

An Evaluation of the Chinese College Admission Examination System from the Standpoint of Equity in Public Policy

Jinlin Ma^{1,a,*}

¹Beijing Normal University - Hong Kong Baptist University United International College, Zhuhai,
Guangzhou Province, 519087, China
a. q030024047@mail.uic.edu.cn

*corresponding author

Abstract: The provincial education examination institution mandate system for China's college entrance examination was approved by the relevant national department or is implementing an independent proposition. It is uniformly dispatched by the Ministry of Education and implemented and managed by the provincial enrollment and examination committees. Its nature dictates that social justice must exist. The battle for college entrance exams has grown more intense as the number of exams for admission to colleges continues to rise. Then came the sociological phenomenon of immigrants taking college admission exams. This article will use the phenomenon of "college entrance examination immigration" as an illustration to explain the need for its public policy for the equitable distribution of social value through a thorough analysis of college entrance examination admissions. The fairness of the new college entrance exam system must be continually improved. To take into account the interests of all parties and maximize the overall efficacy of public policy, social values must be distributed fairly.

Keywords: education equity, public policy, equity, college entrance examination immigration, social equity

1. Introduction

It is crucial to decide what sort of model will be used to distribute educational chances due to the finite nature of resources and the direct correlation between how they are distributed and people's future social class and potential for upward mobility. The college entrance test is the hub connecting high schools and universities and is strongly tied to the distribution of higher education entry possibilities. It is a basic education examination system with specific Chinese characteristics [1]. The difference between the admission score lines of important institutions in different provinces is expanding as the national college entrance test adopts a provincial quota admission policy and with the developing disparity between regional economic and educational growth in recent years. As a result, there are increasingly compelling arguments against the student admissions quota approach. Immigration related to college admission exams was also a result of its policy [2]. At present, the scope of academic research on the college entrance examination system is expanding and becoming more and more detailed.

Although there are many different definitions and differences among them, there is a general consensus that public policy is about promoting and distributing the rules of social value. According to David Easton, public policy is the authoritative distribution of the values of the whole society. According to Professor Chen Qingyun, a famous expert on public policy, “public policy is a code of conduct formulated by the government in the process of effectively enhancing and fairly distributing social interests through the selection and integration of various interests in society according to the goals of a specific period.” [2]. These two definitions indicate that public policy is developed around the production and distribution of social values, and the core is value production and distribution, so value analysis constitutes an important branch of public policy research. Education policy belongs to public policy, and “in the education policy activities, the question of value has a special core position, especially in the era of social transformation and education reform.” The issue of value in activities is becoming increasingly complex and prominent. How to analyze and study the many value problems in educational policy activities is an important content of the theoretical construction of our educational policy analysis. When the educational policy value choice is wrong, the value cannot be realized because the cost of realizing the value is too high. When it is high, it means that this set of policies is risky. The education system plays a fundamental role in the national security system. The key role of guidance is that educational outcomes are sluggish. The problems exposed by this system are not as obvious and direct as the economic and military problems, which easily paralyze people and lack awareness of crises. Therefore, this paper analyzes the value of the college entrance examination reform from the perspective of risk. There are many perspectives on value analysis, among which the most basic aspects are value choice, legitimacy, effectiveness, and feasibility of public policy.

Only by reviewing and studying the historical evolution of college entrance examination and grasping its intrinsic values can it provide beneficial measures for continuous system reform. How can the issues brought on by the provincial quota admission policy be understood and resolved? How can the fairness of college admission exams be ensured in underdeveloped economic areas? When the college admission test is changed in the future, we will have to deal with this issue. In order to generate some concepts or findings that have guiding relevance to reality, this article will conduct a preliminary investigation of these topics.

2. Problems under the College Entrance Examination System

In the 1980s, the term “college entrance examination immigrants” first appeared. Immigrants who take college admission exams typically come from two different sorts of migratory zones. The first is the places where colleges and universities are concentrated, such as Beijing, Shanghai and other municipalities with high economic level and high concentration of colleges and universities but low admission scores. Secondly, remote areas, such as Hainan, Xinjiang, Qinghai and other places, have preferential policies for college entrance examination enrollment indicators, and the admission score is relatively low [3]. A notification demanding strict scrutiny of the registration qualification of candidates for the college entrance examination was jointly published by the Ministries of Education and Public Security in 2005. Candidates who submit fraudulent information, repeatedly register in other provinces, or register through erroneous residency transfer processes shall be rejected from the exam or admission, and those who have already enrolled should be expelled from the school once this information is discovered. Over 9000 immigrants took the college entrance exam in Hainan Province in 2005, accounting for nearly one-fourth of the more than 44000 candidates who took the test. This information was reported by a media outlet prior to the test. Only 21 days before the college entrance exam, on May 16, 2005, the Hainan provincial administration abruptly stated that 338 applicants who had “two places to register” had been rejected from the exam. The Hainan Provincial Government has sequentially received the urgent responses from the Ministry of Education and the

General Administration of Letters and Calls of the People's Republic of China for emergency coordination. It was determined to reinstate the qualifications of these candidates after the urgent joint meeting of the college entrance test in Hainan Province was conducted, although stringent limits were also established. However, this is not a coincidental phenomena and the tsunami of Hainan's college entrance exams has momentarily calmed [4]. Some test-takers took advantage of the variations in the college entrance exam's cutoff scores and the high and low admission rates in different locations to sit for the exam in regions with relatively low cutoff scores and high admission rates through household registration transfers or migration, giving rise to the so-called phenomenon of college entrance examination immigration.

3. The Role of Public Policy

Relevant experts and academics study public policy from the perspective of social value because they believe that public policy is a concentrated representation of social value. Public policy is actually formed by a process in which different interest groups input their own interest requirements into the system for formulating policy, and the policy topic then balances and modifies the intricate interest linkages in accordance with their own interest requirements [5]. According to David Easten's methodical examination of politics, public policy is the result of the political system's authoritative judgments and the distribution of value of the entire society. According to this definition, public policy is an activity that distributes values according to political principles and has the qualities of authority and compulsion. The value described here ought to include all beneficial resources available to the entire society. The fundamental role of the government is to authoritatively distribute wealth throughout society so that it can become a matter of public concern and function as effectively as possible. The most significant method of distributing values by the government is public policy [6]. In other words, the route from power to law and finally to rights truly governs how public policy is carried out. This method, which places the law at its core and the government at its core, seeks to strike a balance between the public interest and individual interest. Public order and social welfare are the values it upholds. The terms value and interest are somewhat interchangeable. If value and interest are to be firmly differentiated, value should either be a higher concept or incorporate interest [7]. In contrast to interests, the concept of value places an emphasis on how human initiative and the fulfillment of human needs by objects work together. In fact, the existing national college entrance examination policy is to reflect the fairness of college entrance examination and education.

4. The Suggestions on Educational Equity

It is simple to create visible interest groups and potential interest groups since modern society has highly diverse interests. Due to their greater access to political and financial resources, their preferences is easier to be taken into consideration. On the other hand, certain individuals or groups within the public lack the financial and political means to succeed. It is challenging to value them and accommodate their interests. These groups are particularly weak. The government must impose restrictions on powerful groups, especially those made up of a small number of individuals, and must protect weaker collectives with legal protections. After taking into account several pointless elements, it is unjust to divide the various entrance score lines according to household registration [8]. Examinees with low scores but strong household registration take up a small number of admissions, pushing out other examinees with high scores, which is inefficient and not conducive to the best use of resources for higher education. This inefficiency and injustice, for instance, have increased as a result of individual's decision to allow the children of prominent financial institution executives to sit for the college admission exam. It not only violates the principle of educational equity by giving children of senior financial institution executives access to the privilege of low score admission, but

it also makes it harder for high score candidates to access resources for higher education, impeding the efficient distribution of those resources [9].

China's college entrance examination system adopts a policy of quota admission by province in order to rationally adjust the country's allocation of educational resources so that students in areas with relatively low educational levels can also receive higher education. This policy is advantageous for igniting the interest of students in underprivileged areas, promoting the improvement of local educational standards, and maintaining the unity of the Chinese nation. Ethnic minority locations, such as Xinjiang, Inner Mongolia, Ningxia, and Hainan, have turned into destinations for "college entrance examination immigrants" to catch up due to the abundance of enrollment plans, high enrollment ratio, low enrollment scores, and low requirements for enrollment. The root cause of the "college entrance examination immigration" issue is the unequal distribution of educational resources across different geographic areas, which contributes to the low college entrance examination scores and admission rates in the current college entrance examination admission system. There are significant variances in matriculation score lines across the nation because our country has been executing the policy of deciding the number of admissions by provinces and regions and setting the matriculation score line for many years. Due to the lack of university enrollment quotas, it is more likely that some examinees are pursuing the objective of passing the college entrance examination, which has resulted in the occurrence that examinees have taken the college entrance examination in various locations since the mid-1980s. A surge of immigrants taking college entrance exams has emerged in society recently as the score disparity across provinces and regions has grown increasingly pronounced [10].

Education equality — the expansion and application of the value of social justice in the sphere of education — is the core concept of college entrance examination immigration. Equal educational opportunities and rights are included as two fundamental components. Fair public policies are the basis for the assurance of educational equity. Due to inadequate investment in education, there are many unjust phenomena in the distribution and utilization of educational resources. Statistics show that the national education investment is unjust, which has artificially caused some schools and universities to receive more funding for education. The tendency is particularly pronounced in less developed places. As a result, a small number of schools end up with the best management, buildings, teachers, and other resources for public education. Provinces are unevenly represented by the important universities that the state has invested in and developed. They are overly concentrated in Beijing, Shanghai, Wuhan, Guangzhou, and other cities and have access to greater resources for higher education than other locations. Various social interest groups have drawn attention to the education sector at the same time. Social resources are becoming more concentrated in top-tier colleges and universities due to the profit-driven nature of investment, widening the gap in resource distribution between institutions of higher education.

This paper makes several recommendations for addressing the unfairness of college entrance exams: To lessen regional disparities and educational gaps, the government should first create a fair funding policy and prioritize schools and marginalized groups in marginalized areas, i.e., poverty alleviation rather than supporting the best. Secondly, it needs to tighten registration regulations, raise the entry hurdle, and combat corruption. Thirdly, it ought to lessen the large variations in test results for college entrance. Increase the authority of independent examinations, as well as college and university enrollment, and modify the current national unified college entrance examination model. Fourthly, to enhance the scientific nature of educational decision-making and represent educational fairness, implement the system of educational administrative hearing and consultation, educational fairness evaluation and supervision, etc.

5. Conclusion

The policy of quota admission by province is a significant component of China's education and college entrance exam policies. To a certain extent, the current admission quota policy per province is realistic, which can realize the fairness of differences. However, because of the disparities in space arrangement between the current colleges and universities and the unbalanced regional basic education growth, there are significant regional trends in higher education enrolment, particularly with regard to deployment quota allocation, leading to a number of unfair educational phenomena and the significant variances in each province's college entrance examination admission fractional line. As the public policy that the government authority exports, it must be mindful of social justice, begin with the tenets of equality, freedom, and opportunity, and adopt the maximization of broader social interests as the primary objective. To put it another way, concern for individuals, civil rights, and social progress must be the fair value of public policy. A just and equitable society should also be a healthy, civilized community. In order to effectively realize educational equity, we must ensure that public policies adhere to the principles of fairness and equity and allocate educational resources sensibly. There is a lot of room for improvement in this paper's analysis of several difficulties that still remain. For instance, the research has limits since it cannot overcome the meristematic enrollment quota allocation of national data and information. The population data for each province does not allow for a thorough analysis of the variables limiting the fairness of the quota admission policy in each province. How to steadily improve the unfairness under the college entrance examination system is the current and future task. We need to follow the principles of prudence and stability first. But fairness and justice are always needed.

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