



Research on the Impact of Higher Education Equity on the Development of all Social Strata

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Abstract. In recent years, great progress has been made in the reform and development of China's education system. Based on China's unique social environment, this paper discusses the role of China's higher education in the process of social reproduction. John Rawls's theory of "the principle of social and economic inequality" is applied, especially "the principle of equal opportunity". To investigate whether middle and low-class students in China have a fair opportunity to enter the higher education system (for example, by taking the college entrance examination). This paper analyzes how China's higher education system contributes to promoting social equity and further narrowing the gap. We must further study the role of China's higher education system in the field of social reproduction so that it can play a substantive and useful role. The common development of China's higher education system and the college entrance examination system is conducive to eliminating educational differences and realizing the balanced development of the society as a whole. In addition, China's evolving higher education system has contributed to promoting social equity by providing students from all regions, races and socio-economic strata with comprehensive and fair opportunities and quality of higher education.

Keywords: China's higher education, social strata, equity, social reproduction

1 Introduction In 1978, China implemented economic reform and opening up, and carried out major economic reforms, creating new development opportunities for the development of China's education. White [10] studied China's attempt to promote social equality of opportunity by redistributing opportunities for higher education. The Chinese government promotes social equity through the redistribution of higher education opportunities. China's capacity to realise its ultimate objective of ensuring social justice for its population has sparked discussion because of internal obstacles [10].

Higher education in China has a distinctive impact on the progress of society at all levels. Some studies have not kept up with the "speed" of internal changes in Chinese society in the wake of China's economic transition after the reform and opening up. The role of China's higher education system in the field of social reproduction needs to be further explored and played a significant positive role. The combined development of China's higher education system and its college entrance examination system

will help reduce class differences and achieve the balanced development of the whole society. This paper explores the role of education in the advancement of social strata in China's specific cultural context, the social reproduction of Chinese higher education, and the fairness and equality of Chinese students with social family difficulties in receiving higher education (such as the college entrance examination). In addition, it explores how China's higher education system fosters social fairness and minimises class disparity.

2 Social context of Chinese class groups

2.1 Definition of social class meaning of social stratum

In order to properly comprehend and contextualise the word "class," Bourdieu's theory of class is referenced [3]. According to the findings of the study that Bourdieu conducted in 1990 on the topic of class reproduction, an individual's social class is determined by three factors: their financial standing, their class habitus, and their cultural and social capital [3]. According to Hong and Zhao [5], the first and third of these three criteria are forms of capital, whereas habitus is a characteristic of an individual's character. This means that Bourdieu's class theory is made up of two main components: external conditions (capital) and internal character systems (ethnicity) (habitus). Understanding the distribution of preferences allows a person to recognise or predict expected and unlikely outcomes in a given social context—and so fit the individual in question. Taste is a kind of social orientation that guides inhabitants to social positions that are acceptable for their properties, as well as activities or objects that are suited to that spot in social space. To provide a practical prediction of the expected social importance and value of the selected behaviour or item, an analysis of people's social distribution coupled with practical information about the link between commodities and groups as possessed by other influencing agents may be used [4]. Bottero [2] reminds out that the position we hold within the hierarchy affects more than just our social and cultural priorities. Our most personal social relationships are also affected.

2.2 Particularity of Chinese social strata

The education system, according to Bourdieu [4], has an effect on the group differentiation features of social classes. By producing an educated class in the rest of society, education, particularly higher education, alters group behaviours and social reproduction. According to Donald Tsang and Lee [9], this is not the situation in China. The findings of their study indicate that China's social capital is the consequence of shared social space in metropolitan regions, rather than the outcome of residents having comparable educational backgrounds.

2.3 Current status of social stratification in China

China's extensive social factors (politics, law, society, etc.) and their diversity make the class situation complex, its group signs are poor, and the communication, integration and interworking between classes are more prominent. In the context of Chinese society, academic structure has an obvious driving force on the impact of class mobility and transformation. Through the continuous reform of the college entrance examination mechanism and university education in China, education has a strong influence on the equalization of social opportunities.

3 Social reproduction of higher education in China

3.1 China's higher education is the driving force to promote the balanced development of society

The uneven starting point of higher education is caused by the differences in expectations and choices of students from different socio-economic backgrounds (in Higher Education). Song [8] pointed out that low-income groups lack enthusiasm and ability for class upgrading, which seriously hinders the role of social mobility in higher education. By increasing the relevant investment in education and active guidance, it will greatly improve the educational attitude of people at all levels.

Hong and Zhao [5] argued that current cultural stratification is mostly the outcome of consumption among people of all social classes, as opposed to differences in taste and behaviour. Economic capital continues to be the dominant factor in modern civilization. For educational reproduction research, they suggested that pastoral and caring attitudes should be used as habitual markers rather than test scores [5]. Economic capital allows families of diverse socioeconomic statuses to have varied financial resources when it comes to their children's education, according to Song [8]. Social capital as a collection of personal social ties (such as social position, reputation, and other social resources) influences the selection of higher education. In conclusion, cultural capital, which includes aesthetic preferences, cultural awareness, educational knowledge, and scientific information, has become a strategic factor influencing people's capacity to select higher education. Strategic life planning and the in-depth construction of various types of higher education by the state, such as the operation of the vocational university mechanism, as well as the expansion of the full-time enrollment capacity of vocational universities, are effective ways to increase the acceptance of various types of higher education at all levels.

3.2 China's higher education promotes social equity reform

China's higher education system takes into account the economic, social and cultural capital of middle and low-class students. proved that the real motivation of students to achieve excellent results in examinations is scholarships. Numerous scholarships are utilised to cover tuition and living costs for students. In addition, Chinese college students have access to additional perks, such as part-time "work study" opportunities.

In addition to monetary benefits, students may also get non-monetary rewards, such as significant improvements in their lives [6]. Students in need can benefit from subsidies and use them to engage in popular areas of study or courses of their choice.

In addition to the financial and non-financial support within the school, the government also strives to eliminate the psychological pressure of students at all levels. Carry out positive emotional education for college students and spread positive outlook on life and values [7]. For example, the deeds of Jiang MENGAN, who moved Chinese characters. Although Jiang MENGAN was deaf, she worked hard and was admitted to a key university. Through education, life has been improved. Learners from different social strata have the same opportunities to improve themselves through education. In addition to increasing their cultural capital, they may broaden their perspectives by interacting with peers from diverse fields while pursuing higher education. This can enable college students from all levels to have a healthy exchange of views and information.

4 Fairness and equality of Higher Education

4.1 Introduction of relevant policies

The college entrance examination system, sometimes known as the "college entrance test," governs the distribution of resources for higher education among regions and groups that have significant educational inequality [11]. He believes that the polarity of basic and higher education resources has had a significant impact on the beginning point, method, and results of education as a whole. As a way to meet China's social and economic demands for higher education talent, the Chinese government unveiled its action plan for revitalising the country's educational landscape in the twenty-first century way back in 1999. The paradigm of the Chinese higher education system has transitioned from elitism to populism as a result of its development and fast transformation. The enrollment strategy has shifted progressively from the initial goal to the market, and the industrialization of education has started. Similarly, the Ministry of Education extracted from the "opinions on further expanding the reform of the enrollment and examination system of ordinary colleges and universities" in 1999: "the college entrance examination system must adhere to the reform, actively adapt to the features of the times and its needs for talent quality and ability structure, and seek to lead the improvement of overall talent quality and the growth of creative talent." Education justice has evolved from a focus on politics to economics, and eventually to the improvement of quality of life for everyone. Therefore, the extension of higher education gives new academic chances for a broader variety of candidates and promotes equality from the beginning; therefore, the reform of assessment systems promotes equity in the educational process.

4.2 Gradually improve the educational system and mechanism to realize the comprehensive promotion of education to social strata

China's education system has been constantly reformed and improved with the needs of social development. From the scientific improvement of the selection mechanism, the diversification of the construction of higher education institutions, and the connotation construction of discipline construction, we can provide citizens at all levels with suitable educational choices and opportunities. The entrance of students into disciplines at colleges and universities is nearly completely based on their examination performance. Performance-based systems diminish the worth of household capital and the influence of subjective appraisal. Elite universities in China have a double impact on social mobility for greatness because of their strong elite environments. Acceptance to prestigious colleges opens up a world of options for students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, enabling them to make the most of the personality qualities they developed in school while still preserving their academic reputations and gaining new kinds of experience. The socialisation of universities helps students of all levels to select an appropriate class and become an agent of social growth. Their dedication to a certain kind of college life exemplifies their self-obedience. Parents are better equipped to teach their children at home the more education they possess. Their educational experience impacts the amount to which they can engage in school activities, encourage their children to study, obtain and process information about education and work options, and indirectly influence their children's education and employment. Generally speaking, different levels of cultural resources enjoy different advantages, and their respective advantages are translated into different conditions for children to choose higher education. To some extent, learners from different socioeconomic classes develop the cultural quality of the social class specific to their origin according to their economic environment and a series of interests and family knowledge. Therefore, when determining the higher education system, we must consider the cultural differences between social and economic levels. Considering the process of choosing the higher education system in the context of contemporary China's socio-economic stratification, cultural differences between different social strata lead to differences between social strata.

4.3 The reform of China's higher education is to achieve the educational balance of all levels of society

The general secondary education system has undergone continuous changes, and has formed a more mature and scientific benign operation mechanism aiming at the continuous improvement of the comprehensive quality of citizens at all levels, and is constantly working towards a more equitable education. Centering on economic development and focusing on efficiency, the government's reform of higher education has promoted the balanced development of basic education in rural and urban areas. As the baton of basic education, high school entrance examination has diversified the selection methods of the government, and takes the selection of high-quality talents as the core goal. Since the turn of the 21st century, the Chinese government has under-

taken many efforts to reform all parts of the college admission test system [11]. In September 2014, the State Council released implementation views about the intensification of the reform of the examination and enrollment system in order to further improve the fair and scientific selection of talents. It has built a thorough and structured reform to address test and enrollment procedures, primarily as they pertain to the college entrance exam. These reform approaches mitigate the phenomena of dwindling enrollment possibilities for disadvantaged populations as a result of the basic education gap. The State Council intends to conduct a macro-control of the enrollment plan in order to ensure that the various methods of enrollment in general higher education are more transparent, efficient, and equitable. This objective will be attained by modifying the enrollment mechanism and enhancing supervision. The direction of the reform of the college entrance examination system in the future can show the country's ability to truly achieve educational equity and promote self-development to enhance human values [11]. A summary of the current reforms to secondary general education was provided by Zhang [11] as follows: Rather of a single-choice exam, the regular secondary school curriculum is now assessed using multiple-choice questions. To gauge pupils' overall aptitude, the theme setting is used; decentralised testing techniques are used; the test style has evolved from once to many times. More scientific and consistent admissions processes have been implemented as part of this reform.

A 1996 study by Arneson [1] found that the fairness of the starting point and the fairness of the opportunity are the same. Education is available to all Chinese citizens, regardless of their family background or personal standing, under the law [11]. In the current global pattern, education has become an important springboard for one's social status and an important part of cultural capital [5]. It is an important threshold for students of all levels to have the same opportunity to enter famous universities. The reform of "college entrance examination" has now turned to an equal way of education, that is, considering internal differences and environmental differences. According to the current reform, educational equity is achieved by giving priority in the allocation of enrollment plans to the central and western provinces (regions with inadequate financial, educational, and cultural resources). They want to create rural-specific programmes and laws that enable migrant workers' children to take part in college admission exams with other local students. This is their goal. In other words, students from all socioeconomic backgrounds have equal access to higher education at premier institutions. Make all levels of society more interdependent and capable of progressing together. College admission exams have made significant progress in China's reform of its higher education system, which has resulted in a more equitable society.

5 Conclusion This paper examines China's higher education system to visualize its fairness among social and economic strata. On the one hand, there is the issue of social reproduction, while on the other there are questions about the equity of China's higher education system. The system of higher education in China is resolving the issue of unequal resource distribution, and individuals of all socioeconomic classes are progressively gaining the chance to use social, cultural, and economic resources more equitably. In addition to political and geographical variables, these elements have various and complicated consequences on existing social class disparities [12]. The continuously evolving system of college admission examinations in China plays a significant role in fostering social equality by offering students from all regions, races, and socioeconomic groups with equal and fair chances and a high standard of higher education. Taking into account the current stratification of society, various areas and student groups should implement distinct professional education programmes. The college entrance test system should be revised and enhanced in order to create a more varied education system for various groups of applicants. It is necessary to enhance kids' social awareness and establish a culture that protects and values their self-confidence and self-esteem at all grade levels. The research on educational equity focuses on a more in-depth evaluation of the agenda for sustained reform of higher education policies.

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