

# Problems and Solutions in Chinese Basic Education

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**Abstract:** *The study combs the achievements and existing problems of Chinese basic education development since the reform and opening up 40 years ago, and based on the theory of educational equity and equalization of public services, and compares the data released by the Ministry of Education in 2012 and 2021, it can be found that compulsory education the number of schools in the stage has been reduced, the enrollment and enrollment have increased to a certain extent, and the nine-year compulsory education consolidation rate has increased; the gross enrollment rate in high school has increased by 6.4%, full-time teachers have increased significantly, and the student-teacher ratio has been further optimized. This study found that the key issues of Chinese basic education are mainly in the aspects of education evaluation, teacher team construction, and digital empowerment education. Therefore, it is proposed to implement the evaluation content of basic education under the guidance of the "Overall Plan for Deepening Educational Evaluation Reform in the New Era"; Guided by the policy of public-funded normal students, improve the quality of teacher supply; take the digitalization of education as the guide, to accelerate the development of basic education and other policy recommendations, so as to promote the development of basic education in China.*

**Keywords:** Basic Education; Educational Evaluation; Teacher Supply; Digitalization of Education.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Basic education is the foundational project for the realization of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, a key area for the development of fair and quality education, and the core content of basic public education services. Basic education is the foundation project for improving the quality of the nation, and it is the cause of cultivating people. It is in the basic and leading position in the national education system and plays a vital role in improving the people's comprehensive quality and promoting the all-round development of people. Since 2012, the development of basic education in China has made great progress, but there is still a lot of room for improvement, and there are many problems and challenges.

## 2. CHAPTER ONE RESEARCH BACKGROUND

### 2.1 Problems Existing in the Development of Basic Education in My Country

Over the past 40 years of reform and opening up, basic education has made historic achievements in China. However, in the face of the challenges of social development and international competition in the 21st century, there are still some key problems, mainly in the training objectives of basic education, education system, curriculum content, teaching methods, Management systems and mechanisms, teaching staff, etc.

At different stages of schooling, there are different problems and dilemmas. Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, the three-year action plan for preschool education has achieved initial results. A public service system for preschool education with wide coverage, basic guarantees, and quality has been basically established, which has effectively alleviated the problem of "difficulty in entering kindergartens." Solve outstanding problems such as insufficient supply of inclusive resources, shortage of preschool teachers, urgent need to improve the construction of the teaching team, the quality of the teaching team needs to be improved, and the low salary level of teachers. At present, Chinese compulsory education is facing a serious gap between urban and rural areas. The quality of education in big cities is much higher than that in rural areas. It is necessary to vigorously promote the integrated development of compulsory education in urban and rural areas, so that compulsory education can transition from "basic balance" to "high-quality balance". Establishing "universal, diversified and characteristic" middle school education is necessary for the development of high-quality and fair education in China.

### 2.2 Theoretical Perspective

Existing studies have conducted in-depth analysis and research on the field of basic education in China through the three theories of education equity theory and public service equalization theory.

Equity theory, also known as social comparison theory, was first proposed by American psychologist John Stacie Adams in 1965, and the representative is Coleman. Henry Levin pointed out that educational equity has four distinctive features, namely equal educational opportunities for people with the same educational needs; equal educational opportunities for students from different social backgrounds; educational outcomes are equal; the impact of education on life chances is equal. The essence of fairness in basic education lies in whether the distribution of basic education resources is fair. Among individuals and family groups, the distribution of educational benefits is not determined by factors such as money and status, but by factors such as

development rights, development opportunities, and development conditions.

The equalization of public services means that citizens enjoy equal public services in urban and rural areas and between regions. In China, there are two imbalances in economic development, one is the imbalance between urban and rural areas, and the other is the imbalance in economic development between the eastern and central and western regions. Starting from the overall social interests, evaluating the level of public services in various regions is conducive to promoting the equalization of basic public services. We always analyze problems from the three levels of opportunity, process, and result, which can also be applied to the field of equalization of public services. Equalization of opportunity refers to whether citizens have equal opportunities to enjoy public services, and equalization of process refers to the enjoyment of all citizens. The distribution process of public services realizes social fairness and justice. The equalization of results depends on whether the experience and satisfaction of people enjoying public services are equal.

### 3. BASIC EDUCATION DATA

The development of basic education can be seen from the data of primary school, middle school and high school. In 2012, there were 282,000 compulsory education schools across the country, enrolling 32,854,300 students; 144,589,600 students; the consolidation rate of nine-year compulsory education was 91.8%; and there were 9,089,800 full-time teachers. 228,600 primary schools; 17.1466 million students; 96.9590 million students; 16.4156 million graduates; 99.85% net enrollment rate of primary school-age children; 5.5385 million primary school staff; 5.5855 million full-time teachers; qualified primary school full-time teachers The rate is 99.81%; the pupil-teacher ratio is 17.36:1. 53,200 junior high schools (including 49 vocational junior high schools); 15.7077 million students; 47.6306 million students; 16.6078 million graduates; 102.1% gross enrollment rate; 88.4% junior high school graduates; 393.91 junior high school staff 3,504,400 full-time teachers; 99.12% of junior high school full-time teachers have qualified academic qualifications; the student-teacher ratio is 13.59:1. There are a total of 26,868 schools for high school education; 15.9874 million students are enrolled; 45.9528 million students are in school; the gross enrollment rate for high school is 85.0%. There are 13,509 ordinary high schools; 8.4461 million students, 24.6717 million students, 7.9150 million graduates, 2.4626 million faculty members, 1.595 million full-time teachers, student-teacher ratio 15.47:1, full-time teacher qualification rate 96.44%.

In 2021, there will be a total of 529,300 schools of all types and levels across the country, with 291 million students and 18,443,700 full-time teachers. There are 207,200 schools in the compulsory education stage. The compulsory education stage enrolled 34.8802 million students, 158 million students, and 10.5719 million full-time teachers. The nine-year compulsory education consolidation rate was 95.4%. 154,300 ordinary primary schools; 17.8258 million primary school students; 108 million students, an increase of 545,800 over the previous year; 17.1803 million graduates; 6.6008 million full-time primary school teachers; student-teacher ratio 16.33:1; The pass rate of teachers' academic qualifications is 99.98%; the proportion of full-time teachers with a bachelor's degree or above is 70.30%. 52,900 junior high schools; 17.0544 million students enrolled in junior high schools; 50.1844 million students; 15.8715 million graduates; 3.9711 million full-time teachers in junior high school education; student-teacher ratio 12.64:1; 90.05% of the students have a bachelor degree or above. Among the students enrolled in compulsory education, there were 13.7241 million children of migrant workers who moved with them. Among them, 9.8411 million are enrolled in primary schools and 3.883 million are enrolled in junior high schools. The gross enrollment rate in high school is 91.4%. There are 14,600 ordinary high schools nationwide; 9,049,500 ordinary high schools enroll 9,049,500 students, 26,050,300 students, 7,802,300 graduates, 2,028,300 full-time teachers for ordinary high school education, the ratio of students to teachers is 12.84:1, and the qualification rate of full-time teachers is 98.82%.

By comparing the education statistics in 2012 and 2021, it can be found that the number of schools in the compulsory education stage has been reduced, the enrollment and students in school have increased to a certain extent, and the consolidation rate of nine-year compulsory education has increased; the gross enrollment rate in high school has increased by 6.4 %, full-time teachers have increased significantly, and the student-teacher ratio has been further optimized. Through the continuous implementation of the compulsory education consolidation rate and the promotion of the popularization strategy of high school education, the popularization level of basic education in my country has been significantly improved.

### 4. CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS IN BASIC EDUCATION PRACTICE

Through ten years of hard work, the popularization of basic education in China has been significantly improved, and the popularization of compulsory education has reached the average level of high-income countries in the world. But there are still some challenges and problems. The key issues of basic education are mainly in the aspects of education evaluation, teacher team construction and education informatization and digitization.

#### 4.1 The Reform of Basic Education Evaluation Needs to Be Deepened

Educational evaluation policy is the "weather vane" of educational evaluation reform. Since the reform and opening up, Chinese

educational evaluation policy has experienced four periods: standardized construction, diversification and improvement, scientific reform, and systematic integration. There are many educational evaluation issues related to basic education, including basic education school evaluation, teacher evaluation and student evaluation. The seriousness of the evaluation problems of basic education schools is mainly determined by the importance of the evaluation object's responsibility and role in the development and growth of teachers and students, the overall education and even economic and social development, and the vulnerability of its relative status in the evaluation. The external dominance, the "three evaluations and one investigation" of loan sharks, and the administrativeization of "promoting construction with evaluation" replaced the professionalization of "assisting construction with evaluation". The management system and management system are not sound enough, the regulations and development plans formulated have not reached the due strategic level, and the necessary norms and professionalism are lacking. Teacher evaluation problems in basic education are mainly manifested in the teachers' subjectivity in daily education and teaching activities, the wide range of evaluation objects, the complexity of the evaluation process, and the evaluation results. There are many problems in the evaluation of teachers' professional titles and performance evaluation, which can not only fully reflect the overall direction of the school's teaching work, but also directly affect their attentive education and evaluation of students, and indirectly affect Employer's evaluation.

#### **4.2 The Allocation of Basic Education Teacher Resources Needs to Be Continuously Optimized**

The effective allocation of high-quality teacher resources is an important way to achieve "fair and quality" education in China. Schools in remote mountain villages still face shortage of teachers and difficulty in recruiting, and there is a contrasting shortage of teachers in county- level primary schools. Generally speaking, county primary schools have basically reached a balanced level, but just looking at a certain value may be "averaged" by other data, and more data is needed to dig out some local and specific problems, rather than just looking at the whole , ignoring the fact that there is a shortage of teachers in some remote mountainous areas. The difference in the professional title level of urban and rural teachers has narrowed, but it is more difficult to evaluate and hire rural teachers. Existing studies have shown that there is not much difference in the level of teachers' professional titles between urban and rural areas, which shows that in recent years, county schools have vigorously promoted the biased policy of giving priority to teachers' professional titles, which has promoted the level of teachers' professional titles to a certain extent. However, according to actual research, although there is no significant difference in the level of professional titles of teachers between urban and rural areas, teachers still encounter some difficulties in the evaluation and employment of professional titles in educational practice. Teachers' satisfaction with teachers' school environment is still low. Among them, there is a significant difference in the school environment satisfaction of urban and rural primary school teachers, and the average level of environmental satisfaction of urban and rural junior high school teachers is relatively low; urban and rural junior high school teachers have a significant difference in school environment satisfaction , and the satisfaction of junior high school teachers in county towns is lower than that of junior high school teachers, but the mean value of urban and rural junior high school teachers' satisfaction with school environment is lower horizontally.

#### **4.3 The Digital Level of Basic Education Informatization Needs to Be Significantly Improved**

The survey conducted by Yu Siyan et al. on 29 districts (counties) in 10 cities in Guangdong Province shows that in the process of promoting the high-quality and balanced development of compulsory education, there are still uncoordinated development mechanisms, low level of integration of technology and classroom teaching, and "high-quality" education informatization in Guangdong Province. Insufficient construction of digital teaching resources, imperfect information training system and other problems. Zhu Zhiting and others studied the digital transformation of education in Shanghai, led the development of a series of standards for Shanghai's education digital base as the No. 1 project of education digital transformation, and participated in the construction of three pilot areas in Baoshan District, Changning District and Xuhui District. Through preliminary research and practice, it is found that information network, platform system, digital resources, smart campus, innovative applications, and trustworthy security are the six key directions of the new infrastructure of education informatization. As basic education in an important field of people's livelihood, although its informatization work has been vigorously promoted and achieved certain results, the research on its digital transformation is still relatively weak, and relevant theoretical research and path guidance are urgently needed.

To sum up, the key issues of Chinese basic education are mainly in the aspects of education evaluation, teacher team construction and informatization and digital empowerment education.

### **5. COUNTERMEASURES AND SUGGESTIONS FOR CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS**

#### **5.1 Guided by the "Overall Plan for Deepening Educational Evaluation Reform in the New Era", Implement the Evaluation Content of Basic Education**

For the educational evaluation of basic education, countermeasures and suggestions are put forward mainly from the perspective of school evaluation and teacher evaluation. First of all, school evaluation corresponds to institutional arrangements such as

implementing the modern division of labor and improving the modern school system, on which the success or failure of educational reform and the level of educational development depend. School evaluation should pay attention to the realization of its own planning goals, pay attention to the internal governance structure and effectiveness, especially to strengthen the establishment and improvement of the internal quality assurance system, and further establish the main body of school education quality. Only by strengthening the internal quality system can we avoid unnecessary external intervention and reduce external intervention, so that there will be no quality management vacuum. Secondly, teacher evaluation corresponds to the teaching process of qualified teachers, which is the basic way of education quality, and the ideal characteristics of graduates must also be realized through teacher evaluation. Any concept of educational evaluation reform is meaningless if it cannot be successfully spread to the classroom through front-line teachers and change the learning outcomes of students. If classroom evaluation is not handled properly, it is easy to cause great damage to students' learning and growth.

### **5.2 Guided by the Policy of Publicly Funded Normal Students, Improve the Quality of Teacher Supply**

Some scholars have put forward a series of suggestions to solve the problem of rural teacher shortage. First of all, "precisely approve" the number of teachers based on the school rather than the region (cities, counties, districts). Secondly, implement the urban and rural "new dual-track system" teacher staffing standards to solve the shortage of rural teachers. Finally, increase the flexibility of teacher staffing to solve the shortage of front-line teachers caused by the increase in the school-age population brought about by the changes in the national family planning policy, especially the second and third births of female teachers. Some scholars proposed to further improve the teacher personnel system and establish a benign rural teacher flow mechanism; expand local training units and set up a graded enrollment structure; expand the scope of policies to achieve a reasonable match between the supply and demand structure of teachers; strengthen educational support and improve rural education. career attractiveness of teachers. In addition, from the perspective of teacher supply, normal students are an important source of supplementary teachers. It is necessary to implement the policy of publicly funded normal students and the "Excellent Teacher Program" policy to provide high-quality teachers for underdeveloped areas in the central and western regions.

### **5.3 Guided by Education Digitization, Accelerate the Development of Basic Education**

First of all, we must strengthen the construction of new infrastructure. Promote the application of new generation information technologies such as 5G, big data, cloud computing, artificial intelligence and other new generation information technologies at the regional and school levels, establish educational big data warehouses, promote the integration and sharing of educational data, build educational brains, and promote data integration as a whole. Integrate and establish data application and analysis models for students, teachers and schools. Secondly, cultivate new capabilities based on digital capabilities; in order to adapt to social digital reforms and adapt to a rapidly changing world, it is key to innovate the talent training model and cultivate the digital capabilities of new students. Finally, establish a sustainable development culture and multi-sectoral cooperation mechanism. The digital transformation of education is a process of all elements, the whole process, the whole business, and the whole field of digitalization. It is necessary to establish a continuous improvement culture, coordinate the relationship between planning, construction and maintenance and updating, establish a continuous attention and investment mechanism, and promote organizations and schools to establish a continuous improvement awareness.

To sum up, to solve the key problems of basic education in China mainly through the evaluation policy to guide the evaluation of education in the new era, a series of policies for public-funded normal students to promote the construction of teachers, and the digital transformation of education to improve the quality of basic education.

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