



Research on Advancing Educational Equity under Chinese Government Leadership in Basic Education

Jin Huang

Teaching Center, Zhejiang Open University, Hangzhou, China
Email: 408446875@qq.com

How to cite this paper: Huang, J. (2023) Research on Advancing Educational Equity under Chinese Government Leadership in Basic Education. *Open Access Library Journal*, 10: e10364.
<https://doi.org/10.4236/oalib.1110364>

Received: June 9, 2023

Accepted: July 9, 2023

Published: July 12, 2023

Copyright © 2023 by author(s) and Open Access Library Inc.

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0).

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



Open Access

Abstract

Since the founding of People's Republic of China 70 years ago, China has made remarkable achievements in education. From eradicating illiteracy to building an educational power, the Party and the government have adhered to the concept of serving people and always took the promotion of educational equity as governing philosophy and action target, guaranteeing everyone's right to being educated, and striving for greater happiness for the people. Under the guidance of the CPC's concept of educational equity, the level of educational equity in China has been continuously improved and raised, the nine-year free compulsory education has been fully realized. In the meantime, the overall national quality has been improved, and the intergenerational transmission of social disparities has been effectively curbed.

Subject Areas

Education Administration

Keywords

Educational Equity, Educational Development, Basic Education in China

1. Background

The year 2021 marked the momentous occasion of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China, which holds immense significance. Throughout the past century, the CPC has guided the Chinese people in accomplishing remarkable achievements in politics, economy, society, and culture, creating a magnificent narrative of a strong and prosperous nation. This journey has also witnessed the most illustrious chapter in the extensive history of educa-

tion. Reflecting on the transformative shifts in modern Chinese education, from being “a country with limited resources prioritizing education” to becoming “a powerful nation excelling in education”, China has remained resolute in leading its people towards rejuvenation and steadfastly prioritizing socialist education with distinctive Chinese characteristics. Under the resolute leadership of the Party, China has actively forged a path of socialist education that aligns with its unique context. This path has consistently promoted equality, democracy, and fairness in education, substantially increased the duration of education for its citizens, effectively safeguarded the rights and interests associated with education, and achieved a remarkable leap in cultural and developmental standards. China has now ascended to the upper echelons of global educational attainment. The profound practical experience and exploration in the field of education have unequivocally affirmed the correctness of the path of socialist education with distinctive Chinese characteristics. This success fully exemplifies the robust vitality and extraordinary advantages of the Chinese socialist system.

Educational equity represents the foundational principle of educational advancement. Since the establishment of the People’s Republic of China, China has made consistent efforts to address the disparities and deficiencies in educational development, resulting in significant progress in overall educational attainment. With a strong commitment to empowering education, there has been a notable focus on enhancing the educational process and improving its quality. This reflects the transformative impact of an inclusive and equitable educational system, which has ushered in a new era for Chinese education under the guiding principles of the Chinese government’s leadership and the progressive philosophy of socialist education.

This research lies in the in-depth exploration, through tracing the Communist Party of China’s emphasis on educational equity and long-term reform efforts, of the importance and impact of the Party’s education policies on equitable development. It also provides valuable insights for future educational reforms and development, as well as facilitates the learning and adaptation of other regions.

2. Socialist Equity and Educational Equity

Fairness serves as a fundamental objective pursued by human society. Since its inception, socialism has embraced the pursuit of social justice as its core mission. Marx and Engels’ socialist doctrine extensively criticized numerous unfair social phenomena and issues present in capitalist societies. They advocated for the eradication of class exploitation and oppression, the attainment of unrestricted and holistic human development, and the establishment of fairness and justice in a communist society. The ultimate goal of communists is the complete liberation of all individuals, with Marx emphasizing, “our aim is not to change private ownership, but to abolish it; not to hide class antagonisms, but to eliminate classes; not to improve existing society, but to construct a new one” [1]. Realizing social equity on the foundation of a highly developed social economy

entails the complete eradication of private ownership. This essentially involves eliminating the class disparities that stem from economic inequality and addressing various forms of inequality arising from factors such as gender, age, region, physical labor, and mental labor. Education plays a crucial role in achieving social equity, with educational equity representing a fundamental aspect of it. From a socialist perspective, attaining educational fairness necessitates dismantling the monopolies held by social classes and capital in education, striving to eliminate educational injustice, and ensuring the equitable distribution of educational benefits to make education a shared welfare for all individuals.

Given the current socioeconomic conditions, the practical understanding and implementation of educational equity can only proceed with the principle of “the greatest possible educational equality for the largest number of people” [2]. However, with the continuous advancement of a socialist political and economic system centered around public ownership and people’s empowerment, the realization of true social equity and justice is not far off.

Following World War II, the pursuit of equal opportunity in education emerged as a shared concern. In 1966, Coleman published a report titled “The Idea of Equal Opportunity in Education”, which examined the state of schools in the United States. This report marked the inception of research on educational equity and sparked discussions on equal opportunity and educational justice in the field of education during the 1960s and 1970s. Coleman identified four primary dimensions of educational equity: 1) the provision of free education to individuals up to a certain level; 2) the availability of a standardized curriculum for all children, regardless of their social backgrounds; 3) ensuring children from different social backgrounds have equal access to schools; and 4) offering equitable educational opportunities within specific geographic regions [3]. Coleman’s concept of educational equity highlights the importance of reasonable equality of conditions and universal access, establishing them as the fundamental basis and primary goal for achieving educational equity.

The researchers of the same era emphasized the concept of equal educational opportunities. Anderson C A., in his article “sociological factors in the demand for education in social objectives in educational planning by study group in the education of education” (1967), argued that education should be provided to every individual according to certain standards and ensure the regularity of basic continuing education [4]. In the 1970s, Thorsten Husén proposed the principle of equal educational opportunities, summarizing previous research on the issue of equal educational opportunities. He defined “equality” from the perspective of learners and considered “opportunity” as a variable standard. He put forth a new concept based on equality in terms of starting point, process, and outcome, emphasizing the correspondence between individual differences and the development of individual talents [5]. With the increasing emphasis on education investment and active educational reform experiments in various countries, the focus of factors influencing educational equal opportunities has shifted. The goal

of educational equity has gradually evolved from the basic “realization of equal access to schooling” to a higher level of “enjoying equal opportunities for high-quality education”.

As education becomes increasingly widespread worldwide, the complexities and nuances associated with educational equity have grown. Its meaning and scope have expanded to encompass a broader range of factors. China, with its vast population and extensive territory, experiences significant regional disparities in economic and cultural development. Consequently, there are considerable disparities in educational foundations and conditions among different regions, creating a multifaceted issue of educational equity within China. In line with the principles of socialist equity and considering China’s unique national circumstances, the concept of educational equity has consistently been placed at the forefront of the country’s educational endeavors.

3. Development and Breakthroughs in Educational Equity under the Leadership of the Party

China’s modern educational equity has been constrained by poor and challenging historical conditions, leading to a tumultuous development process. Therefore, the remarkable achievements it has attained today can be considered nothing short of a miracle. The successful implementation of educational equity owes much to the Party’s unwavering conviction and perseverance. It is also the outcome of the Party’s systematic exploration, grounded in China’s unique circumstances. The progression of educational equity in China can be delineated through distinct stages, intricately intertwined with the country’s developmental history in various periods following the Party’s establishment.

Around the time of the May Fourth Movement, early Marxists actively advocated populism based on Western bourgeois pragmatism and the lessons drawn from the Russian dictatorship of the proletariat. As the relevance of socialist ideology to China’s national conditions deepened, the Marxists’ pursuit of democracy gradually transformed into a quest for revolution, leading to the emergence of a vibrant democratic education movement. Following the establishment of the Soviet government, the Party vigorously promoted literacy education and the acquisition of knowledge and culture in the Soviet regions. They also advocated for compulsory education for children and worked towards achieving free state education for the offspring of workers and peasants. Despite the challenges faced in the anti-Japanese democratic base areas during times of war, national education remained a top priority. Young students and intellectuals were encouraged to engage in theoretical studies and practical involvement in production and labor. The implementation of government support for civilians facilitated the continued advancement of children’s education and promoted widespread cultural education. After the war victory, the liberated areas embarked on the path of “new formalization” in basic and higher education, instituting a structured educational system in preparation for the construction of education in the new Chi-

na. Guided by Marxist principles of democracy and equity, educational equity in China centered around the fundamental objectives of providing access to basic education and promoting mass literacy and cultural education. The efforts made and achievements attained are detailed in **Table 1** below.

Since the founding of the country seven decades ago, the Chinese government has prioritized universal compulsory education and literacy programs. It has made significant efforts in developing rural education, providing extensive support to disadvantaged areas, strengthening basic education in ethnic minority regions and remote/poverty-stricken areas. The government has also focused on specialized teacher training, utilized information technology to enhance basic education, and expanded access to secondary education. Equity in education has consistently been the central objective and guiding principle of the government's initiatives. China is dedicated to furthering educational rights equality while ensuring the widespread benefits of education.

At the beginning of the founding of the country, the Common Program of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, which served as a provisional constitution, defined the new democratic nature of Chinese education, emphasizing its national, scientific, and popular cultural aspects. The First National Education Work Conference emphasized the importance of cultural, political, and technical education for workers and peasants. It called for schools to open their doors to workers and peasants, develop amateur education programs for them, increase the representation of workers and peasants in primary, secondary, and higher education, and raise their cultural levels. The goal was to achieve educational access for workers and peasants and uplift their cultural standards. In 1954, the first Constitution of the People's Republic of China established the right to education for Chinese citizens and assigned the state the primary responsibility of ensuring citizens' access to education. In 1956, the Eighth Congress of the Communist Party of China formulated a comprehensive education plan. It aimed to expand primary education gradually, strive for universal twelve-year compulsory education, promote amateur education for workers and peasants, and eradicate illiteracy. The Congress emphasized the expansion of primary education, the goal of achieving universal compulsory primary education within twelve years, and efforts to eliminate illiteracy. During the early years of the People's Republic of China, the Party's concern for educational equity continued the fundamental objectives of the New Democratic Revolution. The focus was on empowering the general public in education, ensuring that educational opportunities were available to all and safeguarding the right to education for people at different educational levels, particularly workers and peasants, through legislation and policies. This period adopted an "equity first" strategy, prioritizing social equality in resource distribution. However, this approach had trade-offs, as it sometimes came at the expense of economic and social development efficiency. In subsequent periods, the Party consistently emphasized the importance of educational equity at the ideological level and explored different

Table 1. Milestones of educational equity over the years (1949-2020).

Year	Efforts made and Achievements
1949	The “Common Program of the Chinese People’s Political Consultative Conference” defined the new democratic nature of education in China. The First National Conference on Education emphasized the importance of cultural, political, and technical education for the working masses.
1954	The first Constitution of the People’s Republic of China was promulgated, stipulating the right of Chinese citizens to receive education.
1956	The 8th National Congress of the Communist Party of China conducted comprehensive education planning, proposing the gradual expansion of primary and secondary education and the phased popularization of compulsory primary education.
1977	The resumption of the college entrance examination gradually eliminated the restrictions of educational class division and restored the order of educational fairness.
1980	The “Decision on Several Issues Concerning the Popularization of Primary Education” and the “Joint Notification on Effectively Carrying out Cultural and Technical Remedial Classes for Young Workers” proposed the historical task of achieving basic popularization of primary education nationwide and compensating for the educational level of the lagging groups to reach junior high school level.
1986	The “Compulsory Education Law of the People’s Republic of China” clearly defined the steps, methods, and duration of implementing the nine-year compulsory education, stipulating that all children who have reached the age of six should receive the prescribed years of compulsory education.
1987	The 13th National Congress of the Communist Party of China convened, explicitly placing the development of education in a prominent strategic position and adhering to the principle of “making education the foundation of the nation for a hundred years”.
1993	The “Outline of China’s Education Reform and Development” summarized the achievements of nine-year compulsory education and incorporated the goals of basic implementation of nine-year compulsory education and basic eradication of illiteracy among young and middle-aged adults into long-term planning.
2002	The “Notice of the Ministry of Education on Strengthening the Management of Basic Education” proposed actively promoting the balanced development of schools in the compulsory education stage.
2004	The “Two Basics” Campaign in Western China (2004-2007) and the “Education Revitalization Action Plan (2003-2007)” strengthened the promotion of basic education in rural and western regions.
2005	The “Opinions on Further Promoting the Balanced Development of Compulsory Education” placed the promotion of balanced development of compulsory education in a significant position.

Continued

2006	The revision of the “Compulsory Education Law of the People’s Republic of China” comprehensively included compulsory education within the scope of national financial guarantee.
2010	The “National Medium and Long-Term Plan for Education Reform and Development (2010-2020)” listed “achieving fair education benefiting the entire population” as one of the strategic goals for educational development. The Ministry of Education began signing memorandums of understanding on balanced development of compulsory education with provincial governments.
2011	Supervision and evaluation for the balanced development of compulsory education was implemented in county areas.
2013	The “Opinions on Implementing the Education Poverty Alleviation Project” advocated the important role of education in poverty alleviation and development.
2014	The “National Plan for Children’s Development in Poverty-stricken Areas (2014-2020)” proposed the protection of the rights and development of children in poverty-stricken areas.
2016	The “Opinions on Coordinating and Promoting the Integrated Reform and Development of Compulsory Education in Urban and Rural Areas within County Regions” proposed promoting the balanced development of quality compulsory education. The “Thirteenth Five-Year Plan for Education Poverty Alleviation” launched a targeted poverty alleviation strategy, initiating the battle against education poverty.
2018	The “Implementation Plan for Education Poverty Alleviation in Deeply Impoverished Areas (2018-2020)” addressed the education issues in deeply impoverished areas
2020	The planning and deployment aim to achieve the final victory in the overall battle against poverty through education.

educational models suited to national development. However, challenges such as the weak foundation, class-based resource distribution, and inadequacies in the educational system diverted the educational trajectory and exacerbated educational disparities, hindering progress in achieving educational equity.

In the late 1970s, the reform and opening up policy marked the restart of education in China. Guided by Deng Xiaoping’s principle of “respecting knowledge and talent”, the development of education aligned with the laws of human development and gradually returned to the right track. In 1977, the college entrance examinations were reinstated, and the adoption of a unified and fair assessment method became a significant indicator in dismantling educational barriers and restoring educational equity. This also facilitated the establishment of educational objectives at all levels. The State Council issued the “Decision on Certain Issues Concerning the Popularization of Primary Education” and the “Joint Circular on Effectively Improving the Cultural and Technical Supple-

mentary Work of Young and Strong Workers”. These documents put forward the goal of achieving universal primary education throughout the country and proposed that regions with the necessary conditions could also strive to popularize junior high school education. It required all localities and enterprises to implement “double supplementation” efforts. In the mid-1980s, the central government clarified the steps, methods, and timeline for implementing nine-year compulsory education. The Compulsory Education Law of the People’s Republic of China was enacted, stipulating that all children aged six and above, regardless of gender, nationality, or race, should be enrolled in school to receive the prescribed education. This ensured the basic right of children to receive compulsory education. The 1993 Outline of China’s Education Reform and Development summarized the achievements in education, highlighting the successful implementation of the planned and gradual nine-year compulsory education, resulting in 91% of the country’s population achieving universal primary education. During this time, the rural basic education system proved to be quite effective. The Outline formally incorporated the goal of “basically implementing nine-year compulsory education and essentially eradicating illiteracy among young adults”¹ into its long-term planning. Governments at all levels, educational administrative departments, and primary and secondary schools have prioritized the “two bases” work in their educational initiatives. They have carefully planned and actively implemented strategies to ensure the sustained, stable, and healthy development of basic education.

The education development strategy in the 1980s and 1990s aligned with the country’s talent demands, prioritizing efficiency over equity. Basic education was expanded and popularized in urban areas, particularly in developed regions. However, this uneven development situation gradually improved after 2000, and the focus of educational equity shifted clearly from urban to rural and underdeveloped areas. The state established different requirements for the development of basic education in different regions, following zoning planning and classification guidance principles. The emphasis was placed on addressing the practical challenges of educational development in rural and underdeveloped areas. The specific goal of balanced compulsory education development was to “effectively curb the widening education gap between urban and rural areas, regions, and schools, improve the operating conditions of rural and weak urban schools, and gradually achieve balanced compulsory education development” [6]. The aim was to accelerate the integrated development of urban and rural compulsory education, address the shortcomings of rural education, and enhance its quality. Improving the quality of rural education was not only essential for the fair development of education but also the starting point for the comprehensive revitalization of China’s rural areas. In 2002, the Party Central Committee proposed actively promoting the balanced development of compulsory education schools in the “Notice of the Ministry of Education on Several Issues of Strengthening

¹Abbreviated as “two bases”.

the Management of Basic Education Operation”. In 2005, the “Several Opinions of the Ministry of Education on Further Promoting the Balanced Development of Compulsory Education” aimed to achieve unification. The 2010 National Medium and Long-Term Education Reform and Development Plan (2010-2020) further established “forming equitable education for all” as one of China’s strategic goals in education development. In 2016, the “Opinions on the Integrated Reform and Development of Compulsory Education in Urban and Rural Areas” called for promoting the balanced development of high-quality compulsory education based on the basic balance of compulsory education in counties. The 20th National Congress of the Party emphasized the need to accelerate the high-quality and balance development of compulsory education, promote urban-rural integration, and optimize the allocation of regional educational resources. These developments demonstrate that the concept of education fairness for all has always been an integral part of China’s education system, transitioning to the “balanced development of compulsory education” with the ultimate goal of improving educational quality.

For a long time, the state has consistently organized and implemented various significant plans, projects, and initiatives to support the advancement of basic education in rural areas and western regions. In 2004, the “Two Basics” Tackling Plan in the Western Region of the Country (2004-2007) and the “2003-2007 Education Revitalization Action Plan” were issued to strengthen the “Two Basics” and promote special construction. In 2006, the “Compulsory Education Law of the People’s Republic of China” was revised. Starting in 2010, the Ministry of Education began signing memoranda on the balanced development of compulsory education with provincial governments. By 2011, the balanced development of county-level compulsory education had been implemented. This included supervision, evaluation, and consolidation of educational achievements, forming a coordinated promotion mechanism for the implementation of balanced development in compulsory education. In 2013, seven departments jointly issued the “Opinions on the Implementation of Educational Poverty Alleviation Projects”, recognizing the vital role of education in poverty alleviation and development. They promoted centralized education and poverty alleviation in contiguous areas facing special difficulties. The 2014 “National Development Plan for Children in Poor Areas (2014-2020)” focused on effectively safeguarding the rights and interests of children in poverty-stricken areas throughout their survival and development. It aimed to provide comprehensive care and guarantees from the government, family, and society to ensure their healthy growth. The 2016 “Thirteenth Five-Year Plan for Educational Poverty Alleviation” adopted targeted poverty alleviation as the fundamental strategy, aiming to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty. Unconventional policy measures were employed to precisely target the most disadvantaged areas and vulnerable groups, launching a battle against poverty through education. The 2018 “Implementation Plan for Poverty Alleviation through Education in Deeply Poverty-Stricken

Areas (2018-2020)” focused on addressing educational issues in “three regions and three states” and overcoming the challenges of poverty alleviation. In 2020, national planning and deployment were geared towards achieving the final victory in the decisive battle of poverty alleviation through education.

Under the Party’s scientific and democratic leadership, China has achieved remarkable results in the development of equitable education. Before 1949, the national enrollment rate for school-age children was only 20%, the illiteracy rate was as high as 80%, and the average number of years of education for individuals over 15 years old was only 1.6, resulting in a generally low level of education among the people. By 2000, China had achieved the basic universalization of nine-year compulsory education for over 85% of the population and had essentially eradicated illiteracy among young adults. In 2011, all provincial-level administrative regions and county-level administrative units across the country successfully passed the national assessment for the “two foundations” (*i.e.*, universal nine-year compulsory education and elimination of illiteracy among young adults), achieving a population coverage rate of 100%. Additionally, the illiteracy rate among young adults dropped to 1.08%. The “two foundations” campaign has made historic and brilliant achievements [7]. By 2019, the consolidation rate of nine-year compulsory education had reached 94.8%, and the average number of years of education for the working-age population had reached 10.7 years. Significant results were achieved in the decisive battle against poverty in education in 2020. Nationwide, 200,000 students who had dropped out of compulsory education were successfully reintegrated, and the goal of achieving compulsory education was essentially realized. Currently, China’s education at all levels has reached or surpassed the average level of middle and high-income countries, marking a historic transition from mass to universal education. The development path of China’s education equity has evolved from prioritizing efficiency and equity to achieving balanced urban and rural development, and ultimately expanding equitable and high-quality education. This journey has been long and challenging. However, under the strong leadership of the Party and the relentless efforts of the people, the objectives and tasks of basic education have been successfully accomplished. China’s educational equity has experienced groundbreaking progress, leading to a transformative change in the landscape of China’s education system.

4. Guarantee of the Party Leadership

Since the founding of the People’s Republic of China, the development of education system has undergone a tortuous path. The pursuit of equitable education has achieved significant accomplishments and reached new heights. This is the result of the correct guidance of Marxist theory, and more importantly, it is due to the strong leadership of the Party and the robust protection provided by the socialist system.

The Party’s leadership adheres to the fundamental work approach of serving

the people and the mass line, which forms the conceptual basis for educational equity. One of the difficulties in achieving educational equity lies in its requirement to benefit the entire population and every individual. Phrases such as “respecting knowledge” and “respecting talent”, “representing the fundamental interests of the vast majority of the Chinese people”, “putting people first”, and “placing the people at the center” can be found in the governing ideologies of various governments. As the leading core of all undertakings, the Communist Party of China has always placed “people” at the core of values, considering the survival and development of individuals as the highest value goal and prioritizing the fundamental interests of the people. In September 2013, General Secretary Xi Jinping delivered a video message at the one-year anniversary of the United Nations’ “Education First” global initiative, stating, “we strive to ensure that every child has access to education and that the 1.3 billion people can enjoy better and more equitable education, enabling them to develop themselves, contribute to society, and benefit the people”. This represents the Party’s greatest vision for the equitable development of education in China and is an earnest and solemn commitment. Maintaining close ties with the people, serving them wholeheartedly, meeting their new educational needs, and better fulfilling the people’s expectations for education have become the lofty ideals and steadfast beliefs of the Communist Party of China in promoting educational equity, unbreakable and unwavering.

The Party’s leadership insists on combining adherence to laws with highlighting distinctive characteristics, which serves as the practical standard for educational equity. Marxist philosophy is the organic combination of materialism and dialectics. It emphasizes the unity of revolution and science, cognition and practice, subjectivity and objectivity, and recognizes that the transformation of things must follow the objective laws of their development. Guided by socialist theory and the scientific outlook on development, the Party fully plays its guiding role, adjusts the correct direction for promoting educational equity in accordance with the characteristics of the socialist development stage, and constructs a scientific and effective system for the equitable development of education. After the basic completion of socialist transformation, the Eighth National Congress of the Party in 1956 pointed out that the contradiction between the people’s rapidly growing needs for economic and cultural development and the inability of the current economic and cultural conditions to meet those needs had become one of the main domestic contradictions. The economic and cultural demands of the people are not only for their livelihoods but also for spiritual strength and intellectual wealth. As a result, the promotion of compulsory education and the eradication of illiteracy among young and middle-aged adults became key educational tasks to be advanced. In the 1980s, the main contradiction in China was further identified as the contradiction between the people’s growing material and cultural needs and the backwardness of social production. The focus of the Party and the state’s work gradually shifted to socialist moder-

nization centered on economic construction. Social productive forces developed significantly, and the coverage of education benefited greatly expanded. However, urban-rural and regional disparities continued to widen. In the first two decades of the 21st century, the country vigorously strengthened its support and assistance for education in rural and underdeveloped areas, resulting in significant improvements in educational equity. In 2017, the report of the 19th National Congress of the Party pointed out that socialism with Chinese characteristics had entered a new era, and the principal contradiction in the society had transformed into the contradiction between the people's growing needs for a better life and the insufficient and unbalanced development. Solving the problem of inadequate and unequal development in the field of education and promoting coordinated and common development among regions and areas became the main tasks of educational work. At the same time, the urgent demand for a better life from the people also directed their new expectations toward education. Educational equity should further move toward higher quality and fairness in education.

The Party's leadership has effectively utilized its institutional and organizational advantages, laying a solid foundation for the advancement of educational equity. Scientific institutional design serves as the cornerstone for promoting educational equity. China has undertaken significant explorations in institutional design and policy construction from a comprehensive, historical, strategic, and practical perspective to foster educational equity.

The Chinese government has implemented a public financial guarantee system for compulsory education, comprehensively including it within the scope of public financial support, and coordinating resource allocation. As of September 2022, the proportion of national fiscal education expenditure to GDP has remained above 4% for 10 consecutive years [8]. In early 2014, the Ministry of Education issued the "Guiding Opinions on the Enrollment of Primary School Graduates in the Vicinity of Compulsory Education Stage without Examination", followed by the issuance of the "Notice on Further Improving the Work of Non-Examination Enrollment in Key Large Cities for Compulsory Education", designating 19 key cities nationwide to fully implement this policy. The non-examination enrollment system for compulsory education abolishes selective school examinations at the compulsory education stage and implements enrollment based on proximity, ensuring fair enrollment opportunities for students from different regions and backgrounds.

To improve the supplementary mechanism for teacher training, a large number of high-quality teaching resources have been provided to rural areas in the central and western regions through various channels such as the "Special Post Plan", government-sponsored teacher training programs, and retired teachers teaching in rural areas. The "Simultaneous Enrollment of Public and Private Schools" policy has been fully implemented nationwide in 31 provinces since 2020. It requires public and private schools to enroll students simultaneously,

conduct admissions simultaneously, and register student records simultaneously, in order to curb the escalating irregularities of certain schools admitting top students in advance and restore the normal order of admissions.

Furthermore, the government actively implements the system of coordinated regional education development, providing more support and assistance to education in the central and western regions as well as rural areas, narrowing the educational gap between regions and urban-rural areas. At the same time, efforts are made to promote inclusive education, providing more policies and funding guarantees for education in minority areas such as Tibet, Xinjiang, and remote impoverished areas, aiming to eliminate illiteracy and school dropout rates.

Promoting educational equity has become a fundamental education policy of the country. The overall framework and system of educational equity policies, ranging from planning and implementation to supervision and evaluation, are relatively comprehensive, ensuring adherence to laws and evidence-based practices. The state not only offers robust support through policies and institutions but also substantially increases financial and resource allocations. Through top-level macro-control and grassroots initiatives, the education system is tailored to local conditions, optimizing the distribution of educational resources. Since the turn of the millennium, guided by policies prioritizing rural education development, the state has allocated additional education funds primarily to rural areas. This has significantly narrowed the educational gap between rural, impoverished, and minority regions and urban and developed areas, thus fostering considerable progress in educational equity.

5. Conclusions

Educational equity is not only a vital requirement for promoting comprehensive individual development and social fairness and justice, but it is also an unwavering goal pursued by China in its education reform and development. China has made significant strides in advancing educational equity and will continue to prioritize narrowing the gap and enhancing the quality and efficiency of education. Given its vast territory, China experiences substantial disparities in resources, environment, history, and culture across different regions. A standardized approach alone cannot adequately address the complex challenges posed by imbalanced development in various areas. Therefore, the government must proactively and comprehensively guide the ongoing development of educational equity, taking into account the realities on the ground. This entails relying on compensatory and inclusive policies to give special attention to disadvantaged regions and populations. By employing both developmental and compensatory principles, we can effectively promote educational accessibility and strengthen educational equity [9]. The strong leadership of the Communist Party of China and the government's informed decision-making will serve as the guiding beacon for educational equity. They are also the fundamental guarantee for the future revitalization, prosperity, and equitable development of education in the

nation.

The study still has limitations as it relies more on general literature research and less on quantitative research and case studies, which needs to be improved. Additionally, there is an excessive focus on equity issues in the basic education stage, neglecting the equitable development in higher education and vocational education, among other educational stages. Moving forward, there will be a deeper exploration of the future development of educational equity, particularly in relation to the widespread use of new technologies in basic education and higher stages, the diversification of educational methods, and the impact of educational equity on lifelong education and the construction of a learning society.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

References

- [1] Marx and Engels (1995) Selected Works of Marx and Engels, Vol. 1. People's Publishing House, Beijing, p. 368.
- [2] Liu, F. (2002) Equity and Fairness Mechanism of China's Education Policy. *Educational Research*, No. 10, 45-50.
- [3] Zhang, R.J. (1989) Basic Anthology of Foreign Educational Sociology. East China Normal University Press, Shanghai, p. 179.
- [4] Anderson, C.A. (1967) Sociological Factors in the Demand for Education in Social Objectives in Educational Planning by Study Group in the Economics of Education. OECD, Paris, 30-47.
- [5] Husen, T. (1975) Social Influences on Educational Attainment. Research Perspectives on Educational Equality. OECD Publications Center, Washington, pp. 182-186.
- [6] Ministry of Education (2005) Several Opinions of the Ministry of Education on Further Promoting Balanced Development of Compulsory Education. http://www.moe.gov.cn/srcsite/A06/s3321/200505/t20050525_81809.html
- [7] Wen, J.B. (2019) Speech at the National Teacher Work and "Two Basic" Work Summary Commendation Conference. http://www.gov.cn/ldhd/2012-09/09/content_2220253.htm
- [8] Ministry of Education (2022) The Ratio of National Fiscal Education Expenditure to GDP Has Remained above 4% for 10 Consecutive Years. http://edu.china.com.cn/2022-09/27/content_78439760.htm?eqid=8ae384740002327a000000066450ec86
- [9] Yang, D.P. (2006) The Ideal and Reality of Educational Equity in China. Peking University Press, Beijing, p. 60.