



Preferential Policies in Higher Education for Minorities in China

Jingyi Yang^(✉)

School of Marxism, Zhejiang Normal University, Jinhua 321000, China
yangjingyi20010302@zjnu.edu.cn

Abstract. Under the background, higher education for ethnic minorities in China differs from ordinary students. This paper aims to analyze the impact of the preferential policies on minority students, minority areas, and the development of the entire social education structure from China's existing preferential policies for minority higher education. To sum up, this article is based on specific higher education policies for ethnic minorities, combined with the current social development situation, to carry out detailed analysis and research. In China, boarding school policy is supported by factors such as residence, which better promotes higher education equality for ethnic minorities. During the period of higher education, there are different directions of government funding support and scholarship policies supported by local institutions. After completing higher education, specific policies help ethnic minorities find jobs and encourage ethnic minority students to return to their hometowns to promote local social development.

Keywords: Higher education · Minority students · Education policy

1 Introduction

There are 56 ethnic minorities in China. Most of them live in some communities. From the perspective of geographical location and economic development, there is a particular gap among Han students in allocating educational resources. In addition, for minority students, especially those with their minority languages. They may also have specific problems due to language differences in their higher education.

In previous studies, many scholars have focused on the social background factors of policy making and various reasons for the differences between ethnic minorities and Han people. Thus, eliciting the differences in education between the two and making. However, before that, people primarily focused on analyzing minority higher education policy from a macro perspective. There is a lack of detailed reviews and comparative studies on Han higher education policies in specific areas.

Combining the current situation of social development and the form of educational development from the perspective of ethnic minorities, this paper will make a precise analysis of the current situation of social development of ethnic minorities and China's higher education and educational resources.

2 Policies of Ethnic Minorities on Access to Higher Education

2.1 “Boarding School”: An Exceptional School System for Ethnic Minorities

In China, average students usually choose which schools they can enroll in according to their native place, called “Hu Kou,” during their compulsory education phases. Of course, they have to pass the entrance exam for middle or high schools, respectively.

However, students who live in minority regions, especially in remote areas, lack educational resources and geographical location limitations. Students’ rights and education opportunities cannot be fully guaranteed locally. Therefore, the introduction of the “Boarding School” policy has primarily narrowed the gap in the distribution of educational resources and other aspects. The “Boarding School” educational policy ensures minority students’ intellectual rights and chances. Han and Li argue that “Currently, the more respected policy intrinsic value pursuit is the ‘3E’ standard. The ‘3E’ criteria are effectiveness, efficiency, and equity” [1].

As we all know, Tibet is located in the west place of China. People who live there are very different from the eastern and central regions. Many people from the mainland have difficulty adjusting to the high-altitude environment in Tibet. Although there are teachers who go to support teaching, in general, the educational resources in Tibet, especially the teachers, are far less than those in the comparatively developed areas.

Therefore, the Chinese government pays special attention to implementing this policy. For example, there is an official paper pointed in the “Notice of the General Office of the State Education Commission on Printing and Distributing the Opinions on Further Strengthening the Work of Tibetan Classes in the Mainland” and the “Implementation Rules for the Management of Tibetan Middle School Classes (Schools) in the mainland” [2]. In this official paper, the fundamental purpose and task of establishing Tibetan classes (schools) on the mainland are to take advantage of the school-running conditions and the advantages of teachers in mainland schools. It is a typical example of the “Boarding School.”

2.2 Bonus Points Policy for Ethnic Minorities Students

Although the “Boarding School” policy provides an excellent opportunity for students from ethnic minority areas to study in economically developed areas, there are still some students who have not passed the entrance exam for the mainland classes, so they have to stay in their hometowns to study. In addition to the “boarding school” policy, the bonus policy is also an essential preferential policy for minority higher education enrollment.

Regarding the preferential policies for ethnic minorities in the entrance examination of higher education, in Ding’s paper, she pointed out, “As early as 1951, when the colleges and universities were recruiting new students, it was stipulated that students from ethnic groups should be admitted leniently even though their test scores were slightly worse” [3]. For a long time, since 1951, this preferential policy for education has been continued. In 1980, the new policy issued by the Chinese Ministry of Education further refined the bonus points policy. Also, in Ding’s paper, “Under this policy, ethnic minority candidates in the diaspora will be admitted preferentially under the same conditions as Han candidates.” Similarly, it is also mentioned in the relevant regulations on the bonus

points for the high school entrance examination and the college entrance examination that students from ethnic minorities can get five extra points in the final score. This provision is formulated for ethnic minority students scattered in non-ethnic minority areas. For example, many Hui students are scattered in China's Henan and Shanxi provinces. The "hukou" of these students is in Henan and Shanxi provinces. Therefore, while adopting the same admission system as the local Han students, a policy of bonus points is given to higher education admission.

To sum up, in Zhang's argument, "The implementation of the policy of adding points for the college entrance examination in ethnic areas is one of the measures to pursue substantive equality of education and oppose formal equality in the context of the overall uneven distribution of educational resources" [4]. This policy also broadens the scope of preferential policies for ethnic minorities in higher education enrollment, guarantees the right to education of more ethnic minorities, and allows more students to receive a better education.

2.3 Policy on Preparatory Classes for Ethnic Minorities

In the notice of the ministry of education on printing and distributing the "Administrative Measures for Minority Preparatory Classes and Ethnic Classes in Ordinary Colleges and Universities (Trial)." The first regulation states that "ethnic preparatory classes and ethnic classes held by ordinary colleges and universities are a special school-running form adopted by the state to speed up the training of minority talents" [5]. The specific implementation method of minority preparatory classes is that preparatory students and general students are enrolled together, and primary students are sent to relevant institutions to study for one or two years.

The reason for implementing this system is to solve better some difficulties encountered by ethnic minorities after enrolling in school. For example, the native languages of some ethnic minorities are too different from Chinese mandarin. So, the "preparatory system" can have a period of adaptation and transition after they enter the higher education stage. And it can also lay the foundation for further study in the future. Ding's article also mentioned, "National and ethnic preparatory education is not only different from cram schools in general middle schools but also different from general higher education."

There will be many differences for minority students who have not studied in "Boarding School."

3 Grants and Subsidies Policies for Ethnic Minorities in Higher Education

3.1 Preferential Policies in the Course of Study

Among the above arguments, an objective fact is that some ethnic minority students live in remote locations in China. Before they enter higher education, there is a knowledge gap between them and students living in cities with better economic development. In response to the above situation, the government aims to narrow the differences in knowledge

levels due to different educational levels. Preferential policies for ethnic minorities in higher education learning processes have been promulgated. For example, in higher education studies and examinations, the passing grades of minorities are lower than those of ordinary students. Some preferential policies are offered to minority students during their higher education studies.

Universities in different regions also have different implementation standards for this policy. For example, Inner Mongolia University for Nationalities stipulates in the “Administrative Measures for the Student Status and Grades of Minority Preparatory Course Students (Final),” pointed, “After the minority preparatory students are promoted to Chinese-taught majors if they use the same exam paper as the Chinese-taught course for the course. The pass line is 50 points” [6]. Similarly, in the “Administrative Measures for the Course Grades of Students Enrolled by Ethnic Minority Policy” of Xi’an University of Finance and Economics, it stipulates that “the pass standard for the courses of ethnic minority students is 40 points” [7]. According to this, different universities have different requirements for the passing threshold of ethnic minorities. But they generally lowered the standards for passing grades and appropriately gave ethnic minorities preferential help in their studies.

Therefore, these preferential educational policies had taken care of different groups at different starting lines. Today’s society, where there is still a significant gap in economic development, has promoted the fairness of education to a certain extent.

3.2 Tuition Fee Remission Policy

In minority higher education, the government has also given policy support to minority students’ higher education spending. Such policies can be divided into two broad categories: the policy specifically targeting minority students in poverty; the other is for students from ethnic minority areas in specific majors with the nature of social feedback. A subsidy of certain funds is given.

First, the tuition Fee remission policy targets poor students in minority areas. In the paper “Minority Preferential Policies and Educational Equality in China’s Higher Education,” Teng and Ma’s mentioned, “Although the higher education unification system has alleviated the shortage of education funds, it has a great impact on the acceptance of higher education by members of low-income families. Especially the students in impoverished areas of small ethnic minorities in the west” [8]. Therefore, the economic issue is also essential facing China’s current ethnic minority higher education. In the paper “Trial Analysis of Educational Preferential Policies at the Higher Education Level of Ethnic Minorities in New China,” Wang pointed out, “In 1983, the coexistence system of grants and scholarships was implemented, and the students of the Nationalities College enjoyed the principle of 100% of the people’s grants” [9]. This financial aid policy has been implemented in all provinces and universities in China, and there are also policies to help ethnic minorities and impoverished ethnic minorities with financial support. For example, in “China Education News,” an approach was proposed that poor students in Guangxi province should achieve 100% assistance from enrollment to employment, not only for poor students from ethnic minorities but also for all students in the region [10]. Of poor students, all have financial help.

The second category is for some specific majors. Following the promulgation of relevant regulations by the China National Education Commission approved by the State Council of China in 1989, many reforms have been carried out in colleges and universities' enrollment and graduation systems. Similarly, Wang argued that "tuition is waived for college students who enjoy national professional scholarships such as ethnic majors" [9]. In addition, "free education grants" for minority students are also a preferential policy in higher education. This policy has been widely implemented in various universities in China. For example, in the "Notice on Doing a Good Job in Free Education Subsidy for Teachers in the Tibet Autonomous Region" [11], published by Lanzhou College of Arts and Sciences for students of Tibetan nationality. The subsidy funds can be applied for by filling in the relevant application documents as long as they meet the requirement of "students from the Tibet Autonomous Region" and meet the requirement of "professional majors in normal education."

3.3 Scholarships for Minority Students

The financial support and preferential policies for ethnic minorities are discussed in the policies mentioned above. These policies provide more students with access to higher education and reduce the financial burden on their families. Of course, the preferential policies in terms of funds can bring these benefits and promote the fairness of social education. It can also become a source of motivation for students to study hard and improve themselves in the higher education stage.

Because there is a gap between minority students and ordinary students in the basics of cultural courses. It is unfair to minority students if they are required to be based on the criteria for granting scholarships to regular students. Therefore, many colleges and universities have set up different standards for giving scholarships to minority students. At the same time, some state-owned enterprises in China have also supported the awarding of scholarships to ethnic minorities. For example, the "China Construction Bank's Talent Program for College Students in Minority Areas" [12]. Is a program issued based on preferential treatment for ethnic minorities at Harbin Engineering University also supported by this program, which has opened up a separate channel for applying for minority scholarships and bursaries? On the school's official website, it is also clearly stated that the purpose of opening the minority scholarship is "To encourage our school's minority students to study diligently and to forge ahead, and at the same time do a good job of subsidizing minority students from financially disadvantaged families in our school, and help them complete the study."

To sum up, whether it is the preferential treatment of ethnic minorities in receiving higher education or the financial support and rewards. These preferential policies have brought substantial help and support to minority students at the stage of higher education. These policies also allow them to get a better learning environment and living environment, leading to better learning outcomes.

4 Employment Policy for Ethnic Minority Graduates

Employment is a significant issue that every student has to face. It is also the first problem that students encounter after completing their studies. For minority students, policy

concessions and university guidance on employment. These measures have increased the employment rate of graduates from minority colleges and universities. Because of this, the Chinese government's policies on preferential higher education for ethnic minorities are relatively complete. They have been realized, providing comprehensive assistance to ethnic minority students from enrollment to employment.

4.1 Preferential Employment Policy

The economic development of a region is inseparable from the introduction and training of talents. For minority areas, to achieve better results. A win-win policy is for ethnic minorities to be employed in ethnic minority areas. Therefore, based on such a social development direction, preferential employment policies for ethnic minorities have been proposed in higher education policies and social policies.

For example, in Li's paper, he studied China's western development strategy and the policy of high-level critical talent plan for ethnic minorities. He proposed that "improving human resource reserves and improving human resource quality are the fundamental factors for promoting economic and social development in ethnic areas" [13]. In this view, it can be seen that after receiving higher education, ethnic minorities can return to their hometowns for employment and promote the social and economic development of their hometowns according to the policy of the high-level critical talent plan for ethnic minorities. Therefore, under such an employment method, if Han and ethnic minorities jointly deliver some jobs in ethnic minority areas, ethnic minorities will be given priority.

Not only that, many colleges and universities also target minority talent training. A specialized intensive training base has been set up. The most typical example is the Minzu University of China, which has opened a training base for ethnic minority students in higher education, especially postgraduate. Such a policy has once again improved the strength of minority students and made them more competitive when looking for jobs.

Minority students can use their advantages through these policies when they are employed. For example, as bilinguals, people from ethnic minorities can reunite to give full play to their natural advantage in positions where they need to use both ethnic languages and Chinese. Finally, the preferential policies for the employment of ethnic minorities focus on the future development of ethnic minority students and the matching degree of employment positions.

4.2 Financial Aid and Support for Newly Graduated Ethnic Minorities and College Students in Minority Areas

Although there are preferential policies for the higher education of ethnic minorities and the support of relevant policies to help ethnic minorities find jobs, there are still some college students of ethnic minorities who may be unable to find employment after graduation. Similarly, some ethnic minorities hope to return to their hometowns after graduation to help them develop economically and socially. However, they do not represent all minorities. There are still some ethnic minorities who are willing to work in the provinces where they studied.

These minority graduates who go to other provinces to work in non-minority areas may face some money difficulties when they graduate into the society and start to work.

Compared with Han students, most ethnic minority students who stay in the hinterland to work are far from their hometowns, especially those from Xinjiang, Tibet, and Inner Mongolia, China's frontier regions. Besides, people tend to get a lower salary when they start working. Most people live on a basic wage. Therefore, minority students need to get help in employment and money.

Similarly, ethnic minority areas support ethnic minority students seeking employment in provinces or regions other than their hometowns or starting their businesses. Therefore, there are also relevant policies and funds to support fresh graduates from ethnic minorities working or starting businesses on the mainland. For example, on August 5, 2020, the Lhasa Municipal People's Government office issued a notice entitled "Specific Measures of Lhasa Municipality to Promote Employment and Entrepreneurship of College Graduates from Lhasa," which mentioned that "Graduates of ethnic minorities from Tibet who find jobs outside the Tibet Autonomous Region will be given housing subsidies every month, among which: Those who work in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Shenzhen will get a subsidy of 1,500 yuan per month, and those who work in other cities will get a subsidy of 1,000 yuan per month" [14].

4.3 The Employment Policy of "Stay and Teach" for Ethnic Minorities in Universities

In addition to the policy mentioned above of preferential recruitment of ethnic minorities and the employment subsidy policy for ethnic graduates, there is also an employment policy that provides an alternative path for ethnic minority students. This employment policy is the policy of ethnic minorities staying in schools to teach. This type of policy is based on the guidelines of China's economically more developed provinces, assisting the provinces in ethnic minority areas or the autonomous regions of ethnic minorities. It is a policy to encourage ethnic minorities to find employment other than ethnic minority autonomous regions.

For example, an outstanding Tibetan graduate from Zhejiang Normal University stayed at Zhejiang Normal University after graduation in accordance with Zhejiang Province's aid to Tibet policy. This policy is called "snow-covered plateaus to send jobs, employment assistance to Tibet yields new results" [15]. This policy is the counterpart policy of Zhejiang Province to employ ethnic minority students in Tibet. Under this policy, minority students can choose to stay and work in Zhejiang.

Therefore, the policy of one-to-one assistance from economically developed provinces to provinces in China's border areas not only increases the choices of employment for ethnic minority students after receiving higher education. Similarly, it is also conducive to encouraging more and more ethnic minorities to go out of their hometowns, together with Han students, to find suitable careers in various provinces of China, further narrowing the gap between ethnic minority students and Han students.

5 Conclusion

In conclusion, these particular education policies aimed at students from ethnic minority areas in the higher education stage, to a large extent, help them narrow the gap with Han

students. The directional employment policy, in which students make achievements and return to their hometown, also promotes the social development of ethnic minority areas to a certain extent. Therefore, these education policies have continuously promoted the educational equity of Chinese society and improved the construction of community in education from a deeper level.

This article focuses on working with minority students throughout the higher education stage. Analyze the specific impact of specific policies on them to promote education equity among different ethnic groups better.

They hope that educational resources will be distributed equally to the greatest extent in the future. Regardless of nationality or region, let every student receive a complete education and train them to become honest and thoughtful people.

References

1. XM. Han & SJ. Li, Value Analysis of Tibetan Class (School) Education Policy in Mainland China, in *Tibet Education*, 2004, pp. 8-11.
2. Notice of the General Office of the State Education Commission on Printing and Distributing, the Opinions on Further Strengthening the Work of Tibet Classes in the Mainland and the Implementation Rules for the Management of Tibetan Middle School Classes (Schools). <https://law.lawtime.cn/d495707500801.html>
3. XY. Ding, On the preferential policies for ethnic minorities in higher education in my country, South-Central University for Nationalities, 2009. <https://kns.cnki.net/KCMS/detail/detail.aspx?dbname=CMFD2011&filename=2009226559.nh>
4. RY. Zhang, On the Necessity of the Minority College Entrance Examination Bonus Policy, taking Tibet Education as an Example, in *Intelligence* 2020, pp. 40-41.
5. Notice of the Ministry of Education on Printing and Distributing the "Administrative Measures for Minority Preparatory Classes and Ethnic Minority Classes in Ordinary Institutions of Higher Learning (Trial)" http://www.moe.gov.cn/jyb_xxgk/gk_gbgg/moe_0/moe_495/moe_1073/tnull_11941.html
6. Administrative Measures for the Student Status and Grades of Minority Preparatory Course Students (Final), Inner Mongolia University for Nationalities, 2009. <https://www.imu.edu.cn>
7. Administrative Measures for the Course Grades of Students Enrolled by Ethnic Minority Policy, Xi'an University of Finance and Economics, 2014. <https://www.xaufe.edu.cn>
8. X. Teng, XY. Ma, Preferential policies and educational equality for Ethnic minorities in China's higher education, in *Ethnic Studies*, 2005, pp4-10.
9. LD. Wang, An analysis of preferential education policies for ethnic minority higher education in New China, in *China Ethnic Expo*, 2015, pp73-74.
10. Guangxi issued the Implementation Plan of Targeted Poverty Alleviation Through Education to achieve 100% of enrollment and employment in the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China website, 2016. http://www.moe.gov.cn/jyb_xwfb/s5147/201607/t20160722_272641.html
11. Notice on Doing a Good Job in Free Education Subsidy for Teachers in the Tibet Autonomous Region, Lanzhou College of Arts and Sciences, 2019. <https://xsc.luas.edu.cn/2019/1030/c1110a75061/page.htm>
12. China Construction Bank's Talent Program for College Students in Minority Areas Programme, Harbin Engineering University, 2015. <http://xsc.hrbeu.edu.cn/2017/1026/c5010a168037/page.htm>

13. P. Li, Educational Policy Research on High-level Key Talents Program for Minorities, 2018. <https://kns.cnki.net/KCMS/detail/detail.aspx?dbname=CDFDLAST2018&filename=1018068124.nh>
14. Notice of the Lhasa Municipal People's Government Office on Printing and Distributing the Specific Measures of Lhasa City to Promote the Employment and Entrepreneurship of Lhasa College Graduates Outside the District, 2020. <http://www.lasa.gov.cn/laszfxgk/zcfg/202008/76aed33381da4580b9f92836f59ced7a.shtml>
15. Snow-covered plateaus send jobs, and employment assistance to Tibet yields new results, in Zhejiang Province, employment assistance for college graduates and special job fairs were successfully held in Lhasa and Nagqu, in Zhejiang Aid to Tibet Net, 2021. http://yz.zjol.com.cn/yzyw/202107/t20210724_22845981.shtml?from=singlemessage

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

