

# Research on Government Supervision of Primary and Secondary School Extracurricular Care Institutions in City C

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**Abstract:** *China's off-campus care institutions have developed rapidly, but the lack of supervision has caused safety concerns. This study focuses on the government supervision of care institutions in City C. Using the new public management, collaborative governance and responsible government theory analysis, it is found that there is a lack of coordination among the regulatory subjects; the government's regulatory power is limited, and social forces are insufficiently involved; the laws and regulations for off-campus care institutions for primary and secondary schools are not sound; the form of supervision is limited and relies on administrative inspections; countermeasures are proposed: "departmental joint governance" and cross-departmental collaboration; with the help of social supervision, expand multi-party participation; issue relevant laws and regulations to regulate the operation of care institutions; introduce information-based supervision methods to achieve dynamic monitoring. The study aims to provide theoretical support and practical reference for improving the quality and safety level of care services in City C, and promote the all-round development of primary and secondary school students.*

**Keywords:** After-school care institutions; Primary and secondary school students; Government supervision; Effective supervision

## 1. Problem Statement

Education is a fundamental cause that promotes national development and social progress. With the development of society and the increasing demand for education from parents, education is not limited to the improvement of academic performance, but also involves the comprehensive development of students and the satisfaction of basic needs. In recent years, the country has gradually deepened its attention to education, especially through the implementation of the "double reduction" policy, which has reduced the academic burden of students and the mental pressure of parents, and also promoted the growth of demand for custodial services. The implementation of custodial services can also effectively reduce the burden on parents, especially solving the problem that parents cannot pick up their children in time due to work reasons, and further enhance the happiness of the family. With the gradual improvement of policies and the collaboration of all parties, the custodial service industry is expected to achieve sustainable development on the basis of ensuring the health of students and the needs of parents, and contribute to the education cause of society.

With the rise of after-school care institutions, these institutions have gradually become an important choice for parents, meeting their actual needs in daily life. By providing comprehensive services, care institutions not only help students get knowledge tutoring after class, but also ensure that students can rest and eat in a safe environment. After-school education care institutions have received widespread attention in recent years, but in their development process, safety and diet issues are still the focus of parents and society.

To this end, the state has successively issued relevant documents such as the "Law of the People's Republic of China on the Promotion of Private Education" and the "Guiding Opinions of the General Office of the Ministry of Education on Doing a Good Job in After-school Services for Primary and Secondary School Students", and various places have also

issued the "Administrative Measures for Student Off-campus Custody Institutions". In the practice of various places, the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region was the first to promulgate the normative document on off-campus custody institutions in 2019, the "Guiding Opinions of the General Office of the People's Government of Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region on Strengthening the Management of Off-campus Custody Institutions". Later in 2021, the People's Government of Hunan Province issued the "Guiding Opinions of the General Office of the People's Government of Hunan Province on Strengthening the Management of Off-campus Custody Institutions" to improve the management level, avoid the situation of inconsistent service quality, simplify the approval process, allow more high-quality institutions to enter the market, and improve the overall level of the custody industry. Subsequently, in 2023, Dongguan City, Guangdong Province promulgated the "Dongguan City Student Off-campus Custody Institution Management Measures (Trial)", which clarified the government's responsibilities in the supervision of off-campus custody institutions. This not only improves the accuracy of supervision, but also ensures the standardization and legality of custody institutions in the service process. The measures also stipulate penalties for illegal and irregular acts to ensure the authority and effectiveness of supervision.

With the increase of social demands and a series of reforms in education policies, City C, as the central city in southeastern Shanxi Province, is one of the regions that attaches great importance to education in the province and is also an important city in the central region. Education in the central region is like the "backbone" of my country's basic education in both geographical and economic terms. General Secretary Xi Jinping emphasized that the "backbone" of the central region should be stronger and "supplemented" to play a greater supporting role.

In recent years, the demand for after-school care for primary and secondary school students in City C has continued to increase, especially in terms of meals, rest, care and tutoring.

More and more parents choose to entrust their children to these institutions to solve the problem of food and accommodation. However, there is currently a certain degree of lack of government supervision in the after-school care institutions for primary and secondary schools in City C. Some after-school care institutions for primary and secondary schools have certain problems in education, food and other aspects, and there are some potential safety hazards. Parents' demand for after-school care services continues to increase. How to regulate the operation of institutions and ensure the safety and health of children is still an important issue that needs to be solved urgently.

## 2. Theoretical basis

### 2.1 Responsible Government Theory

Responsible government is a kind of government governance thought. The core idea is that the government, as a responsible service provider, can realize the vision of improving society through more positive actions. This theory emphasizes that the government must be responsible for its governance, have the ability and willingness to take responsibility, and meet the needs and demands of the people through sustainable policies.

Its characteristics are that the policy implementation process considers the implementation results in advance, attaches importance to the results that change over time after implementation, strictly abides by laws and policies in the decision-making process, pays attention to potential risks in the future, and seeks solutions. Responsible government has important individual, collective and institutional significance in modern governance. From an individual perspective, government behavior directly affects the basic rights and interests of citizens and their quality of life; from a collective perspective, government actions are related to the stability and development of the society as a whole; from an institutional perspective, the implementation of government responsibilities can promote the improvement and fairness of the social system. The interrelationships between government behaviors and the coordination mechanism between different departments reflect the rationality of institutional arrangements. Only through effective institutional arrangements can we ensure that the government fulfills its responsibilities at all levels and promote the healthy development of society<sup>[1]</sup>.

### 2.2 New Public Management Theory

The emergence of the New Public Management theory is mainly to deal with the inefficiency and inflexibility of government management, and attempts to improve the quality and efficiency of public services by introducing the concept of corporate management. The theory advocates that the government should be positioned as a macro manager rather than a specific executor, thereby promoting the marketization and socialization of public services. The government reshaping movement emphasizes that the government should become a "helmsman" and improve the efficiency and service quality of the public sector by formulating macro policies, incentive mechanisms and legal frameworks, and using market mechanisms and competition mechanisms. This process not only emphasizes the government's role as a

"regulator", but also emphasizes the improvement of the quality and efficiency of the government in public services<sup>[2]</sup>.

### 2.3 Collaborative governance theory

"Synergy", as the core concept in synergetics, refers to the overall effect produced by the interaction and cooperation of multiple subjects in a system<sup>[3]</sup>. This effect goes beyond the results of individual or departmental actions alone, and forms a cooperative effect by gathering the strength of all parties. In the field of governance, synergy reflects the coordination and cooperation among different stakeholders and is the key to achieving sustainable problem solving. Collaborative governance emphasizes solving complex social problems through a systematic approach, emphasizes holistic thinking, promotes mutual cooperation at different levels and departments, and ensures that all relevant parties achieve a balance in resources, interests and responsibilities. General Secretary Xi Jinping mentioned in many speeches that systematic governance and rule of law are important principles for governing the country in the new era, which provides theoretical support for the proposal and implementation of the collaborative governance model. In addition, the concepts of source governance and comprehensive measures also emphasize the way to solve problems fundamentally, which requires all parties in the governance process to not only solve existing problems, but also to make long-term designs in terms of systems and mechanisms to prevent problems from happening again.

## 3. Problems faced by the government in supervising after-school care institutions for primary and secondary schools in City C

### 3.1 Ineffective coordination among multiple regulatory bodies

The coordination and cooperation of regulatory bodies are key factors in ensuring the smooth achievement of regulatory effects. According to the theory of responsible government, the government should ensure that the duties of various departments are clear and that the responsibilities are implemented in place when managing public affairs. However, once the off-campus care institutions lack the coordination and cooperation of regulatory bodies, the responsibilities of the regulatory bodies will be unclear. Although City C has included off-campus care institutions for primary and secondary schools in the regulatory vision of various departments, there has been a significant improvement compared to the initial stage, but the current supervision of off-campus care institutions for primary and secondary schools in City C involves more departments and lacks a clear coordination mechanism and accountability system, resulting in varying degrees of poor coordination in supervision work.

At present, multiple departments in City C jointly undertake the supervision of off-campus care institutions, including the education department, market supervision department, fire department, public security bureau, health and sports bureau, etc. However, the division of responsibilities among these departments is not completely clear, and there are often crossovers and overlaps in actual implementation. For example, the Education Bureau of City C is responsible for the

teaching quality, curriculum setting and teaching staff of the care institutions, but the functions of this department do not involve the operation management and safety assurance of off-campus care institutions. When there are problems with the teaching quality of off-campus care institutions, the Education Bureau can discover and take measures in a timely manner, but in other aspects, such as food safety and fire safety, there is a lack of effective coordination and intervention.

### **3.2 Limited government supervision and insufficient participation of social forces**

After-school care institutions require multi-party supervision. Relying solely on government supervision will have many limitations. The synergy of social forces can not only make up for the lack of government resources, but also improve the transparency and fairness of the system through social supervision and cooperation. Collaborative governance theory emphasizes that public management should integrate the power of multiple subjects to achieve resource sharing and coordinated cooperation. However, the current supervision force of after-school care institutions for primary and secondary schools in City C is single, and still mainly relies on the limited administrative power of government departments, and has failed to effectively introduce the participation of social forces and market entities.

After-school care institutions that can pass the test of the market and consumers are often formed under the joint promotion of the government, the market and other forces. After-school care institutions for primary and secondary schools need to improve service quality and meet consumer needs in order to gain competitiveness in the market. At the same time, the cooperation of multiple forces such as the government, consumers and industry associations jointly promotes the development of after-school care institutions and ensures the standardization and sustainable development of the industry.

### **3.3 The laws and regulations on after-school care institutions for primary and secondary schools are not sound**

There are still many areas that need to be improved in the laws and regulations related to after-school care institutions for primary and secondary schools. After-school care institutions for primary and secondary schools have become a social problem, but the relevant laws and regulations have not yet been promulgated. This has led to the fact that even if the government wants to supervise, it is difficult to implement effective supervision due to the lack of an effective legal basis.

In the existing legal system, many provisions are set up for traditional educational institutions or social service institutions and cannot be directly applied to the management needs of off-campus care institutions. Due to their special nature, off-campus care institutions have both educational attributes and profit attributes. There is a lack of special regulations for off-campus care institutions. In the process of implementation, regulatory authorities often rely on existing laws and policies, and the scope of application of these laws is limited, resulting in insufficient targeted supervision.

### **3.4 Limited supervision and reliance on administrative inspections**

The government should use a variety of governance tools, combined with resources and information from all parties, to achieve dynamic and flexible supervision. By combining multiple forms of supervision, it is possible to cope with complex and changing social needs and the operation of off-campus care institutions, thereby ensuring the comprehensiveness, scientificity and pertinence of supervision. The new public management theory emphasizes performance orientation, that is, by setting clear goals, evaluation standards and results orientation, ensuring that government work can achieve its goals efficiently. The diversification of supervision forms plays an important role in this concept.

However, the current supervision method of off-campus care institutions in City C for primary and secondary schools is relatively simple, relying on irregular on-site inspections, and lacks flexibility in the time, frequency and content of inspections. In actual supervision, the supervision method of off-campus care institutions in City C mainly relies on traditional administrative inspections, lacking flexible and effective diversified supervision methods. At present, the supervision department usually adopts the on-site inspection method, which is difficult to achieve long-term and continuous supervision effects due to time and manpower constraints. This single form of administrative inspection makes off-campus care institutions lack the motivation for continuous improvement after accepting supervision, affecting the long-term effectiveness of supervision.

## **4. Countermeasures and suggestions for government supervision of after-school care institutions for primary and secondary schools in City C**

### **4.1 "Joint governance by departments" and cross-departmental collaboration**

Cross-departmental joint law enforcement inspections should become a normalized mechanism. Joint inspections should be conducted regularly to ensure that all types of custodial institutions comply with relevant laws and regulations and standards. These inspections can be conducted in a combination of "random inspections" and "regular inspections" to ensure the comprehensiveness and effectiveness of the inspections. In addition, the inspection process should include the management level, teaching staff, safety measures, parent feedback and other aspects of the custodial institution, and an evaluation report should be formed for reference by relevant departments.

City C needs to establish a coordination committee or working group composed of multiple government departments such as education, market supervision, civil affairs, public security, and health to clarify the responsibilities and tasks of each department in the supervision of off-campus care institutions and ensure the participation and synergy of all parties. The coordination mechanism should hold meetings regularly to coordinate the planning of management policies and implementation details of off-campus care institutions to

ensure consistency and continuity of supervision.

#### **4.2 Expanding multi-party participation through social supervision**

The C municipal government can encourage and support third-party social organizations (such as education industry associations, public welfare organizations, consumer rights protection organizations, etc.) to participate in the supervision of off-campus custody institutions. These third-party organizations can regularly evaluate the service quality, charging standards, safety assurance and other aspects of the custody institutions and issue relevant reports or suggestions. By introducing professional supervision by social organizations, the fairness and independence of supervision can be improved, and the public's trust in the results of supervision can be enhanced.

#### **4.3 Promulgate relevant laws and regulations to regulate the operation of custodian institutions**

At present, the supervision of after-school care institutions for primary and secondary schools in City C is mostly carried out jointly by the education department, market supervision department, fire department, etc., but there is a lack of unified and special laws or regulations to regulate the operation of care institutions. In order to fundamentally solve these problems, special laws and regulations must be issued to clearly define the establishment, management, and operation of care institutions, and ensure that the supervision responsibilities of all parties are clear, so as to form an effective supervision synergy.

The C government should issue the "Management Law for Extracurricular Care Institutions for Primary and Secondary Schools" or similar special laws and regulations to clarify the establishment conditions, operation and management standards, responsibilities and obligations of care institutions, and stipulate specific standards for the qualifications, school operating permits, teacher requirements, safety management, etc. of care institutions. The law should clarify the legal person responsibilities, regulatory responsibilities and legal responsibilities of care institutions to ensure that the care service industry operates within the legal framework.

#### **4.4 Introducing information-based supervision methods to achieve dynamic monitoring**

Traditional manual supervision methods can no longer meet the growing supervision needs of extracurricular custody institutions for primary and secondary schools in City C. In order to improve supervision efficiency and strengthen the comprehensiveness and timeliness of supervision, City C can learn from information technology and promote the construction of a dynamic supervision mechanism. Through an information management platform, real-time monitoring system and data analysis technology, the government can implement more accurate and comprehensive supervision of custody institutions, thereby improving supervision efficiency and management transparency.

City C can consider building an intelligent supervision platform that integrates information collection, data processing, and supervision and evaluation. Through this

platform, regulatory departments at all levels can obtain real-time operational information of custodial institutions, including data on faculty, student numbers, safety facilities, and course schedules. In addition, the platform should have data analysis and early warning functions, and be able to automatically generate risk assessment reports based on the operating conditions and historical data of the custodial institutions to identify potential problems in a timely manner.

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