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Influence of Social Support on School Adaptation of Left Behind Children: A Case of Shanxi Province, China

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore the influence of Social Support on the adaptation of rural left-behind children's schools in Shanxi Province. This study divides Social Support into Government Support, School Support and Family Support. School adaptation is divided into three aspects: learning adaptation, relationship adaptation and behavior adaptation. In this paper, 500 left-behind children in 222 rural primary and secondary schools in Shanxi Province were investigated by questionnaire. Using exploratory factor analysis method, the key factors of Social Support Influencing School Adaptation are analyzed. The method of linear regression was used to analyze variables and test hypotheses. Exploratory factor analysis showed that there was a correlation between Social Support and School Adaptation. In the study, it has been found that School Support had a significant positive effect on School Adaptation, Family Support had a partial positive effect on School Adaptation, and Government Support had a partial positive effect. Therefore, attention should be paid to the impact of Social Support on the School Adaptation of left-behind children in rural areas. Finally, a logical path of support is proposed to strengthen Social Support and improve the School Adaptation of left-behind children.

Keywords: left behind children in rural, social support, family support, school support, governmental support, school adaptation

1. Introduction

Left-behind children are a global problem. Left-behind children are concentrated in developing countries and regions such as Eastern Europe, Africa, Latin America and Asia. The number of left-behind children in these areas is large and growing. In Sri Lanka, 1 million left-behind children are left at home because their parents have gone to work. In the Philippines, about 9 million left-behind children are separated from at least one parent, accounting for 27 percent of the country's youth population. In 2006, after a sample survey of 5,930 Bangladeshi children, Kuhn found that 91% of children with one parent out of town, with most of them fathers and 2% with both parents working.

At present, China has a large number of left-behind children, with 6.97 million rural left-behind children (data source, Ministry of Civil Affairs, 2018). Shanxi Province, located in central China, is a province with a large number of labor force exporters in China, with a large number of people leaving the countryside to work in other places. In addition, Shanxi Province used to be a big coal producing province. Since 2008, the state has carried out energy conservation and emission reduction, strengthened environmental protection, and closed down many coal enterprises, which led to the original coal enterprise workers to work in other provinces. Therefore, Shanxi Province has a large number of rural left-behind children, numbering 166,800 (data source: Shanxi Civil Affairs Department, 2018).

The problems of these left-behind children affect the sustainable development of local education. The study on the School Adaptation of left-behind children in Shanxi Province is helpful to improve the educational environment and adaptation of left-behind children. Furthermore, it contributes to the fairness and justice of local education and the sustainable development of education.

At present, most scholars study the factors affecting the School Adaptation of left-behind children from a single perspective, without comprehensively considering the impact of social factors on left-behind children. From the perspective of improving the school adaptation of left-behind children in rural areas, this paper takes Shanxi Province as an example to study the impact of Social Support on school adaptation, in order to provide theoretical guidance for left-behind children to better adapt to social development.

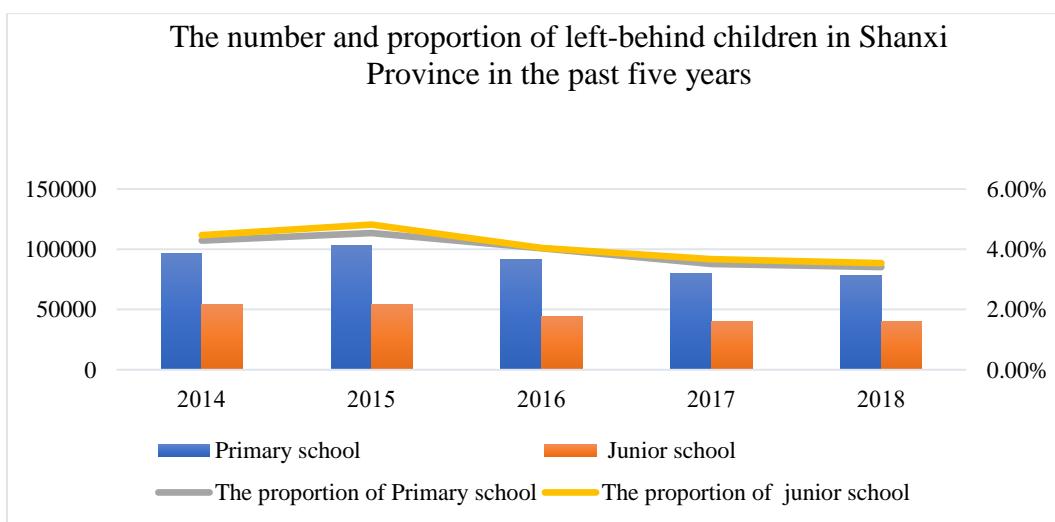


Fig. 1: The number and proportion of left behind children in Shanxi Province in the past five years.
:Source Department of civil affairs of Shanxi Province,(2018)

At present, most scholars' studies on School Adaptation of left-behind children mainly start from a single factor and respectively analyze the influence of government, school and family on School Adaptation. Few scholars comprehensively consider the common influence of these social factors on School Adaptation, and previous studies are not systematic. The analysis methods of left-behind children School Adaptation are mostly qualitative analysis, focusing on the analysis of the current situation and description of problems, while the quantitative research results are less.

Based on these academic blanks, with the method of questionnaire survey, this paper adopts quantitative research method, try in the current social background, the exploration and thinking of Social Support how to effectively promote and support the left-behind children's school adjustment, comprehensive government, school, family three social factors, to study the comprehensive influence on rural left-behind children school adaptation.

2. Literature Review

- Concept of left-behind children in rural areas

At present, the research on left-behind children in China focuses on the specific impact of left-behind children. The definition of left-behind children is not uniform. According to Shang (1993), "left-behind children" in rural areas are a brand-new social phenomenon with the development of society, which should arouse the attention of the whole society. Many domestic studies have proved that "left-behind" has a negative impact on children's psychology.

- Social Support concept

The research on Social Support originates from the psychology field abroad. In the early 1970s, the concept of Social Support was formally introduced into the psychiatric literature and began to be recognized and studied in various fields of academia. Nowadays, the research on Social Support involves many fields and disciplines. However, due to the rich connotation of Social Support itself and the different research disciplines and purposes of different scholars, there is no uniform definition of Social Support at present.

- Social Support theory

Domestic research on left-behind children has been very rich, such as education, scale, communication, psychological development and health, supervision, etc., but the research on Social Support for left-behind children is very limited. The research on the issue of support for left-behind children is mainly carried out at the macro and micro levels. At the macro level, from the perspective of national policies and regulations, the Social Support system for left-behind children is built at the government, society, family and school levels. At the micro level, it mainly

studies the individual's subjective perception of external support, analyzes the individual differences of subjective support and the relationship between Social Support and psychological characteristics.

- School adaptation theory

Students spend most of their time in school. School is an important base for students to study, make friends and live. Adapting to school life is an essential link and task in the healthy growth process of students. The concept of school adaptation is multidimensional, and is considered as one of the most basic forms of students' adaptation, which involves many aspects of individuals in school. Raymond. Jcorshni (1994) believes that school adaptation refers to the extent to which skills are applied to meet one's own needs in the school context, and children can be described as well adapted and maladjusted. According to Birth (1997), School Adaptation not only refers to student behaviors, but include more.

But also, their feelings or attitudes towards school, whether they actively participate in various activities organized by school and classes. He is defined by the individual's adaptation to school in terms of emotional development, study, interpersonal relationship, etc., mainly in terms of adaptation. The definition of Ladd (1997) has been adopted by most studies, and he believes that school adaptation is the condition of happily participating in school activities and achieving academic success in the school context.

3. Research Methodology

- Research Design

This study uses questionnaires as the main tool to carry out quantitative statistical analysis on the sample data collected by questionnaires. Based on the literature review, this chapter determines the overall population and samples of the study, designs a reasonable questionnaire according to the framework of the research model, and tests the questionnaire to form a high-quality questionnaire. For this study, KMO and Cronbach's Alpha were used to test data reliability and validity, and Pearson Correlation and Multiple Regressions Analysis were used to analyze the correlations between independent variables and dependent variables, as well as to validate the previous research hypotheses.

- Population and Sample

There are 3,662 rural primary and secondary schools in Shanxi Province (data from the Education Department of Shanxi Province, 2018), and most of these left-behind children attend primary and secondary schools in rural areas. Considering the cognitive ability of the research object, in order to better understand the questionnaire content and obtain high-quality questionnaire data, this

study selected rural left-behind children from grade 4 to grade 3 of junior middle school as the research object, with a total number of 95,351 (data from the Department of Civil Affairs of Shanxi Province, 2018).

In this study, Yamane formula (Yamane, 1973) was used to determine the sample size. Since the total number of subjects was determined, the formula for calculating the sample size using Yamane formula was as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{(1+Ne^2)}$$

Where:

n = corrected sample size

N = population size

e = Margin of error (MoE), e = 0.05 based on the research condition.

According to the calculation principle of the sample size, 95,351 left-behind children in rural areas were taken as the population and the 95% confidence level was used to calculate the sample size, which was as follows:

$$n = \frac{95351}{1 + 95351 * 0.05^2} = 398.33 \approx 400$$

Thus, the sample size is 400 samples. However, for more convenience and to protect from the incomplete questionnaire, the researcher used 500 samples in this research for easy computation.

- Data Collection Method

This study uses a semi-structured questionnaire. The questions in the questionnaire are designed according to the maturity scale in the literature review and the conceptual framework of this paper. In consideration of students' cognitive ability and understanding ability, the questionnaire was distributed to rural left-behind children from grade 4 to grade 3 of junior middle school. In addition, in order to improve the quality and authenticity of the questionnaire and make the survey smooth, the length and readability of the questions in the questionnaire should be controlled in the design of the questionnaire, so that the respondents can easily fill in the questionnaire.

- Data Collection

There were 3,662 rural primary and secondary schools in Shanxi Province (data from the Education Department of Shanxi Province, 2018), and 222 of them were selected as the places to issue questionnaires through simple random sampling in this study. Since the respondents were students from grade four to grade three in junior middle school, the author sent the questionnaire

to the schools of the respondents and sent the questionnaire to the school staff in charge of student management, giving them a detailed introduction of the requirements for filling in the questionnaire and matters needing attention. Then, these managers randomly distribute the questionnaire to the rural left-behind children in schools, instruct these left-behind children to fill in the questionnaire correctly, and the managers take back the questionnaire.

- Data Analysis

Since this research is designed to be quantitative, the author inputs the data from the questionnaire into a computer for statistical analysis. The data of the questionnaire were analyzed by the software of Statistics (IBM SPSS Statistics 26), including descriptive statistical analysis, correlation analysis and multiple linear regression analysis. Then, we study the relationship between variables, verify the hypothesis, and analyze the relationship between School Support and School Adaptation.

4. Research Findings and Discussion

- Descriptive Analysis

First of all, descriptive analysis should be carried out on the survey data. In order to have a preliminary understanding of Family Support, Government Support, School Support and School Adaptation, descriptive statistical analysis is carried out on these four variables. The mean value of each variable is above 3.5. According to the classification standard, the average value of each variable is at a high level.

- Reliability and Validity Analysis

Reliability analysis is called dependability analysis, which measures whether the indicators in the scale can reflect a certain characteristic of the investigated items. In this research, Cronbach's α coefficient method is the most commonly used method, and professional statistical software SPSS 26.0 is used to measure α reliability of the main scale. It is generally believed that $\alpha > 0.7$ indicates high reliability.

In this research, Cronbach's α of the whole questionnaire was calculated by SPSS 26.0. The results are shown in table 2. The overall reliability is 0.950, which shows that the internal consistency of the questionnaire is good and all the questions have good reliability.

Table 1 Reliability of All Scale Factors

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.950	54

The reliability analysis of Government Support, School Support, Family Support and School Adaptation is shown in table 3 and table 4.

Table 2 Reliability analysis of independent variable items

Scale	Dimensions	Items	Scale	Scale	Cronbach's	
			Meanif Item	Variance ifItem	Corrected Item-Total	Alphaif Item
Deleted	Deleted	Correlation	Deleted		Cronbach's Alpha	
GS	Active support	Q14	7.215	4.095	0.712	0.799
		Q15	7.067	4.298	0.724	0.792
		Q16	7.091	3.530	0.737	0.782
	Aid support	Q17	7.665	4.424	0.648	0.697
		Q18	7.483	4.072	0.613	0.739
		Q19	7.561	4.530	0.637	0.709
FS	Substantive support	Q20	7.320	4.196	0.730	0.745
		Q21	7.276	4.022	0.769	0.704
		Q22	7.278	5.360	0.619	0.851
	Emotional support	Q23	7.237	3.667	0.698	0.788
		Q24	7.126	3.701	0.707	0.780
		Q25	7.202	3.547	0.715	0.772
SS	School administrative support	Q26	10.828	10.012	0.713	0.847
		Q27	10.791	8.976	0.777	0.820
		Q28	10.983	9.817	0.706	0.849
		Q29	10.657	9.407	0.729	0.840
	Teacher support	Q30	22.496	29.745	0.710	0.915
		Q31	22.524	28.442	0.788	0.907
		Q32	22.452	30.693	0.737	0.912
		Q33	22.367	30.333	0.739	0.912
		Q34	22.174	27.002	0.820	0.904
		Q35	22.270	31.417	0.766	0.911
		Q36	22.044	28.913	0.776	0.908

Peer support	Q37	25.404	47.501	0.776	0.930	
	Q38	25.002	48.516	0.750	0.932	
	Q39	25.026	47.028	0.842	0.925	
	Q40	25.137	47.208	0.767	0.931	
	Q41	24.983	47.699	0.755	0.932	0.938
	Q42	24.950	48.954	0.808	0.928	
	Q43	25.028	46.171	0.819	0.927	
	Q44	24.913	49.539	0.737	0.933	

It can be seen from table 3 that the Cronbach's α coefficient of each variable is greater than 0.7. It is proved that the internal consistency of each variable's item is high, the reliability is good, and the reliability test is passed.

Table 3 Reliability analysis of dependent variable items

Scale	Dimension	Items	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted	Cronbach's Alpha
SA	Learning Adaptation	Q45	25.122	42.020	0.786	0.927	0.936
		Q46	25.107	39.912	0.844	0.923	
		Q47	25.044	39.972	0.795	0.927	
		Q48	25.054	41.367	0.768	0.928	
		Q49	25.174	41.564	0.749	0.930	
		Q50	25.222	42.291	0.736	0.931	
		Q51	25.111	41.328	0.762	0.929	
		Q52	24.946	41.123	0.769	0.928	
Behavioral adaptation	Behavioral adaptation	Q53	24.859	44.936	0.753	0.935	
		Q54	24.952	46.686	0.768	0.933	
		Q55	25.104	43.858	0.854	0.927	

Relationship adaptation	Q56	25.228	45.989	0.772	0.933	0.94
		25.126	46.690	0.751	0.934	
		25.161	45.103	0.768	0.933	
		25.030	45.576	0.759	0.934	
		25.135	44.139	0.867	0.926	
	Q61	21.278	34.284	0.768	0.920	0.930
		21.504	35.614	0.764	0.920	
		21.372	36.047	0.757	0.921	
		21.324	35.344	0.762	0.920	
		21.3065	33.986	0.796	0.917	
		21.3761	35.259	0.777	0.919	
		21.2522	33.174	0.811	0.915	

According to table 4, Cronbach's α coefficient of each variable is greater than 0.7. It is proved that the internal consistency of each variable's item is high, the reliability is good, and the reliability test is passed.

- Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis is mainly used to analyze the correlation between two variables. This article uses the Pearson correlation analysis method to analyze the correlation coefficient. It analyzes the correlation between Government Support, School Support, Family Support and School Adaptation (learning adaptation, behavior adaptation, relationship adaptation). The results of the analysis are shown in the table below.

Table 4 Correlation Analysis

	AC	AIS	<i>GS</i>	SAS	TS	PS	<i>SS</i>	SUS	EMS	<i>FS</i>	LA	BA	RA	<i>A</i>
Active	1													
Support														
Aid support	.264*	1												
	*													
<i>GS</i>		.788*	.802*	1										
	*	*	*											
School	.136*	.245*	.240*	1										
administrativ	*	*	*	*										
e support														
Teacher	.216*	.336*	.348*	.241*	1									
support	*	*	*	*	*									
Peer	.256*	.233*	.307*	.253*	.334*	1								
support	*	*	*	*	*	*								
<i>SS</i>	.293*	.368*	.417*	.564*	.739*	.821*	1							
	*	*	*	*	*	*	*							
Substantive	.281*	.224*	.316*	.150*	.200*	.255*	.289*	1						
support	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*						
Emotional	.267*	.217*	.304*	.170*	.199*	.288*	.314*	.358*	1					
support	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*					
<i>FS</i>	.333*	.267*	.377*	.194*	.242*	.328*	.365*	.844*	.802*	1				
	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*				
LA	.272*	.297*	.358*	.276*	.327*	.332*	.432*	.185*	.250*	.261*	1			
	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*			
BA	.211*	.261*	.297*	.182*	.288*	.335*	.387*	.394*	.449*	.510*	.417*	1		
	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		
RA	.459*	.404*	.542*	.215*	.269*	.300*	.367*	.344*	.383*	.439*	.472*	.477*	1	
	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		
<i>SA</i>	.388*	.398*	.495*	.280*	.370*	.405*	.496*	.386*	.453*	.507*	.789*	.803*	.802*	1
	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	

.**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level)2-tailed

-Multiple Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is a statistical method to study the causal relationship between variables. Through regression analysis, you can clarify the causal relationship between variables. That is, how one variable causes the change of another variable. In this summary, regression analysis is used to further verify and explain the causal relationship between variables.

Table 5 Regression Result

Model		Standardized				Collinearity		Statistics	
		Unstandardized		Coefficient s	t	Sig.	Tolerance		
		Coefficients							
1	(Constant)	0.920	0.238		3.859	0.000			
	GS	0.232	0.055	0.197	4.196	0.000	0.768	1.302	
	SS	0.421	0.060	0.325	6.966	0.000	0.776	1.289	
	FS	0.078	0.052	0.068	1.494	0.136	0.806	1.241	

As shown in the above table, VIF value is less than 5, indicating that there is no multicollinearity between independent variables. School Support and Governmental Support have significant significance at the 0.05 level, and the regression coefficient is 0.232 and 0.421 respectively, indicating that both Governmental Support and School Support have significant positive influence on Learning Adaptation. The significance of Family Support on Learning Adaptation was greater than 0.05, but there was no significant influence. Therefore, the regression equation can be established:

$$Y=0.920+0.232*X_1+0.421*X_2$$

The regression equation shows that, other things being equal, an increase of one unit in Governmental Support means an increase of 0.232 units in Learning Adaptation. If School Support increases by one unit, Learning Adaptation increases by 0.421 units. The analysis shows that Government Support and School Support have a significant impact on the Learning Adaptability of left behind children. Family Support has no significant impact on the Learning Adaptability of left behind children.

Table 6 Regression Result

Model		Standardized Coefficients				Collinearity Statistics	
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance
		B	Std. Error				
1	(Constant)	0.496	0.237		2.094	0.037	
	GS	0.065	0.055	0.053	1.187	0.236	0.768
	SS	0.292	0.060	0.215	4.866	0.000	0.776
	FS	0.492	0.052	0.411	9.481	0.000	0.806
							1.241

As shown in the above table, VIF value is less than 5, indicating that there is no multicollinearity between independent variables. School Support and Family Support have significant significance at the level of 0.05, and the regression coefficient is 0.492 and 0.292 respectively, indicating that both Family Support and School Support have significant positive influence on Behavioral Adaptation. The significant effect of Governmental Support on Learning Adaptation was greater than 0.05, but there was no significant influence. Therefore, the regression equation can be established:

$$Y=0.496+0.292*X_2+0.492*X_3$$

The regression equation shows that, other things being equal, an increase of one unit in School Support means an increase of 0.292 units in Behavioral Adaptation. If Family Support increases by one-unit, Behavioral Adaptation increases by 0.492 units. The analysis shows that Family Support and School Support have a significant impact on the Behavioral Adaptability of left-behind children, while Government Support has no significant impact on the Learning Adaptability of left-behind children.

Table 7Regression Result

Model		Standardized						Collinearity Statistics	
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Coefficient s		t	Sig.		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	s				
1	(Constant)	0.045	0.231			0.196	0.845		
	GS	0.508	0.054	0.404		9.501	0.000	0.768 1.302	
	School Support	0.151	0.059	0.109		2.574	0.010	0.776 1.289	
	FS	0.303	0.051	0.248		5.970	0.000	0.806 1.241	

As shown in the above table, VIF value is less than 5, indicating that there is no multicollinearity between independent variables. Governmental Support, School Support and Family Support have significant significance at the level of 0.05, and the regression coefficient is 0.508, 0.151 and 0.303 respectively, indicating that Governmental Support, School Support and Family Support have significant positive influence on Relationship Adaptation. Therefore, the regression equation can be established:

$$Y=0.045+0.508*X_1+0.151*X_2+0.303*X_3$$

The regression equation shows that, other things being equal, an increase of one unit in School Support means an increase of 0.151 units in Relationship Adaptation. If Family Support increases by one unit, Relationship Adaptation increases by 0.492 units. If Governmental Support increases by one unit, Relationship Adaptation increases by 0.508 units. The analysis shows that Government Support, Family Support and School Support have a significant impact on the Behavioral Adaptability of left-behind children.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

-Conclusion

Based on the summary of previous research results and the factors that affect the School Adaptation of left-behind children, this paper analyzes the following gaps in academic research: the research on the common influence of various factors on the School Adaptation is insufficient, and the research on the School Adaptation of left-behind children is insufficient from a

quantitative perspective. With the help of Social Support theory and School Adaptation theory, this paper USES quantitative research methods to analyze the influence of Social Support factors on the adaptation of rural left-behind children's schools.

The study finds that Government Support has a partial and significant positive impact on School Adaptation of left-behind children, among which, it has a direct and significant positive impact on learning adaptation and relationship adaptation, but not a direct and significant positive impact on behavioral adaptation. The behavioral adaptation of left-behind children is mainly to observe school rules and regulations at school and classroom discipline. The material and policy support provided by the government has no direct and significant positive impact on their behavioral adaptation. Governmental Support can provide special funds for rural left-behind children to assist them, and can also provide materials for left-behind children, such as learning books and some learning tools, to improve their learning adaptation.

The government can formulate relevant policies for the relationship adaptation of left-behind children in rural areas, and ensure that left behind children have better relationship adaptation in schools through laws and regulations. At present, the government has insufficient policy support and material assistance for left behind children, and relevant policies only have a general framework, rarely involve specific measures for left behind children, which is difficult to implement.

School Support has a direct and significant positive impact on the School Adaptation of left-behind children, including the relationship adaptation, learning adaptation and behavioral adaptation. Schools can enhance the learning adaptation of left-behind children from administrative management, curriculum arrangement and teaching facilities. Improve teachers' teaching ability and make teachers' pay more attention to left-behind children so as to improve their learning adaptation and behavioral adaptation. To educate students and actively carry out class activities, so that students have better relationship adaptation.

Family Support has a partial and significant positive impact on School Adaptation of left-behind children, among which, it has a direct and significant positive impact on behavioral and relationship adaptation, while has no direct and significant positive impact on learning adaptation. In terms of Family Support, parents' guidance and care for left-behind children enable them to have correct outlook on life and values, and to deal with interpersonal problems well. They play a leading role in left-behind children's adaptation and behavioral adaptation.

Through the above analysis, the influence relationship model of Social Support on School Adaptation is found, as shown in the figure below:

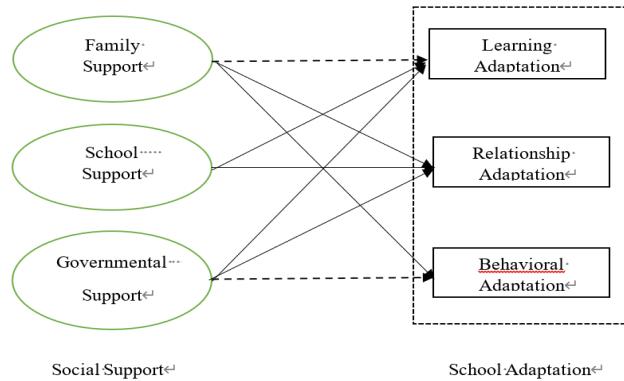


Fig.2: The Model of Social Support to School Adaptation

:SourceThe author developed from various sources of information

- Recommendations for Future Research

Selection of survey area. This area of research for China's central provinces - Shanxi, a western province developed central provinces, the central region rural left-behind children's school adaptation and Social Support and western provinces have bigger difference, the future research to study western provinces rural left-behind children's school and the influence effect of Social Support, explore the regional differences of school adaptation, for a comprehensive understanding of China's rural left-behind children's school adaptation to do fundamental research.

Subdivision of survey objects. The objects of this study are students from grade four to grade three in junior high school, and there is a big gap in School Adaptation among students at this stage. Although this paper adopts the method of stratified sampling, in order to accurately reflect the School Adaptation of the survey objects, future research needs to conduct a detailed classification of the survey objects and accurately study the impact of Social Support on the School Adaptation of rural left-behind children of different grades.

Internal relationship of Social Support. Social Support includes Family Support, School Support and Government Support. Different supports have different significant influences on School Adaptation. Whether there is also a significant positive relationship among the three dimensions of Social Support is what this paper seeks to explore in the future.

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