Journal of Contemporary Educational Research, 2026, Volume 10, Issue 7
http://ojs.bbwpublisher.com/index.php/JCER
Online ISSN: 2208-8474
Print ISSN: 2208-8466

Research on the Growth Difficulties of Special Group Students and Support Strategies from the Perspective of Collaborative Education

Lu Han

Shandong Vocational College of Science and Technology, Weifang 261053, Shandong, China

Copyright: © 2026 Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY 4.0), permitting distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is cited.

Abstract: Special group students are a key concern in inclusive and equitable education. With the deepening of the home-school-society collaborative education mechanism, systematically examining the growth difficulties of special group students from a collaborative perspective and constructing support strategies has significant theoretical and practical relevance. Based on an overview of the current situation of special group students in China, this paper focuses on analyzing the difficulties they face—such as weakening family support and home-school disconnection, insufficient remedial education and school-society disconnection, fragmented social support and family-society absence, and obstacles in collaborative mechanisms—from the perspectives of family, school, and social interactions and the operation of the collaborative mechanism. This paper will explore approaches to multi-agent collaborative education, providing reference for addressing the growth difficulties of special group students.

Keywords: Collaborative education; Special group students; Strategies

Online publication: August 5, 2026

1. Introduction

Special group students, due to their particularity, are in a disadvantaged position in social and family life, and they face even more obstacles and difficulties in education. Over the years, the Ministry of Education has been committed to improving the education system for special group students, and has gradually perfected the construction of the "home-school-society" collaborative education mechanism, making special group students the focus of collaborative education. However, in reality, the difficulties encountered by special group students are far more complex than imagined. Practical problems such as weak educational infrastructure for special group students, insufficient social and cultural advocacy, and lagging construction of professional talent teams all affect the development of education for special group students in China. Only by analyzing their core growth difficulties and carrying out targeted collaborative education can we truly and

steadily improve the educational level of special groups of students in China, providing a guarantee for the realization of a modern education power.

2. Overview of special group students in China

Special students are a group deserving of care in China's current social development. As of the end of 2024, there were approximately 1.68 million disabled children aged 0–6 in China, and approximately 950,000 special education students in the compulsory education stage [1]. The main types of disabilities are hearing, vision, intellectual, physical disabilities, and autism (autism spectrum disorder), with the proportion of autistic children increasing year by year. Faced with a large base of special student groups, how to implement special student education, alleviate family education pressure, protect the basic rights of special group students to receive education, and embody social care and harmony has become one of the problems that need to be fully explored and solved in the current education field.

In terms of scale, the base of special group students is enormous. According to publicly available data from the Ministry of Education and academic research estimates, there are approximately ten million rural left-behind children nationwide at the compulsory education stage, and nearly ten million accompanying children of migrant workers enrolled in schools. Although the enrollment rate of disabled children in compulsory education has exceeded 95%, the absolute number of students in schools remains considerable. In addition, students from economically disadvantaged families have achieved "full assistance for those in need" through the national financial aid system, but multi-dimensional poverty and hidden difficulties still exist. In terms of geographical distribution, left-behind children are highly concentrated in rural areas of central and western China, while accompanying children of migrant workers congregate in eastern coastal cities and provincial capitals, creating a two-ended squeeze between urban and rural areas.

These students generally exhibit some common characteristics: insufficient emotional care and guardianship, with some students experiencing psychological distress such as loneliness and anxiety; a lack of family cultural capital and weak academic support; and obstacles in self-identity and social integration, making them prone to feelings of inferiority and marginalization. At the same time, the difficulties of different types of special group students also show differences: students with disabilities urgently need accessible environments and individualized education support, migrant children face barriers to urban integration and educational advancement, while left-behind children prominently display the loss of family affection and the absence of family education. These characteristics determine that assistance must transcend the efforts of a single entity and shift towards a collaborative and integrated educational paradigm.

In the process of implementing special student education, it is necessary to pay attention to the "particularity" of special students, because this is the key to carrying out educational work. Because of their "particularity," special students often encounter unimaginable psychological pressure during their growth, from the incomprehension of peers and implicit discrimination from society. All these will affect the mental health of special students during their growth. Therefore, in the process of education for special students, improving the mental health education mechanism and adopting more scientific and reasonable educational methods are important educational reform contents to protect the rights of special students in China and better care for them [2].

3. Growth difficulties of special group students from the perspective of collaborative education

Examined within the collaborative education framework, the growth difficulties of special group students not only stem from individual or family disadvantages, but are further manifested in the disconnected linkages, functional mismatches, and lack of collective strength among the three major education systems of family, school, and society.

3.1. Weakening of family support and rupture of home-school collaboration

A large number of families of special group students face the dilemma of insufficient guardianship capacity and a lack of professional knowledge among parents, resulting in a general lack of emotional comfort and specialized education for special group students. On the other hand, the communication channels between schools and families are relatively limited, mostly staying at transactional notifications or accountability communications after problems occur. Regular home visits and parental education guidance for special group students are often mere formalities. The combination of family deficiencies in information, willingness, and ability with the insufficient initiative of schools leads to a clear rupture in home-school collaboration. Students are unable to receive consistent and coherent support in the two most important fields.

3.2. Insufficient remedial education in schools and lack of school-society linkage

Schools are the initiators of collaborative education for special group students and are the very institutions expected to study and improve various educational systems. However, most schools still lack standard guidance for the academic progress of special group students, respond insufficiently to the individualized needs of special group students, and lack teaching staff. For example, in schools with a concentration of migrant children, the insufficient connection with community resources leads to a lack of holiday care and enrichment activities; in small-scale rural schools, information is not circulated between the school and village-level children's homes or social work stations, resources cannot sink down, and student needs cannot float up. The lack of linkage between schools and society narrows the educational function of schools, making it difficult for special group students to receive social support beyond knowledge learning in schools.

3.3. Fragmentation of social support and absence of family-society collaboration

At present, there are many public welfare projects targeting special student groups in the social field, but they lack overall coordination and are seriously fragmented, making it difficult to form a concerted force. Community care centers are limited by funding and personnel allocation, making it difficult to carry out specialized psychological counseling and educational assistance for special group students. A more prominent social dilemma is the lack of a collaboration mechanism between social organizations and families. Some implicit discrimination and bullying behaviors against special group students still exist, and it is difficult for society to have professional groups speak out for them.

3.4. Ambiguous powers and responsibilities and information silos

From an institutional perspective, multiple departments including education, civil affairs, women's

federations, disabled persons' federations, and health, all bear responsibilities for supporting special group students, but cross-departmental collaboration mostly remains at the level of joint meetings, and normalized data sharing, resource coordination, and joint action mechanisms are not well established. Information such as poverty and left-behind status held by schools is difficult to compare in real time with the registry of children in difficult circumstances held by civil affairs departments, leading to lagging precision identification. In psychological crisis intervention, referral channels among schools, hospitals, and communities are not smooth, easily causing delays in assistance. Ambiguous responsibility boundaries also result in situations where "everyone is managing but no one is managing thoroughly," and buck-passing easily occurs when encountering complex cases. Such structural obstacles mean that even if families, schools, and society all have the willingness to assist, it is difficult to converge into normalized and long-term effective collaborative strength, ultimately causing special group students to fall through the cracks of the support network.

4. Growth difficulties and support strategies for special group students from the perspective of collaborative education

The education of special students reflects the openness and inclusiveness of national education and is also one of the important manifestations of the superiority of the socialist system [3]. Under the strategy of educational development in the new era, actively carrying out mental health education for special students is a further adherence to and expansion of the openness and inclusiveness of national education. As the guardians of children, families of special students have a more comprehensive understanding of their children's growth process. From the perspective of professionalism and the future psychological development trends of students, a good family atmosphere and parental love are more conducive to creating a favorable growth environment, thereby providing special students with a warmer and more loving environment, which in turn subtly influences their mental health. Therefore, in the process of carrying out mental health education for special students, teachers exploring new models of home-school cooperation helps to leverage the professional advantages of the school and the caring advantages of family education, forming a joint force in mental health education, truly constructing a more harmonious and stable environment for the physical and mental growth of special students, and promoting their comprehensive development. The specific implementation strategies are as follows.

4.1. Collaborative education: Forming a mechanism that combines personalized teaching and psychological intervention

The mental health characteristics of special students have their particularity. Teachers should fully consider this point in the process of daily teaching and mental health intervention, accurately grasp the psychological characteristics of different special students, and thus form personalized teaching content and psychological intervention through collaborative education to help special students grow healthily [4].

In order to better eliminate the special fears in the psychology of special students, before the start of school courses, teachers can establish a home-school communication group to learn in detail from parents about the specific situation of the child, the "special reasons," family members' information, etc., to lay a

"foundation" for carrying out targeted education and psychological intervention. During this period, fully listen to the opinions of parents. If possible, invite parents to participate in the special student's school learning life in the early stage. For example, every morning when entering the classroom, the teacher can arrange for parents to send the student into the classroom. For special students in different situations, the teacher can have parents and children jointly design a greeting gesture or action with the teacher, using this to intervene in the student's heart, helping them become familiar with the new environment and eliminate psychological fear. In addition, parents can be allowed to bring dolls to the classroom for some students with intellectual developmental delays. With the psychological guidance of the doll, they can quickly approach special students with care and love. Set up a video call device and screen in the classroom. For some special students who cry or have autistic tendencies, video calls can be made with parents at any time to soothe the students' emotions, truly realizing collaborative education and conducting personalized psychological intervention for special students.

4.2. Expanding collaborative education methods and building a "trinity" support network

On the basis of building collaborative education, schools should actively explore the "school, family, community" "trinity" education network, which helps comprehensively solve the psychological problems of special students and truly promotes the improvement of the mental health education level for special students. On the basis of exploring home-school co-education, schools should expand the forms of education, explore the "trinity" teaching system, integrate social teaching elements into the process of mental health education, and consolidate the achievements of collaborative mental health education [5].

Before carrying out activities, teachers should contact the community in advance, using festivals as nodes and relying on them, to carry out collective activities for Special Student Care Day. During the activity, teachers should specially invite parents of special family children to participate. During the activity, carry out more targeted communication with parents of special students about the child's performance, understand the child's performance at home, share the school performance with parents, and provide appropriate educational suggestions for parents from the perspective of educational professionalism. During the activity, through community publicity and appeals, pay more extensive social attention to families of special students. Through community grid workers, survey single-parent special student families in the community, and provide economic assistance to children from disadvantaged single-parent families through the community. Through activity invitations and charitable donations, give special care to special students, making special students and their families feel the warmth of society more deeply. Truly, through practical activities, create a good atmosphere for the mental health growth of special students. On the basis of the original collaborative education, expand the educational dimension, let the whole society pay attention to the education of special students, reach a consensus on collaborative education, gradually improve the mental health education system for special students, and provide more comprehensive support for special student education in China.

4.3. Carrying out anti-bias education and campus culture construction through collaborative education

The particularity of special students makes them vulnerable to discrimination and prejudice. Once such discrimination and prejudice are formed, they are both a physical and psychological harm to special students and are key factors inducing mental health problems among special students [6]. For this reason, schools should carry out targeted daily anti-bias education and integrate such education with the construction of school culture. For example, a certain school carried out a "We Are All Little Angels" pairing and mutual assistance activity for special students, allowing normal peers in regular schools to form "pairs" with special students. Regular students take care of special students in life and study, eliminating prejudice and estrangement between peers and mending the psychological wounds of special students. During the activity, invite parents and children to participate together, expand the scope of cooperation, form family mutual assistance pairs, and create a strong anti-bias educational atmosphere. This allows special student families to feel the love of society and the emphasis and efforts the school places on the construction of special student campus culture, thus eliminating the feelings of inferiority and pessimism within special students, guiding the whole society to build a harmonious and caring growth environment for special student families.

5. Conclusion

The growth difficulties of special group students result from the compounding of multiple disadvantaged factors, and more importantly, they reflect a concentrated breakdown in the collaborative chain linking family, school, and society. The collaborative education perspective not only provides a systematic framework for diagnosing these difficulties but also points toward an integrated pathway for reconstructing support strategies. Only when the government provides high-level coordination, schools take proactive measures, families fulfill their responsibilities, and society participates broadly—thereby transforming fragmented care into institutionalized collaboration—can we truly pave a hopeful path of growth for every special group student. This is both an inherent requirement of educational equity and a shared responsibility of the whole society.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

References

[1] Wei B, 2021, Special Love for Special You—A Guiding Study on Class Teachers' Psychological Counseling for Special Students. Questions and Research, (14): 129–130.

[2] Zeng Y, 2021, Let Special Students Grow in the Warm Cradle of Home-School Linkage. Talent, (8): 106–108.

[3] Liu W, Gao D, Wu X, 2026, A Trilogy of Class Teachers Transforming Special Students in Regular Classes. Primary and Secondary School Class Teachers, (3): 107–110.

[4] Yang F, 2025, Practical Research on Inter-School Collaboration in Inclusive Education Support Systems—Based on the Practice of Transition Education for Students with Special Needs. Journal of Pu'er University, 41(6): 133–138.

[5] Cui X, 2025, Research on the Construction of a Mental Health Support System for Special Students from the Perspective of Inclusive Education, Beijing International Exchange Association, Shangdang District Poetry Society of Changzhi City. Proceedings of the 4th Education Innovation and Experience Exchange Seminar in 2025, 119–122.

[6] Lu Y, 2025, Improving the Professional Competence of Special Education Resource Teachers Based on the Concept of Inclusive Education. Parenting, (17): 170–172.

Publisher's note

Bio-Byword Scientific Publishing remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.