

# Study on the Current Situation of China's Education Inequality

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**Abstract.** Despite China's recent strong economic growth, there are still many educational disparities, significant delays in completing educational objectives, and unequal educational quality. They include family involvement in society, insufficient investments in education, unfair distribution of education funding, the impact of regional economies, inappropriate policies and regulations, and corruption in education. The current state of educational inequality between regions, urban and rural locations, and class families is examined in this paper. The causes of educational inequality are also found to be multifaceted, mainly due to uneven regional economic development, inadequate policy implementation, the importance families attach to their children's education, and other factors. To achieve equity in education, by identifying the issues and delving into the reasons, the author seeks solutions to the issue. After researching, the author believes that the problem of educational inequity can be effectively remedied through measures such as balancing educational resources, increasing educational input, improving input distribution models, improving educational policies and regulations, and innovating and improving educational models.

**Keywords:** Education inequality, education opportunity, social levels, resource allocation.

## 1. Introduction

With the improvement of times and standards of living, society is placing an increasing emphasis on education. Educational attainment has become an important basis for knowing whether a country is strong or not. The promotion of overall human growth and the improvement of people's overall quality can both be accomplished through education. It is a crucial component of societal advancement and the great revitalization of the Chinese nation, serving as a cornerstone for both [1]. Despite the ongoing implementation of key education policies in recent years, advancing equity in education is not a silver bullet. The main problems of education equity in China today are the development gap between urban and rural education levels, the development gap between regional education levels, and the development gap between class education levels. These problems have a direct impact on the future development of students. In this paper, the author will study the issue of educational equity in China's compulsory education stage.

## 2. Inequity between Regions

Between regions, it is mainly reflected in the college entrance examination. In the past few decades, high school students from different regions have expressed dissatisfaction or protest against China's unfair college entrance examination system, especially the inequality caused by regional differences, which has aroused heated discussions. The term "college entrance examination migrants" is a good illustration of this inequity between regional differences. In one simple sentence, the term means that candidates from areas with high score lines and low admission rates are moving to places with low score lines and high admission rates by transferring schools or hukou. Currently, Shandong, Hebei, Henan, Hubei, Hunan, and other provinces are the main "college entrance examination immigrants". A common feature is a large number of candidates, the overall level of test-taking education is relatively high, but the enrollment plan is relatively small, and the admission rate is low. In contrast, the so-called "depressions" of the college entrance examination, such as Xinjiang, Tibet, Qinghai, Ningxia, and other backward regions, have a smaller number of candidates and enjoy national policy support. As a result, 'migrants' often choose a province with a weaker basic education level and a more relaxed admissions situation as their destination. Some of the students who have participated in

the process have reported online that the migration does exist, and that some of the "Qingbei critical students" have been screened [2]. Through this mechanism, candidates can enter better universities and get generous bonuses; private schools can quickly increase their popularity, attract more local students, and thus earn more profits; better performance. To some extent, this is a win-win situation for candidates, private schools, and even the "floating population of the college entrance examination". In a way, this is a win-win mechanism for the candidates, the private schools, and even the education administrations on the Mainland [2]. There are not only inter-provincial migrants, but also migrants from within the province, migrants from abroad, and Han Chinese candidates posing as ethnic minority candidates. The level of scores on college entrance exams will have a direct impact on applicants' prospects of admission. Candidates are chosen in the same region in accordance with the ranking of high to low marks. The distribution of test takers is uneven when the national exam papers are used in 28 provinces, cities, and regions around the nation, despite the fact that this is generally fair. The disparity in admissions across provinces is mostly reflected in admissions scores. The influence is so significant since it determines whether the pupils will have favorable employment possibilities in the future. Higher education cannot increase their skills or productivity, and the output, economic growth, and regional inequality of China will all be directly impacted by their future productivity [3]. Differences in admissions scores and uneven admissions rates between provinces are one of the direct causes of the phenomenon of college entrance exam migration, which stems from the growing demand for knowledge and personal ability to get into the ideal university. Although the relevant policies have been constantly rectified, the fundamental problem still lies in the loopholes in China's college entrance examination policy. To a certain extent, the score-based approach to the college entrance examination is also contrary to the aim of cultivating well-rounded talents and all-round development in China, and the fact that the fate of a candidate is determined by a single examination paper is a manifestation of unfairness, which also drives the phenomenon of immigration to the college entrance examination. What's more, although the form of the college entrance examination is constantly reforming, such as canceling the separation of arts and sciences, most students still focus on the three main subjects of Chinese, mathematics, and English, which runs counter to the overall development of quality education. The disparity in educational standards between areas, which also contributes significantly to school migration, is present at the same time.

Improving this phenomenon, it will take a long period and require the concerted efforts and input of all sectors of society. The relevant policies on the household registration system need to be carefully improved, and policies tailored to the actual situation of different places need to be formulated to solve the problem of deviations in the formulation and implementation of policies, to achieve complete equity in the starting point, process, and outcome of education.

### 3. Inequity between Urban and Rural Education

The inequity between urban and rural education, on the other hand, is one of the more problematic issues in contemporary educational inequity, and there are more problems. Although the country has made many achievements in promoting equity in compulsory education, such as waiving school fees and miscellaneous expenses at the compulsory education stage, implementing the "nutritious lunch" program for students from poor families in rural areas, increasing support for special groups, and improving the system of grants and loans, the situation of compulsory education in rural areas is not satisfactory. However, the situation of compulsory education in rural areas is not optimistic. There are still fewer and fewer schools in the countryside, no schools to attend, high dropout rates, and high dropout rates for girls. According to a survey, "from 2000 to 2010, an average of 63 primary schools, 30 teaching points, and three junior high schools disappeared in China's rural areas each day, and almost every hour that passes, four rural schools disappear [4]." While urban education focuses to some extent on the joint development of moral, intellectual, physical, social, and aesthetic education, rural areas are still implementing a single examination-based education, and many schools do not even know what quality education is yet.

### 3.1. The Imbalance in Teacher Allocation

At the same time, the imbalance in teacher allocation has seriously affected the balanced development of urban and rural basic education.

#### 3.1.1. Academic qualifications of teachers

Teachers in urban and rural locations have different levels of academic training. There has always been a disparity in the education levels of teachers in urban and rural areas. According to statistics, in some cities, the number of primary school teachers with a college degree or above accounts for about 59% of the total, while in some places the figure is only 10.3%. The number of junior secondary teachers without a bachelor's degree is only 48%, while in some places the figure is 92.4%.

#### 3.1.2. Imbalance in the allocation of teachers' academic resources

The huge disparity in educational quality between metropolitan and rural regions is also a result of the massive imbalance in the distribution of teachers' academic resources. Fewer and fewer students were choosing to study in rural areas as students who had previously lived in rural regions started to transfer to urban areas. Due to this, urban schools are steadily receiving more students, and some of them are severely overcrowded [5]. Because rural schools generally lack highly educated and outstanding backbone teachers and subject leaders, teachers' knowledge of educational theory is not comprehensive, their educational concepts are relatively backward and their teaching methods are not advanced. There is also a discrepancy in the number of teachers in urban and rural regions. In some developed regions and large and medium-sized cities in China, the number of teachers is large, and in some places, they are even overstaffed. Teachers' remuneration is closely related to local financial strength, and there is no doubt that the opportunities and potential for development are much higher in rural areas than in cities.

### 3.2. Measures

In recent years, China has taken a number of steps to ensure that rural teachers are paid in full and on time, but after the base salary, there is still a huge difference between them and the cities in terms of benefits and job status. The disparity in treatment has led to a serious lack of motivation among rural teachers and has also led to a loss of rural teachers, affecting the stability of the rural teaching force [5]. It takes a multifaceted approach to close the development gap between urban and rural regions. People must first create accurate ideas and concepts as well as a fair distribution of teacher resources. The government must enhance the remote teacher preparation and support systems, as well as the teacher "rotation" system. The treatment of rural instructors and their incentive system must be improved by local governments [4]. The nation should actively learn from the pertinent experience of developed countries and cultivate a social environment that supports the balanced development of basic education in urban and rural areas.

## 4. The Disadvantaged Status of the Family

In terms of class, educational inequity is mainly reflected in the fact that the disadvantaged status of the family causes difficulties in children's career access, which affects the family's willingness to support education and thus creates new educational inequity. On the one hand, education helps those at the bottom of society move up, while on the other, the wealthy use their ample resources to make sure their kids have more possibilities to go to a better school. In addition to having a significant impact on their children's choice of schools and future careers, the social capital of families also has a profound impact on their educational philosophy and behavior through the interaction of their 'circle of friends'. The Chinese folktale of Mencius' mother, who relocated three times to find a suitable setting for her children's education, illustrates the significance of the "circle of friends" in children's education. Although in terms of access to rights, the development environment based on market mechanisms and household mobility provides equal access to school choice for all groups in urban and rural areas, the ability to enjoy this right is largely dependent on the economic status of the family,

and the 'Matthew effect' between the family's economic capital and the quality and level of education received by their children provides the possibility for children from economically advantaged This limitation resonates with the established school gap between urban and rural areas, resulting in rural children often being educated in rural schools of lower quality than in urban areas [6]. However, the specific policies implemented by local governments have placed strict restrictions on the admission and promotion of floating rural students in the place of reception, including the need for legal guardian work permits, actual residence certificates, family household registers, temporary residence permits in Beijing, and no-guardian condition certificates issued by pertinent departments of the place of household registration. These rigid norms act as insurmountable institutional impediments for the majority of immigrant families. Relevant data show that a student's ability to enroll in a public school frequently depends on their family's financial and social circumstances. Parents with unpredictable jobs, low incomes, and no social ties are more likely to have their children rejected by public schools [7]. The "private school choice fever" has been in the limelight a lot in the past two years, with popular private schools having an obvious elitist selection orientation in their independent admissions. The "packaging" of students' families has made them the first to be selected by schools, and it is difficult for students with insufficient family cultural capital and average academic performance to be "selected" [8]. There is a strong correlation between family income, parental educational attainment, parental occupational field, occupational status, and the level of the school attended by children in lower secondary education. In other words, the socio-economic status of the family has a strong influence on the enrolment of children in different types of schools at the lower secondary level. The higher the socioeconomic status of the family, the more likely the child will attend a better junior high school. The lower the socioeconomic status of the family, the more likely the child will attend a poorer junior high school. Magnani and Zhu found a growing relationship between parents' educational success and that of their offspring. They proposed the possibility that the transmission of education through generations can affect social mobility and result in economic inequality. Gender and ethnicity, especially particular in underdeveloped areas, may also have an impact on educational achievement. Therefore, even though China has made great strides in education development in terms of increasing access and achievement and decreasing inequality, much work still needs to be done, especially for populations who are underprivileged and have lower incomes, as well as to remove institutional barriers like the hukou system and unequal distribution of resources for high-quality education [9].

During the compulsory education period, the government should gradually dilute the policy on key schools. Legislation should be strengthened to regulate the development of public schools in the education market so that public schools can better serve the goals of society. The government should strengthen legislation to regulate the development of public schools in the education market so that public schools can better serve the goals of society. Fair opportunity is an extension of fair rights. Equality of opportunity is to enable people from all walks of life to obtain equal opportunities to receive higher education. As stated in the "National Medium and Long-Term Educational Reform and Development Plan (2010-2020)," "Equal opportunity is the key to educational equity." At the moment, the search for "high-quality" higher education chances is gradually supplanting the pure pursuit of opportunities for fairness in higher education. The Open University's technologically advanced, inventive, open, and inclusive character supports the growth of high-quality and equitable higher education in China. Admission to the Open University is open to all societal citizens. The Open University welcomes students of all categories and social classes. This supports the fairness of higher education rights and satisfies the equal rights of social group members to pursue higher education. The entire community has access to the Open University's educational materials. To meet the varied learning requirements of students and truly actualize the sharing of learning resources, all members of society can now access educational materials from the Open University via the Internet information technology platform. Encourage the equitable development of higher education opportunities and give social members the chance to obtain higher education. The Open University's system for managing its schools is available. It serves to build a lifelong education system, taking

into account academic education and non-academic education, innovatively establishing a credit bank, and using the online teaching service system to meet the learning needs of the public. It is an overpass bridge for lifelong education and has effectively promoted the fair development of higher education [10].

## 5. Conclusion

The above research shows that the problem of educational equity in China today is mainly manifested in the disparity in the development of regional education levels, the divergence between urban and rural education standards in the development and the disparity in the development of class education levels. Regional educational inequity is mainly reflected in the migration to the college entrance examination, and the difference in admission scores and the uneven admission rates among provinces is one of the primary reasons why people are migrating to take college admission exams. Education disparities between metropolitan and rural areas are one of the more difficult issues in contemporary education inequality, and there are more problems. Among them is the serious imbalance in the allocation of teacher resources. Class education inequity is mainly reflected in the fact that the disadvantaged status of the family causes difficulties in children's career access affecting the family's willingness to support education and thus creating new educational inequity. How to solve the educational inequity that people encounter in social life, and how to activate the visible educational equity resources around people, are urgent issues to be considered and solved under the new era of educational equity. Therefore, the establishment of a sound education equity system, increased investment in education, rational allocation of education resources, "balanced development" of education, and the implementation of policy formulation and implementation deviations are the goals and directions to address the current situation of education inequity.

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