

# On the Allopatry of National College Entrance Exam in China: The Root, Policy and Strategy

Shi Zhang

**Abstract**—This paper aims to introduce the allopatry of national college entrance examination which allow migrant students enter senior high schools and take college entrance exam where they live, identifies the reasons affect the implementation of this policy in the Chinese context. Most of China's provinces and municipalities recently have announced new policies regarding national college entrance exams for non-local students. The paper conducts SWOT analysis reveals the opportunities, strength, weakness and challenges of the scheme, so as to discuss the implementation strategies from the perspectives of idea and institution. The research findings imply that the government should take a more positive attitude toward relaxing the allopatry of NCEE policy restrictions, and promote the reform household registration policy and NCEE policy with synchronous operations. Higher education institutions should explore the diversification of enrollment model; the government should issue the authority of universities and colleges to select elite migrant students beyond the restrictions of NCEE. To suit reform policies to local conditions, the big cities such as Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou should publish related compensate measures for children of migrant workers access to higher vocational colleges with tuition fee waived.

**Keywords**—College entrance examination, higher education, education policy, education equality.

## I. INTRODUCTION

EQUAL opportunity for higher education is the mainstream progressive spirit of the modern society. Universal Declaration of Human Rights declared "Everyone has the right to education. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit." According to China's Education Law, all students may enjoy equal rights in pursuing higher education. Chinese government has approved an education reform plan for next decade (2010-2020) which promises to give students fairer access to quality education, with more public education resources to be arranged for rural and ethnic areas.

"The Allopatry of National College Entrance Exam" means migrant students can sit for the national college entrance exam in where they live now or their hometowns. According to the "Report on China's Migrant Population Development" released by the National Population and Family Planning Commission, statistical data shows China has 260 million flowing population, with the number of 27 million children of migrant workers. Because of the household registration

system, so far, children of migrant workers can attend primary school and middle school in the city where their parents work and live, but they have to go back to places where they have a permanent residence permit, to enter senior high schools and sit college entrance exams.

It has become a public concern that migrant children do not have access to education and cannot receive as good an education as do urban children in the cities. If the government couldn't solve this issue, there will be millions of migrant students in a diploma of accessing higher education with injustice and unequal. The Ministry of Education recently urged local education authorities to issue plans by the end of 2013 to enable the children of migrant workers to sit for the National College Entrance Exam where they live. More provinces and municipalities have issued college matriculation policy for migrant children and announced education reforms that would allow migrant students to enter senior high schools and take college entrance exam locally.

## II. THE ROOT OF THE ALLOPATRY OF COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION

Deng Xiaoping rehabilitated teachers' and students' social status and resumed pre-cultural revolution's higher educational model in 1977, the National College Entrance Exam was restored, about 5.7 million candidates took the exams and about 270,000 were admitted to higher education in the same year [1]. Since 1980s, Deng Xiaoping's path of opening up and economic reform has stimulated many migrant workers flowed from poverty villages to advanced cities like Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and other provincial capitals, where they have made great contribution to regional rapid economic growth.

What is a good life? To most migrant workers, education matters the most. Chinese migrant families struggle for equal educational rights in national college entrance exam and eager to access to high quality higher education resources in the advanced cities. Their contributions to the city are no less than those who have residence permits here, why can't their children have the equal rights as their peers? In order to benefit the society and appeal for more equal opportunities for accessing to higher education, both the central and local governments, students and parents, mass media and the public began to concern with the matriculation policies of migrant students recent years.

The purpose of higher education policy is to increase and distribute the social benefit. College entrance examination policy should consider the benefit of individual, as well as protect and promote the benefits of the region and the higher

Shi Zhang, PhD candidate, is with the Personnel Division, Dalian University of Technology, Dalian, 116024 China (e-mail: zhangshi@dlut.edu.cn).

education. The interests of the society should be efficiently satisfied and developed, while the distribution of social benefits should be more fair and justice. The former college entrance examination policy tended to promote social interests more efficiency and somehow ignored the justice of social benefits on some aspects. This is the policy root of enable migrant workers children to take the college entrance examination in the city, aimed at the equality of education system.

The scheme of allopathic college entrance examination is creative, but quite difficult for local government to implement specific policies [2]. What drives conflicts on the policy of migrant students to sit college entrance exam in cities, of course, is the severe competition of the national college entrance examination system and the household registration system in China. The specific reasons of this issue are as follows:

#### *A. The Lack of High Quality Educational Resources*

The severe competition for college enrollment arises from the lack of high quality educational resources. High quality resources of higher education are unbalanced in regional allocation; and the problem comes with the disparity between the regional supply and demand in Chinese higher education. Figures provided by the Beijing education commission indicate that about 400,000 migrant children were studying at primary and middle schools in Beijing in 2011. Only about 10,000 stayed on for senior high school there, and the rest returned to their hometowns to take college entrance examination or left school to find jobs [3]. The policy of allopathic college entrance examination will bring problems if a large number of migrant populations flow into Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and other international metropolis.

#### *B. The Level of Regional Development of Higher Education*

With the acceleration of higher education, China runs a huge system in the world, which has 30% gross attendance rate and the scale of 33,250,000 students in the number of 2,762 higher education institutions. Regional development gaps, Urban-rural gaps of higher education exist between provinces. Based on the relative research, the level of higher educational development is closely related to the regional economic status. The influence factors of higher education opportunity are economy, population, and the division of the education cost. The imbalance of economic development and income gap are the fundamental reason of opportunity inequality of higher education. For instance, Shanghai, the international metropolis owns abundant higher education resources, there are 34 universities located in Shanghai with 70% gross attendance rate of higher education. While there are only 10 universities located in Zhengzhou, with 23.66% gross attendance rate where the competition is intense due to big number of students and high admittance thresholds.

#### *C. The Bias of Colleges Recruit Fractional Line*

Colleges recruit fractional line is not unified between different regions; the recruit fractional lines of local universities are lower than that in other province. For example, Peking and Tsinghua University in Beijing, which often enroll many more local students than those from other provinces, while the levels of required scores for locals are much lower. In Shanghai, Fudan university, which is a prestigious research university, lowest admission scores line of 2013 enrollment of college entrance examination, Shanghai is 497, Hubei province is 654, while as a student in Shandong province, he need to pass the lowest admission scores line 684. So many non-Shanghai migrant students eager to enter prestigious high schools of Shanghai that means they can be enrolled by universities and colleges of Shanghai more convenient and easier. These discrepancies are prompting some parents to move to big cities, and acquire local residence permits by any means necessary, to better their children's education.

### III. THE POLICY OF THE ALLOPATRY OF COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION

The migrant children's education policy can be divided into three parts: funding and school access policy, equal opportunity policy and school support and social integration policy. This paper is focus on the school access policy.

TABLE I  
RELATED POLICIES FOR MIGRANT STUDENTS TO TAKE COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAM IN CITIES

Province	Policy Restrictions	Time
Beijing	Parents have full-time job for six years and have contributed social insurance for six consecutive years; Migrant children have completed three-year high school study in Beijing can access to higher vocational colleges.	2014
Shanghai	Shanghai residence permits.	2014
Guangdong	Guangdong residence permits.	2016
Zhejiang	Migrant students have completed three-year high school study in Zhejiang.	2013
Jiangsu	Migrant students have completed three-year high school study; parents have legal and stable employments and residence.	2013
Shandong	Migrant students have completed three-year of high school study in Shandong.	2014
Hunan	Migrant students have completed three-year of high school; parents have residence permits.	2013
Chongqing	Migrant students who have completed three years of high school study; parents have full-time jobs for over three years; parents have legal and stable employments and residence.	2013
Liaoning	Migrant students have completed three-year high school study in Liaoning; parents have legal and stable employments and residence.	2013
Henan	Migrant students have completed three-years of high school study in Henan; parents have legal and stable employments and residence.	2013
Sichuan	Migrant students have two-years of high school study in Sichuan; parents have legal and stable employments and residence.	2014
Jiangxi	Migrant students have one-year high school study experience in Jianxi.	2013
Ningxia	Parents have full-time job and residence for three to six years and have contributed social insurance for three consecutive years; Migrant children have completed three-year high school study and have appropriate scores of high school academic level exam.	2013
Qinghai	Unreleased	-
Tibet	Unreleased	-

More provinces and municipalities have issued college matriculation policy for migrant children and announced education reforms that would allow migrant children to enter senior high schools and take college entrance exams locally. Table I shows the policy restrictions of some provinces and municipalities for migrant students to sit college entrance exam in cities [4].

According to policies and plans of each provinces and municipalities, the requirements for the allopatry of NCEE are varies between provinces. A growing number of migrant students in the school will be allowed to take the college entrance exams within two years, while in some regions such as Beijing, Shanghai and Guangdong, which has a large number of migrant workers, students will still need to wait some time to fully benefit from new policies and rules. Some regions only require the local education experience of migrant students (as Zhejiang, Shandong, Jiangxi). Some regions added the requirement of parents' employment and residence (as Chongqing, Liaoning, Sichuan). While in Beijing and Ningxia, migrant students can only access to higher vocational colleges.

The year of 2013 is the first year of implement the policy of allopatry of national college entrance exam, the statistical data of local education authorities shows the government should take a more positive attitude toward relaxing the NCEE restrictions. For example, Jiangsu and Zhejiang are coastal economically developed provinces in China which has a large migrant population. There are 451,000 students took the 2013 college entrance exams in Jiangsu, less than 0.1% of them (number is 347) are migrant students. There are about 11,000 migrant students in Zhejiang, because of the policy restrictions; only 984 migrant students took the college entrance exams in Zhejiang in the summer of 2013.

#### IV. ON THE STRATEGY OF THE ALLOPATRY OF COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMINATION

The paper conducts SWOT analysis reveals the opportunities, strength, weakness and challenges of the scheme, and discusses the future implementation strategies from the perspectives of idea and institution.

##### A. Strength

The allopatry of NCEE can increase access of higher education, allocate education resources rationally, that would solve the problem of opportunity inequality of higher education on some aspects. The allopatry of NCEE allows children of migrant workers to enter senior high schools and take college entrance exams in cities, which can significantly decrease the number of left-behind generation and solve some related social issue.

##### B. Weakness

The allopatry of NCEE is not only directly influence the access of higher education, the policy also closely connected with the stability politics, the development of economy, the allocation of education resource, the direction of employment. If lacking of other supporting policies, it will increased operation cost of the institution, may caused institutional disequilibrium and the disorder of population flow. The allopatry of NCEE may cause population pressure on education resource centralized cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and it's more difficult for these big cities to implement and operate this new policy.

##### B. Opportunity

Chinese government has approved an education reform plan for next decade (2010-2020) which promises to give students fairer access to quality education, which considered being a big opportunity to promote the relaxing of the allopatry of NCEE restrictions. The Ministry of Education also appointed Shandong Province, Hunan Province and Chongqing

Municipality as pilot areas for the loosening of registration requirements. However, the public expressed doubts that the three areas were renowned for heavy competition, and that they themselves were mainly emigrant areas. While we won't deny the experiences of three pilot areas will benefit the future reform of more provinces and municipalities.

#### D. Threat

Local government need to meet the claim of different interest groups on this issue. The new policies definitely reduce the benefit of local interest groups, such as local students and their parents; some stakeholders may block the reform and put stress on the implement of new policy.

TABLE II  
SWOT ANALYSIS OF THE ALLOPATRY NCEE

Strengths	Weaknesses
To increase access of higher education and education equality; To allocate education resources rationally; To decrease the number of left-behind generation and solve related social issue;	Unilateral policy breakthrough limitations; Difficulty of policy implementation and operation;
Opportunities	Threats
The 2010-2020 outline planning national long-term education reform and development; The national education reform pilot area;	Path dependence on NCEE; Local interest groups may block the reform;

The SO strategy is the ideal implementation strategy of the allopatry of NCEE, it could combine the advantages and opportunities, so as to promote the process of education reform [3].

The priority strategies are as follows:

Chinese government should use the internal advantage of institution and response to external public opinion by the innovation of education institution. Special attention should be focused on those policy areas not effectively implemented and more support should be directed to those migrant students who are more disadvantaged [5]. Chinese government should take a more positive attitude toward relaxing the allopatry of NCEE restrictions, and promote the reform household registration policy and NCEE policy with synchronous operations, so as to enhance education justice and equal.

Higher education institutions should explore the diversification of enrollment models; the government should issue the authority of the universities and colleges to select elite migrant students beyond the restrictions of NCEE. The secondary education institutions especially senior high schools should pay more attention on enhancing the learning performance of immigrant students.

Considering the diversified condition of local education, Chinese big cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou and Jiangsu should increase the education funding and implement compensate measures for children of migrant workers access to higher vocational colleges with tuition fee waived.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Massive expansion of university rolls causes problems for China. [http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200706/06/eng20070606\\_381598.htm](http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200706/06/eng20070606_381598.htm). June 06, 2007.
- [2] ZHAI Yueling., "On the Root of the Immigration Policy of Entrance Exam in the university" in *China Higher Education Research*, 2012. Vol. 7, pp. 25-29.
- [3] Web source: <http://www.ebeijing.gov.cn/BeijingInformation>.
- [4] Web source: [http://www.gov.cn/zwgk/2013-01/04/content\\_2275996.htm](http://www.gov.cn/zwgk/2013-01/04/content_2275996.htm)
- [5] XIAO Jun-fei, LIU Da-wei. "SWOT Analysis of Allopatric College Entrance Exam: Feasibility and Implementation Strategies" in *Fudan Education Forum* 2012. Vol.10. No.6, pp 70-73.