

Education Curriculum Comparison between Private and Public Schools in China

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Abstract. The Chinese educational system has seen dramatic transformations in recent decades, with the rise of private schools as a competitive alternative to the traditional public sector. The purpose of this research was to compare and contrast the curriculums of public and private schools in China. The results imply that private schools in China prioritize personalized instruction and student innovation while state schools prioritize exam prep and tried-and-true techniques. As compared to public schools, which focus on teaching the basics, private schools have greater leeway in creating their curricula and providing a richer selection of extracurricular options for their students. The research also shows that foreign schools in China place a greater focus on English language skills and global views than either private or public schools in the country. These institutions provide a wider variety of courses taught mostly in English. The study emphasizes the significance of recognizing and appreciating different teaching methods and learning styles, as well as the role of extracurricular activities in developing students' social and emotional skills and calls for a more adaptable and diverse education system that can accommodate the individual needs and interests of students.

Keywords: Chinese education system, Private schools, Public schools, Curriculum comparison, Extracurricular activities.

1. Introduction

Chinese culture has always placed a premium on education and revered those who thrive academically. For centuries, public schools in China have been the primary option for students due to their provision of both free and mandatory education. Private schools, however, have gained in popularity and stature in recent years, to the point that they are now a significant component of the educational landscape.

Many reasons influence the growth of China's private school sector, including shifting government policy, growing affluence, and a greater desire for quality education. Opportunities for private sector investment in education were made possible when, on December 28, 2002, the Chinese government issued the *Regulations on the Implementation of the Non-state Education Promotion Law of the People's Republic of China (2002 Revision)*, which legalized the operation of independent schools [1]. Since then, private schools have flourished, particularly in urban areas.

Private institutions rely on student tuition and charitable contributions rather than governmental funding and administration. The Chinese government monitors and regulates private schools to make sure they adhere to particular policies and procedures. Preschool, primary, secondary, and post-secondary education are offered by private schools in China. Moreover, some private schools provide specialty programs, such as the International Baccalaureate, multilingual education, and vocational training. Private schools tend to have a more stringent admissions procedure, requiring students to pass an entrance test or achieve specific academic standards in order to be admitted.

On the other hand, all children in China have free access to public schools. Public schools are divided into primary, secondary and university and provide 9-year compulsory education since year 1993 [2]. The government provides funds for and regulates the operation of public schools, and the Ministry of Education determines the curricula that will be taught. The government monitors and controls public schools by inspecting and evaluating them often to ensure they adhere to set criteria.

The Chinese government has made significant efforts in recent years to reform the education system and increase the quality of education in China. It includes things like encouraging students to

think creatively and critically, expanding the use of technology in the classroom, and putting less of a focus on rote memorization and standardized testing. Slow progress in these changes means that the Chinese education system still struggles with issues including overcrowding, antiquated teaching techniques, and unfair allocation of resources.

Given these backgrounds, it is crucial to be familiar with the distinctive features of China's private and public schools, particularly with regards to pedagogical content. The purpose of this research is to investigate how public and private schools in China approach similar but distinct educational topics. This research shall contrast the educational aims, methods of instruction, and curricula of public and private schools. The research will also look at how much more emphasis is placed on innovation, analysis, and autonomy in private schools than in public ones. Reviewing previous research and analyzing data will form the basis of this investigation.

Three sections make up the research methodology. First, looking at the curriculum, instructional strategies, and educational objectives of private schools. In a second step, the basic concerns of public school education will be examined, such as its curriculum, pedagogical practices, and overarching objectives. Lastly, how private and public schools in China approach similar topics in their curricula and how those approaches differ will be developed.

The importance of this research lies in its ability to provide light on the ways in which private and public schools in China approach similar but fundamentally different areas of study. The results of this research will provide educators and parents with the information they need to make educated choices regarding their children's education. This research will also provide the groundwork for future studies of education in China and make a significant contribution to the existing academic literature on the subject.

To summarize, this research will investigate how private and public schools in China vary in their educational philosophies. A literature study and data analysis will form the basis of the research methodology. The purpose of this research is to shed light on the disparities between private and public schools in China in terms of the educational subjects that are covered in both of these institutions.

2. Public Schools vs Private School

Education is a fundamental component of Chinese culture; thus it is not surprising that it plays a significant role in the economy and society of the nation. Public schools have historically been the predominant type of education in China, offering free and mandatory education to all children. Private schools have arisen as a viable alternative to public schools in recent years, providing distinctive characteristics and instructional concepts. This section will investigate the variations in education themes between private and public schools in China.

2.1. Education Themes in Private Schools

Private schools in China provide a wide range of educational programs to their students. Some of these programs include bilingual education, the international baccalaureate, and vocational training [3]. When it comes to education, private schools often have a more creative and flexible approach, with a stronger emphasis on individualized teaching, artistic expression, and analytical reasoning.

2.1.1 Individualized learning

In China, private schools often have smaller class sizes than public schools, which enables teachers to devote more time and attention to each student as well as to provide more specialized training [4]. This approach takes into account the fact that children learn in a variety of ways and at varying speeds, and it offers a more personalised approach to the classroom setting [5]. The teachers at private schools are strongly encouraged to have an in-depth awareness of both the students' strengths and areas for improvement.

2.1.2 Creativity and critical thinking

Since students will need to be able to think both critically and creatively in order to be successful in the 21st century, private schools in China concentrate a significant amount of attention on these two aspects of student development [6]. The disciplines of art, music, theater, and design are just a few of the many that benefit from the encouragement of creativity and uniqueness that can be found in private schools. Students have the opportunity to develop their interests and polish their abilities through participation in these programs.

2.1.3 Multiculturalism

Students attending private schools in China are often immersed in a multiethnic environment, which broadens their horizons in terms of the range of languages and cultural traditions to which they are exposed. Students attending private schools have access to linguistic instruction in a variety of languages, including English, Spanish, and French, and are actively encouraged to participate in international student exchange programs. Students' viewpoints are broadened as a result of their increased familiarity with a variety of cultures, which also contributes to their formation of a more global perspective.

2.1.4 Extracurricular activities

As opposed to public schools, private schools in China tend to provide a broader variety of extracurricular options for their students. The spectrum of these pursuits includes anything from athletics to the arts to volunteer work. When it comes to educating a children's complete personality, private schools realize they can't ignore the significance of social and emotional development. A feeling of belonging is fostered, and students get valuable experience in working together and taking charge through these events.

2.2. Education Themes in Public Schools

A more conventional approach is used in China's public school education system, which places a greater premium on scholastic achievement and the recollection of facts and knowledge. In spite of this, the vast majority of public schools have a high student population, big class sizes, and a curriculum that is focused on the students' preparation for standardized examinations.

2.2.1 Academic achievement

In China's public schools, which place a strong emphasis on academic achievement, a significant amount of time and energy is dedicated to standardized testing. The standards of academic achievement that must be met to graduate from a public school are quite high, and students are strongly encouraged to pursue excellence in all aspects of their education. Pupils who achieve a higher level of academic success have a greater likelihood of getting accepted to prestigious universities and of finding work in the future.

2.2.2 Rote learning

Memory, repetition, and practice make up a significant portion of the instruction in China's public schools, rather than genuine comprehension of the material being taught. Several teachers are of the opinion that using this strategy improves students' performance on standardized examinations and gives them a strong grounding in the subject's basics. On the other hand, many people have the opinion that it inhibits active learning and puts a damper on inventiveness [7,8].

2.2.3 Limited electives

The curriculum taught in Chinese public schools is very regimented and focused on required subjects like as mathematics, science, and English language arts. As a result, there are less possibilities for pupils to investigate other topics that may be of interest to them. It is possible that students' exposure to other topics and interests is limited as a result of this strategy, despite the fact that it provides pupils with a strong foundation in the aforementioned areas.

2.2.4 Technology integration

In light of the growing importance of technical literacy in the workplace, Chinese public schools have begun to focus a larger emphasis on incorporating technology into the classroom. The use of technology like laptops, tablets, and interactive whiteboards has become more common in K-12 classrooms, and this has helped to increase student engagement and the level of interactivity in the learning process [9]. Whilst significant progress has been achieved, there is still more to do to properly integrate technology into the classroom and provide teachers with the tools they need.

3. Comparison of Education Themes between Private and Public Schools in China

The curriculums of China's private and public schools diverge significantly in a number of important respects. Public schools place a greater emphasis on academic success and memorization of material, whereas private schools place a greater emphasis on customized learning and creative expression. The aims and ideologies of these two distinct kinds of schools are fundamentally unlike, which is the primary cause of these discrepancies.

In China, private schools have more leeway and autonomy in the development of their curricula as well as the instructional methods they use [10]. In the classroom, they often use forward-thinking methods that put the focus on the students and place an emphasis on the cultivation of creative and critical thinking abilities. Students at private institutions, for instance, could participate in inquiry-based or project-based learning as a way to foster their individual curiosity and academic growth. In addition, in order to offer its children with a well-rounded education, private schools put a larger focus on extracurricular activities such as athletics, music, and art.

In contrast, public schools in China adhere to a more conventional approach to teaching, placing a greater emphasis on academic accomplishment and performance on examinations. The curricula and teaching methods used in public schools are highly standardized, with a primary emphasis placed on rote learning and the accumulation of information. Students' ability to do well on the rigorous college admission test, which will ultimately decide the academic and professional options available to them in the future, is the primary focus of public-school education. As a result of the emphasis placed on academic courses relative to other fields of interest, public schools often provide a limited number of extracurricular activities.

The number of students in each classroom is yet another important aspect that distinguishes public from private schools in China. Classes at private schools often have fewer students enrolled, which results in a greater degree of individualized attention and contact between teachers and students. On the other hand, owing to the great demand for education and limited resources, public schools tend to have bigger class sizes than private schools. This often leads to less customized attention and more learning through repetition.

The general disparities in educational tenets that may be found between private and public schools in China are illustrative of the divergent objectives and guiding principles of the two distinct categories of educational institutions. Private schools provide a greater emphasis on students' individual growth and creative expression, whereas public schools place a greater emphasis on academic accomplishment and performance on exams. While deciding between public and private schools in China, it is important for both parents and kids to take into account their unique requirements and preferences.

4. Conclusion

This research has compared the education theme of both private and public schools in China. The curriculum, teaching techniques, and extracurricular activities of these two kinds of schools have been compared through a study of the relevant literature and analysis of source data.

The results of this research indicate that private schools in China prioritize personalised instruction and student innovation whereas state schools prioritize exam prep and tried-and-true pedagogical practices. Although public schools focus on teaching the basics, private schools may tailor their curricula to the needs of their students and provide a greater variety of extracurricular options.

In addition, the research showed that foreign schools in China place a greater focus on English language skills and global views than either private or public schools in the country. These institutions have a wider variety of courses available and utilize English as their major medium of teaching.

It is clear that the results of this research will have far-reaching effects on Chinese policymakers, teachers, and parents. These show how important it is for students' educational experiences to be adaptable to their unique backgrounds and interests. The value of extracurricular activities in helping kids build social and emotional skills is also highlighted, along with the need of recognizing and appreciating students' individual differences in learning styles and pedagogical approaches.

In conclusion, the findings of this research provide important new perspectives on recurring topics in both Chinese public and private schools. It has brought to light the parallels and distinctions between these two kinds of schools, as well as the need for an educational system that is both more varied and adaptable. Policymakers, teachers, and parents in China may all benefit from this research's results as they work to improve the country's education system.

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