

Educational Equity from A Global Perspective: A Comparative Analysis of Chinese and American Educational Systems

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Abstract: In the context of deepening globalization, educational equity, as an important cornerstone of social progress and national development, has attracted wide attention from countries around the world. With the title of "Educational Equity from a Global Perspective: A Comparative Analysis of Chinese and American Educational Systems", this paper aims to explore different approaches to educational equity and their effects by comparing the two educational systems. With the support of national policies, China's education system has experienced rapid development and change. The Chinese government has long been committed to the strategy of "rejuvenating the country through science and education", which has not only greatly improved the popularization of basic education, but also made remarkable progress in the field of higher education. At the same time, measures such as the poverty alleviation policy and distance education platform for poor areas have effectively narrowed the gap in educational resources between urban and rural areas and between regions, reflecting the government's great importance and active practice of education equity. In contrast, the American education system is characterized by decentralized management, coexistence of private and public schools, and emphasis on multicultural and innovative entrepreneurship education. In promoting educational equity, the United States strives to provide equal educational opportunities for students from different backgrounds through special education programs and social participation. However, school district choice and school district housing issues are still one of the important factors affecting educational equity. Through the comparative analysis of the policy orientation and actual results of educational equity in the two educational systems, this study finds that although China and the United States have different national conditions, there are many common points in the pursuit of educational equity. In the future, the two countries can strengthen international exchanges and cooperation, learn from each other's advantages, jointly optimize the education system, further enhance the equity of education, and contribute to the development of global education.

Keywords: Educational Equity; Comparison Between China and The United States; Educational Policy; Allocation of Educational Resources; International Educational Cooperation.

1. Introduction

With the rapid development of globalization, education has become an important part of national competitiveness. As the basis and premise of social equity, educational equity plays an irreplaceable role in promoting social stability, economic development and personal growth. With the acceleration of the process of globalization, governments and all sectors of society pay increasing attention to the equity of education, and how to ensure that all citizens can enjoy equal opportunities for education has become a global issue [1]. As the two largest economies in the world, China and the United States have important research value on the development patterns and achievements of their education systems. Both countries have carried out a lot of exploration and practice in the pursuit of educational equity, and have accumulated rich experience. The comparative analysis of the education systems of China and the United States cannot only provide useful references for other countries, but also help the two countries find their own strengths and weaknesses, further optimize education policies and practices, and jointly promote the development of global educational equity [2]. The purpose of this paper is to explore the different ways to achieve educational equity and their effects through the comparative analysis of Chinese and American education systems. First, policy orientation: Comparing the design and implementation of educational equity policies in China and

the United States. The second is the actual results: evaluate the results of the two countries in narrowing the gap between urban and rural education resources, regional education resources and education assistance for vulnerable groups. The third is the future outlook: based on the existing research results, suggestions are put forward to improve the equity of education, and the possibility of international exchange and cooperation is discussed.

2. Definition of Educational Equity

2.1. Basic Definition of Educational Equity

Equity in education is about ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their socioeconomic background, race, gender or other personal characteristics, have equal access to educational opportunities and resources, and that they maximize their personal potential through education. It not only involves the equality of enrollment opportunities, but also includes the fairness of educational resource allocation, non-discrimination in the educational process and the equality of the final educational outcomes [3]. Educational equity is an important cornerstone of building a harmonious society and a key factor in promoting social mobility and reducing inequality.

2.2. Major Issues of Equity in Education on A Global Scale

Under the background of globalization, educational equity has become one of the core issues concerned by governments and all sectors of society. First, whether the distribution of sources is fair is directly related to the quality of education. In many countries, the difference of educational resources between urban and rural areas and between different regions is obvious, which leads to the unfair starting point of education. In order to narrow this gap, a more balanced resource allocation mechanism is needed to ensure that every student has access to adequate teaching facilities, teachers and other necessary learning conditions. Equality means that all students are able to participate equally in educational activities, including but not limited to access to school, course selection, extracurricular activities, etc. This requires eliminating all forms of discrimination and ensuring that every child can choose an education path that suits his or her interests and talents. At the same time, personalized support and services need to be provided for students with special needs, such as children with disabilities. Equality emphasizes the fairness of educational outcomes, that is, students should be able to achieve corresponding academic achievements regardless of their background. This means providing a level playing field for all students and giving them the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities [4]. In addition, it is also necessary to pay attention to the employment prospects and social integration after graduation to ensure that education can truly change people's fate.

Although the importance of educational equity is widely recognized, the exact measure is controversial. Some scholars believe that the educational equity of a country or region should be evaluated from the following aspects: the enrollment rate, especially the enrollment rate of preschool education and compulsory education; Study rate, find out how many students drop out, analyze the reasons behind; Performance differences, to observe whether there are significant differences in academic performance between different groups; The quality of teachers, to investigate the professional level of teachers and regional distribution is uniform; Infrastructure: Assess the quality and accessibility of the school's hardware facilities. However, in practice, the realization of educational equity in the full sense faces many challenges [5]. For example, the lack of policy implementation, local protectionism, the influence of family economic status, etc., will cause certain obstacles to education equity. Therefore, governments and social organizations must continue to work hard and constantly explore new solutions in order to gradually approach the ideal state of education equity.

3. An Overview of Chinese and American Education Systems

3.1. Characteristics of China's Education System

The Chinese government attaches great importance to the development of education and regards it as a strategic priority for national development. Since the reform and opening up, the state has continuously increased its financial input in the field of education, which has promoted the overall progress of education. In accordance with the Education Law of the People's Republic of China and related laws and regulations,

the government is committed to building a fair, high-quality and efficient education system to ensure that all citizens enjoy equal educational opportunities. "Rejuvenating the country through science and education" is a long-term development strategy proposed by the Chinese government to enhance the comprehensive strength of the country. The strategy emphasizes that science and technology are the primary productive forces, and education is the basis for cultivating scientific and technological talents. Through a series of policy measures, such as increasing research funding, optimizing the structure of higher education, and encouraging innovation, the aim is to improve the scientific and cultural quality of the people and promote sustained and healthy economic and social development. In order to ensure that every child can enjoy fair and quality education, the Chinese government has implemented a series of poverty alleviation policies. For example, the policy of "two exemptions and one supplement" (waiving tuition and fees, providing free textbooks and subsidizing boarding students' living expenses) has effectively reduced the financial burden of students in poor areas. The Nutrition Improvement Program ensures the basic nutritional needs of rural students during the school year. In addition, there are a variety of scholarships, grant programs, and loan policies to help students from different backgrounds complete their studies. The progress of information technology has brought new opportunities to Chinese education. The rapid development of distance education and online learning platforms has broken the restrictions of time and space, making high-quality educational resources widely disseminated. Students, whether in cities or remote mountainous areas, can access the latest course content through the Internet and interact with outstanding teachers. This new education model not only improves the efficiency of education, but also provides a strong technical support for realizing educational equity.

China's basic education covers the two stages of primary school and junior high school, with a nine-year compulsory education system. In recent years, with the rapid economic development and social progress, basic education has been greatly improved, the enrollment rate has been significantly increased, and the dropout rate has been significantly reduced. Especially in rural areas, the government has implemented a series of measures to alleviate poverty and help students, effectively solving the problem of children from poor families having difficulty in going to school and enabling more children to receive good education. China's higher education has experienced unprecedented expansion in the past few decades, not only expanding the size of enrollment, but also improving the quality and internationalization of education. The number of colleges and universities is increasing, the subject setting is more diversified, and the mode of personnel training is constantly innovative. At the same time, the state strongly supports the construction of "double first-class" (world-class universities and first-class disciplines), and strives to build an internationally competitive higher education system to send high-quality professionals to China and even the world.

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3.2. Characteristics of the American Education System

The American education system is characterized by decentralization, with the federal government, state government and local government each playing different roles in the field of education. The federal government is primarily responsible for setting the national educational policy framework and influencing the direction of education through grants and legislation. States have greater autonomy and can adjust curriculum standards and evaluation systems according to local conditions. District-level boards of education directly manage specific school matters. This multi-level management system not only ensures the flexibility of education policies, but also enables each region to develop its own characteristics of education. In the American education system, public schools and private schools coexist and have different priorities. Public schools, which are publicly funded and open to all students, provide free basic education services and are the primary route to primary and secondary education for most Americans. Private schools, including religious schools, independent schools and other forms, usually charge tuition and provide more diverse educational options and services. The benign competition between them promotes the effective allocation of educational resources and the improvement of service quality. In order to ensure that every child has access to an education suitable for them, the United States pays special attention to the development of special education. All public schools are required by law to provide free and appropriate public education (FAPE) for children with disabilities and to develop an individualized education plan (IEP) based on individual needs. In addition, there are specialized special education institutions and professionals to provide support for these children and guarantee their right to education. As a country of immigrants, the United States has a highly multicultural education system. The school not only welcomes students from different backgrounds, but also actively promotes multicultural education and encourages students to understand and respect various cultures and traditions. In addition to traditional academic subjects, the curriculum also includes content such as world languages, art, and music, which helps cultivate cross-cultural communication skills. In addition, many schools organize cultural festivals and other activities to promote mutual understanding and tolerance among different ethnic groups.

Innovation and entrepreneurship education plays an important role in the American education system. From primary school to university, schools at all levels pay attention

to cultivating students' innovative thinking and practical ability, and encourage them to actively participate in project-based learning and social practice activities. For example, at the high school level, students can participate in science competitions, robot competitions and other activities; In higher education, there are more opportunities to participate in practical training such as laboratory research and enterprise internship. This educational model is designed to stimulate students' creativity and help them excel in their future careers.

Despite the United States' commitment to educational equity, school district choice and district housing remain an urgent challenge. The distribution of high-quality schools is often concentrated in some specific areas, leading to the rise of housing prices, and then the formation of "school district housing" phenomenon. This makes it harder for children from low-income families to get into good schools. To this end, some places are trying to implement reform measures such as magnet schools and charter schools, trying to break geographical restrictions and provide more diverse educational choices, so as to alleviate this contradiction.

4. Comparison of Educational Equity Practice in Chinese and American Educational Systems

4.1. Policy Similarities and Differences and Effectiveness

In China, educational equity is promoted mainly through national policies and government-led approaches. The Chinese government has long been committed to the strategy of "rejuvenating the country through science and education", continuously increasing its input in the field of education, and implementing a series of policies and measures aimed at narrowing the gap in educational resources between urban and rural areas and between regions. For example, the policy of "two exemptions and one supplement" has effectively reduced the financial burden of children from poor families. The development of distance education and online learning platforms breaks the limitations of time and space, making high-quality educational resources widely disseminated. Through a series of poverty alleviation policies and infrastructure construction, China's rural education conditions have been significantly improved, the enrollment rate has been significantly increased, and the dropout rate has been significantly reduced. Especially in poor areas, government programs such as the "Nutrition Improvement Plan" and the "Compulsory Education Guarantee Project" have ensured that more children can receive a good education. For disabled children and students with other special needs, China has formulated the Regulations on Education for the Disabled and established a relatively complete special education service system. At the same time, various scholarships, grant programs and loan policies help students from different backgrounds to successfully complete their studies and promote the equality of educational opportunities.

In contrast, educational equity in the United States depends more on the participation and support of social forces. Although the federal government provides some funding and policy guidance, the specific education affairs are mostly the responsibility of state and local governments. In addition, non-profit organizations, charities, businesses and individuals are also actively involved in the cause of education, through donations, volunteering and other ways to help the

disadvantaged. This diversified support system makes up for the uneven distribution of public education resources to a certain extent. Despite the problems of school district choice and school district housing, the United States is also trying to narrow the gap in educational resources between different regions by various means. For example, some places are trying to implement reform measures such as magnet schools and charter schools, trying to break geographical restrictions and provide more diverse educational options to alleviate this contradiction. In the United States, all public schools are required by law to provide free and appropriate public education (FAPE) for children with disabilities and to develop an individualized education plan (IEP) based on individual needs. In addition, there are specialized special education institutions and professionals to provide support for these children and guarantee their right to education. At the same time, the support of social forces also provides additional help to vulnerable groups.

4.2. Comparative Analysis and Enlightenment

Through the comparative analysis of the practice of educational equity in the Chinese and American educational systems, it can be found that both countries are actively taking measures to achieve educational equity. Both the Chinese government and all sectors of American society have recognized the importance of educational equity to social development and personal growth, and have made unremitting efforts to this end. China puts more emphasis on the leading role of the government, and solves the problem of uneven resource distribution through preferential policies and technological means. The United States focuses on improving educational opportunities for disadvantaged groups through legal safeguards and social services. The United States, on the other hand, pays more attention to the participation and support of social forces, and improves the educational opportunities of disadvantaged groups through legal protection and social services.

In the future, the two countries can strengthen cooperation and exchanges in the following aspects: learn from each other's successful experience in education equity and optimize their own education policies; Technology sharing and the use of information technology to promote the sharing of quality educational resources, especially in distance education and online learning platform construction; Strengthen international cooperation, jointly discuss the issue of global education equity, promote cross-border cooperative research, and contribute to the development of global education.

5. Conclusion and Prospect

Through in-depth comparative analysis of educational equity between China and the United States, we can conclude the following points: Both China and the United States have fully recognized the importance of educational equity and regard it as an important goal of national development; The

country is actively developing and implementing policies aimed at providing equal access to education for all students. For example, China's "two exemptions, one supplement" policy and the United States' FAPE (Free and Appropriate Public Education) are designed to protect the education rights of vulnerable groups. In addition to government leadership, social forces have also played an important role in the process of educational equity in the two countries. Non-profit organizations, businesses, and individuals support education through donations, volunteering, and other means. The differences between the two countries are as follows: China implements a centralized educational management system with strong policy unity; In contrast, the United States adopts a decentralized management model, in which state and local governments have greater autonomy and can flexibly adjust education policies according to local conditions. China focuses on narrowing the resource gap between urban and rural areas and regions through large-scale infrastructure construction and the promotion of distance education platforms. The United States relies more on market mechanisms and social forces to solve the problem of unequal distribution of educational resources by setting up innovative models such as magnet schools and charter schools. Chinese culture emphasizes collectivism and social responsibility, which is reflected in the general focus on all students in the Chinese education system; American culture is more focused on individualism and diversity, so its education system attaches more importance to personalized education and the integration of diverse cultures. In the face of the opportunities and challenges brought by globalization, China and the United States can strengthen cooperation in the following areas to jointly promote the development of global educational equity: learn from each other's advantages and optimize their own education systems; Strengthening collaborative research on issues of equity in education across borders; International educational exchanges and cooperation.

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