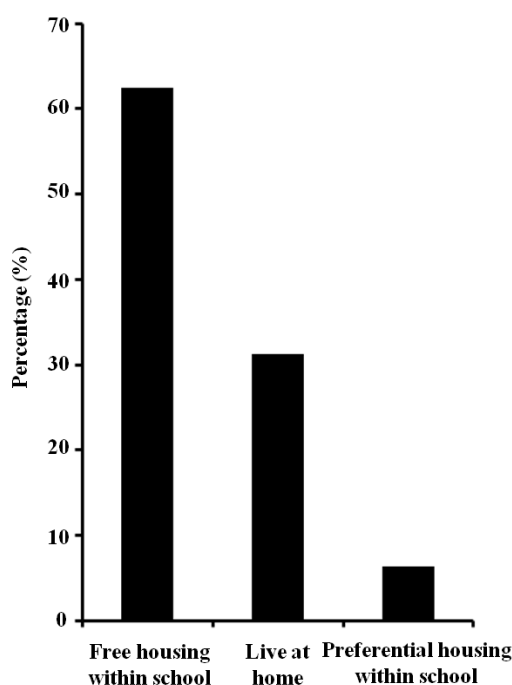


Fig. 1 Survey on housing problems of biology teachers

2.3 Remuneration and welfare of biology special post teachers

For special post teachers, in order to better encourage them to engage in education and teaching, promote their better development, and take root in rural areas for a long time to play an active and effective role, the direct and effective way is to improve the salary treatment of special post teachers. Efforts should be made to improve the basic living standards of special post teachers so that they can safely, enthusiastically and lifelong teach without worries. This requires relevant education and teaching departments to give priority to ensuring that special post teachers' salaries are paid in full and on time, and to establish appropriate compensation and incentive mechanisms for special post teachers when conditions permit. We will continue to improve the treatment of special post teachers by rewarding them with wages, granting subsidy for daily life or class hours, et al. According to the survey, 62.5% of the biology special post teachers' monthly salary is above 2000 yuan, and 37.5% of the biology special post teachers' monthly salary is between 1500 and 2000, which accounts for a small proportion. In addition, 62.5% of the special-duty teachers said that the school they teach does not have a class-hour subsidy; 18.8% of the teachers said that the school has a class-hour subsidy, but the subsidy is less; only 18.8% of the teachers think that the school's class-hour subsidy is reasonable. For the overtime allowance for morning and evening self-study and vacation, 50.0% of the Specially-Appointed biology teachers said that there was no subsidy at all in their school, and only 12.5% of the biology teachers were very satisfied with the reasonable subsidy of the school, 18.8% of the biology special post teachers expressed their satisfaction with the reasonable subsidy of the school, and the school could issue the subsidy on time, 18.8% of the biology special post teachers thought that the school occasionally issued reasonable subsidy, but the subsidy was low (Fig. 2). Therefore, the salary of biology special post teachers in southern Henan is low and the subsidy is low.

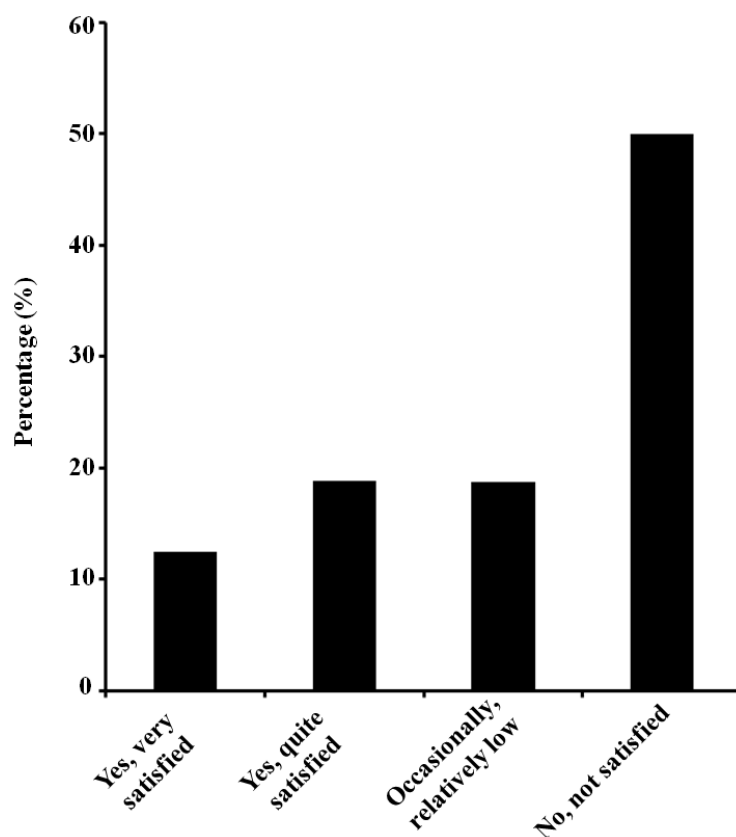


Fig. 2 The distribution of reasonable allowances for special post teachers

As for the welfare benefits of special-duty teachers, whether their social security such as "five insurance and one fund" can enjoy the same treatment as those of public-owned teachers is a common concern of special-duty teachers. "Five insurance and one pension" refers to old-age insurance, unemployment insurance, maternity insurance, industrial injury insurance, medical insurance and housing accumulation fund, which is a guarantee for the present and future life of special post teachers. "Five insurance and one pension" refers to old-age insurance, unemployment insurance, maternity insurance, industrial injury insurance, medical insurance and housing accumulation fund, which is a guarantee for the present and future life of special post teachers. A survey was

conducted on whether the education authorities or the schools where they teach buy "five insurance and one fund" for special post teachers. The results show that: 81.8% of biology special post teachers normally enjoy "five risks and one fund." 6.5% of biology special post teachers buy 4-5 items of "five risks and one fund." 13.2% of biology special post teachers only buy 2-3 items of "five risks and one fund" (Fig. 3). Therefore, through the analysis of the survey results, we can see that the welfare benefits of biology special post teachers in southern Henan are relatively deficient. This will bring some pressure to the life of biology teachers.

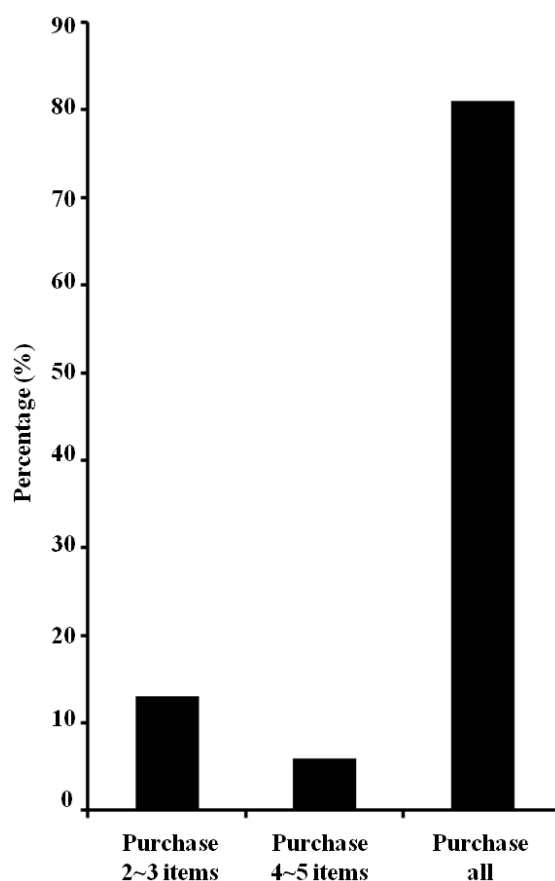


Fig. 3 The purchasing situation of "five insurance and one fund" for special post teachers

2.4 Family life status of biology special post teachers

Marriage and family is an important factor for the stability of special post teachers, and it is also a very important issue to be concerned. The desire of special post teachers for marriage and family is the spiritual sense of belonging and the pursuit of love of special post teachers. Graduates of undergraduate or postgraduate students have reached the age of marriage. If the marriage issue can not be solved in time, then special post teachers lack the support and care of some families, which will inevitably divert their work and life energy, and form unstable factors, and ultimately affect the work and life of special post teachers. Through surveys and interviews, it was found that 37.5% of the biology special post teachers were single, and 50.0% of the biology special post teachers were unmarried. A further survey of married biology teachers found that 75.0% of married teachers separated from their families. Therefore, the marriage and family problems of biology teachers in the south of Henan need to be guided and solved. Therefore, the marriage and family problems of biology teachers in the south of Henan need to be guided and solved.

2.5 Amateur life of biology special post teachers

Special post teachers are mostly located in rural areas where the conditions are more difficult. Their transportation is inconvenient, housing conditions need to be improved, and recreational activities are less. This will affect the personal feelings and spare time of special post teachers. Especially, the living conditions of special post teachers

are much worse than those in cities. The richness of their spare time life directly affects their mental health and the stability of their work. Even it will be difficult to adapt to the life of rural schools, inevitably, there will be feelings of escape, although the latter may be slowly accustomed to, but it is difficult to stay for a long time. By means of interviews and questionnaires, this paper investigates and analyses the spare-time life of biology teachers in the south of Henan Province. The results show that: 68.8% of the special post teachers of biology think that their spare time is very monotonous, and the proportion is relatively large. Among the survey results on loneliness of biology teachers in Southern Henan, 56.3% felt lonely occasionally, 31.2% did not feel lonely, and 12.5% of biology teachers said they often felt lonely. Most biology teachers work in remote areas and often live separately from their families. Their psychological status needs to be paid enough attention. Therefore, the spare-time life of the biology teachers in the south of Henan province is relatively single. It is necessary to enrich their spare-time life further, promote their peace of mind and enthusiasm in teaching, and constantly improve the level and quality of education and teaching.

2.6 Social status of biology special post teachers

General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized at the National Education Conference that teachers are the foundation of teaching and the source of revitalizing teaching, and that teachers' dignity should be restored. In order to build a modern and powerful country, new and higher requirements are put forward for respecting teachers and respecting education in society and continuously improving teachers' political, social and professional status. Then, the social status of the special post teachers in the local teaching is reflected in the degree of local respect. According to the survey, 81.3% of biology special post teachers think that special post teachers are more popular among the school teachers they teach; 6.2% of biology special post teachers think that they are not popular in the school they teach, and only 12.5% of biology special post teachers say that they are very popular in the school they teach. At the same time, 75.0% of the biology special post teachers said that they were respected in the local area, and 18.8% of the biology special post teachers thought that they were highly respected in the local area. This shows that the biology special post teachers are respected and welcomed in the schools they teach.

3. Investigation and analysis of professional development of biology special post teachers in Southern Henan

3.1 The satisfaction degree of biology special post teachers on their professional development

Through interviews and questionnaires, this paper investigates the current situation of biology teachers' professional development in southern Henan Province. The results show that: 25.0% of special post teachers are satisfied with their current professional development, 62.5% of them are basically satisfied with their current professional development, and only 12.5% of them are not satisfied with their current professional development. From this point of view, the vast majority of special post teachers of biology in southern Henan Province are satisfied with their current professional development.

3.2 Actual workload of biology special post teachers

In order to grasp the actual teaching workload of biology specialty post teachers in southern Henan Province, interviews and questionnaires were conducted, the statistical results show that: 6.2% of the biology specialty teachers have 22 or more biology lessons per week, which is equivalent to more than 4 lessons per day on average; 37.5% of the biology teachers have 18 to 21 lessons per week; 18.8% of the teachers have 14 to 17 lessons per week; the proportion of biology specialist teachers whose total weekly class hours are between 10 and 13 is 37.5%. That is to say, there are at least 2 biology classes per day (Fig. 4). It can be seen that the actual teaching workload of most biology specialty post teachers in southern Henan is relatively large and the labor intensity is relatively high.

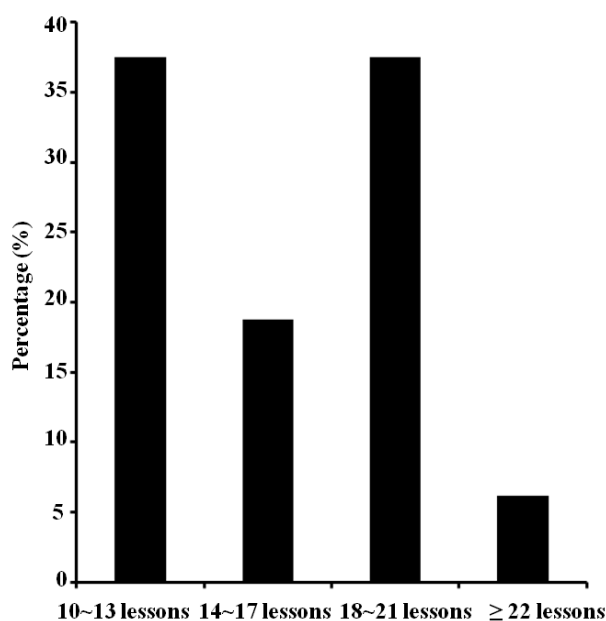


Fig. 4 Total lessons per week

Further investigation results verify that the actual teaching workload of most biology specialty post teachers in southern Henan is large. The analysis results show that: 43.8% of the Specially-Appointed biology teachers thought that their teaching workload had exceeded the allowance, and they were laborious and tired (Fig. 5); 18.8% of the special post teachers of biology expressed their satisfaction with their teaching workload, believing that although the workload was heavy and hard, they still liked their teaching work; 31.3% of the Specially-Appointed teachers of biology showed just the right teaching workload and had room for learning and development; Only 6.3% of the Specially-Appointed teachers of biology indicated that their teaching workload was not large and easy, and even they could increase the workload appropriately.

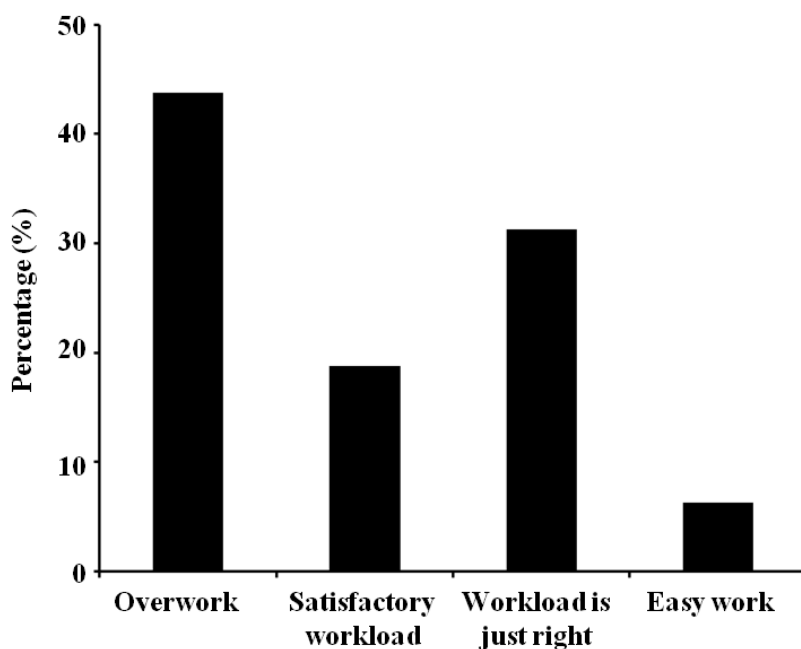


Fig. 5 Statistical results of teaching workload

3.3 Attitudes of biology special post teachers towards biology education theory and reform

In order to investigate the current attitudes of biology teachers to biology education theory, education reform and education information in southern Henan, this study conducted interviews and analyzed the valid questionnaires

collected. The results show that: 50.0% of the special post teachers in biology are concerned about educational theory, educational reform and educational information, 12.5% are very concerned about educational theory, educational reform and educational information, and 37.5% are general about educational theory, educational reform and educational information; and the number of people who do not pay attention to educational theory, educational reform and educational information is 0. Therefore, more than 60% of the special post teachers of biology are concerned about biology education theory, education reform and education information, which implies that they are willing to participate in the theory and reform of biology education, thus promoting the quality of biology education in southern Henan.

3.4 Professional learning means of biology special post teachers

Through the investigation of the biology teachers' professional learning means and teaching reflection activities in south Henan province, it was found that 6.2% of the Specially-Appointed teachers of biology indicated that their main way of professional learning was through participating in further education activities; 56.2% of the teachers said that they mainly learned through teaching and research activities and professional learning; the remaining 37.6% of the biology teachers said that their main method of professional learning is to search for information online. Among them, 37.5% of the special post teachers often carry out teaching reflection activities; 43.5% of the teachers sometimes carried out teaching reflection activities; 19.0% of teachers expressed general opinion on teaching reflection. Therefore, the above survey results show that most of the biology specialty post teachers in southern Henan can actively strengthen professional learning and timely reflection on teaching.

3.5 The participation of biology special post teachers in teaching and research activities

The method of interview and questionnaire survey was adopted to investigate the participation of biology teachers in the regular teaching and research activities of the university in south Henan. The statistical results show that 37.5% of the teachers take part in the regular teaching and research activities of our school once a semester; 37.5% of the teachers take part in the regular teaching and research activities twice a semester; the remaining 12.5% of the biology specialist teachers say they do not participate regularly or rarely; and 12.5% of the teachers say they have not participated in the regular teaching and research activities of our school. Teaching and research activities (Fig. 6). Therefore, most of the special post teachers of biology in southern Henan can participate in the teaching and research activities of their university, but the teaching and research activities need to be further strengthened.

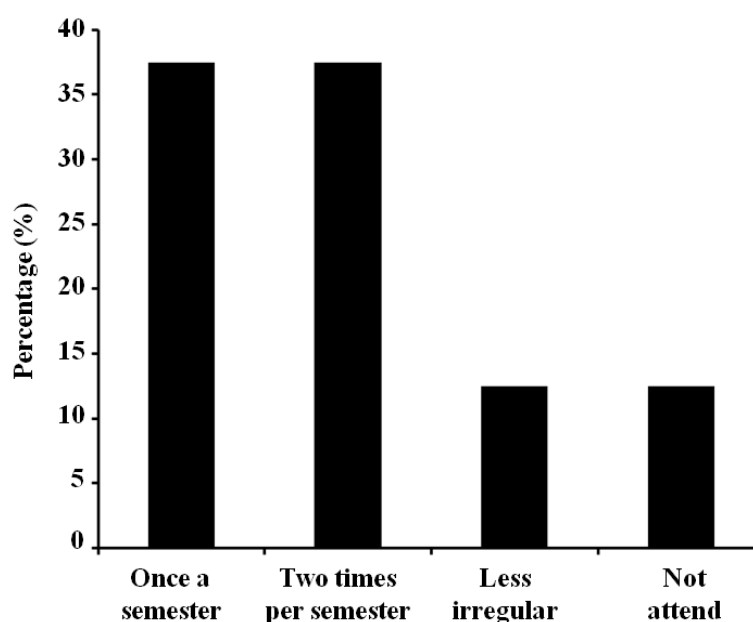


Fig. 6 Participation in teaching and research activities

3.6 The school's expectations for biology special post teachers

Biology special post teachers have made positive contributions to the cause of school education, but it is not clear what the school expects of biology teachers at present. Through interviews with biology special post teachers in southern Henan Province, combined with the results of the questionnaire survey, it was found that 43.8% of the teachers said that the school had high expectations for biology special post teachers; 12.5% of teachers said the school has very high expectations for biology teachers; another 43.7% said the school's expectations for biology special post teachers were modest. Thus it can be seen that the expectations of most schools in southern Henan province for the position of biology specialist teachers are in the upper middle level. In addition, after the expiration of the teaching period, the most concerned issue of the special post teachers in biology is the "incorporation problem," which shows the positive concern of the special post teachers for the employment situation and personal career development after the expiration of the teaching period. Among them, 62.5% of teachers said that they would continue to teach in their current school after the expiration of their service period, while 37.5% said that they would strive for opportunities to transfer to better-qualified schools after the expiration of their service period.

4. The development strategy of biology special post teachers in Southern Henan

4.1 Improve the supporting policies to promote the professional development of biology special post teachers

In terms of the policy of "special post teacher plan," the state has only made overall deployment and arrangement at the macro level. It is the responsibility of local governments at all levels to flexibly formulate relevant rules for teachers with special posts according to the actual situation in various regions. Especially, most of the special post teachers' pre-employment and post-employment training, as well as professional development, which basically rely on local finance to solve this problem, requires local governments to increase investment in education in poor, remote and backward rural areas from the perspective of the overall situation of education. Teachers in special posts of biology go to the countryside, because they have fewer opportunities for further training, they basically have no chance to participate in training and continuing education, and can only rely on self-study. However, teachers in special posts have a large number of teaching classes, and the time they can use to improve their ability and level of personal professional knowledge is not much, which seriously limits the professional development of biology special post teachers.

Special post teachers are in the induction period, most of them took part in work not long ago, which is the most critical period in the whole career. Paying more attention to the professional development of special post teachers is not only the need to solve practical problems, but also the need to build a long-term stable and quality rural teachers team (Tian et al., 2013). In addition, the issue of whether to stay or not after the expiration of the special post teachers' tenure is also a hot topic of current social concern (Wang et al., 2019). Cities have abundant social resources and vast space for professional development, which is the main driving force for biology teachers to choose from rural to urban areas. Therefore, in order to avoid short-sighted behavior and establish a long-term and stable management mechanism, the relevant departments should improve the relevant policies of the "special post plan" (Yang, 2019). At the same time, it is necessary to further improve the school's various management systems and take targeted measures. Special post teachers themselves also need to change their induction concepts and make joint efforts to ensure that the teachers of biology special post can teach with peace of mind and enthusiasm.

4.2 Improve professional identity and professional confidence, and enhance the self-efficacy of biology special post teachers

Creating a good social atmosphere of respecting teachers and respecting education, constantly enhancing the professional pride of special post teachers and improving their professional self-confidence are the key to promoting their professional identity. The factors influencing the professional identity of biology teachers are complex and diversified. Biology teachers with different professional motivation have significant differences in their feelings of professional identity, especially in the aspects of occupational cognition, occupational experience, occupational expectation, occupational emotion and occupational skills (Zhou et al., 2019; Xu, 2014; Li, 2012). The survey results show that there is a significant positive correlation between social support and teachers' professional pride (Zhang, 2016). For the biology teachers in rural primary and secondary schools, if they can get

material and spiritual support from leaders, colleagues, parents, students and society in the activities of education and teaching, they will have a positive psychological impact to a certain extent. This kind of positive emotion will promote the improvement of their educational and teaching abilities and levels, and make the teachers of biology specialty post fully enjoy the sense of achievement and dignity of value in their own educational and teaching activities, so as to have a certain sense of belonging to their school and teaching profession, and ultimately enhance the level of teachers' professional pride. Therefore, it is necessary for the state and society to give biology special post teachers more preferential policies and positive public opinion guidance. While continually improving the professional prestige of special post teachers, we should constantly improve the corresponding social status, political status, professional status and salary level of biology special post teachers, so as to form a good atmosphere for respecting, understanding and supporting special post teachers in the whole society (Zhang, 2016). In addition, a good school environment should be established so that the biology special post teachers can constantly gain a sense of honor, mission, dignity and pride in the process of education and teaching, strengthen the professional self-confidence of the special post teachers, enhance the sense of self-efficacy, and form a benign interaction for the high-quality development of education and teaching in rural primary and secondary schools.

4.3 Focus on the psychological status of special post teachers and improve salary and welfare treatment

Only by improving the basic living security of special post teachers and letting them have no worries, can they be reassured, enthusiastic and lifelong in teaching. Regrettably, according to the results of salary satisfaction survey, 66.7% of the Specially-Appointed teachers of biology expressed dissatisfaction or very dissatisfaction with the salary level. Imperfect infrastructure, lack of material conditions and low salary are still the main reasons that hinder the retention of rural special post teachers (Tang et al., 2019). Special post teachers have made great contributions to improving the current situation of education and teaching in poverty-stricken areas, but their economic status has not been improved accordingly. Life worries will inevitably have a negative impact on the working status of special post teachers. Therefore, the relevant departments should improve the local allowances and social security benefits for special post teachers, and formulate and implement the basic standards of work and life security for special post teachers. At the same time, it is necessary to make clear provisions on the safety, transportation, accommodation and working environment of special post teachers, so as to ensure the basic conditions of their work and life, and to stimulate their enthusiasm for work.

Most of the schools taught by special posts teachers are located in remote counties or towns. Many special posts teachers live alone away from their families, and often feel lonely. Therefore, special post teachers will inevitably have various psychological problems, which need to be paid enough attention by relevant departments (Liang, 2019). The whole society should pay more attention to the special post teachers, deepen the humanistic care, and strengthen the communication and exchange between them (Tian et al., 2013). It is suggested that the administrative department of education at the county level should take the lead to set up regional research and friendship teaching organizations in rural poverty-stricken areas with scattered special post teachers as the main body and similar township schools as units to create a good communication environment. It can not only exchange learning experience with each other, promote the improvement of professional level, but also enhance the communication between special post teachers in life and emotions, create favorable conditions for young special post teachers to make love and friends, and lay a solid foundation for them to take root in the countryside and serve rural education.

Acknowledgments

This work was financially supported by Postgraduate Education Reform Project of Henan Province (2019SJGLX088Y), Special Research Project of Teacher Education Linkage Development Community in Southern Henan (2019-GTTYB-01), Research Project of Teacher Education Curriculum Revolution of XYNU (2019-JSJYYJ-10) and Postgraduate Research Innovation Project of XYNU (2018KYJJ47).

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