It Takes a Village: Professional Practical Skills Education for Rural China

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Introduction  Professional Technical Skills (PTS) and Professional Practical Skills (PPS) are two kinds of education that are often discussed by writers. PTS refers to a specific subject matter, for example, mathematics; while PPS stands for the ability to put into practice PTS in the real life situation. A confluence of PPS and PTS is not only the ultimate goal of education (Nichols, 2001), but also what a market economy requires. However, the traditional exam-orientated education system in China doesn’t provide rural youth the opportunity to learn PPS (Lu, 2000). As a result, most rural students, no matter they have high scores or low scores, are featured as having “low ability”. Given the context of the problems the rural community in China is facing, it is without doubt that providing PPS along with PTS education for Chinese rural youth is imperative.

Purpose of the Poster  The purpose of this poster is to show the audience a study the author has conducted to investigate the enablers and barriers of providing PPS education in confluence with PTS education in rural Zhejiang, China.

Information Shared in this Poster  The background of the study, the research methodology used in this study, which is a combination of both qualitative and quantitative research methods, the results from the study, as well as some recommendations will be shared in this poster.

Conclusions  The author concluded that providing PPS in confluence with PTS is feasible in rural Zhejiang, China. However, considering the barriers identified from this study, the author put forward the “It Takes a Village” (ITV) model, which depicts that teachers, parents, students, other social entities in the community, and government should collaborate with each other to facilitate the provision of both PPS and PTS education.

Educational Importance  There is little done in China regarding the problem this study is designed to address. This study no doubt will give some implications to educators in China, both theoretically and methodologically. In addition, the lack of PPS education is also a universal problem. Thus, this study can also give implications to educators from other countries.