



The Impact of Primary School Computerized Random School Assignment Policy in Ningbo

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Abstract. In order to ensure educational equity, reduce the pressure of compulsory education, and effectively guarantee overall educational equity, the state has introduced a lottery policy, which is a computerized random assignment to determine the secondary schools that students within a district attend. The paper, through a method of questionnaire, explores the common complain toward the policy that exist among the public. The paper finds that this policy has indeed solved some of the problems of poor schooling and difficult schooling, and brought about many negative effects like unfairness to good students, subjectivity of interview, resource mobilization of teachers and so on.

Keywords: Ningbo, Computerized random school assignment, equity, education, educational resource

1 Introduction

Many parents have been influenced by marketing numbers and peers around them, and they choose to start in the rat race. In addition to their children's remedial education, they are concerned about the school district and teacher transfer. Many public figures emphasize that not giving your child extra classes, going to OU, and asking for connections has become a way to hold your child back. The state therefore promulgated a new system of moving from elementary school to junior high school, the lottery policy which is using a computer randomly assigns places to a child's school). This policy caused an uproar when it was introduced. There are not particularly many papers in this area at the moment. The titles of the current papers include: Analysis of Xi'an's junior high school lottery policy from the perspective of equity; Negative effects of the junior high school lottery policy and its improvement; and Junior high school lottery policy from the perspective of educational equity. They studied this policy mainly through educational equity, including unfairness to good students, subjectivity of interview, resource mobilization of teachers and so on.. However, each city has its own characteristics, so the research on Ningbo city is still in a blank stage.

The research method of this paper is mainly to study the education policy released in Ningbo city and conduct a survey of the surrounding primary and secondary schools. The phenomenon is extended through real problems and then studied by correlating the

phenomenon with the fairness of education. The significance of this study is to further raise the issue of educational inequity through the study of many aspects of this policy, so that compulsory education can achieve maximum opportunity equity. And educational equity is more than just ensuring that every child has the opportunity to learn and grow. It is also dedicated to the narrowing of the gap between rich and poor, the harmony and stability of society, and the similarity of human values.

2 Current status of compulsory education

2.1 Introduction of educational equity and opportunity equity

Confucius was the first to propose the concept of "education without discrimination". Nowadays, it has gradually been further refined. In our country, the emphasis is on compulsory education equity because it is the basis for people's lives and values. In contrast, there is a certain amount of voluntary and capacity assessment in higher education, and our country has now reached about 57% of higher education coverage, which is already very good. Educational equity refers to the norms or principles of reasonableness that the state allocates educational resources according to. By "reasonableness", we mean that the allocation of educational resources should be consistent with the development and stability of society as a whole and the development and needs of individual members of society, and should be based on the discriminatory relationship between the two [1]. But there are still problems with compulsory education, such as the difference in resources and equipment between rural and urban areas. The basis of education equity is opportunity equity, and opportunity equity is reflected in junior high school. At present, the state has issued relevant policies to solve the problem, but there are some problems [2].

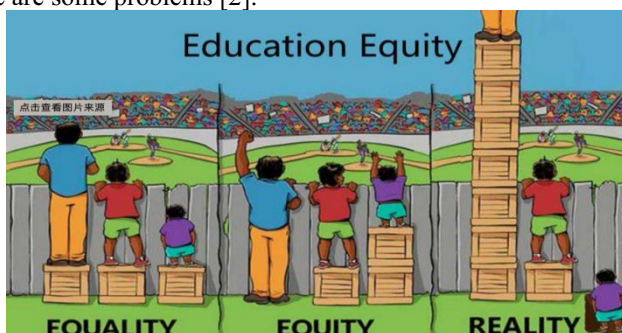


Fig. 1. Education Equity [3]

2.2 Increasing competitive pressure

The problem of difficult schooling lies mainly in the scarcity of educational resources. The number of students enrolled in school rises during this period, influenced by the 2016 second child wave [4].

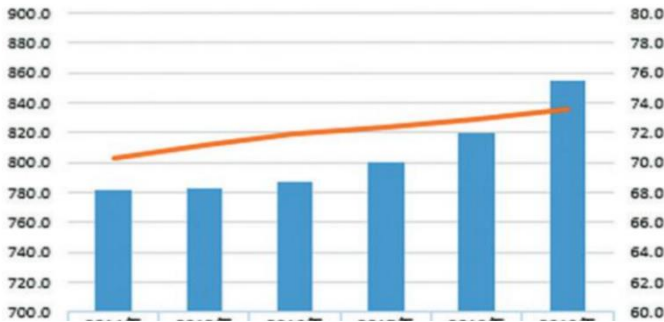


Fig. 2. Permanent resident population and urbanization rate of Ningbo from 2014-2019 [1]

Table 1. Permanent resident population and urbanization rate of Ningbo from 2014-2019 [1]

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Permanent resident (10000)	781.1	782.5	787.5	800.5	820.2	854.2
Urbanization (%)	70.3	71.1	71.9	72.4	72.9	75.6

However, there are 743 general primary and secondary schools in the city, with 827,000 students enrolled. Of these, 427 are elementary schools with 517,000 students enrolled, and 230 are junior high schools [5]. For such population growth, the slow growth or even no growth in the number of primary and secondary schools has given rise to a new problem while reaching 100% education coverage. That is, our education problem has changed from the difficulty of going to school to the difficulty of going to a good school. Based on this problem, many parents and students feel the unprecedented pressure of education, which also makes them feel a lot of confusion and distress. For this reason, the state has promulgated such a new policy to reduce the burden of parents and students and make new progress in education equity.

3 Methodology

A total of 24 people participated in the questionnaire. The survey lasted two weeks, from August 1 to August 15. The questionnaire is formulated by the direction of the survey and common phenomena. The questions are divided into multiple-choice and free-response. Multiple choice questions mainly include two questions: 1. What grade is your child or your relative's child in? 2. Do you think the current computer random allocation policy is fair? The author will study the data for these two questions and ask some questions. Multiple choice questions include: 1. What impact does the lottery policy have on your children? 2. What problems do you know about the interview for the junior high school entrance examination? 3. The lottery policy has solved the problem of educational fairness from a certain perspective, but what other problems do

you think need to be solved? These questions can help me see the loopholes in this policy that are being raised by parents. Finally, the personal information of the respondents in this questionnaire is confidential.

4 Results and analysis

Question: Grade of your child or your relative's child

Table 2. Grade of Child of participants

Grade	Number	Proportion
1	3	12.5%
2	4	16.67%
3	1	4.17%
4	3	12.5%
5	4	16.67%
6	9	37.5%

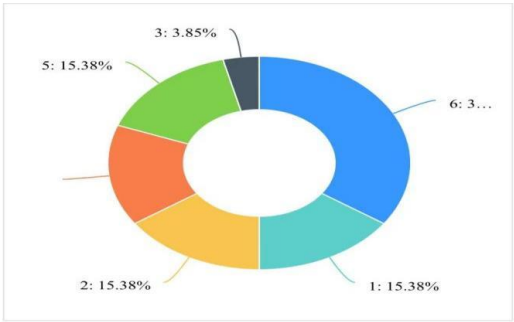


Fig. 3. Grade of Child of participants

As you can see, the willingness to be surveyed this time is mainly among the parents of 6th grade students, which proves that they attach great importance to their children who are about to enter school and are concerned about this shifting policy.

Question: Do you think the computer random allocation policy is fair?

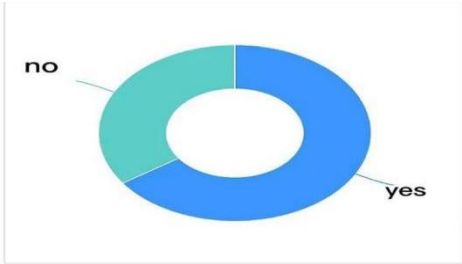


Fig. 4. Proportion of people's opinion

66.67% of people still chose yes to the question of whether this education policy is fair. Indeed, this computerized random assignment policy effectively solves the educational inequity extended by educational resources, remedial classes, and financial problems, and organizes the prematurely realized educational diversion. But Many people choose unfairness, which reflects the drawbacks of this policy. Some parents even said that their children have worked hard for many years, have participated in many programs such as the Olypic math competition, and have studied a part of junior high school, but now the policy has been enacted, making all their efforts useless. In addition, many other parents mentioned in the questionnaire that they had purposely chaperoned their children for the purpose of enrollment, and one parent even quit their job to care for their children's schooling, so such a situation, driven by the policy, turned out to be a big sacrifice.

The questionnaire also mentioned: how do you think the random assignment policy affects your own child?

Only 33.33% of the parents thought it had no impact, while the rest of the respondents thought there were problems such as unfairness to children, unreasonable distribution of educational resources, and insufficient schools. In fact, the point that there are not enough schools is also reflected in the problem of the scarcity of educational resources that the author mentioned above. As more and more children, the number of primary and secondary schools is gradually not enough to use, especially for quality educational resources. It is difficult to achieve a reasonable distribution. So this is also a problem that needs to be solved.

There is an interview session in the junior high school, which is also a hotly debated issue among parents.

In the questionnaire, parents think that although it is an interview, they actually also look at the grades and awards. In addition, the school's initial and artificial factors made parents have great doubts about the fairness of the interview. Some parents also suggested that the state of the child in just a few minutes would affect a lot, and that the interviewer would not be able to fully understand the child, and that there would be inevitable errors of judgment.

The questionnaire concluded with parents offering their views on other issues of educational inequity.

The issues mainly included: the different economic status of each family; too few schools; school district problems; class placement problems; remedial classes; teacher character enhancement; and private money transactions. Some parents also mentioned that some problems need to be solved by themselves and not rely on the government completely.

5 Discussion

The questionnaire was used to analyze this policy as well as to extend it. According to the results of the questionnaire, there are several points worth to discuss.

- 1) Unfair to the children who have good grades. Children who are smart and hard-working are affected by their surroundings due to the shifting of numbers, and

they lose better educational resources and a learning atmosphere and eventually bury their talents. Educational streaming is only an opportunity for children with average as well as poor grades, but it is a great risk for children with good grades. The culture of education and the guidance of teachers will directly affect the study habits and interests of children.

2) The problem of educational resources between different districts and cities. The allocation of educational resources is indeed carefully considered, but there must be differences in educational resources within different districts. For example, the primary and secondary school resources in the Zhenhai District of Ningbo City are much better than in Beilun and Xiangshan. Such differences give parents a new direction for inward scrolling, such as moving to a household, buying a house, etc. These require a lot of money and are also extremely risky. And it is still unfair for families without economic power and located in the lack of educational resources.

3) Subjective factors. The lottery policy also mentions interviews, and once the human factor is added, the assessment becomes less objective, such as the preferences of the judges, the level of preparation of the students, and whether there are leaks of interview questions. These are all new factors that need to be considered. Take a very simple example. Primary school interview judges will be more passionate about their work in the morning, but in the afternoon, due to sleepiness and fatigue, they will be biased in capturing the details of the child, which will also lead to different scores and unfairness.

4) Transportation issues. Due to lotteries and school district divisions, many children are not able to enroll in the nearest school, making the journey to school a major problem. In addition, it can be a struggle for dual-income families. In fact, don't underestimate this transportation factor, which can place an additional financial burden on many families, as well as on students who may be relatively missing a portion of their sleep. Most children who must travel to school by car for an extended period eat their breakfast in the car, which is also taxing on their bodies. When they arrive at school, they may no longer have the energy to face the learning day.

5) In fact, this policy is not good for the growth of some sensitive children, especially when a child has worked hard for many years after the shakeout policy, so that he has doubts about his own efforts, because he will think that luck is the main factor in one's life. At this stage of a child's life, he has not yet formed three views, and he will be easily influenced by his surroundings. When luck becomes the main criterion for further education, the child will also believe in luck rather than hard work in his future life, which makes the next college entrance examination and employment a big problem for them.

6) As a direct result of the primary school lottery, the diversity of students admitted to the school is increasing compared to the original recommendation or test-based selection method. This poses a new challenge to traditional teaching methods that are used to teach gifted students in groups, forcing teachers to focus on individual students to implement more appropriate and personalized instruction and support. This can be seen as a challenge (a drawback), but it can also ultimately translate into greater pedagogical and administrative wisdom.

7) In fact, the most direct impact of this policy is the equity of opportunity, but it also made some contributions and changes to process equity and outcome equity. The most intuitive is when a less able child is admitted to a better school. There may be some doubts about process equity, such as unfair treatment of the student by teachers, or the student's own perceived struggles in the learning process, or other discomforts. The same goes for outcome equity. Even if children have a relatively fair education because of this policy, there are inequities in high school, college, and employment due to gender, wealth, and face value that cannot be solved by this policy.

8) This policy of school district housing is actually a very flawed policy. Many parents can put up large sums of money for school district housing, but after the student is done with school, they make a profit when they sell the house. This exacerbates the gap between the rich and the poor. For this reason, the state has introduced a solution for this. In other words, taxes are currently stricter on investments and pure profit making, but really valuable social actions are strongly supported. Taxation is a certain basis for education. Since all compulsory education is free, all expenses are left to the government, which gets its money from taxes. The state attaches great importance to the arrangement of educational resources, so the corresponding taxes have been adjusted to some extent. For example, these items approved by the State Council: exemption from sales tax for educational services provided by schools engaged in academic education; no sales tax for those who work while they are students; and exemption from sales tax for those engaged in technology development. These are good explanations of the preferential policies in education. This will make children less financially constrained and make parents who buy a school district home more rational.

6 Suggestions and solutions

First, we need to stop all explicit and implicit remedial classes and class placement practices and allow students to grow in a relatively fair environment. In fact, remedial education is a great educational inequity. Many parents have the money and resources to provide their children with many superior educational resources. For example, find famous teachers outside, give children tutoring, and even participate in many competitions, etc. However, these are inequitable to ordinary children; we should all attend the same school and have access to the same educational resources [6].

Then, judged by the same standard, too many external factors, so that ordinary children should lose the original competitiveness. However, for the promotion policy, it is suggested to achieve it by means of interesting tests and other methods, taking into account various aspects such as flexibility and study habits. Second, to strengthen the relative equity of education allocation to different regions, i.e., to achieve a reasonable distribution of resources according to the consumption levels and prices of different cities and districts [7].

At the same time, teacher training and resource mobilization need to become the norm to ensure the richness of teachers in different schools and the transparency of school rules and regulations [8]. Finally, since we have been emphasizing quality education and cultivating children who are well-rounded in moral, intellectual, physi-

cal, and aesthetic development, the interview form with a strong subjective element should not be eliminated [9]. However, the accuracy of the assessment needs to be strengthened by refining the scoring guidelines and using simultaneous scoring by multiple teachers and taking the average.

7 Conclusion

Through this study, we found that parents of sixth grade students are the most concerned about the relevant policies. In addition, there are still 1 / 3 people who think that this policy is unreasonable. They have their own views on other problems and solutions. In short, they are not particularly satisfied with the current policy. We have also found other problems brought about by this policy, such as unfair interviews for good students, factors brought about by subjectivity, and the still existing one-on-one make-up classes and other extra-curricular training classes. Educational fairness has a lot of negative effects on primary school students, which needs to be further strengthened and improved. At the national meeting, the Ministry of Education proposed that educational equity is definitely not egalitarian [10]. The promulgation of this policy is indeed effective in providing a part of educational equity. As the parent in the questionnaire said, many problems are their own problems in the family, and we cannot rely on the government completely. The computerized random assignment policy has shown that the state attaches great importance to the issue of education equity and has effectively solved a series of education equity problems such as class placement due to remedial classes. But what we need to do is to try to ensure that every child is given the opportunity to learn and the same starting point. We do not want to achieve huge differentiation in primary and secondary schools, which will only make the gap between rich and poor bigger and make children's educational attainment greatly influenced by other factors. To achieve greater equality, the computerized random assignment policy must be accompanied by corresponding change measures such as interview reform and more equitable educational resource allocation. A lot of solutions have been put forward above, including the division of school districts, the refinement of interview scoring criteria and the content of stopping training courses. These are very effective solutions. In addition, there are many existing problems of unfair education, which need our further research and discovery before they can be better proposed and solved.

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