China Migrant Schools in the Last Two Decades
---Emergence, Policy Changes, Teaching and Learning, and Policy Recommendations

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Background

- Late 1980s--, labor migration (*Mingong chao*) rural to urban
  - 1980s: 2 million --→ 2008: 210 million
  - Reasons
    - Declining VTE and non-farm business activities
    - Better job opportunities in cities
  - Uniqueness
    - Stay long and permanently settling
    - Family unit: 11% children, 24 million (2008)
- Migrant children education:
  - Not in school: 2 million (9.3%) of 20 million (2000)
  - Studying in urban area: 8 million (33%) (2008)
    - Small portion in urban public schools
    - Most in “migrant schools”
Significance & Problem Statement

• Significance
  – Challenging education system
    • enforcement of 9 yrs of compulsory education
    • Improvement of rural education
    • College preparation
  – Economy growth and safe society
    • “one more migrant school now, one fewer prison in the future”.

• Problem Statement
  – More news reports, little scholarly inquiry
  – Little centered on “migrant schools”
  – Little international comparative view
Limitations of Existing School System

- Urban-rural segregation in household registration (*Hukou*)
  - Unit: district in urban areas and county/town in rural areas
  - Size: population of the community
  - Requirement: temporary registration cert. (*zanju zheng*), Birth cert., guardian’s ID, housing rental documents; working cert., birth control cert., immunization cert., student academic archive, etc

- School financing policy
  - Free at origin
  - Government funding not portable to destination cities
  - High temporary studying fees (*jiedu fei*):
    - A few hundreds (<100 USD) to 230,000 yuan (3,000-4,000 USD) annually
    - Clothing, insurance, traveling, internet, student activities
Definition

• Those schools established at suburban areas of large cities to provide education at compulsory stage for migrant children, supported by migrant workers or other social charity in the last two decades
• Unique in the world
• Different from public & private schools
• Represent
  – Marginalized education
  – Inability of the present educational system to resolve the issue of migrant children education and to keep up with developments of the times
Emergence and Strengths

1. No admission requirement of hukou
2. Low and affordable education cost
3. Less discriminative climate
4. Unified textbooks
5. Convenience
Development

- 5-6 yrs, indifferent and opaque position of government
- 1998, 2003, government policy changes
- Non-licensed and floating status: close down and reopen
- NO statistics
- Estimate: 1,000
  - Beijing:
    - 123 enrolling 17,000 migrant children (2002)
    - 200 enrolling 40,000 migrant children (2003)
    - 300 by 2004
  - Shanghai: 519 enrolling 120,000 (2006)
Problems with Migrant Schools

1. Non-licensed status
2. Private for profit
3. Poor infrastructure, equipment and hygiene standards
4. Inferior quality of teaching and curriculum design
5. Inability to provide high school education and prepare students for colleges
Policy Development of Migrant Children Education and Implementations

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Outline

- Challenges of Migrant Children Education in China
- Major policy development to promote equality of migrant children
- Financial policy and implementation
- Conclusion
Challenges of Migrant Children Education in China

“... all children between 6 and 15 years of age were entitled to nine years of compulsory education...”

---- Compulsory Education Law of PRC
Challenges of Migrant Children Education in China (cont.)

- Household registration system and a decentralized education financing system
  
  Origin government ---- the primary source
  
  the place where people registered as permanent residents
Challenges of Migrant Children Education in China (cont.)

- Rural v. urban residents
- Migration pattern: individual to family
- Geographical migration, but no change of identification
- Migrant status ---- barrier to public schools
Policy Development to Promote Equality of Migrant Children

Three stages:

• 1996-2000
  The Interim Measure of School Education for School-age Children Among Rural Migrant Population 1996
  《城镇流动人口中适龄儿童、少年就学办法（试行）》
  The Interim Measure of School Education for Temporary Migrant Children 1998
  《流动儿童少年就学暂行办法》
Policy Development to Promote Equality of Migrant Children (cont.)

- 2001-2002
  The Decision of Basic Education Reform and Development 2001
  《关于基础教育改革与发展的决定》
Policy Development to Promote Equality of Migrant Children (cont.)

• 2003-

The Notice on the Management and Service for Rural Migrant Workers 2003
《关于做好农民进城务工就业管理和服务工作的通知》

The Notice of Improving Education of Children of Rural Migrant Workers 2003
《关于进一步做好进城务工就业农民子女义务教育工作意见》

The Notice of Promoting Socialist New County Construction 2005
《关于推进社会主义新农村建设的若干意见》
Policy Development to Promote Equality of Migrant Children (cont.)

- 2003-

The Notice on Solving the Problems of Rural Migrant Workers 2006
《关于解决农民工问题的若干意见》

The Decision on Building Socialist Harmonious Society 2006
《中共中央关于构建社会主义和谐社会若干重大问题的决定》

Revision of Compulsory Education Law of People’s Republic of China 2006
新修订的《中华人民共和国义务教育法》
Financial Policy and Implementation

- Huge socioeconomic disparity and education development disparity
- Diversified revenue base at county level and below
- Children migrated, but with no resource coming with
Financial Policy and Implementation (cont.)

Beijing

- Financial subsidies
- Not calculated by the No. of migrant children and the average per-student spending at the urban public school standard
- Actually pull down school quality
Conclusion

- Central government taking a leading role
- Providing specific targeted funds
References

References


References


Teaching and Learning

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The instructional Triangle
By Cohen, Raudenbush & Ball
Recommendations

• Two directions
  – being closed down eventually
  – continuing to develop

• Reforming Public Schools as a Major Channel
  – Temporary studying fee (*Jiedu fei*)
  – Maximizing the capacity to accept migrant students
    • Mixed classes; Special classes; Joint institutions; Branches
  – Eliminating discrimination and promoting integration within schools
    • Segregation like U.S. urban and suburban
    • 15 European countries and US Migrant Education Program
Solutions & Recommendations (cont.)

• Developing and Reforming Migrant Schools
  – Renovating suburban schools and improving usage of less-occupied: one-child policy
  – Qualifications of the schools’ operators and teachers
  – Supervision and accreditation system
  – Concerted efforts of public schools and migrant schools
Solutions & Recommendations (cont.)

• Reforming Current School Financing Policy
  – Government aid
  – Transfer payment system
  – School voucher
    • Resources: Government appropriation, charity, employers of migrant workers
    • Experiment: Rui’an, Zhejiang Province
    • Provincial and municipal level
  – Donation and social support

• Research and Other Recommendations
  – Advanced research methodology
  – Information about population and education: US Migrant Student Record Transfer System (MSRTS)
References


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