



The Influence of Household Registration Policies in Guangdong Province on Migrant Children's Education in Compulsory Education Stage

Jinchao Chen^(✉)

Education University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China
164102136@stu.cuz.edu.cn

Abstract. Compulsory education has always been the main factor in Chinese education values. Since the reform of China, the rapid growth of economics and the need for construction opened massive opportunities for people's employment, allowing a massive population to move from the countryside to urban areas. Therefore, the migrant children's education becomes the principle of maintaining social stability. Along with the expansion of the migrant children population, the Chinese government has introduced many policies to protect migrant children from education problems, especially in the compulsory education stage. Guangdong province has had a host of migrant population and migrant children in recent years; thus, the related policies are also essential. As the household registration issue is a deep-rooted policy system with Chinese characteristics, it profoundly impacts migrant children. Therefore, this paper sorted out the household registration problem and corresponding policies related to migrant children's education and also reflected its influence in Guangdong province during the last 20 years. By comparing the statistics and analyzing policies, there are some improvements in migrant children's education. Moreover, some suggestions are also listed in the end. Undoubtedly, the Chinese government is fully aware and will overcome these problems in the near future.

Keywords: Migrant Children Education · Guangdong Province · Household Registration Policies

1 Introduction

In the past 40 years, since the beginning of reform and opening up, the economy in China has rapid development. China has experienced a rapid urbanization process and large-scale population flow and migration. The phenomenon of migrant children, which refers to children who live with their legal guardians temporarily for six months or more in non-domicile places and have reached the age of compulsory education, has become a social problem that cannot be ignored [1]. In 2020, China's migrant population was 376 million. According to this data, migrant children's number has been more than 130 million, accounting for more than 40% of the children in China. The high-quality education of migrant children and the relevant public policy welfare have a very positive practical

Table 1. Statistics on the Number of Children in Compulsory Education in Guangdong Province (2013–2018) (Unit: ten thousand people, %) [3]

Year	Number of migrant children in compulsory education stage in Guangdong Province	Number of compulsory education students in Guangdong Province	migrant children in compulsory education stage of the total proportion of students in Guangdong Province	The number of migrant children in compulsory education in China	The migrant children in Guangdong Province account for the total number of migrant children in compulsory education in China
2013	356.60	1212.73	29.40	1613.59	22.10
2015	413.01	1224.20	33.74	1810.86	22.81
2017	446.09	1298.05	34.37	1897.45	23.51
2018	461.76	1360.84	33.93	1952.41	23.65

significance for social stability and development [2]. Migrant children's parents have preferred to go to Guangdong Province in recent years: nearly 13 out of every 100 migrant population dwell in Guangdong Province, and nearly 23 out of every 100 migrant children in compulsory education are in Guangdong Province [2]. According to the data in Table 1 from the National Data Statistics, Guangdong Education Department, Information Times and Guangdong Plan Letter (2019) No.145 [3], by the end of 2018, the number of children with compulsory education in Guangdong Province was 461.76 million, accounting for 33.93% of the total number of students with compulsory education in Guangdong Province and 23.65% of the total number of children with compulsory education in China. From 2013 to 2018, Guangdong ranked first in the country in the number of children living with their parents in compulsory education, putting pressure on local governments to enroll a large number of migrant children [3]. Therefore, if the migrant children's education improves, Guangdong must become a pioneer. In China, migrant children's compulsory education is the most prominent educational equity issue. Due to parent-child separation and lack of guardians, left-behind children lose the basic premise of effective education [1]. For many young boarding children, physical and mental health and academic problems are obvious in a state of high risk without adult supervision [3]. Migrant and left-behind children have the same trouble and always have different changing roles. One way to reduce and solve the problem of left-behind children is to let them become migrant children so that they can reunite with their parents and have a complete family and family education [3]. Therefore, solving the migrant children's education guarantee is significant in promoting social and educational equity.

2 Household Registration Problem

The root of migrant children's education problem lies in the household registration system and its long-term binding relationship with various basic public services. In China, compulsory education is entirely free for school-age children. However, due to the limited spending of local governments, the compulsory education of local governments will give preference to local students rather than migrant children. Meanwhile, many local officials are reluctant to provide financial support for the education of outsiders. They prefer associating crime and social instability with the migrant workers in cities [4]. As a result, some migrant children may not be able to obtain compulsory education due to government policy restrictions after entering Guangdong Province [5]. The household registration system constructs an inverted pyramid public resource distribution system. Within the same region, the people in the city always have preferences, followed by the local rural residents and rural-urban migrant population with their respective advantages.

In contrast, the rural-urban migrant population is at the bottom, in the most disadvantaged position to acquire public resources in their current residence [5]. From the establishment of the household registration system in 1958 to the reform and opening up, the reason why the value of household registration was very high was that the employment system, production organization system, housing system, education system, medical system, and distribution system all differentiated urban and rural residents according to the type of household registration [6]. With the reform and opening up, the building of a modern country, and promoting the process of social industrialization, many rural 'hukou', the name of the household registration system in Chinese, residents need to work in cities. Thus some of their children will follow them to live in cities. Therefore, there is no doubt that these migrant children's education at the compulsory level will be hindered by the hukou. Because parents' hukou rather than the actual place of birth determines a child's hukou, a large number of children born in the destination area are still excluded from local public services [7].

3 Policies

3.1 Policy 1

In 2001, The State Council proposed that "the problem of migrant children acquiring compulsory education should be solved by "two priorities", which is mainly administered by the local government, and mainly by full-time public elementary and middle schools, thus taking multiple modes to protect the migrant children's right to acquire compulsory education according to law [2]." Shenzhen issued the Measures for children of Temporary Residents in Shenzhen (Trial) in 2005. The regulation stresses the principle of "two priorities" and requires that only children whose parents have lived in Shenzhen for more than one year can apply for compulsory education in Shenzhen if they can provide the following proof: "(1) birth certificate, household register of origin, residence permit in Shenzhen or temporary residence permit; (2) Valid real estate certificate of the city, purchase contract or rental contract registration and filing materials; (3) A copy of employment and social security certificate or business license; (4) Family planning certificate; (5) The school contact letter issued by the original household

education department or the transfer certificate issued by the school [2].” Since 2013, Shenzhen Municipality has issued the Guiding Opinions of Shenzhen Education Bureau on The Trial Points Enrollment Method for Public Schools of Compulsory Education and implemented points enrollment uniformly in public primary and secondary schools in 10 administrative regions of the city for children with household registration and children without deep citizenship [2]. Specific points items, standards, and scores are determined by each district. Gradually formed the existing household registration type and housing as the essential basis of the point admission policy. The main Futian district and Nanshan District of Shenzhen adopt the “commercial housing model” points enrollment system, which provides a green channel for the elite class who immigrated to Shenzhen not long ago and who are not registered in Shenzhen to buy a house and enroll in school, but the cost is that the school opportunities of migrant children without real estate will shrink. It should be noted that, regardless of the principle of household registration or class dominance, the current policy favors elite families, while there is still a long way to go to help the families at the bottom of society. Migrant children’s families of low social class, which should be mostly covered by public services, are excluded from the public education system. The existing education policies for migrant children transform the conflict between the supply and demand of public education into the competition for citizens’ personal capital and ability [8].

3.2 Policy 2

As for the residence problem, Guangzhou mainly relies on private education to solve the enrollment problem of most migrant children [5]. Migrant children can obtain the degree from public primary and secondary schools by paying borrowing fees or donating tuition fees. After the central “two policies”, Guangzhou’s first municipal policy files to respond to the migrant children’s compulsory education problem [5]. The file put forward to gradually increase the proportion of students to study in a public school, and regulations in accordance with the “living in Guangzhou for more than six months, migrants with a fixed place of residence, job and income can apply for compulsory education for their children between the ages of 6 and 15 [5]. Children of migrant workers who are awarded the title of excellence at the city or district level are given priority in public schools, and 200 are awarded this title each year. Compared with before 2000, the current compulsory education financial system has increased the government’s educational financial responsibility and basically realized free compulsory education. In the sharing of government financial responsibility, the central and provincial governments have assumed greater responsibility, and the burden of sharing has shifted significantly [9]. In 2015, transfer payments from the central government to local compulsory education reached 156.32 billion yuan, accounting for 13.6 percent of local spending on compulsory education [9]. Guangzhou vigorously promotes the development of compulsory education. In July 2016, the “1 + N” achievement system of “Development Strategy Research and Layout Plan for Elementary and Middle Schools in Guangzhou” (2013–2020, draft) and “Control Guidelines for Elementary and Middle Schools in Guangzhou” of 11 districts were formed. Guangzhou will continue to promote the three-year plan for upgrading primary and secondary schools and promote basic education facilities for primary and

secondary schools and new demonstration high schools in accordance with the principle of “overall planning at the municipal level and focusing on districts” [10]. From 2016 to 2020, about 157,800 public primary and secondary school degrees have been added in Guangzhou, effectively solving the problems of insufficient supply and the unbalanced development of public primary and secondary school degrees [10]. Though the Guangzhou government has adopted some policies to increase the number of academic degrees, there, however, still exists hosts of migrant children, especially those with poor economic conditions, who do not enjoy free compulsory education because the local government fails to increase the supply of public education in time and does not open enough degrees to migrant children [11]. Migrant children are also still far less likely to continue their compulsory education than children with household registration. In terms of compulsory education enrollment policy, Guangzhou provided a small amount of surplus public degrees to migrant children after ensuring their schooling needs, and less than 20% of migrant children enjoy free compulsory education through integral enrollment. In Guangzhou, most migrant children who enable to study in public schools, whether through points screening or sponsorship fees, come from families with relatively high socioeconomic status [11]. Migrant children from families with low socioeconomic status, however, have to pay their own way to attend private schools. Therefore, it requires Guangzhou and Shenzhen governments to address the migrant children’s issue by exploring mechanisms based on the direct smooth circulation of rural and urban, conscientiously carrying out in accordance with the permanent population scale of education planning, actively expanding the supply of public compulsory education degree, appropriately increasing subsidies for the degree of private primary and secondary schools, and gradually increasing the number of open to public high school degree of migrant children; thus that migrant children can equally enjoy the opportunity to attend high school in the places where they enter.

3.3 Policy 3

As household registration reform is being carried out across the country, migrant children’s policies in education have also changed [5]. According to the Interim Regulations on Residence Permits issued in 2015, migrants can apply for residence permits in their permanent places of residence, and relevant institutions should provide residents with a variety of public services, including compulsory education [2]. At the same time, large and medium-sized cities in recent years have already competed for persons, significantly lowering or even completely liberalizing the threshold of household registration and constantly promoting the process of “citizenization” of the migrant population [2]. In particular, As early as 2014, Shenzhen issued the “Shenzhen Talent Housing Measures”, granting rental subsidies to newly registered talents with a bachelor’s degree or above, which can be said to be the pioneer of the “competition for talent” [5]. According to the statistics of Guangdong Statistical Yearbook 2016 and Guangdong Statistical Yearbook 2019, the permanent population of the Pearl River Delta region increased by 4.2671 million at the end of 2018 compared with the end of 2015, among which Guangzhou and Shenzhen increased by 1.4033 million and 1.6479 million respectively in the same period [2]. By 2018, the permanent resident population in the Pearl River Delta region increased by 355.37 million compared with that at the end of 2015, among

which Guangzhou and Shenzhen increased by 73,500 and 1,278,600, respectively, in the same period [2]. In 2017, the mainstream settlement in the Pearl River Delta region had three kinds of talent introduction settlement, integral settlement, and residence employment settlement, in addition to investment tax settlement and other ways [6]. In addition to applying for permanent residence registration on their own property, migrants can also apply for collective household registration in employers, communities, and families of relatives and friends, and their family members can also move with them if they meet certain conditions [2]. Colloquially, it is available to “rent a home”. Household registration for residence and employment is an important measure to promote the granting of urban residency to 100 million people without household registration and deepen the reform of the household registration system [6]. In Shenzhen, only migrant children whose parents have sufficient economic capital and can buy a house in the school district have the chance to overtake children with registered residence in the school district in the integral enrollment and obtain valuable public degrees. Migrant children with neither Shenzhen hukou nor real estate rank last in the points system in all administrative regions and even face the dilemma of being forced to drop out of school or return home during the compulsory education period.

4 Results

For instance, Shenzhen’s new point-admission policy significantly increases the importance of “real estate” while reducing the importance of Hukou. It is suggested that the reform of the household registration system should take two ways: directly grant the household registration to those who meet the conditions; If it is difficult to grant household registration immediately, the relationship between public services and household registration will be gradually removed, so that permanent residents without household registration can also enjoy public services [3]. In fact, “citizens who have left their place of permanent residence and have settled in other urban areas for more than six months and meet one of the conditions for lawful and stable employment, legal and stable residence or continued study are allowed to apply for a residence permit in line with the provisions of these Regulations”, according to the Provisional Regulations on the Administration of Residence Permits, which came into effect in January 2016. It also stipulates that holders of residence permits are eligible for six basic public services, including compulsory education, employment, health, and family planning services. The Provisional Regulations on the Administration of Residence Permits, effective from January 2016, clearly stipulates that “citizens who have left their permanent residence and have lived in other cities for more than six months and meet one of the conditions of stable and legal employment, lawful and stable residence or continuous study shall be eligible to apply for a residence permit in line with the provisions of these Regulations”. It also stipulates that the holder of a residence permit is entitled to six basic public services above. Therefore, it is necessary to improve the standard of the points-based system and implement the policy of admission with residence permits to substantially promote the citizenization of the migrant population [3]. According to the data in Table 2 from Guangzhou and Shenzhen Education Bureau Government Information Disclosure Data and Guangzhou Education Statistics Manual 2017, the number of migrant children has

Table 2. Two: Basic information on compulsory education for migrant children in Guangzhou and Shenzhen (Unit: ten thousand people, %) [3]

City	Year	The number of students in compulsory education	The number of migrant students in compulsory education	The proportion of migrant students in compulsory education to all students
Guangzhou	2017	134.34	62.84	46.77
Shenzhen	2017	125.50	87.29	69.55

accounted for half or even more than half of the local students, which poses a great challenge to the education management of local schools. Guangzhou and Shenzhen have promoted collectivized school running, and the total amount of high-quality resources has been increasing. The “hematopoietic function” of collectivized schools has been initially demonstrated, raising the level of running schools in weak schools, cultivating a batch of new high-quality educational resources, and promoting the high-quality and balanced development of basic education. By June 2020, 63 education groups had been established in Guangzhou, covering 314 schools with 382,000 students. Moreover, the governance efforts have been intensified, and a pattern of co-construction and co-governance of after-school services has taken shape. According to the 2018 survey, 1,003 primary schools in the city provided after-school services, accounting for 92%; 309 junior middle schools, accounting for 67%, carried out after-school services; 168,000 junior high school students participated in after-school services, accounting for 52% [3]. In terms of improving the quality of school teaching, the “Implementation Opinions of Guangdong Provincial People’s Government on Encouraging Social Forces to Run Education and Promoting the Healthy Development of Private Education” has issued a series of guarantee and incentive measures in terms of the training of teachers and talents. Guangzhou and Shenzhen have introduced policies to provide school teachers with teaching allowances and teacher training [3]. In addition, they have promoted the exchange mechanism between excellent teachers, which has promoted the improvement of teaching quality in some schools with relatively weak education quality.

5 Conclusion

This paper reviews the impact of Guangdong Province’s household registration policy on migrant children’s compulsory education in the past 20 years, as well as the relevant household registration policies issued by the state and the improvement of the household registration system. Whether it is Shenzhen’s point-based hukou policy or Guangzhou’s degree policy, migrant children’s education has indeed been improved step by step with the introduction of these policies. Since 2000, from neglecting the migrant children’s compulsory education to the “two main” policy put forward by the State Council, to the strengthening of the implementation of academic degrees and the simplification of the conditions for points registration in Guangdong Province, all these measures have been actively addressing the education issue of migrant children and promoting the social

development harmoniously. In addition to these policies-related defects mentioned above and some suggestions for further improvement, this article also exists due to the time change for migrant children population policy changing, data updating these related influence. In addition, under Covid-19 in China, the migrant population has returned to their hometown, which may lead to the reduction of the accuracy of relevant data. Moreover, the lack of study of foreign scholars' literature leads to the partial lack of viewing the issues of migrant children's education in China from a global perspective. This paper focuses more on the improvement of the migrant children's compulsory education in Guangdong Province under the household registration system with Chinese characteristics.

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