

China Mode of Preferential Development of Education in Ethnic Areas: Comparison and Selection

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Received 23 August 2014; accepted 29 October 2014
Published online 26 November 2014

Abstract

From the perspective of origin and way of use of the factors of production, the Chinese mode of preferential development for education in ethnic areas could be clarified into mode of “hematopoiesis”, mode of “transfusion” and mode of “immigration”. When comparing these three modes from the dimensions of feature, environment and objective, we could find that these different modes have their own advantages and disadvantages when we have different emphasis. The educational development in ethnic areas should choose a proper mode, considering the specific issues and situations, thus the objective of development could be achieved.

Key words: Ethnic areas; Preferential development of education; China mode; Comparison; Selection

Li, X., & Hu, X. F. (2014). China Mode of Preferential Development of Education in Ethnic Areas: Comparison and Selection. *Studies in Sociology of Science*, 5(4), 165-169. Available from: URL: <http://www.cscanada.net/index.php/sss/article/view/6093> DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3968/6093>

INTRODUCTION

Education is fundamentally concerned with realising the potential of every child, but an increasing social diversity presents enormous challenges for the state in terms of its commitment to providing an appropriate education for all. Factors such as ethnicity, disability and material deprivation are associated with inequality, social exclusion and the risk of low educational attainment. Diversity also

reflects divergent cultural values and norms. In responding to the challenges posed by diversity, public education authorities are to some extent constrained by individual or group rights (Harris, 2007). Many countries attaches great importance to ethnic education development, such as the United States take economy and cultural compensation to support blacks and other ethnic education, which are covering every stages, Project Head Start (1965), School Desegregation, Project Follow-Through, Compensatory Education Program, The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965), Education Consolidation and Improvement Act (1981), Hawkins-Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988, No Child Left Behind Act (2001).

In China, the strategy of granting ethnic areas with preferential development of education has become a social consensus and conscious desire, but with the transformation of social-economic development and the acceleration of urbanization, the question of preferential development of education in Chinese ethnic areas is not simply about input of money, personnel training and counterpart aids, etc.. We ought to take modes of development as a starting point, tease out and rethink systematically the policies, and further we should think about this: In a new historical period, how could we tackle the practical demands derived from educational divergences and avoid the tendency of homogenization for educational preferential development when we pursue equality of education in these areas. This thinking has an important significance, both theoretically and practically.

1. CATEGORY OF MODES OF PREFERENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN ETHNIC AREAS

Mode means method, means, way, main body of implementation of this strategy is mainly the government,

according to different criteria of classification, the modes of implementation could be classified into several cases. For instance, we have elementary education, vocational education, preschool education and higher education etc. according to the criterion of types of education; we have modes of input of funds, disposition of teachers, construction of infrastructure, institutional priority etc. according to the criterion of content of implementation, we have concrete modes like Tibet Mode, Xinjiang Mode, Inner Mongolia Mode or Southwest Mode, Northwest Mode, etc. according to the criterion of place of implementation. In this paper, we base our studies on the core issue—preferential development of education in ethnic areas, and we are more willing to concentrate on this problem: how the factors of production and resources are in the area of education are given full play in the implementation of this strategy. We venture to classify the modes of development from the perspective of origin and way of use of the factors of production, and then these three are derived: mode of “hematopoiesis”, mode of “transfusion” and mode of “immigration”.

Mode of hematopoiesis starts from inside the ethnic areas, and it addresses the issue of educational development in these areas by way of enhancing the working enthusiasm and ability of related main bodies of responsibility. This model advocates “self-reliance” for the development of education, and meanwhile it tries to create a good atmosphere for this development. Mode of transfusion makes use of comparatively advantageous resources from outside, applies various methods of aid to help the educational development in these areas. For a long time, this kind of model which seeks help from external force sees the active involvement of social welfare organizations, intermediary organs and other enterprises and institutions besides the government. Especially, due to vigorous support from comparatively developed areas, the effectiveness of implementing related laws via this mode is greatly improved. Inside the ethnic areas, for the resolvement of urban-rural gap, some positive and feasible methods of transfusion also are applied to help comparatively less developed rural areas. Mode of “immigration” is a concept that is derived from the angle of regional difference to study the implementation of laws related to the preferential development, its biggest feature is that the factors of production does not move while the recipient moves. Strictly speaking, educational immigration could be classified as “active” and “passive” in terms of the educated, also it could be classified as “government-leading” and “the educated-oriented”, as to “passive” and “the educated-oriented”, economically developed areas especially the costal developed areas should recruit students from ethnic areas who have a certain level of education, provide them with remote training and help with their employment, or the educated in ethnic areas could actively receive their education

and work in the developed areas, these are also a kind of educational immigration. But, due to the fact that the related laws mostly only make provisions as to the government’s responsibility in the process of educational development, the “immigration” mode referred to in this paper is a method of remote migration and aid which aims at helping ethnic areas with the development of education, it is government-leading with the educated being active or passive.

2. CONCRETE MANIFESTATION AND COMPARISON OF THE MODES OF PREFERENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN ETHNIC AREAS

2.1 Mode of “Hematopoiesis”

In terms of implementing related laws, the mode of hematopoiesis has the common feature which all preferential developments of education in western poverty-stricken areas share, also it embodies the ethnic areas’ own characteristics, the hematopoiesis mode the government takes in recent years mainly involves the following aspects: Firstly is hematopoiesis of teachers in these places, especially the rural areas. This involves an increased training of teachers from all levels of schools, an improvement of treatment and social status for rural teachers, an intensified training for in-service teachers and team building of bilingual teachers. Secondly is guarantee of education appropriations and improvement of teaching conditions. For example, we could take part of border construction subsidies and ethnic allowances specially to support compulsory education, operate with a mechanism of diverse investment in education at the same time, actively advocate social involvement in vocational and preschool educations in these areas, thus to enhance vitality of education. Thirdly is respect to the inherent features of education in these areas and consideration of the demands of education there. Related laws and regulations have granted these areas with corresponding flexibility and autonomy in developing education, therefore, the biggest advantage of this mode of hematopoiesis is a full play of its own autonomy, which is mainly embodied in instructional modes, education policies and selection of teaching materials.

2.2 Mode of “Transfusion”

The first aspect of this mode is supplement of teachers to these places especially rural areas and this is mainly embodied in preferential and inclining policies, etc. such as remission of tuition, improvement of treatment, reduction of entry threshold and provision of opportunity for further education. The second aspect is flow of teachers within a particular area. After Reform and Opening-up, faced with the fact that there exists a big

gap between education in urban and rural areas, relevant government departments mainly apply the method of sending volunteer teachers (particularly short-term) to rural schools in the underprivileged and ethnic areas. But in contrast, due to reasons of rural teachers' own life and work and guide of the selection mechanism of teachers in urban areas, one-way flow of teachers from rural to urban areas could be frequently seen, and this results in a strange phenomenon of "Adverse elimination". The third aspect is an inclined distribution of education resources. On the one hand is inclination of input of education resources; on the other hand is exporting of quality resources to these areas by developing ones via counterpart aids.

2.3 Mode of "Immigration"

As a mechanism of remote aid for ethnic areas educational development, the mode of "immigration" is favored by government due to its low cost and fast payoff, and some typical cases are as follows.

The first is "Xinjiang Class", "Tibet Class". Based on the actual situations of educational development in these two regions, the Chinese government decided in 1984 and 2000 respectively to launch "Xinjiang Class" and "Tibet Class" in selected inland provinces and cities, and this gave rise to a new mode which involves a directional support for ethnic education via inland forces. The launching of inland ethnic classes (schools) greatly improves the quality and quantity of education in ethnic areas, enhances the scientific and educational levels of people in these areas, and this results in a large input of

talents into ethnic areas in Tibet and Xinjiang. The second is educational immigration of ethnic minorities in Hainan. This kind of immigration makes export-oriented transfer of population possible for poverty-stricken regions or regions with harsh ecological environment. With the vigorous support of all levels of government and an integration of educational resources, local people's level of education and the quality of education are improved, and teenagers from poor and ethnic regions are able to study and work in towns. Finally, poverty could be got rid of and a local leaping development could be reached. Besides this, there is also the "High Level Minority Talents Plan" which also contributes to the local social, economic, educational development.

3. ANALYSIS OF THE MODES OF PREFERENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN ETHNIC AREAS

In practice, the implementation of this strategy of preferential development is a result of joint action of the three modes. As to specific ethnic educational issues, there is a difference in selection of and preference for specific modes. With a comparison of the three modes of dimensions of feature, environment and objective, we could find that, these different modes have their own advantages and disadvantages when we have different emphasis (Table 1).

Table 1
Comparison of the Modes of Preferential Educational Development in Ethnic Areas

| Dimensin | Emphasis | Hemtopoiesis mode | Transfusion mode | Immigration mode |
|------------|--|-------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Feature | Appropriateness | Strong | Medium | Weak |
| | Speed and effectiveness of development | Slow | Medium | Fast |
| | Sustainable | Strong | Weak | Medium |
| Environmet | Economic cost | High | Medium | Low |
| | Resistence | Strong | Medium | Weak |
| Objective | Realization of equcational of education | Strong | Medium | Strong |
| | Respect to educational differences | Strong | Medium | Weak |
| | Adaptation to level of local econmic development | Strong | Medium | Weak |

Firstly, as to dimension of feature, mode of hematopoiesis has a strong appropriateness, and to start from inside the ethnic areas to solve the problem of educational development is a fundamental method, in contrast, due to separation from local educational environment and background, mode of immigration could not fully reflect the actual demands of development of education there, thus its appropriateness is weakest of the three; but due

to the strength of economy in developed areas and their comparatively advanced educational facilities and ideas, large scales of teachers and also convenient transportation, way of talent cultivation in mode of immigration is comparatively effective, while a lot of prophase preparation and input are needed for local educational development, it takes long and the speed of development is slow, thus leaving some urgent problems difficult to resolve.

Secondly, as to the dimension of environment, because of limitation of geographical environment, constraint from economic development and influence from cultural differences in ethnic areas, the costs of infrastructure construction and staff input are comparatively high, these problems could not be solved solely by its own forces, therefore, in terms of distribution of educational resources, a collision of interests between these areas and other educational interest groups and professional interest groups would rise with a strong resistance. While in developed areas, due to the well-constructed infrastructure and large scale of staff, cost of input for mode of immigration is comparatively low, meanwhile in practice, educational immigration is not a big problem for local educational resources (for instance, the input is special funds, and also recruitment quotas is separated from local ones), therefore the resistance met is not that strong.

Thirdly, as to the dimension of objective, mode of hematopoiesis is a major measure taken for the implementation of this preferential development strategy, the reason for this is the mode could fully realize the three objectives of preferential development (equality of education, divergent education, adaptation to local economic development), this mode has exemplary effects by itself and could be rooted in ethnic areas, in the long term it could yield more profits. In contrast, mode of transfusion brings fresh staff mainly from outside the ethnic areas, this way of aid does not always adapt to the divergent demands of educational development and thus homogenization could easily be resulted, to a certain extent, this mode may give rise to formation of a dependency habit. By comparison, the biggest weakness of mode of immigration is its ineffectiveness in inheritance of ethnic cultures and local economic development, and also it could not afford a large-scale promotion with only a few may benefit from it, but what is undeniable is that it is comparatively effective in guaranteeing certain ethnic students' right to education.

4. THINKING AND PROSPECT BEHIND SELECTION OF THE MODES OF PREFERENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN ETHNIC AREAS

Education in ethnic areas assumes the task of promoting economic development and inheriting ethnic cultures, some scholars propose an anti-poverty strategy which involves taking "culture-education-economy symbiosis" as a basic dimension to realize a win-win objective of the above two tasks (Carter, 1984). But all the various aforesaid modes have their own advantages and disadvantages, the modernization process in ethnic areas must take local actual situations into consideration and

make it internalized as a demand for modernization for the whole people (National Institute of Education, 1978), thus in selection of proper mode of development, we should combine the concrete issues and situations, take into consideration the limited educational resources, demands from different interest bodies and the degree and level of development of education in ethnic areas, only this way could education's role in social-economic development and inheritance of ethnic cultures be given full play. Firstly, when economic conditions permit, mode of hematopoiesis should become the main measure of implementing the strategy of preferential development, and it could be optimized according to actual situations. In fact, this mode involves various issues: Funds, staff, infrastructure, etc. and also situations are variously different for these areas, therefore, intensity of its popularization is closely related to level of national social-economic development. Shortly after the founding of new China, "self-reliance" of the development of education is frequently advocated for lack of financial resources, even nowadays, preferential development of education is still faced with problems such as shortage of funds and poor infrastructure. Besides this, we also need to optimize mode of hematopoiesis to get rid of the dependency habit evident in certain ethnic groups and mobilize people's enthusiasm of developing education in ethnic areas. Secondly, for some urgent educational issues, mode of immigration or mode of transfusion ought to be applied. For example, as to the issue of lack of talents in the process of ethnic educational development, we could cultivate high-level talents directionally via the "High Level Minority Talents Plan" and create preferential conditions in order to bring in excellent persons to work in ethnic areas; its efficiency is far above the hematopoiesis mode. Thirdly, for demands of divergent education in ethnic areas, it is recommend that we mainly take mode of hematopoiesis and actively absorb advanced experience from other areas which involves inheritance and development of ethnic cultures, and also involves promoting economic development via education. This is because the role of education in ethnic cultures and local economic development must be combined with its particular situations, but the advanced experience of developed areas could contribute to avoiding detours for ethnic areas and thus guarantee sound and rapid development of education. However, A positive relationship between education and economic, political, and cultural development is widely assumed throughout much of the modern and modernizing world, yet research suggests that this relationship is problematic (Chabbott & Ramirez, 2006), they point out that the problem has two aspects, First, although many empirical studies show a positive relationship between many forms of education and individual economic, political, and cultural development, the effects of education on development at the collective level are ambiguous.

Second, at the same time evidence of this for ambiguity has been growing in the form of international education conferences and declarations and national-level education policies.

CONCLUSION

The education of children and young people is among the most important central functions performed by the modern state, and the state's interest in the education of its future citizens continues to grow (Harris, 2007). We could see from the above discussions that, in a new period, implementation of this strategy of preferential development of education for ethnic areas must be rooted in the actual demands derived locally and give costs and effectiveness a full consideration; it should start from various objectives such as realization of equality of education for ethnic minorities, respect to ethnic differences in education, promotion of social-economic development in ethnic areas; this implementation should apply and optimize proper modes of development

and reach the following targets in terms of transfer of preferential development in ethnic areas: Optimized distribution of resources, diversified access to guarantee of rights, preferential policies with pertinence, diversified objectives of education.

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