



International Experience of Home-based Childcare in the Context of Comprehensive Three-child Education and Practical Analysis in Zhejiang

Qing Wang

School of Early Childhood, Hangzhou Polytechnic, Hangzhou, Zhejiang, China.

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Corresponding author: Qing Wang, School of Early Childhood, Hangzhou Polytechnic, Hangzhou, Zhejiang, China.

Abstract

Since the implementation of the universal three-child policy, childcare service has been regarded as one of the important measures to implement the universal three-child policy. For a long time, the infant care subject in traditional Chinese culture has been the family. This paper summarizes the change of infant care responsibility in China and analyzes the model of family care service in developed countries, analyzes the experience of home-based childcare service model in developed countries such as Canada, Australia and Denmark, and introduces the trial of family care service in Zhejiang Province of China. Finally, it sorts out the positive reference for the construction of family care service in China, especially in Zhejiang Province. This paper argues that in the process of developing family care services in China, it is necessary to strengthen the responsibility of the government, actively encourage social resources to actively participate in the construction of family care services, promote the joint participation of multiple subjects, and establish a new system of family care services.

Keywords

Home-based childcare, International experience, Chinese reality

1. Question raising

Family members are the most intimate social members of infants and young children before the age of three. The trust that infants and young children establish in them is irreplaceable by other childcare institutions. In addition, as the first safe environment for infants and young children after birth, home provides close, warm and comprehensive care for infants and young children, which is irreplaceable by other childcare institutions. Compared with traditional institutional care, family care can provide children with a relatively warm and stable environment, and also enable children to gain more attention and interaction than traditional care institutions. Family care services have been carried out all over the world, making great contributions to alleviating the difficulties of infant care (Liu Zhongyi, 2017). At present, China's family-care service starts late and develops more slowly than traditional care institutions. This paper provides strong support for vigorously developing family-care with Zhejiang characteristics by drawing on foreign mature management experience, based on and combining with China's social reality.

2. Experience of Family Care Abroad

Family care refers to the care services provided in the family. There are two main forms of family care services. One is that caregivers take care of a specified number of infants and young children in their own families, usually called

"Day Care". Family day care can provide infants with a family atmosphere and opportunities to communicate with peers, and can promote the development of infants' cognition, emotion, sociality and other aspects. The other is that caregivers take care of infants and young children directly in their homes, called "home care", which is similar to family nannies. In foreign countries, family care is a popular form of care. The home-based childcare environment can make infants and young children quickly familiar with the new environment and gain a sense of security; Personalized care provides convenience for infants and parents, and the service content depends on the requirements of parents.

2.1 Canada

Canada's childcare service started early and gradually formed a complete childcare service system, including childcare institutions, group-based childcare services, and home-based childcare. Among them, family care is popular among Canadian residents because of its flexible collection and personalized service. According to statistics in 2013, nearly 44,000 women were engaged in recognized and formal family care services.

There are no fixed and uniform standards and models for the services of family care institutions in Canada, and their childcare services are independently provided by the province. Therefore, there are regional differences in the provision of childcare services in Canada. Take Ontario as an example, the legal person who provides home-based childcare services must have a childcare and education-related license. In general, the scale of family care services should not be too large to facilitate the care and care of every child. Family care institutions can provide care and education services for up to 10 children under the age of 12. Canada's provinces are responsible for childcare services independently, so there are differences in the specific provisions on the proportion of teachers and children. Take British Columbia for example, the maximum number of children enrolled is 7, and the maximum care ratio is 1:7. In order to form a complete family care service system, improve the quality of family care services and better manage the family care institutions, the family care service system in Canada includes not only caregivers, but also care service coordinators and managers, who jointly promote the development of family care services towards specialization and standardization (Zuo Kuan, 2022).

2.2 Australia

The Australian government's childcare service also started early, and gradually formed two main forms of institutional childcare and family-type childcare. Among them, family-type childcare is favored by many residents because of its flexible care. According to the data released by the Australian Bureau of Early Childhood Education and Care Quality in 2016, home-based childcare in Australia accounts for 12% of the total childcare services. There are about 17000 home-based childcare social workers in China, and about 12,500 children receive home-based childcare services, and the number of children receiving this service is also increasing. To establish a professional family-care institution, first of all, it is necessary to clarify the qualification for the establishment. Before the establishment of the family-care institution in Australia, it is necessary to go through a series of procedures of registration, evaluation, improvement and certification, and then it can be qualified to provide family-care. Australia's National Quality Framework clearly stipulates the proportion of teachers and children who start family care, and provides detailed care proportion for different age stages. For example, in family care, the proportion of caregivers to children with children is 1:7. There shall be no more than 4 preschool children. No more than 2 children under 3 years old (Li, H. J & Liu, W. J, 2021).

2.3 Denmark

Denmark, as a model of welfare system, provides adequate family welfare support for Danish citizens. To solve the problem of family care for infants aged 0 to 6 years old, the Danish government has set up various types of nursery places. Most Danish parents choose home-based childcare services for children under the age of three, usually in private homes or other Settings. Denmark's family care development time is longer, the legislation and standard requirements are more mature. After submitting the request for home-based care services, the Municipal administration will assess the home environment of the day care. According to the relevant legislation, good quality family care environment should meet the basic needs of physical and mental development of children. Family care places should provide good childcare and education services for children, not only to ensure the healthy growth of children, but also to improve their learning and development skills, such as creativity, independence, cooperation and so on.

3. The Enlightenment of Foreign Home-Based Childcare on the Development of Home-Based Childcare Services in China

3.1 The competent department is clear and the policies and regulations are perfect

A clear administrative department is the prerequisite for the standardized and institutionalized development of the family care service system. The introduction of policies and regulations is an important guarantee for the standardized

and institutionalized development of family care services. An important guarantee for the standardized and institutionalized development of family care services, countries with more mature home-based childcare services have stipulated who is responsible for childcare services, so as to accurately control the direction of childcare services. In addition, countries have issued relevant policy documents to specifically regulate the development requirements of childcare services (Cai, H., Guo, M. W., & Chen, Y. Y., 2022).

3.2 Clear start-up requirements and strict personnel access

In order to ensure the safety of childcare services, countries have strict examination on the qualification of home-based childcare institutions. At the same time, in order to ensure the quality of childcare services, there are also clear requirements for the access qualification of practitioners. In terms of qualification, countries mainly pay attention to the safety inspection of houses and the background examination of personnel; In terms of the access qualification of employees, the age of the main employees, whether they have received training, whether they have professional qualification certificates, personal background and experience are reviewed. However, due to the influence of national conditions and regional differences, there are differences in the qualification of establishment and personnel access among countries.

4. Practical Practice of Developing Family Care in China—Taking Zhejiang Province as an Example

Xiaohepei Family in Luqiao District, Taizhou City, Zhejiang Province is currently the first qualified family nursery in Chinese Mainland. In recent years, family care in Zhejiang Province has been at the forefront of the country, and has solved a series of livelihood problems such as women, employment and childcare to some extent (Zhang M & Wang X H, 2020). Hangzhou has made clear the development direction of childcare, which is family-oriented, community-based and organization-supplemented. Up to now, Hangzhou has to some extent solved a series of practical problems that have lowered the fertility desire, such as the lack of care for infants and children, the creation of a part of employment opportunities, and the liberation of women's childbearing pressure and the contradiction of intergenerational rearing. Hangzhou is also promoting the model of Gongshu District infant growth post station in the whole city, and has issued the "Implementation Opinions on Strengthening the Construction of Infant Growth Post Station", which also puts forward detailed requirements for family-style childcare services.

As the first area in Zhejiang Province to carry out family care services for infants and young children, Gongshu District of Hangzhou has become a national demonstration area for infant care services. Among them, the "Sunshine Children" nursery is the first "government-community-family" three-in-one family care model for Gongshu District. That is, the new model of family care, which is a trinity of government funding, community venue and parents' caregiving. By 2023, Gongshu District plans to build hundreds of sunshine childcare service points for children and infants in the whole district, and on this basis, build a 15-minute infant care service scope system in Gongshu District. In order to realize the integration of childcare services, digital empowerment is used to help the old and the young, and the community care system, so as to truly realize the digital common prosperity of the elderly care at home and the happy home of the Grand Canal.

5. Suggestions on the development of home-based child care in China

5.1 Define the competent department of home-based childcare institutions and introduce relevant policies and regulations

At present, some provinces and cities in China have begun to gradually explore home-based infant care services, and have successively issued relevant documents. For example, Nanjing has issued the Interim Measures for the Administration of the Establishment of Nursery Institutions for Children under the Age of 0-3 in Nanjing, and Shanghai has issued the Standards for the Establishment of Nursery Institutions for Children under the Age of 3 in Shanghai (Trial) and other documents. However, due to the lack of a clear administrative department and unclear responsibilities of the department, the perfect childcare service system has a clear responsibility subject and administrative department. Therefore, the Chinese government should play the role of top-level design, coordinate all departments, further develop policies and regulations related to family-care services in line with China's national conditions, and clarify the responsibilities of all departments and institutions. We will improve the government's investment and guarantee mechanism, clarify the status, rights and obligations of home-based childcare personnel, and standardize the evaluation and accountability system for the service quality of home-based childcare institutions, so that home-based childcare services and other forms of childcare services can truly be legally based.

5.2 Formulate strict standards for setting up home-based childcare institutions, and clarify personnel access qualifications

At present, although China has issued several laws and regulations related to childcare services since 2019, it only refers to family-based childcare services, but there is no clear explanation of how to run family-based childcare services, so there are certain risks in safety supervision and other aspects. Therefore, the competent government departments should appeal to the upper departments to formulate legally effective family care service guidelines as soon as possible, and put forward specific requirements on the qualification, staffing, space environment, safety precautions, health care and other aspects.

5.3 Establish a supervision and evaluation system to ensure the quality of home-based childcare services

First of all, a government-based childcare service center should be established to uniformly manage childcare services, regional childcare facilities and home-based childcare facilities. The district and street childcare service centers have network information resources on the basis of computer network. With the community childcare service center as the regulatory agency, the kindergarten network system of the community childcare service center and the regional network system of public security, fire protection, health, education and other units have been formed to ensure the safety and quality of family childcare. Therefore, in order to reassure parents, we can now consider installing monitoring equipment in the daily living area of infants and young children, automatically backing up the data to the public security department, and taking the means of network monitoring as the basis for safety quality assessment. Second, the supervisor of the community nursing center will visit regularly or irregularly to evaluate the quality of nursing. The quality monitoring standards of family nursing quality assessment should include safety management, resource allocation, teacher level, nursing service content and quality, guardian satisfaction, etc.

5.4 Strengthen vocational skills training and improve the level of teachers in home-based childcare institutions

The quality of nurseries relates to the quality of early education for protecting and educating infants, and the quality of early education for nurseries relates to the development of emotional and social functions in the future. At present, most of the teachers in the home-based nursery are from medical staff or retired women, but they cannot meet the requirements of the 0-3 year old baby.

Infants before the age of 3 years are the fastest growing period, and their self-protection ability is reduced, so they need to be professional and scientific. In order to ensure the quality of infant care, it is necessary to carry out special training and assessment for nurseries.

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