CHINA*

Introduction

This study begins by examining the development of community learning centres and community education (CE) in China. The functions of CE and CLCs in rural areas are mainly in literacy education, health care, poverty alleviation, increase of income, retraining of the labour force, and improvements in the lives of rural people. In urban areas, the emphasis focuses on the meaning of learning, more systematic learning content, lifelong learning behaviour and a scientific learning approach.

China is a developing country with a large population and diversified economic development levels, from the least developed remote areas in the western part of China to the economically advanced areas in the eastern part. Even within a single province such as Zhejiang Province, economic development is diversified in different areas. For the purpose of showing the entire picture of CLCs in China, this study chooses three types of CLCs. The first is a CLC in rural Gansu Province, whose main functions are related to poverty alleviation through literacy education, which represents a large proportion of CLC programmes and activities in poor rural areas. The second type of a CLC is located in Zhejiang Province, which is relatively developed economically. Thus, the emphasis is on the increase of income through CLC programmes and activities. CLCs offer different training menus, mainly for local people and for people coming from other provinces who will get jobs in factories after training. The third type of CLC is in an urban area, a type that is now very popular in China. CE in Zhabei District, Shanghai, is described as the example.

The study concludes with some positive findings from the CLCs that have already been implemented, and puts forth some recommendations for further development of CLCs in China.

Positive findings are: 1) policy support from governments; 2) institution and guarantee for the implementation of CLC movements and community education; 3) training programmes and activities suited to the needs of learners and economic markets; and 4) the formation of a learning environment for the whole society.

Recommendations for the further development of CLCs are: 1) reliable funding; 2) more support from sectors other than education; 3) combination/integration of different programmes or concepts; 4) application of ICT; and 5) establishment of a national network for CLCs and CE.

Overview of CLCs in China

The functions of CE or CLCs in rural areas, in general, and remote or poor rural areas, in particular, are mainly in the areas of literacy education, health care, poverty alleviation, increase of income, retraining of the labour force, and improving the lives of rural people. In urban areas, CE or CLCs focus on popularizing consciousness of learning, more systematic learning content, lifelong learning behavior, and a scientific learning approach. The concept of the “learning city” has also been put forth, which is a concrete reflection of the development of a learning society.

Based on the UNESCO guiding ideas of education for poverty alleviation, the “Rural Community Learning Centres for Poverty Alleviation” project was first carried out in three provinces of western China (namely Gansu and Yunnan provinces and the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region) in 1997. With support from local governments, education institutions and schools, CLCs were established at township or village levels according to the reality of serving local socio-economic development. As an effective measure to achieve the goal of education for all and the idea of learning to live together, CLCs in the three project provinces provide a foundation for the establishment of lifelong learning systems in rural communities. The development of CLCs in China should be understood within the framework of the following two broad movements: one is the movement of “the two basics” and the other is the CE movement.

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The Two Basics

The “two basics” are the basic universalization of nine years of compulsory education and the basic eradication of youth and adult illiteracy. In 1993, the Outline for Reform and Development of Education in China issued by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the State Council formally established the “two basics” as education goals to be met during the 1990s: universalization of 9 years compulsory education in areas with about 85 percent of the total population, and attainment of a 95 percent literacy rate for youth and adults. The Chinese Ministry of Education also issued its National Action Framework on Education for All in 1993, which re-emphasized the need to realize the “two basics” goal by the end of 2000. This framework was buttressed a year later when the Second National Conference on Education further determined the goal, task, strategy, policy and implementation steps of educational development in the 1990s and treated “the two basics” as “the priority of priorities” for educational development.

The CE Movement

In the late 1980s, community education was appearing in China, particularly in urban areas. This was closely related to the development of CLCs. In 1986, for example, Zhenru High School in Putuo district in Shanghai established the Community Education Commission for Zhenru High School, and in March 1988, Xinjiang Sub-district and Pengpu Sub-district in Zhabei district in Shanghai set up Community Education Commissions. Then the organizations named “Community Education” were popular in all of Zhabei district. The development of community education in Zhabei has led to the development of CE in all of Shanghai, which has later influenced all of China and finally promoted its nationwide popularization and development.

In April 2000, the Department of Vocational and Adult Education of the Ministry of Education in China issued the Notice on the Experiment of Community Education in Some Areas, thus starting the launch of CE nationwide. In May 2000, eight experimental areas were selected by the Ministry of Education, formally starting the CE experiment, and in November 2001, another twenty experimental areas were added. Those 28 experimental areas were considered the first group of CE experimental areas in China. By the end of 2003, such experimental areas expanded to 61 all over China. They were located at district or county levels. Since then, the CE/CLC movement has developed strongly and quickly in China, from the early rural CLCs mainly for literacy education and poverty alleviation to CLCs in urban areas that realize the ultimate aim of improving social development to achieve the success of sustainable development and make every community a better place for people to live together.

Profile of the Research Study

China is a developing country with a large population and diversified economic development levels, from the least developed remote areas in the western part of China to the economically advanced areas in the eastern part. Even within one province, such as Zhejiang Province, one can observe different levels of economic development. For the universalization of compulsory education, provinces are classified into three groups according to their level of economic development. The first group consists of nine provinces with economically advanced development; the second group is composed of 12 provinces with economic development at a medium level, and the third group is composed of nine economically less developed provinces and autonomous regions (in the west of China).

The initial CLC project named “Rural Community Learning Centres for Poverty Alleviation” was first launched in the three provinces of Gansu, Yunnan and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, located in the third group described above. The activities of CLCs in these provinces may be typical of CLCs and programmes in the least developed rural areas. In addition, researchers studied the Yushan Community Learning Centre in Pan’an County, Zhejiang Province (which is located in the mountains and focuses on becoming rich through poverty alleviation), and the Keqiao Adult Education Centre in Shaoxing County, Zhejiang Province (which emphasizes training farmers to work in factories and thereby increase their incomes). Community education in Zhabei district, Shanghai, and the community school of Pengpu Xincun Township of Zhabei district completed the study sites. They concentrate on leisure time education for improving people’s quality of life as well as offer vocational and technical skills training for the residents of urban areas and migrants from other places.
Thus, the main objective of this research was to show a complete picture of CLCs in China, not only the early rural CLCs in the western part, but also CLCs in urban areas. In particular, the study describes three kinds of CLCs or CE. It evaluates their effectiveness and describes the impact of the programmes.

The research team was composed of several professors and graduates mainly from East China Normal University, with Professor Zhao Zhongjian acting as the principal investigator.

**Analysis of CLC Experiences**

**Programmes/Activities**

There have not been any national programmes for CLCs. However, in order to realize the goal of compulsory education for all children in China, the Chinese Government has launched several important national projects or programmes, which may be summarized in the following table:

**Table 11: National Educational Projects or Programmes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title of the Programme</th>
<th>Responsible Agencies</th>
<th>Source of Finance</th>
<th>Targets and Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compulsory Education Programmes in National Depressed Areas (second time)</td>
<td>Ministry of Education and Ministry of Finance</td>
<td>5 billion RMB from the Central Government and another 2.5 billion RMB from local government</td>
<td>Support 522 depressed area counties (among 462 located in west China) in order to rebuild school buildings, teacher training, purchase of books, scientific equipment, distance education and IT equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools Programme in Depressed Area supported by corresponding schools from big and middle cities in the same province (autonomous regions and directly administered cities)</td>
<td>The governments of various provinces, autonomous regions and directly administered cities</td>
<td>Funds offered by the supporting areas and schools</td>
<td>Send teachers, provide funds and materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools Programme in West China Depressed Area supported by corresponding schools from east China</td>
<td>Concerned provinces, autonomous regions and directly administered cities organized by Ministry of Education and six other departments</td>
<td>Funds offered by the supporting areas and schools</td>
<td>Send teachers, provide funds and materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme for Rebuilding School Buildings</td>
<td>Ministry of Education, Committee of National Development and Reformation, and Ministry of Finance</td>
<td>3 Billions RMB from the central government, 3 Billions RMB from the local gov't.</td>
<td>Rebuild and build about 1.7 million sq.m. school building in 26 provinces, about 20 thousand schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT Network in All Schools</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
<td>Offer assistance from the nation</td>
<td>Schools at county-level in east China and middle-level in middle China connect to Internet in 5 years; more than 90% schools connect to Internet in 10 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope Project Programme</td>
<td>China Youth Development Foundation</td>
<td>Mobilize social donations</td>
<td>Help children complete their studies in depressed areas, build a Hope Project primary school; organize “one help another” activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Buds Plan</td>
<td>National Association of Women and China Children and Teenagers' Fund</td>
<td>Mobilize social donations</td>
<td>Help dropout schoolgirls to reenter school in depressed areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candle Programme</td>
<td>China Charity Fund</td>
<td>Social donations</td>
<td>Assist teacher training in depressed areas, and honour excellent teachers with the “Candle Award”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Structure and Management

In rural areas, primary schools are often the centres of basic education as well as the learning centres of cultural and technical education for villagers. Besides conducting formal basic education, these primary schools have the responsibility and the capacity to act as centres for literacy education, technical training and cultural exchange. At the township level, CLCs are generally located in the township's vocational middle schools or technical schools for farmers. These centres are run and managed through the coordination of township government and local mass organizations. There is an inter-related preferential relationship between the learning centre and local people. The learning centre should make full use of the local education facilities and intelligent resources to make contributions to local socio-economic development through conducting literacy education and technical training. Here we look at examples of some management structures for the implementation of CLC programmes.

In early 2005, the Educational Bureau of Shaoxing County was named the lead CLC for the whole county by the National Commission for UNESCO and the China Adult Education Association. The Adult Education Centre of Shaoxing County is in charge of community learning and the various centres under its leadership. Figure 3 shows the network of adult education centres in Shaoxing:

Figure 3. Adult Education Centres Network in Shaoxing County, Zhejiang Province

Yushan CLC in Pan'an County, Zhejiang Province, is also named the Yushan Community Centre for Education and Science and Technology, located in the No. 3 High School of Pan'an County. It is responsible for community education in six townships, including 892 village residential groups with 24,972 families. The management structure of Yushan CLC is illustrated in Figure 4.

Although the CLC names are not the same, the management models or structures are quite similar. Thus, we can describe the typical management structure in terms of the overall governmental leadership, with education authorities taking on main responsibility in cooperation with other government authorities, active support from society, autonomous activity by the community itself and broad participation by residents.

Policy Linkages

In China, the development of CLCs and CE is closely related to government policies and activities. Since participation in the World Conference on Education for All in 1990, the Central Committee of the CPC and the State Council has issued such important policies as the Outline for Reform and Development of Education in 1993 and the Decision on the Further Reform of the Education System and Overall Promotion of Quality Education in 1999. One common feature of these policies is the emphasis on the development of
community education. Particularly since the year 2000, when the World Education Forum took place in Dakar, Senegal, the Chinese Government has been active in terms of issuing policies and documents and organizing relevant conferences. The main activities may be listed as follows:

- Publicizing the Chinese Government’s commitment and participation in various important international or UN conferences
- Setting up the National Forum on Education for All, based on the former National Negotiation Group of Literacy Work among Ministries
- Successfully organizing the Ministers Conference of the Nine High Population Countries in August 2001, which passed the Beijing Declaration
- Organizing several national government working meetings, such as the National Working Meeting on Basic Education in 2001, National Working Meeting on Vocational Education in 2002 and National Working Meeting on Education for Minority People in 2002
- Issuing separate documents or policies, such as the Decision on the Reform and Development of Basic Education by the State Council, Decision on Greatly Promoting the Reform and Development of Vocational Education by the State Council, Announcement on the Perfection of the Administrative System in Compulsory Education in Rural Areas by the Office of the State Council, and other documents such as Guidelines for the Reform and Development of Pre-school Education, Guidelines for the Literacy Education during the Tenth Five-Year Plan (2000-2005), etc.

In terms of attaining its commitment to EFA goals, the country’s Ministry of Education issued the National Action Framework on Education for All in 1993 after the National Conference on Education for All (March, 1993) and the National Action Plan on Education for All (2001-2015) (2003). These action plans pay attention to compulsory education, child care, early education, literacy education and skills training, all of which are closely related to CLC activities and programmes.

**CLC Case Studies**

Gansu Province is one of the first three provinces that implemented the UNESCO Regional CLC project in China. The main aim of CLC project implementation in Gansu was to assist the local social forces in facilitating...
different kinds of learning opportunities so as to boost people’s intelligence in poor rural areas and improve their quality of life. Because the CLC project in Gansu has been analyzed often and was featured in reports presented at various UNESCO conferences, this study pays more attention to CLCs in Zhejiang Province and community education in Shanghai.

Zhejiang Province is located in eastern China and, generally speaking, is an economically advanced province. In fact, there are still some counties in this province that are economically less developed or developing. Pan’an County may be representative of these less-developed counties.

**Yushan CLC in Pan’an County**

Pan’an County is a mountain county in northern Zhejiang, with 20 townships, 369 administrative villages and a population of 200,000. Economic development in Pan’an is at a lower level than average, and the county is economically less developed. The Yushan Community Education Centre was first established in March 1999, but was named the Yushan Community Learning Centre in April 2005 by the National Commission for UNESCO and the China Adult Education Association. Because Yushan is a poor, remote rural district, poverty alleviation and improving the quality of life for the local population are the urgent and main tasks of the Yushan CLC.

Yushan CLC is located in the No.3 High School of Pan’an County, with the principal Zhang Meiyao as the director of the CLC. The CLC has two full-time professionals who are responsible for the routine affairs of the centre, with teachers in the township adult education schools as the main administrators and trainers of programmes and activities of the CLC. The structure and management of Yushan CLC may be seen in Figure 4 on page 33.

Yushan CLC has carried out its work in several areas, but it has formed its own guidelines for rural community education through its practice: “peasants put forth topics, experts offer advice, the centre makes coordination, and townships and villages take application.” For the purpose of serving rural people better, Yushan CLC offers diversified education and training, which may be classified as the following types:

**Training in practical agricultural techniques:** First, the CLC insists on its well-chosen projects, and selects agricultural products that would bring profits to the trainees. Based on the nature and situation of the rural mountain areas, the CLC attaches importance to ecology, and has chosen ten projects for various products, including non-environmentally polluted vegetables and high-quality mushrooms on high mountains, high-quality organic tea, Jiaobai (a kind of Chinese vegetable grown in water), and fish. Second, the CLC tries to find those villagers who have done well and become richer after training, and invites them to become “pioneer” role models. Until the first quarter of 2005, the CLC had carried out 66 training sessions of various kinds for 13,053 trainees, among whom 1,391 came from specialized planting households.

**Training for vocational skills and certificate exams:** Yushan CLC makes full use of educational resources from the Department of Human Resources and the Department of Agriculture. It adopts the recommended training mode of integrating short classes with longer ones, and carries out vocational technical training for surplus labourers in the countryside and workers in enterprises. Learners receive training in mechanics (locksmith), electrical engineering, nursery teaching, accounting and computers. In the last two years, 802 learners received such training at the Pan’an No.3 High School CLC. Eighty-five percent of participants passed the training, thanks to the students’ active learning and teachers’ effective instruction. In the six training schools belonging to the community educational centre, there were 1,662 people taking training to pass exams, including 145 in home management, 85 in welding, and 1,432 in agriculture.

**Continuing and lifelong education:** Community education attaches importance to the main work of our Communist Party of China (CPC) committee and government, and various educational needs. We have held education for (the) legal system and for CPC members; we have also had family education, health, and moral education, as well as some social education for strengthening our county with ecology and tourism. We have extended our educational contents to higher education, like training for self-studying exams, distant education of electrical colleges, etc. We are gradually forming a community education system, in which we integrate the short-term training and the formal schooling, vocational technique and the social training, in which we promote the construction of material civilization, intellectual and political civilization at the same time, in which we form a lifelong education atmosphere.
Publication of a newspaper: Yushan CLC edits and publishes The Windows of Science and Education. This monthly newspaper prints 3,600 copies of each issue for a total of 43,000 copies every year. By now, it has published 67 issues, totaling more than 240,000 copies. It is freely distributed to villagers, and includes news of the Yushan CLC, reports on scientific and technological services, experiences exchanged in planting and cultivating, and the latest developments in science and technology related to agriculture. The villagers in Yushan consider this newspaper as “timely rain” for increasing productivity in agriculture and their profits.

CLCs in Shaoxing County

Shaoxing County was formerly a very rural area. Particularly since 2003, with the development of urbanization and industrialization, farmers do not have enough land for planting. Among 338,100 farmers, 172,200 have become city residents and are now without any land. This has created a surplus labour force who need to improve their working skills and increase their incomes. Providing them with these skills is a new task for CLCs in Shaoxing. As of 2004, the county has offered 263 training classes to 21,500 trainees, and 60 percent of them are now working in factories. There have also been 248 classes for 18,218 trainees who no longer have land, and 80 percent of them are now working in factories.

Shaoxing County has carried out a policy of integrating government promotion and market orientation since 2004, starting with the implementation of three training projects:

Transferring Training for Surplus Labour Force: This project targets those farmers whose lands were bought by the government for other uses. One hundred thousand people are to be provided with introductory training and vocational skill training from 2004 to 2006. The project also focuses on providing agricultural skill training to 30,000 people within three years. In addition, five hundred young villagers are to be trained at higher education institutions within three years, allowing 50 percent of rural young people to receive an education at the senior secondary level or above.

Pre-Vocational Training for Migrant Labour: Through this project, people coming to Shaoxing from other places could master several non-agricultural skills so as to improve their qualifications for employment. It is planned to offer introductory training and vocational skill training for 35,000 persons in all: 5,000 in 2004, 10,000 in 2005 and 20,000 in 2006, respectively.

Worker Training for Advanced Textile and Manufacturing Bases: The goal of this project is to train 23,000 skilled textile workers and administrators: 5,000 in 2004, 8,000 in 2005 and 10,000 in 2006, respectively.

The training model for villagers in Shaoxing may be called the “three menus system”. The first “menu” is designed by the training institutions, mostly adult education centres, and trainees can choose whatever they want on the menu. The second “menu” is the ordering menu by factories or companies. These ordering menus include the number of workers the factories or companies want, job requirements, basic treatment and salaries for these workers. At the same time, the factories will sign an Agreement on Employment of Oriented Training with the adult education centres, so as to guarantee the employment of the trainees.

The third “menu” is the fee menu for training paid by the government. After the training classes, the adult education centres will take the list of trainee names to the relevant government authority to request payment of the training fees. In addition to the menus, the County Bureau of Education has compiled and printed Series of Reading Materials for Peasant Education and Training in Shaoxing County to address the economic reality of the county. The series consists of twelve booklets covering the fields of textiles, printing and dyeing, home economics, cooking and restaurants, hotel management, health care, building construction and others. These materials contribute to the improvement of training quality.

Under the leadership of the Adult Education Centre of Shanxing County, six adult education centres (which may also be called CLCs) have their respective training functions and programmes (see Keqiao Adult Education Centre box on page 37).

CLCs in Urban Areas of Shanghai

CLC implementation in urban areas is closely connected with the implementation of community education (CE), and the development of CE is connected with the ideas of encouraging lifelong learning, building learning organizations and developing a learning society. CE work in Zhabei district has been in the forefront of this development.

4 See “Development of Community Education in China” box on page 38 for more details
Zhabei includes nine townships with 730,000 permanent residents and 140 migrants. The district is also one of eight experimental areas of community education that were identified by the Ministry of Education in April 2000. In November of the same year, the People's Government of Zhabei District issued its first document on community education, called the *Working Programme on the Experiment of Community Education in Zhabei District, Shanghai*. The document sets up the overall goal of community education as follows:

Raising the understanding and participative consciousness of building lifelong education system and formation of a learning district through the implementation of experiments in community education; building a community lifelong education system which includes formal education, non-formal education and informal education and which is multi-level, multi-dimensional and open to everyone; perfecting the administrative system and operative mechanism for the learning district and lifelong education; and finally forming a learning district with Zhabei features where everyone learns at any time and any place.

This document also determines the whole structure of community education in the district, which may also be called the management structure of CE in Zhabei, as illustrated in Figure 5 on below.

**Figure 5. Network of Community Education in Zhabei District, Shanghai**

![Network of Community Education in Zhabei District](image-url)
Keqiao Adult Education Centre: Serving Society with Training

Keqiao Adult Education Centre, established in 1992, is a public multi-functional adult education centre, carrying out adult diploma education and vocational skill training for employment. Its service area covers four townships, with each training station in one township. Keqiao Centre is mainly financed by the county government, and partly paid by enterprises that require trained skilled workers. The centre has 20 full-time professional teachers who get their regular salaries from the government, thus ensuring the quality of training.

As to the training programme for the increase of income, Keqiao Centre has different kinds of such training programmes. Generally speaking, it designs programmes that are targeted at local villagers and migrants.

Vocational skill training for local farmers whose land was taken over: Keqiao Centre offers various kinds of skill training classes according to the model of the “three menus system,” making use of patterns of cooperation between centres, between centres and factories, and between centres and villages. Before the development of training programmes, in order to know the basic phenomenon and understand the requirements of learners, staff at the Centre visit farm families to make a field investigation. They also go deep into factories and the labour market to learn about the needs of the market. Information about the training programmes is sent directly to farm families who no longer have any land.

Up to June 2005, Keqiao Centre trained 2,241 local people whose lands were taken over, among whom 1,200 received training in computers, 160 persons in printing and dyeing of textiles, 730 in sewing, and 151 in business and trade English. In addition, 44 received training in gardening, 38 in pastry-making, 55 in auto repair, 62 in the printing and dyeing of textiles, and 160 in computers.

Vocational skill training for migrants from other places: Shaoxing County is now a county with a textile industry. With the founding of new enterprises and the expansion of existing enterprises, every year for the next five years the whole county will need an average of 20,000 migrants to work in factories. Keqiao Centre insists on its mission of “serving society with training,” carrying out the introduction of migrant labour through the implementation of the pattern of “going out, taking cooperation and coming in.”

“Going out” means the establishment of a training centre in another place. In October 2003, Keqiao Centre established its training centre in Jianli County, Hubei Province, together with Lang Sha Er Clothing Limited Corporation. Keqiao Centre is responsible for the design of training programmes and for sending trainers to Jianli. The Jianli centre, in turn, is responsible for the enrollment of local villagers and training at the centre. Finally, the Jianli centre sends the trainees to factories in Shaoxing County, not only solving the problem of worker shortages in Shaoxing, but also solving the problem of a surplus labour force in Hubei. As of June 2005, the Jianli centre had sent 562 trained individuals to work in Shaoxing.

“Taking cooperation” means jointly building human resource recruitment centres in other places. In early 2004, Keqiao Centre jointly built a human resource recruitment centre in Dangshan County, Anhui Province, with the Labor Bureau of Dangshan County. This Dangshan centre is responsible for recruiting local villagers, and Keqiao Centre is responsible for training these people. Then it sends them to factories in Shaoxing. Just after March 2004, the centre in Dangshan recruited 81 local villagers for Keqiao. As of June 2005, 691 persons had been recruited and trained for work in Shaoxing.

“Coming in” means the introduction of vocational school graduates in other places to Keqiao Centre through the local educational authority. In May 2004, Keqiao Centre assumed cooperation with the educational bureaus in Suzhou City, Anhui Province, and Laifeng County, Hubei Province. The educational authorities in these places introduced their vocational school graduates to Keqiao Centre. Keqiao Centre then provided short-term training relevant to the realities of Shaoxing (not only in regard to industrial equipment and work procedures, but also training related to local Shaoxing culture) before sending the graduates to work in Shaoxing’s factories. Up to June 2005, Keqiao Centre has expanded this cooperation to other counties in provinces such as Henan, Sichuan, Hunan, Hebei and Gansu.

It is necessary to mention that the training in Keqiao Centre is free to the trainees, who receive a 300 Chinese yuan stipend every month. The training cost is paid by the enterprises that will employ the trainees.
Development of Community Education in China

The development history of CE in China could be generally described in terms of the following three periods:

The first period extended from 1985-1991. The Decision on the Reform of the Educational System, issued by the Central Committee of CPC and the State Council in 1985, stipulates that “the ultimate aim of the reform of the education system is to upgrade the population qualities of the nation and foster more talented and gifted personnel.” It also points out that school education should develop itself together with education out of school and after school, and various kinds of education at different levels should actively meet the diversified needs of economic and social development. Thus, towards this aim, community education commissions were set up and CE began its development.

The years 1992-1998 were a period of growth. The Third Session of the 14th Conference of the CPC emphasized the development of a socialist market-oriented system. With the development of a market-oriented economy, the change of industrial structure, the movement of people (particularly the move of people from rural areas to urban areas, namely inner migration) and the change of occupations, the vocational training of these people became CE’s new mission.

The third period could be called the perfecting period (1999 until present). In 1999, the Central Committee of the CPC and the State Council issued the Decision on the Further Reform of the Education System and Overall Promotion of the Quality of Education. This document points out the country’s education policy should prioritize implementation of quality education that stresses the development of good citizenship, innovative spirit and practical skills. The implementation of quality education should be combined with formal education, family education and social education. CE has been changed from meeting the occupational needs of people to meeting the leisure needs of people, and from a “supplemental” function to becoming a necessary component of the education system.

The Central Committee of the CPC calls for building China into a learning society, and the ideas of building a learning society, a learning city, a learning community, a learning organization and even a learning family became the consensus of the whole society. Many research projects in community education have been undertaken, many theoretical research reports on community education have been printed and/or published, and community colleges and schools have been established in nearly every rural township and urban district of China.

The district government plays an important role in promoting community education and the CLC project. First, it has issued many government documents on the implementation of CE, and included CE in the Outline of the Tenth Five-Year Plan on Economic and Social Development of Zhabei District, which is its most important document in the last five years. This shows the policy linkage to CLC projects or community education. Some of the main policy documents related to implementation of community education since 2000 include:

3. Notice on the Administration of Counselors of Learning Communities, issued by the Educational Bureau of Zhabei District, February 2001
4. Announcement of Working Plan of Community Education in Zhabei District in 2002, issued by the the Leading Group of Experiment of Community Education in Zhabei District and the District Community Education Commission, March 2002
5. Announcement of the Founding of the Research Centre of Community Education and the Learning Guidance Centre for Residents, issued by the the Leading Group of Experiment of Community Education in Zhabei District and the District Community Education Commission, April 2002
Second, a lead group for the Experiment in Community Education was set up. Leaders of the district government and its various branches serve as group leaders and members. The Working Office for the Experiment in Community Education is located in the District Bureau of Education, and is responsible for the routine work of community education. Salaries for full-time staff in the working office as well as in the Research Centre of Community Education are covered by the district government and the Bureau of Education.

Third, the district government signed agreements with its different branches and bureaus to formalize responsibilities for promoting community education. In collaboration with the Bureau of Education, it has allocated special grants to the Experiment in Community Education for this purpose.

In order to meet its community education objectives, the Bureau of Education chose the first group of 45 teachers from 150 existing formal schools and trained them to be full-time counselors in community education. Several thousand volunteers work with them to provide community education for the whole district. The following table presents information about the personnel working in community education for the district.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personnel relevant to CE</th>
<th>Working Staff</th>
<th>Volunteers</th>
<th>Researchers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(in numbers)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time Counselors</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>1,303</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time Working Staff</td>
<td></td>
<td>4,876</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert/Advisers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time researchers</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A strong network of community education institutions exists in the district. Members of this network include: the Zhabei District Community College (which houses the Research Centre of Community Education and the Learning Guidance Centre for Residents), nine community schools or CLCs (one school or CLC in each township), 71 sub-campuses of community schools and 248 teaching stations. Some community schools have independent sites and buildings, and others are located in primary and/or secondary schools or in vocational and/or adult education schools.

**Major Findings**

**Governmental Policy Support**

The movement of community education, in general, and of CLCs, in particular, has developed positively in China. This has mainly been due to governmental policy and financial support at various levels. The Central Committee of the CPC and the State Council have adopted several policy decisions, restating the importance of community education and its role in improving the quality of life and social harmony. The Ministry of Education as the main government authority responsible for CE, CLCs and EFA, plays a great role
in the development of CE and CLCs. Not only in economically developed urban areas such as Zhabei district in Shanghai or Shaoxing County in Zhejiang Province, but also in economically less developed rural areas such as Gansu and Yunnan provinces, governments have supplied much policy and financial support. In this way, a strong administrative framework has been developed.

**Institutional and Personnel Guarantee for CLC Implementation**

Institutional and personnel guarantees are necessary to effectively implement CLCs. In China, existing formal schools and vocational education institutions have been used as CLCs, thus ensuring that CLC programmes and activities could be implemented effectively and successfully via the active participation of teachers at those existing educational institutions. Additionally, in urban areas, special community schools and colleges have been built for community education. We saw in Table 3 above, for example, that there were 45 full-time counselors and 1,303 part-time staff working in community education in Zhabei district with the support of 4,876 volunteers.

**Training Programmes Suitable to Learner Needs and Market Demands**

Whether or not CLC programmes and activities are welcomed by learners and/or trainees often depends on the relevance of such programmes. Generally speaking, the CLC programmes in rural areas should be closely related to the improvement of working skills and the alleviation of poverty. In urban areas, the CLC or CE activities should not only increase the working skills and incomes of trainees, but also consider the interests of learners who have retired from their jobs and desire leisure time activities. We see such relevance in the CLCs of Zhejiang Province and community education in Zhabei district.

**Formation of a Learning Environment for the Whole Society**

Although the formal CLC project in China started in 1998, it is only known in places where CLC programmes are practiced and only by people involved in the project. Yet, effective implementation of the CLC movement calls for a useful learning environment for the whole society. The central Chinese government has called for the country’s gradual development into a learning society. Concepts of lifelong education and lifelong learning are now very popular, and the movement of building a learning city, learning organization and learning family has been undertaken widely at different levels in China. These are promising steps towards forming a receptive environment to broaden implementation of CLCs and community education.

**Recommendations**

For further development and improvement of CLCs and community education in China, it is necessary to consider the following points:

**Continuous Supply of Expenditure**

Financial support is very important for the implementation of CLC programmes and activities. It is not difficult to find money for the start of one CLC or one training session, but lack of on-going financial support will prevent the continuous development and improvement of CLCs or training for learners. In the above cases of the Keqiao Adult Education Centre of Shaoxing County and the Yushan CLC, we see the successful training of villagers. However, when the trainees finished their first time training and then started work in factories, it was not easy for them to obtain further learning opportunities because there was a lack of financial support from the companies or factories which offered the money for the initial training. In addition, the Yushan CLC was short of money for any substantial improvement to the CLC project; it could only maintain the routine work of the project.

**More Support from Sectors Outside of Education**

Although we see support from governments at different levels as a positive feature of the community education in China, NGOs have not played an important role or taken an active part in the implementation of CLCs and community education. Theoretically speaking, community education should be supported
Integration of Different Programmes or Concepts

Perhaps in every country there are many kinds of CLC programmes or concepts. In China, we have our own examples, such as the Hope Project for assistance to poor children attending school; the Spring Bud Programme concerning the schooling of girls from poor families; and the integration of agriculture, science and education (as well as the combination of general education, vocational education and adult education) in programmes for rural areas. It is better to integrate CLCs and their activities with these already existing different programmes. Otherwise, how can we extend the number of CLCs from 20 to 2,000, or even to 200?

Best Use of ICT

ICT has become an important tool in every field of our society, and UNESCO has paid great attention to ICT and launched several projects for its application. The use of ICT in the implementation of CLCs may be a hot topic in the future, and the use of ICT in CLC programmes will greatly improve the effectiveness, efficiency and quality of CLCs and promote the realization of their overall objectives. Yushan CLC in Zhejiang Province is now participating in the UNESCO project, “Improving Productive Capacity through ICT,” but the effective implementation of this project needs to be further studied.

Establishment of a National Network for CLCs and CE

Who is responsible for the effective implementation and improvement of CLCs? Where can people find information about CLCs and their programmes in China? How can researchers and people who participate in CLC projects exchange information about their experiences and lessons learnt? It is urgently necessary to establish a national network for CLCs and community education in China. Such a network would be responsible for collecting, analyzing and distributing information concerning CLCs and community education in China and throughout the world, and for setting up a website. This is a dream now, but may become a reality in the future.