

From Classroom to Economy: The Transformative Power of Educational Economics in China

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Abstract: Educational economics not only promotes educational reform and development, but also injects strong impetus into economic growth. The government has continuously increased investment in education, especially in the field of basic education, which has significantly improved the overall education level. However, the uneven distribution of educational resources and the tendency of exam-oriented education still need to be solved. In contrast, Japan has cultivated a large number of high-quality talents with its refined education concept and efficient education system, which has had a far-reaching impact on economic development. Through comparative analysis, this paper points out the key role of educational economics in promoting educational equity, improving educational quality and promoting economic transformation and upgrading. In the future, educational economics needs to continue to deepen its research, optimize the allocation of educational resources, and promote the closer combination of education and economy to meet the challenges and opportunities in the era of globalization.

Keywords: China; Educational Economics; Japan.

1. Introduction

Educational economics, as an interdisciplinary field that combines pedagogy and economics, has gradually attracted extensive attention from academic circles in recent years. It not only deeply explores how education investment is transformed into the driving force of economic growth, but also reveals the subtle interaction between education system and economic system [1-2]. In this era of accelerating globalization, it is of great significance to compare the practice of educational economics in different countries, especially those with similar economic and cultural backgrounds, to deepen our understanding of the economic value of education.

China and Japan, as two important economies in Asia, have their own characteristics in education system and economic development mode. Since the reform and opening up in China, the education system has undergone earth-shaking changes, and the practice of its educational economics is also advancing in constant exploration [3]. Japan, which is famous for its refined educational concept and highly developed economic system, is also worthy of in-depth study in the practice of educational economics.

By comparing the educational economics practices of China and Japan, this paper aims to reveal the similarities and differences between the two countries in the distribution of educational resources, educational output and the relationship between education and economy [4]. Through this comparison, we can understand the application of educational economics in different cultural and social backgrounds and how it can promote the sustainable development of national economy.

2. The Development of Educational Economics in China

As an independent research field, China's educational economics has experienced a magnificent development process, from initial exploration to gradual maturity (Table 1).

Table 1. The development of educational economics in China

time slot	Major events
1978-1984	Educational economics began to sprout in China, and scholars began to pay attention to the relationship between education and economy, translating and drawing lessons from the achievements of foreign educational economics.
1984	The establishment of China Educational Economics Research Association marks a new stage of educational economics research in China.
1985	The publication of Education and Economy magazine provides an exchange platform for educational economics research.
1993	Educational economics has entered a stage of rapid development, the research team has grown, a large number of textbooks and monographs have been published, and the number of academic papers has increased.
From 2000 to present	The research field of educational economics is constantly expanding, the research content is deepening, the degree of internationalization is improving, and the research methods are becoming more standardized and perfect.

In the initial stage, China's educational economics mainly drew lessons from the international theory and practice, and at the same time, combined with the actual situation of our country, made a preliminary exploration. Scholars and educators in this period began to realize that education is not only a social activity, but also an investment that can produce long-term economic benefits. They began to try to introduce the theories and methods of economics into the field of education, so as to analyze the relationship between education investment and economic growth [5]. With the deepening of reform and opening up, China's educational economics has entered a period of rapid development. During this period, scholars began to systematically study the contribution of education to economic growth, not only from the macro

perspective to explore the relationship between education investment and national economic development, but also from the micro level to analyze the impact of education on personal income, employment and social status. At the same time, the government has gradually increased its investment in education, which has promoted the popularization and improvement of education and further promoted the close combination of education and economy [6-7].

In recent years, with the rapid development of data science and econometrics, China's educational economics began to use more accurate quantitative methods to evaluate the economic benefits of education [8]. By collecting and analyzing a large number of educational and economic data, scholars can more accurately measure the contribution of educational investment to economic growth, and provide strong decision support for policy makers. However, the development of educational economics in China is also facing some challenges. For example, how to evaluate the quality of education more scientifically, not just the quantity; How to balance the public welfare and marketability of education; How to achieve educational equity in the case of limited educational resources. These problems need to be explored and solved by scholars and policy makers in the field of educational economics.

The development of educational economics in China is a process of continuous exploration and progress, which not only promotes the reform and development of education, but also injects a strong impetus into the economic growth of China [9-10]. In the future, with the efforts of more scholars and practitioners, China's educational economics will surely usher in a broader development prospect.

3. Characteristics of Japanese Education and its Influence on Economy

Japan's education system enjoys a high reputation all over the world. Its unique educational concept and practice not only cultivate a large number of high-quality talents for Japan, but also have a far-reaching impact on the country's economic development. Japanese education pays attention to cultivating students' comprehensive quality, emphasizing the mastery of basic knowledge and skills, and encouraging students to develop critical thinking and innovative ability [11]. This educational concept makes Japanese students perform well in international competition, and has sent a large number of highly skilled talents to Japan's science and technology, engineering and manufacturing industries. These talents have played a key role in promoting Japan's technological innovation and industrial upgrading, thus promoting sustained economic growth.

Japanese education attaches great importance to moral education and cultivates students' sense of responsibility, teamwork spirit and etiquette norms. This kind of education not only shaped the harmony and order of Japanese society, but also laid the foundation for Japanese corporate culture. The teamwork spirit and efficient execution of Japanese enterprises are highly praised all over the world, which is inseparable from moral education in their education system. This corporate culture has further enhanced the competitiveness and market share of Japanese products and had a positive impact on economic development [12-13]. Japanese education also emphasizes the concept of lifelong learning and encourages individuals to constantly update their

knowledge and skills during their careers. This culture of continuous learning enables Japan to quickly adapt to the changes in the global economy and maintain its leading position in the high-tech field. With the continuous progress of technology and the rapid change of market demand, the flexibility and adaptability of Japanese labor force has become an important guarantee for its sustainable economic development.

The characteristics of Japanese education are that it comprehensively cultivates students' comprehensive quality, pays attention to moral education and advocates the concept of lifelong learning [14]. These characteristics not only cultivate a large number of high-quality talents for Japan, but also have a far-reaching impact on Japan's economic development by shaping corporate culture and improving labor flexibility. Therefore, it is of great significance to deeply study the characteristics of Japanese education and its impact on the economy for understanding the secret of Japanese economic success and seeking enlightenment from educational reform.

4. A Comparative Study of Educational Economics between China and Japan

4.1. Similarities and Differences between Educational Ideas and Systems

Table 2. Similarities and differences between Chinese and Japanese educational concepts and systems

Contrast term	China	Japan
Educational idea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prioritizing morality and focusing on comprehensive development; Facing everyone and advocating lifelong learning; Teaching students in accordance with their aptitude and integrating knowledge with action; Co-building and sharing, emphasizing integrated development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultivate the creators of a sustainable society; Enhance the happiness rooted in Japanese society; Cultivate lifelong learning talents facing the globalized society; Realize a symbiotic society that "does not abandon anyone and stimulates everyone's potential".
education system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nine years compulsory education; Popularization of high school education; Coordinated development of vocational education and general education; Popularization and internationalization of higher education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> After graduating from junior high school, they are diverted, and ordinary high schools and vocational high schools coexist; Elite higher education, focusing on the combination of academic research and practice; The lifelong education system is perfect, and adult education and online education are developed.

There are significant differences between China and Japan in the field of educational economics, which are first reflected in their respective educational concepts and systems (Table 2).

In China's education system, in recent years, the educational concept has gradually changed from exam-oriented and achievement-oriented to paying more attention

to students' all-round development. This change is reflected in the emphasis on quality education, innovative ability and critical thinking. However, the traditional concept of exam-oriented education still has great influence in practice, especially in some areas and schools. In terms of system, China's education system is characterized by strong centralization, and education policies and reforms are usually led and promoted by the central government. In contrast, Japan's educational philosophy pays more attention to the individualized development of students and the cultivation of practical ability. Japanese education emphasizes students' autonomy, innovation and teamwork ability, and encourages students to explore and solve problems through practical activities [15]. Institutionally, Japan's education system is relatively decentralized, and local governments and schools have greater autonomy in education management and policy formulation. This decentralized system is helpful for education policy and practice to be closer to the actual needs of localities and schools.

In the field of educational economics, the differences in educational concepts and systems between China and Japan lead to different educational investment strategies and resource allocation methods. China pays more attention to the integrity and scale of education investment, and is committed to improving the quality and efficiency of the entire education system. Japan, on the other hand, pays more attention to the individualization and diversification of education and tends to maintain flexibility and pertinence in education investment.

4.2. Comparison between Educational Input and Output

In recent years, the government of China has continuously increased its investment in education, especially in the field of basic education. However, due to the imbalance of regional economic development, the investment in education in some areas is still limited. In contrast, Japan's investment in education has been maintained at a high level, and it pays attention to the balanced distribution of educational resources. The government's financial support for education is stable, ensuring the good operation of the education system [16]. In terms of human resources, China is committed to improving the overall quality of teachers and enhancing the quality of education by training and introducing high-quality teachers, but remote areas still face the problem of weak teachers. However, Japan attaches great importance to the professional development and training of teachers. The overall quality of teachers is high, and their social status and treatment are relatively good, attracting a large number of outstanding talents to join the education industry.

Students from China and Japan have performed well in international academic evaluation, while students from China have performed well in mathematics and science, but they are faced with the challenge of cultivating creativity and critical thinking. While Japan pays more attention to the cultivation of practical ability and teamwork. From the perspective of social and economic impact, the rapid development of education in China has contributed a lot of high-quality talents to economic growth and social progress, although there is still room for improvement in the matching degree between education and social needs; Japan's education system provides a solid talent base for its industrial and technological development and plays a key role in the sustained economic growth.

China and Japan have their own characteristics in education

input and output. China still has room for improvement in capital investment and human resources, especially in the balanced distribution of educational resources. Japan, on the other hand, is outstanding in the stability of education investment and the construction of teachers. In terms of educational output, students from both countries show a high academic level, but Japan seems to be more mature in the matching degree between education and socio-economic needs.

4.3. Discussion on the Relationship between Education and Economy

The relationship between education and economy is a complex and close network. In China, education is regarded as a key factor for national development and competitiveness. In recent years, with the rapid economic growth, China's investment in education is also increasing. Education not only provides individuals with knowledge and skills, but also provides talent support for the country's economic transformation and industrial upgrading. Especially in the high-tech field, China's education system has delivered a large number of professionals for these industries. However, China's education is also facing some challenges, such as uneven distribution of educational resources, and the tendency of exam-oriented education. These problems may have a certain restrictive effect on economic development, because the quality and effect of education directly affect the quality and innovation ability of the labor force.

In Japan, the relationship between education and economy is closer and more coordinated. Japan's education system focuses on cultivating students' practical ability and innovative thinking, which is highly consistent with the innovation orientation of Japan's economy. Japan's corporate culture and industrial development need high-quality and creative employees, and the education system is designed to meet this demand. Japan's educational economics research also pays more attention to effectiveness and application. The government's investment in education is stable and sufficient, which ensures the balanced distribution of educational resources. This balanced allocation of educational resources has provided a solid foundation for the stable development of Japan's economy.

The educational investment strategies of China and Japan reflect the economic needs of their respective countries. China pays more attention to the overall and large-scale investment, while Japan emphasizes individuality and practicality. In the distribution of educational resources, China is facing an unbalanced problem, while Japan has achieved a more balanced distribution, reducing the educational gap between regions. In addition, Japan is outstanding in the combination of education and industrial demand, and the close combination of its education system and industry provides innovative impetus for economic development; In contrast, China's integration in this area is still improving (Table 3).

China and Japan have their own characteristics and advantages in the relationship between education and economy. Through comparative study, we can find that there are differences between the two countries in education investment strategy, education resource allocation and the combination of education and industry. These differences reflect the practice of educational economics under different social and cultural backgrounds. In order to promote the sustained economic development, the two countries can learn

from each other and optimize the relationship between education and economy while maintaining their own characteristics.

Table 3. Comparison of the relationship between education and economy between China and Japan

Contrast term	China	Japan
Education investment	The proportion of education funds in GDP has increased year by year;	Education expenditure accounts for a high proportion of GDP, ranking in the forefront of developed countries;
Education and employment	Government, enterprises and individuals participate in education investment together.	The government leads education investment and encourages private capital to participate.
Education and innovation	Education promotes scientific and technological innovation, and universities become the main body of innovation;	Education cultivates innovative talents, and universities and enterprises cooperate closely;
Internationalization of education	Investment in research and development continued to increase, and the number of patent applications ranked first in the world.	R&D investment intensity is high, and the quality of patent output is leading.

5. Conclusion

China pays more attention to the integrity and scale of education investment, and strives to improve the quality and efficiency of the whole education system, while Japan pays more attention to the individualization and diversification of education, and tends to maintain flexibility and pertinence in education investment. China and Japan have their own characteristics in education input and output, and China still has room for improvement in capital input and human resources, especially in the balanced distribution of educational resources; Japan, on the other hand, is outstanding in the stability of education investment and the construction of teachers. On the relationship between education and economy, education in China is regarded as the key factor of national development and competitiveness. Education not only provides knowledge and skills for individuals, but also provides talent support for national economic transformation and industrial upgrading. However, Japan's education system focuses on cultivating students' practical ability and innovative thinking, which is highly consistent with the innovation orientation of Japan's economy. China and Japan have their own characteristics and advantages in the relationship between education and economy. Through comparative study, we can find that there

are differences between the two countries in education investment strategy, education resource allocation and the combination of education and industry. These differences reflect the practice of educational economics under different social and cultural backgrounds. In order to promote the sustained economic development, the two countries can learn from each other and optimize the relationship between education and economy while maintaining their own characteristics.

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