



Nine Year Compulsory Education Development in China Analysis and Recommendations

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Abstract. China's education system has continued to reform and develop over the decades, bringing many benefits to Chinese education. This is because many of China's education policies have shaped the Chinese education system as it is today. It reflects the fact that this is a global trend in education. But education in China is different from education in other countries. In this paper, we will select a specific education policy in China - the nine-year compulsory education - for evaluation and analysis and describe its development, the development of the policy, such as its background, objectives, and implementation, and the main target groups. Using a SWOT analysis of the policy, it is necessary to develop some policy elements that can be improved as recommendations (expected impact of improvement measures).

Keywords: Education policy · Education system · Nine year compulsory education · Education planning

1 Introduction

In China, compulsory education for all children and young people of school age is a public service that the national government is required to provide. For the nine years when school-age children and adolescents begin their education, China has implemented a nine-year compulsory education system that includes no tuition or other expenses. To ensure that the compulsory education system is implemented, the state has devised a compulsory education funding guarantee mechanism. China's education reform and growth has centered on compulsory education, and around the turn of the twenty-first century, China attained the aim of universal nine-year compulsory education by resolving the issue of "enrolment" of school-age children and adolescents as required by law [3].

2 Development of the Nine-Year Compulsory Education Policy

Globalization has led to a worldwide consensus among governments and relevant educational organizations and institutions on the objectives, content, and methods of education. As a result, these have also changed. China has been working on developing education

over the past few years and is gradually becoming a success story [1]. Today, China's education system not only provides a reference or model for other countries but also has Chinese characteristics. The two are combined. However, with China's rapid development, its population has exceeded one billion people. China has developed a large state-run public education system. Accordingly, education policy needs to address the issue of access to education for this huge population. It is well known that every child in China must receive at least a basic education [2]. Compulsory education is a very successful educational policy or system. In many countries around the world, compulsory education was applied in the early years for four or six years of school.

2.1 Background

Compulsory education first appeared in the Qing Dynasty. During the period, compulsory schooling was widely used in Europe and America, as well as in Asia's Japan. When Qing dynasty authorities learned of this, they used the words 'compulsory education' and 'forced education' in documents for the Qing court in the early twentieth century. Compulsory schooling for nine years was a historical necessity and an unavoidable tendency in society's fast development [4].

One of China's most notable educational achievements has been the nine-year compulsory education system. Nine years of compulsory education has made China one of the countries with the highest literacy rates in the world. However, in 1949, China's primary school enrollment rate was only about 25% [5]. Before the introduction of the nine-year compulsory education system in 1986, China did not achieve the expected results in terms of universal literacy. China's rapid economic growth has played a large role in the success of the literacy movement, especially as the Chinese government has included nine years of compulsory education in the job performance of officials [6].

Although the nine-year compulsory education policy has achieved great success in education in China, it still faces several problems and challenges. For example, the nine-year compulsory education policy has led to a disparity in educational standards between urban and rural China, even in different schools in the cities, with a large number of rural students studying in the cities, leading to over-sized classes in many schools. The compulsory nine-year education system must improve its efficiency. Although school facilities and classrooms have been rebuilt in recent years, some youngsters continue to find education less appealing due to inadequate teaching techniques and the quality of unskilled teachers. As a result, both the Chinese government and the education sector must work to enhance the quality of education in rural schools. It is critical to develop creative potential for China to become a more inventive and affluent economy in the future [7].

2.2 Objectives

The objective of China's nine-year obligatory education is to increase the country's scientific and cultural quality. Compulsory education is a legal requirement for children and adolescents of school age, and it is a national education that must be guaranteed by the state, community, and family. In essence, it is a law-enforced system of compulsory education for school-aged children and adolescents for a certain period of time [8].

Article 3, Chapter 1 of the Compulsory Education Law of the People's Republic of China stipulates that: Compulsory education must implement the State's education policy, implement quality education, improve the quality of education, enable children and adolescents of school age to develop comprehensively in terms of morality, intelligence and physical fitness, and lay the foundation for cultivating ideal, moral, cultured and disciplined builders and successors of socialism [9].

The objective of the nine-year compulsory education policy is also to provide universal, compulsory and free school education for all school-age children and adolescents by the law, which is the basis for improving the quality of the Chinese nation and the starting point for achieving social equity. It is the basic right of citizens to receive compulsory education, the implementation of compulsory education is an important responsibility of the government, and supporting compulsory education is a common task of the whole society. Nine-year compulsory education is fully universal and free of charge, and the State has set the balanced development of compulsory education as an important goal of compulsory education, striving to achieve the goal of making education available to all school-age children and adolescents. The objective of compulsory education for all children and adolescents of school age is also a basic public service. The government has a legal obligation to provide basic and balanced compulsory education, and every school-aged child and young person should have equitable access to high-quality compulsory education. Compulsory education's characteristics need that it be developed in a balanced manner [10].

2.3 Implementation

The Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee announced a resolution on education reform in May 1985, recommending the universalization of not only primary but also junior secondary education in China, making the universalization of nine-year obligatory education a key job of building. The People's Republic of China's Compulsory Education Law and the Outline of China's Education Reform and Growth were promulgated after 1986, offering legal protection for the development of compulsory education in China and presenting unparalleled development chances [11].

The Nine-Year Compulsory Education Act came into force on 1 July 1986, setting out deadlines and requirements for working towards universal education for all school-age children. The Act also requires that all children receive a minimum of nine years of compulsory education. Although the Act authorizes the exemption of tuition fees for nine years of compulsory education, it is still a goal that needs to be achieved. The Chinese government is working to reduce the cost of school fees and school supplies and to provide allowances for poor families.

The Chinese government claimed on January 1, 2001, that the nation has generally succeeded in implementing nine years of compulsory education from elementary through secondary school, thereby eradicating illiteracy in most regions of the country. The Chinese government has transferred obligatory schooling to the western and poorest parts of the country. On September 1, 2006, the system became operational. In November 2011, China completed the nationwide adoption of the compulsory education system. With a total of 213,800 primary and secondary schools and 149.9 million pupils nationally, the nine-year graduation rate was 94.2% in 2018 [12].

2.4 The Main Group Target

According to the Law of the People's Republic of China on Compulsory Education, which was amended and adopted by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China in June 2006, all school-age children and adolescents with the nationality of the People's Republic of China, regardless of gender, ethnicity, race, family property status, religious beliefs, etc., have the equal right to receive compulsory education and fulfill the obligation to receive compulsory education in accordance with the law. Nine years of compulsory education, generally defined as six years of primary school and three years of lower secondary school (or five years of primary school and four years of lower secondary school) for a total of nine years of education [13].

2.5 Characteristic

2.5.1 Mandatory

China's nine-year compulsory education policy is to make education compulsory for children and young people of school age. It is compulsory. If anyone violates this obligation, they will be sanctioned by law. For example, parents of students will be held accountable if they do not send their students to school; schools will also be held accountable if they do not accept children and young people of school age; and the government will be regulated by law if it does not provide appropriate conditions or assistance [7, 14].

2.5.2 Uniformity and Universality

The nine-year compulsory education law emphasizes the implementation of uniform compulsory education throughout China. This is also universal. This uniformity and universality includes the establishment of uniform standards for setting compulsory education textbooks, teaching standards, funding standards, construction standards, and public funding standards for students [7].

2.5.3 Free Education

"No tuition or fees" is explicitly stated for the nine years of compulsory education. Compulsory education is a public welfare commitment that must be guaranteed by the state and must be available to all children and young people of school age. This compulsory education funding mechanism is designed by the state to ensure the implementation of the compulsory education system [7].

3 Analyzing the Needs, Aims and Contents of the Policy

3.1 Needs

The need for nine-year compulsory education was to eliminate illiteracy. When China was founded, the quality of its people was generally below world standards. There was an urgent need for China to address the issue of literacy and thus raise the standard of

learning. According to statistics, when the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, over 400 million of the country's 500 million people were illiterate, with an illiteracy rate of about 80%, including over 95% in rural areas. Compulsory education and literacy were incorporated into the People's Republic of China's newly revised Constitution (1982 Constitution) in 1982, and the Compulsory Education Law of the People's Republic of China went into effect in 1986, after which China began to implement the "nine-year compulsory education." In the sixth national census in 2010, mainland China's overall population was estimated to be around 1.34 billion people, with an illiteracy rate of 4.08% [15].

3.2 Aims

The aim of the nine years of compulsory education in China is to improve the scientific and cultural quality of the entire Chinese nation, as this is the fundamental way to achieve environmental protection. Raising the nation's quality level entails training the greatest individuals in all fields. To some extent, this will help to the growth of the national economy. Promoting balanced development is a more difficult and complex endeavor than gaining universal access, and it will take more time [16].

At this time, the disparity between regions, between urban and rural areas, and between schools is still evident. Promoting the balanced development of compulsory education within regions will be accompanied by the entire process of narrowing differences in school standards between schools and improving the overall quality of education; promoting the balanced development of compulsory education in urban and rural areas will be accompanied by the entire process of integrated development of urban and rural areas and gradually narrowing the differences between them; promoting the balanced development of compulsory education in urban and rural areas will be accompanied by the entire process of integrated development of urban and rural areas and gradually narrowing the differences between them; The entire process of resolving the problem of regional economic and social imbalance and enhancing the grade of education in the central and western regions would be complemented by supporting the balanced growth of compulsory education between regions [10].

3.3 Contents

Amendments to the People's Republic of China's Compulsory Education Law established the substance of the nine-year compulsory education policy. The People's Republic of China's Compulsory Education Law was adopted under the Constitution and the Education Law to protect the right of school-age children and adolescents to compulsory education, assure its implementation, and improve the country's overall quality. It has sections on general provisions, students, schools, instructors, instruction, funding, and legal obligations. The policy's nine-year substance is intended to safeguard both pupils and those participating in compulsory education. The law is in place to ensure that the nine-year obligatory education strategy is implemented successfully [17].

4 SWOT Analysis

4.1 Strengths

4.1.1 Maximizing Educational Resources

The first is curriculum resource integration, which not only allows for the sharing of curriculum resources in primary and secondary schools, but also allows for the full utilization of curriculum resources, lowers expenditure, ensures the best allocation of curriculum resources, and rapidly increases resource levels.” The integration of instructors is the second step. There is more room for transfer within schools to compensate for teacher shortages through an appropriate mix, resulting in a more rationalized teaching force and more opportunities for teacher advancement. Third, schools may coordinate the complete compulsory education financing plan so that students’ learning is effectively enhanced, all school software facilities are provided, and the contradiction of uneven teacher compensation and income in the same region is overcome. Fourth, the most significant benefit of integrating educational goals is the integration of educational goals [18].

4.1.2 Human Rights Are Provided

The nine-year compulsory education policy is intended to give and ensure all children and young people of school age the right to receive compulsory education, which is a unified education system enforced by the State and a public benefit that must be secured by the State. Compulsory education for nine years implies that children and young people of school age have the right to nine years of free education. Every student is given an equal opportunity to get an education. Obligatory is another term for compulsory. Education must be made compulsory for children and young people of school age by schools, parents, and society. Anyone who violates this commitment will face legal consequences. Parents are liable if their children do not attend school; schools are liable if they refuse to accept children and adolescents of school age; employers are liable if they hire children and adolescents of school age; and schools are liable if they do not offer acceptable conditions. This also includes the application of applicable legislation to protect students’ human rights [19].

4.1.3 Improving the Quality of All People

It is the execution of a nine-year compulsory education policy aimed at providing the nation with a high-quality education. China has experienced a fast development in the quality of education and the quality of its people with the adoption of the nine-year compulsory education policy and a national literacy rate of 95% [20].

4.2 Weakness

4.2.1 Mandatory Education

Nine years of compulsory education is mechanically compulsory. It has been observed through the years that the nine years of compulsory education seem to teach people only

what their teachers teach them. For example, when analyzing national languages, the general belief is that English is the most helpful, hence English is taught in primary school and even kindergarten. As a result, those who have learned themselves other languages are derided and humiliated [21]. Another example is “you can’t even learn English but want to study French.” This is an odd way of stating that it is grammatically correct but logically incorrect. These fallacies arose as a result of compulsory education, which did not require students to acquire English to master other languages. Individuals believe that knowing English is most important since people can only study the courses recommended by the education department throughout their nine years of compulsory schooling. As a result, other cultural components are being rejected.

4.2.2 Rural-Urban Differences

Regional inequalities in the execution of nine-year compulsory schooling have generated problems. Regional disparities can impact how national education systems approach concerns of accessibility and fairness, whether directly or indirectly, regardless of the country. Compared to rural regions, metropolitan areas are more densely populated. In certain cases, educational systems are unable to strike a balance between the two, resulting in imbalances. Uneven distribution of educational resources, inputs, and time are all part of this mismatch. The education system can address concerns of accessibility and fairness in economically developed places, but there are considerable challenges in distant locations, such as rural areas [22].

4.2.3 Problems with Teaching Management

Secondly, there is the issue of financial remuneration. Teachers were concerned about the difference in pay between primary and secondary teachers and how performance would be assessed, rewarded, and treated differently. There are also assessment criteria, which are influenced by promotion rates and will be skewed towards subject performance in junior schools. As primary schools have great potential to promote excellence in education, schools should not adopt a universal criterion for evaluating teaching staff but should rate them according to the characteristics of their teaching at different stages [23, 24].

4.3 Threats

4.3.1 Lack of Integrated Management

The successful articulation of curriculum and instruction is one of the most difficult components of schooling. In terms of teaching objectives, teaching material, teaching techniques, implementation and assessment, as well as student characteristics, there are major distinctions between elementary and secondary schools that necessitate a seamless link. There are curricula and teaching materials produced expressly for independent primary and secondary schools in China, but no curriculum systems written specifically for use in schools under the nine-year obligatory teaching system exist yet. Despite the fact that the education administration encourages schools to build school-based teaching materials based on their unique qualities, some schools only make modest changes to

their curricula, making it impossible to match the content of the curriculum seamlessly. Primary and lower secondary school instructors have little knowledge of each other's material, let alone the school's needs [25].

4.3.2 Lack of Assessment and Evaluation Policy

There are currently administrative bodies in China that specifically assess and evaluate independent primary and junior high schools, but there is a lack of assessment criteria for school-specific assessments, and the education authorities continue to use the same criteria for evaluating the quality of education in schools under the nine-year compulsory education system, which appears to be unfair to the schools. Because schools under the nine-year obligatory system were in a period of exploration and growth in terms of teaching and management, government ministries provided minimal advice and assistance, and they were not allowed additional authority [26].

4.3.3 Lack of Management by a Unified Department

Despite the fact that the People's Republic of China's Compulsory Education Law stipulates a nine-year compulsory education, however, there are differences between many regions in the implementation of the nine-year compulsory education policy. There is no uniformity in the authorities responsible for overseeing the nine-year compulsory education policy in each region, which can lead to confusion. There is no effective communication between schools and local education authorities [27].

4.4 Opportunities

4.4.1 Other Countries Can Make References and Learn from Them

The nine-year compulsory education policy has been an unprecedented success in China. Although compulsory education is practiced in many countries or regions, not every country or region has been able to achieve the desired goals. China's nine-year compulsory education has been developed and implemented in accordance with the world's compulsory education policy. The Chinese nine-year compulsory education also has Chinese characteristics. Many countries or regions can look to China's successful experience in implementing nine years of compulsory education to develop their own compulsory education policies [7, 8].

4.4.2 Twelve Years of Compulsory Education

The Chinese Ministry of Education published "Response to Proposal No. 4849 of the Third Session of the Thirteenth National People's Congress" on December 2, 2020, in response to the NPC deputies' proposal to "amend the nine-year compulsory education system to a twelve-year compulsory education system": The twelve years curriculum for compulsory education and general high school in China has been gradually established after long-term practice and repeated adjustments. The twelve years curriculum for compulsory education and general high school in China has been gradually established after

long-term practice and repeated adjustments and is in line with current international practice. It is basically in line with the current and future social and economic development of the country and is basically in line with the laws of physical and mental development and understanding of children. However, in the future, I believe that China's nine-year compulsory education will become twelve years [7, 28].

4.4.3 National Government Support

Localities actively explored ways to match quality education while improving the quality of compulsory education, and began to experiment with a nine-year consistent school system after the People's Republic of China's Compulsory Education Law, promulgated in 1986, clearly states that "the State shall implement a nine-year compulsory education system," after which localities actively explored ways to match quality education while improving the quality of compulsory education, and began to experiment with a nine-year consistent school system. "The State will build up a nine-year obligatory education curriculum as a whole and implement a nine-year consistent system in areas with circumstances," stated the 2001 Decision on the Reform and Development of Basic Education. The 2012 Opinions on Further Promoting Balanced Development of Compulsory Education states, "Support the separation of middle and high schools and promote the construction of nine-year consistent schools." To alleviate the "school choice fever", the 2013 Decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Several Major Issues of Comprehensively Deepening Reform proposed that "compulsory education should be free of test and close to school, and the school district system and nine-year consistent enrollment system should be implemented on a trial basis" [29].

5 Improvement of the Implementation of the Policy

5.1 Stakeholders

Stakeholders have an important role to play in the implementation of the nine-year compulsory education policy. What we need to know is who are the stakeholders included? The group around which nine years of compulsory education revolves is the school-age children. Everything needs to be considered in terms of the interests of the students [16]. According to the analysis, there are some problems with the content of the nine-year compulsory education policy. The teachers are responsible for teaching the students under compulsory education. The school is responsible for the delivery and implementation of compulsory education and is responsible for the management of the teachers and the students. Parents are also responsible for their students and for ensuring that their rights are exercised [30]. The local authorities act as a medium of communication with the central government, implementing policies, reporting on their work, and managing and monitoring the local schools. These stakeholders are all interlinked. Therefore, the content needs to take into account the stakeholders and the relevant regulations.

5.2 More Human Rights

Children must be given some human rights. In many cases, the nine-year compulsory education policy does not guarantee the rights of children. For example, although the

nine-year compulsory education policy is guaranteed by law, many parents of children in rural areas do not want their children to have compulsory education. This can be an obstacle to the implementation of a nine-year compulsory education policy in the country. The government needs to adapt existing laws to increase the protection of children and to use the law to better protect human rights and regulate the behavior of children's parents [7, 19].

5.3 Distribution Issues

There are important questions about the distribution of compulsory education in the different regions to which the State applies it. There is an uneven distribution of resources between urban and rural areas in terms of funding, teachers, and so on. There is a disparity between urban and rural areas, which can lead to inequality in education and affect the development of education in rural areas. What the government needs to do is to emphasize in the implementation of the content that compulsory education is distributed equally in different regions and, if necessary, to provide additional assistance to regions that are lagging in educational development, to promote the rational and coordinated development of compulsory education in different regions [31].

5.4 Local-Government Relations

Although compulsory education is practiced in different parts of China, there are some differences in the implementation of the nine years of compulsory education in different regions. Many regions do not fully comply with the compulsory education regulations issued by the national government, which has led to confusion in the implementation process and a lack of timely communication between the authorities and the government in many regions. This is why the content needs to reiterate regional relations [7, 19].

6 Conclusion

In general, China's nine-year compulsory education has many strengths, but also some weaknesses. Using SWOT analysis, elements for an improved compulsory education policy are thus proposed. Stakeholders' influence on expectations will contribute to the successful implementation of an improved policy. Each stakeholder is aware of their position and role and will provide feedback for policy improvement. Promoting more human rights can help rural children to assert their rights, regulate parental behavior and promote equity in policy. A reasonable distribution of education can reduce the gap between rural and urban areas, provide more help to rural children and achieve the principles of equity and fairness in education. Most importantly, it can make compulsory education more coherent and efficient. Addressing the current problems is that the high mobility of teachers in many areas has led to frequent changes of teachers for students, which affects the teaching and learning of compulsory education, and many areas have become experimental zones for compulsory education, in violation of the compulsory education policy. We believe that these measures will go some way to solving the problems with the current nine-year compulsory education policy. At the same time, they will also lay the foundation for twelve year compulsory education.

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