

**РАЗДЕЛ III
ФИЛОСОФИЯ ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ
В ВОСТОЧНОЙ ТРАДИЦИИ**

**PART III. PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION
IN THE EASTERN TRADITION**

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**СОВРЕМЕННОЕ РАЗВИТИЕ ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ КИТАЯ:
КЛЮЧЕВЫЕ КОНЦЕПЦИИ, БАЗОВЫЕ ОРИЕНТАЦИИ
И ДАЛЬНЕЙШИЕ ПЕРСПЕКТИВЫ**

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***Аннотация.** Со времени основания Китайской Народной Республики в 1949 г. Коммунистическая партия Китая (КПК) и правительство уделяют большое внимание инновациям в области образования и его развитию. Достигнутые достижения привлекли внимание всего мира. Укрепление образования под руководством президента Си после 18-го Национального съезда КПК стало основополагающим для достижения национального возрождения. Основные концепции нынешнего развития страны имеют приоритетное значение в целях эволюции, модернизации образования и создания образования, которое будет отвечать потребностям людей. Помимо этого основной ориентацией в нынешнем Китае становится общедоступное, качественное образование в течение всей жизни, система социалистического образования с четко выраженной китайской спецификой. Будучи устремленным в будущее, образование в Китае имеет интен-*

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сивную, законодательную, международную, инновационную и информационную тенденции.

Ключевые слова: Китай; развитие образования; концепции; ориентации; тенденции.

CONTEMPORARY DEVELOPMENT OF CHINA'S EDUCATION: CORE VISIONS, BASIC ORIENTATION AND FUTURE TREND

Yang Xiaohui (China)

Abstract. *Since the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the Chinese Communist Party (CPC) and the government have attached great importance to promoting education innovation and development. The achievements accomplished drew the worldwide attention. Under President Xi's governance after the 18th National Congress of the CPC, strengthening education is fundamental to the pursuit of national rejuvenation. The core visions of present development are giving priority to developing education, promoting and advancing educational modernization and developing education that people are satisfied with. Beyond that, promoting universally-available education, equal education, quality education and life-long education has becoming the basic orientation in present China, thereby, forming the socialist education system with distinct Chinese characteristics. Looking forward to the future, the education development in China presents its intensive, legislative, internationalized, innovative and information-based trend.*

Key words: *China; education development; vision; orientation; trend.*

In current times, China's education has ushered in the most critical period of strategic opportunity for development. In this process, it is a great challenge and practical issue how to boost education with distinctive features, facilitate its steady modernization and make educatees have a growing sense of gains. From a new historic point, what kind of educational visions should be held, what kind of orientation should be targeted and what kind of trend would be presented in the future of China's education? All those issues above are difficult problems which need always to be thinking of and trying to solve in the process of dealing with practical challenges, responding to the needs of social development and achieving sustainable development.

I. The Core Ideologies of Contemporary China's Education

The word *ideology* derives from the Greek term *eidōs* which means «form», «essence», «type» or «species». Many scholars once explored and interpreted the philosophical implications of ideology like Socrates, Plato, Kant and Hegel. As an upper philosophical conception at the spiritual and conscious level, ideology is a scientific reflection of subjectivity (knowledge and conception) on objectivity (law and reality), a rational knowledge, ideal pursuit and belief sys-

tem formed through the long-term rational thinking and practice towards a certain thing and phenomenon. In the realm of education, educational ideologies are the guiding principles concerning with the essence and laws of educational activities, the value orientation and pursuit formed in the educational practice, thinking activities, and cultural accumulations and communications. They are kind of stable, sustainable and directive knowing of education. In a sense, «Educational ideologies reflect upon the value orientation of the educational philosophers' and the whole nation» [1].

In practice, any innovation of educational ideas is not like water without a source and a tree without roots, but to reflect on the value of tradition, an in-depth review of the reality and make the adjustment and response timely. It is an important precursor to deepen overall educational reform and overcome the tough points in educational reform smoothly [2]. Therefore, the reform of educational philosophies has an important forward-looking and guiding significance for promoting the advancement of education, enhancing the driving force of its development, and solving practical educational problems. The renewal of educational philosophy is the powerful impetus for educational reform. Whether the education development vision is correct, whether it can keep up with the trend of the times and meet the needs of social development fundamentally determine the effect and even success or failure of educational reform.

Throughout the history of China's educational development, the new ideologies and philosophies were proposed in line with each stage firstly, and then lead the advancing direction for China's educational reform and development. Since the launching of reform and opening-up in 1978, the most important changes have happened in the history of China's education. In 1985, the ideology that education should be geared to the needs of modernization, of the world and of the future indicated the direction of China's education, that is, basing on tradition and facing modernization; basing on China's actual conditions and facing the world; basing on the contemporary Chinese context and facing the future (Three Facing). These three aspects are not only related to each other, but also have their own focus in each aspect, constituting a unified development concept.

Firstly, gearing education to modernization is the foundation and core. Starting from this basic point, education must keep reforming constantly, adapt to and serve the development process of social modernization. Secondly, education should also be geared to the needs of the world. Education in modern times is a world issue that requires to know and absorb the advanced science and technology and educational experience through mutual exchange and drawing on successful experience of other nations, at the same time, make due contributions to the international social development. Thirdly, education

should be geared to the needs of the future, actively predict and grasp the development orientation of future society and world education and achieve the sustainable development in the new era.

In general, this fundamental idea has been running through China's educational development process and still plays an important significant role today. Development as modernization and economic growth, IT application, and cultural diversity, changes in the global governance system and the international order are speeding up, and international competition is increasingly fierce. Under this situation, contemporary China's education must give priority to developing education, advance its modernization, and develop education people are satisfied with. These new visions reflect the top-level design and strategic perspectives of China's education in a new era, a new ground and a new circumstance.

1. Giving Priority to Developing Education

Essentially, education, as the foundation of talent cultivation, plays a fundamental, leading and global guiding role in a country's development, social construction and national rejuvenation. Insisting on giving priority to developing education is a further clarification of such prominent role that education played in the development of a nation and progress of the whole human society.

First of all, education determines the present and future of mankind. Education is of great significance to the development of human society, and the educational reform is to tackle the challenges of human society under new historical conditions. UNESCO's latest report released in 2016, *Education for People and Planet: Creating Sustainable Future for All*, explains it in an authoritative way why education is vital to the sustainable development of all mankind. Education not only gives us the key tools for coping with economic, social, technological, and even ethical issues, but also leads to great prosperity of society, improves agriculture, enhances health outcomes, lessens violence, promotes gender equality, raises social capital and improves natural environment [3]. For this reason, in the new era, people should update their understanding and comprehend the significance of education to global development, individual well-being, and the future of human society.

Secondly, education is of decisive significance to the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation. Throughout the world, Germany proposed the conception of «Education First» in Humboldt Reform at the beginning of the 19th century, contributing the triumph and boost of science and industry in Germany in the 19th century. Many developed countries in Europe and America implemented "Education First" model in the 1950s and 1960s as well, which laid the foundation of talents and education for today's high-degree modernization. As for China, after 40 years' reform and opening-up since 1978, China's education development has realized the historic breakthrough and overall ranked up-

per-middle level in the world. China has always been a country with a large population and education made significant contributions to improving the citizens' cultivation as well as promoting economic and social development. With the rapid progress in science and technology and knowledge-based economy in the ascendant since the new century, China is faced with unprecedented challenges and significant strategic opportunities. Shouldering the huge task of education, China launched «the strategy of reinvigorating the country through science and education» and «the strategy of making the nation strong by relying on talents or professionals» policies to interrelate education, national prosperity and the destiny of Chinese nation. As *Outline of China's National Plan for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development 2010–2020* (hereinafter referred to as the *Outline*) points out that «As we should reflect on the development of China with a historical perspective of the 21st century, the fundamental way of turning the heavy burden of population into a demographic advantage and of transforming from a country with larger scale of human resource to a country rich in human resources is developing education preferentially» [4]. At the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (NCCPC) convoked in 2017, the strategy of strengthening education was emphasized again, which demonstrated the determination of giving priority to developing education and took a further step to correlate education, Chinese history, real national conditions and historical mission in the new era closely with each other. Thus, it initiates a new era of Chinese education reform and development and promotes in all aspects this fundamental project to our pursuit of national rejuvenation.

2. Advancing Educational Modernization

Educational modernization is an indispensable part of the nation's overall modernization. It is both an important development concept for promoting the modernization of the nation and a guiding ideology for education to face modernization, serve modernization and achieve modernization.

Modernization is the historical process of unprecedented improvement of mankind's ability to recognize nature, make use of nature, and control nature (including human itself), and the resulting widespread and profound changes in political, economic, cultural, and other social fields, aiming to create a high-degree material and ethical civilization [5]. In terms of connotation, modernization is an objective and high-level development state, which is a transcendence of traditional education and tries to achieve high-quality and balanced development. As a big developing country that needs to leapfrog over to complete modernization, modernization in education is the premise to achieve modern development of the whole country; and developing modern education with Chinese characteristics and world standards is the path choice for China's educational modernization. The government's document *the 13th Five-Year*

Plan for Economic and Social Development proposes that the most important strategic goal of the future educational development in China is to speed up perfecting modern educational system [6]. Fundamentally, the essence of educational modernization is the growth of educational modernity, and educational modernity is a concentrated reflection of some features of modern education. Therefore, the goal of educational modernization is jointly determined by the objective requirements of human's modernization and society's modernization [7]. Specifically:

First of all, educational modernization should focus on the goal of «four services», further take the advantages of China's educational system and strengthen the confidence in education. Efforts will be made to build a learning system of universally-available education, equal education, lifelong education and quality education as well as to build a learning oriented society and promote the well-rounded development of all our people, so as to fully realize the services for people, for all aspects of governance of Communist Party of China, for consolidating and developing the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and for reform, opening-up and socialist modernization.

Secondly, educational modernization needs a scientific, procedure-based and highly efficient guarantee mechanism. In accordance with the standards – «touch every area, break new ground», «be profound and fundamental», educational modernization should aim at the principal contradictions and prominent problems in education and improve the supply-side and demand-side of education. Through the reform and innovation of the institutional mechanisms, we provide vigor and impetus for educational modernization and build up the country into one with strong education.

Thirdly, educational modernization must make further steps to highlight Chinese characteristics and raise its international status. We must take root in China, follow the national conditions of socialism with Chinese characteristics in this new era, meet the expectations of the people and the needs of national development; meanwhile, we must actively keep an eye on the development of the education worldwide, critically absorb experience from other countries, strive to participate in global education governance, and lead the world education trend actively, thereby build a world-class modern education with Chinese characteristics.

3. Developing Education that People Are Satisfied with

Seeking happiness for the Chinese people is the eternal original aspiration of China's education. In the new era of constructing socialism with Chinese characteristics, people are more eager for a fair access to high quality education. Therefore, how to develop education that people are satisfied with has become the evaluation criterion and ultimate goal of China's educational development.

Firstly, the guiding ideology for developing education is people-centered. China's educational development has always emphasized the need to put people first. From the roots, the relationship between education and society is linked through people. Beginning with Confucius, Chinese education is closely related to people, and always takes «human» as its ultimate goal and fundamental interest. Marxism holds the view that people are the creators of history and also the creators, practitioners and judges of education, and that education is closely related to the development of people. Therefore, educational activities are essentially a kind of practice that makes man into man. In the practice of education, «people-centered» means taking the people as the end, as the driving force, and as the standards, ensuring the principle status of the people and highlighting the value pursuit of «people supremacy», which serves as the foundation for China's educational development and the source of this endeavor. Therefore, when deciding on the ideology of educational development, the benefits that people deserve should be stipulated in the design and arrangement of the system, so that the gains of educational development benefit all our people.

Secondly, satisfying the needs of the people serves as the fundamental purpose of developing education. Developing education that people are satisfied with is a concrete embodiment of thoroughly applying the people-centered concept. Only by running education to the satisfaction of the people can we provide an endless stream of intellectual support for realizing the Chinese Dream of national rejuvenation. As an ancient Chinese saying goes «Bringing benefit to the people is the fundamental principle of governance» [8]. Education should proceed from the standpoint of the people and serve the people wholeheartedly. In this sense, the primary purpose of education is for the sake of the people. In the process of development, we must rely on the people. And then the result is to satisfy the people. Therefore, education should take the people's interests, the people's demands, and the people's expectations as the starting point and goal. Whether the people are satisfied is the basic criteria for determining the success or failure of the education. Historical experience shows that the people are the source of wisdom and the creators of social spiritual wealth. «All scientific theories and all valuable liberal arts come from the people's lives and practices» [9, p. 229] Therefore, only by listening to the voices of the masses patiently, respecting the wishes of the people actually, relying on the wisdom of the people, and learning from the wise men, education will be thriving and the reform will remain invincible.

Thirdly, improving people's sense of fulfillment (happiness) is a desirable goal. As a social psychological phenomenon, people's sense of fulfillment is a feeling of happiness, efficacy and positive life experience. It is not only subject to external and objective factors, but also affected by subjective factors. Fundamentally, edu-

educational development should be followed by improving people's sense of fulfillment as a starting point and goal. People's great yearning for education should become the fundamental driving force for educational development; improving the people's sense of fulfillment in the educational field needs to be achieved through educational reform to improve people's well-being. Therefore, in the process of educational reform, China has consistently adhered to the people's stance and enhanced the thoughts of serving the people and strove for better education to achieve the dialectical unity of social development and individual development, common development and personality development, balanced development and rapid development, and promotion of fairness and improvement of quality. Under the background of new era, China strengthened its confidence and determination in enhancing people's well-being, promoting people's all-round development, and improving the people's sense of fulfillment. It has endeavored to improve the quality of public education, deepen comprehensive reforms in education, strives to achieve «ensuring people's access to education» and «ensuring people's access to high quality education», and meets people's earnest expectations for better education through «optimizing structure, improving quality, promoting fairness, focusing on reforms, and overcoming weaknesses».

II. The Basic Orientation of Contemporary China's Education

Since the 18th National Congress, developing modern education with Chinese characteristics and world standards is a strategic choice for China's educational development in the new historical period. Taking this overarching principle, we deepen the comprehensive education reform and form a series of new ideas and new measures. China has a historic leap from one with the world's largest educational system to one of the world's best. Universal education, equal education, lifelong education and quality education are the basic ways to realize education modernization, and it is also the basic orientation and goals of China's education in contemporary times.

1. Further Popularize Education

As early as in the 17th century, the Czech democratic educator John Amos Comenius put forward the idea of universal education in *Great Didactic of Comenius*. He pointed out that children, male or female, rich or poor, noble or civilians, living in cities or towns, from villages or hamlets, should have equal access to school education [10, p. 65]. This educational ideology has a great social significance, which implicates that education should eliminate class, ethnic and gender differences and be accessible to everyone. Subsequently, Rousseau, a French Enlightenment thinker in the 18th century, elaborated that universal education is a necessity for social development when writing about social issues. He believed that in an ideal society based on the principles of freedom and

equality, the state must establish a unified and universal educational system to replace the hierarchical and aristocratic education in the old system and provide all children rich or poor with equal access to education. He proposed establishing a public educational system and an attempt to make use of the public education, which is universal and independent of the church, to develop a national spirit, good social customs and cultivate citizens and patriots with social consciousness and social morality [11, p. 135–140]. Rousseau's idea of universal education broke the traditional feudal education and played a role in emancipating the minds of the bourgeoisie against the feudal cultural despotism and striving for universal education rights. And it also directly promoted the educational reform in some capitalist countries in Europe and America from the end of the 18th century to the 19th century. In *Critique of the Gotha Programme*, Marx pointed out that educational popularization is premised on social, political, historical, and economic conditions. He criticized and revealed that the «universal and equal national education» advocated by the German Workers' Party is a false slogan. He emphasized the political and class nature of education and also pointed out that to achieve universal compulsory education, it is necessary to abolish the class and reform the social system [12].

As for China, Tao Xingzhi, a great people's educator in China's modern history, pioneered the idea of universal education. Based on China's realities, the thoughts of civilian education, rural education, ethnic education and mass education he proposed in different historical periods all centered on a central issue, that is, how to make education become universal, so that those who have not received education could get it. Additionally, he proposed that universal education must connect with the people's real life needs and many approaches should be used, strengthening legislation, for example [13, p. 58, 150, 161–162, 181].

Since the founding of the PRC, the Communist Party of China and the Chinese government have paid close attention to the issue of universal education. In *Common Political Agenda* promulgated in September 1949, it was proposed to implement universal education in a planned and step-by-step manner. This is the earliest universal education policy of new China. Although it did not stipulate the length and nature of universal education, the basic principle «planning and stepping» provided fundamental rule for universal education in all periods after that. Since the 1980s, China's compulsory education has begun to be supervised by legislation, which promoted the rapid development of popularizing nine-year compulsory education. In 1986, *The Compulsory Education Law of the People's Republic of China* was issued, which was the first law specifically for compulsory education in new China and marked the initial completion of the legal system for compulsory education. In 1955, *The Education Law of the People's Republic of China* defined the rights, obligations, and

sources of funding for compulsory education. Since then, the legal system of compulsory education comprised of the Constitution, the Education Law, the Compulsory Education Law and local regulations provides the legal basis for «popularizing nine-year compulsory education». Since the beginning of the new century, the government has had a deeper understanding that compulsory education is public welfare-oriented in nature. A series of policies to universalize nine-year compulsory education have been promulgated and implemented; and especially, the adjustment of rural compulsory education system and the increasing financial support have effectively promoted the balanced development in compulsory education. The *Outline* promulgated in 2010 proposes that by 2020, the development of compulsory education shall be basically balanced among different regions. Specific policies involve increasing the financial input in rural areas and central and western regions, allotting the school resources in a balanced manner, allocating teacher resources rationally, and guaranteeing the special groups' right to education. In the past decade, the degree of popularization of education in China has made important progress. The specific data are shown in Table as follows [14].

Table

The Degree of Popularization of China's Education

Indicators	Units	2009	2016	2020
Preschool education				
Number of children in kindergartens	Million	26,58	44,139	40
Gross attendance rate for those entering kindergartens 3 years before starting school	%	50,9	77,4	70
Nine-year compulsory education				
Number of students in school	Million	157,72	142	165
Retention rate of students	%	90,8	93,4	95
Senior middle school education				
Number of students in school	Million	46,24	39,701	47
Gross enrollment rate	%	79,2	87,5	90
Higher education				
Total enrollments	Million	29,79	36,99	35,5
Of which: number of postgraduates	%	1,4		2
Gross enrollment rate		24,2	42,7	40

As shown in table 1, in the ten years, the popularity of schooling in different levels has been greatly improved, among which preschool education has taken a great leap, and the target 70 % established in the *Outline* has been completed ahead of schedule, exceeding the average of 73,7 % in middle and high-income countries. Almost all primary school freshmen have received preschool education for a certain period of time; Nine-year compulsory education has further consolidated its achievements, and the popularization of *senior middle school education* has been rising continuously, both of which are higher than the average level of the world's middle and high-income countries; Higher education achieves its planning goal in 2020 ahead of schedule, and it is rapidly advancing towards the universally accepted degree of popularization of higher education. China's higher education has gradually transitioned from elite education to mass education, and higher education accounts for one fifth of education's total scale, making China's higher education rank first in size among all the countries in the world.

2. Delivering Equal Education to Everyone

At all times and in all countries, social justice has always been a fine value ideal pursued by people. In view of the basic, overall, and leading status of education in the development of modern society, education equity plays a fundamental role in the entire social justice system. From Confucius's «In teaching there should be no distinction of classes» to Plato's democratic thoughts on open society and liberal education in *Utopia*, the exploration and pursuit of educational fairness has never stopped in the East and the West. The idea of fairness in modern education sprouted from the renaissance with the slogan of «Liberation of thoughts and individuality». During the Renaissance, people's demands for equality were bred in the wake of people's individual consciousness and the return of values. Fair education was in among them. In the 18th century, fighting against feudal autocracy and religious theocracy, enlightenment thinkers developed the idea of «Natural Rights». Starting from the concepts of «freedom» and «equality», the thinkers regard Natural Rights to be enjoyed by everyone equally, not just limited to a few people. These thoughts reflect the needs of the emerging bourgeoisie to oppose feudal regime and achieve political change. Marx absorbed and developed the viewpoint of those bourgeois thinkers, on the basis of historical materialism, he put forward that «fairness» is a social and historical existence and will inevitably be deeply rooted in real economic conditions and the concept of fairness in certain historical periods often has its historical inevitability. Engels once pointed out, «The idea of equality cannot be eternal truth». Therefore, «it will change in accordance with the development of the entire society and cannot exceed the social structure, and the level of economic and social development of a certain period» [16, p. 448].

As a universal human right in modern society, education fairness embodies the basic spirit of some international conventions, such as *Universal Human Rights Declaration* (1948), *International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights* (1976), *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1990) and so on. It is the mainstream consensus of the international community and the universal value of the world today. In today's China, education equity is the basic educational policy in China and the core value orientation of China's educational development, which is determined by the essential requirements of socialist education. President Xiaoping Deng once stated clearly: «The essence of socialism is to emancipate and develop productive forces, eliminate exploitation and polarization, and eventually achieve common prosperity» [17, p. 373]. This claim lays a theoretical foundation for determining the nature of socialist education fairness. Socialism must liberate productive forces and develop productive forces, which means the emancipation and development of human beings. Since human beings are the primary factor contributing to productivity, only by facilitating full development of individuals' capabilities can we drive the development of social productive forces. The «human beings» mentioned here refers to the masses, not a small proportion of the population. Focusing on the new era, the Party's report on the Nineteenth Congress emphasizes again that the continuing commitment to people-centered philosophy of development is an important strategy for Xi Jinping's «Thought on Socialism with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era». In the field of education, education equity is the source of education's original value, and it is the intrinsic rule of education based on humanity and human beings' fundamental rights [18]. In essence, education is an enterprise of cultivating «human nature», aiming at the emancipation of human nature and the development of human beings. Adhering to the «human-oriented» educational ontology is in conformity with the philosophical purport of Marxism on achieving man's all-round development and ultimate goal.

To promote the implementation of education equity policies, it is firstly essential to clarify the connotation and nature of «fairness» in education. Here, «fairness» is not totally the same as «equality». Equality is the equivalence between two individuals, therefore, equality in education refers to the commonality and consistency of citizens' rights to education and access to education, while fairness in education relates to the value judgement of the adjustment of interest relations and the rationality of resources allocation. The Principle of Rationality is the essence of education fairness. As the «Three Principles of Justice» established in the Theory of Justice by John B. Rawls, the principle of balanced allocation of educational resources should include the principle of equality, principle of difference, and principle of compensation [19]. In modern society, fairness in education is through the institutional justice to

ensure that the power of law could adequately allocate the means of production, the social system is highly open, and the well-ground development of people and society is promoted. China is undergoing profound social changes at present. The CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at the Core has a series of people-centered and care-oriented ideological views on education, based on reform to «making people have a sense of gain», «enabling 1.3 billion people to enjoy a better and fairer education, so that they can acquire the ability to develop themselves, contribute to society and help others», «giving full play to one's talent», «fairness in education promotes social fairness and justice» [20, p. 191]. Such ideas have enriched the definition and connotation of education fairness and established the important value pursuit of the development of education in the new stage of China. This is the theoretical premise and ideological basis for China's education in this stage. At the same time, understanding and implementing fairness in education can also relieve the social contradictions arising from the distribution of educational resources, thereby to build up democratic, harmonious, and equal social values. Therefore, fairness in education is not an abstract moral issue, but a necessity for the development and progress of production mode. It is a responsibility of the state and a core value of modern society.

To achieve fairness in education, the Chinese government has adopted a series of important measures. Firstly, to establish and improve the relevant compulsory systems and strong protection mechanisms which promote fairness in education. Among them, the reform of examinations and enrollment system is a key link. In August 2014, the Central Leading Group for Comprehensive Deepening Reform reviewed and approved the *Implementation Opinions in Deepening Reform on Examinations and Enrollment System*, and each province or municipality has successively issued supporting policies and measures in accordance with their own conditions. The cumulative number of reforms has reached more than 100 items ranging from compulsory education to higher education and the new round of the overall design of examination and enrollment system has been basically completed. Secondly, to further optimize the allocation and use of fiscal expenditure on education, public education resources should be deployed in favor of rural areas, central and western regions, schools with weak teaching ability and disadvantaged groups; also China implements «compulsory education in rural areas free of charge», «ensures compulsory education opportunities for children of rural migrant workers in cities», «No school choice, nearby enrollment» and other institutional compensation policies. In 2006, the total amount of education funds in the country was 3,89 trillion yuan, of which the fiscal expenditure on education was 3,14 trillion yuan, and the portion of it in GDP was raised to 4 % for five years. During the five-year period from 2012 to 2016, the nation's fiscal ex-

penditure on education has invested a total of 13.5 trillion yuan, which is more than the sum of the total investment from 1952 to 2011. More than half are for compulsory education and more than half for the central and western regions. The growth rate of educational investment in central and western regions was significantly higher than that in the east, and more than half is used for teachers' salaries and student financial assistance. Education expenditures begin to show a tendency from focusing on «material input» to «human capital».

3. Offering Quality Education in Various Ways

Since 1980s, a massive education reconstruction campaign has been launched throughout the world. The market-oriented school system reform targeting on quality and efficiency has become the focus of education reform. The «quality education» concept is the earliest reference to the *Reagan Education Report* submitted to the Congress by the Reagan Administration of the United States. The report proposes the «Three E» principle of education: the pursuit of excellence, the enhancement of efficiency, and the emphasis on equality. American educationist Van Dini also put forward the famous education equation «excellent education = quality + equality + effectiveness + participation». The essence of excellence education here is quality education, and the core of quality education is to pay attention to education quality. In 2000, UNESCO adopted the *Education for All Action Plan* at the «World Education for All» Education Forum held in Dakar (also known as the *Dakar Plan of Action*). One of the important conclusions was that «providing education for all is a victory, but if we can't provide them with an education that guarantees quality, it's just a hollow victory» [21]. This signifies that modern education has entered an era characterized by the pursuit of quality. The development goal of world education should be transformed from education for all into quality education for all. Improving the quality of education and developing equality education have become a fundamental aim that political leaders in all countries are concerned about. Enjoying the equality education is increasingly becoming an ideal pursuit for all people of all countries.

China's quality education is influenced by «school reconstruction movement» in the world and the local «quality-oriented education» campaign. Tao Xiping is among the earliest scholars who focused on and systematically studied the development of quality education in China. He pointed out in his report entitled *Development of Quality Education with Integrated Optimization* Thought that quality education is both a pursuit of education from ancient to present and a hot issue of education development today [22]. Quality education is a common value orientation for the development of modern education. It takes the quality of education as a foundation and full potential development as the theme. It is a modern education concept and model aiming at enjoying quality education for all people, pursuing the optimization of educa-

tional quality and maximizing the effectiveness of education, focusing on improving learning quality, quality of life and promoting sustainable development between education and human effectively.

After solving «getting the access to education» in China, better education and fair education with quality have become the new expectation of the people. Behind the constant pursuit of educational fairness, the importance of education quality has become increasingly prominent. Therefore, effectively integrating fairness into quality and paying attention to a higher level of education quality has become the goal and pursuit of China's education. The understanding towards quality education is also constantly evolving and profound. In the past, many people simply equated quality education with education that promotes more students entering schools of a higher grade; meanwhile, equating the test scores with the quality of education results in highly criticized «examination-oriented education». Since 1990s, the country begins to promote «quality-oriented education». The *Outline* pointed out that «putting people first and fully implementing quality-oriented education are the strategic themes for our education reform and development» and «at the core of these themes is to answer the questions of what kind of talents should be cultivated and how». It is to point the purpose of education to «people» and to the improvement of people's overall literacy, that is, to foster virtue through education, put moral education in the first, emphasize capacity building and stress people's all-round development. Considering quality improvement as the core task for education reform and development, the nation proposes to expand the total amount of quality education resources continuously, provide more abundant quality education, better meet the needs of the people for receiving quality education, and promote the overall improvement of educational equality. This means that the balanced development of compulsory education and the improvement of quality are proceeding at the same time. The balanced educational development centered on quality is the key point of China's education after the popularization of compulsory education. Quality and fair education is the new aspiration of the times. Thus, facing with the principle contradiction between the severe shortage and unbalanced development of quality education resources and the people's eager expectation for receiving high quality education, Zhong Binglin, president of China Education Association, pointed out that the fundamental way to resolve this challenge is to change the educational development mode and adhere to the full potential of development characterized by improving quality and optimizing structure [23].

4. Constructing a Systematic Framework for Lifelong Education

As an ideal of mankind, the thought of lifelong education is long-standing and well-established. Muhammad, founder of Islam, stated in his book that life should be «learning from the cradle and learning to the grave», which was

seen as the earliest idea of lifelong education in the world. Aristotle advocated that all citizens living in the polis should have «same education». Muhammad and Aristotle respectively mentioned the essence of lifelong education as «education at every moment, everybody is educated». In our country, lifelong education is not the «imported concept». Confucius once described his lifelong learning experience, «At fifteen I set my heart upon learning. At thirty, I planted my feet firm upon the ground. At forty, I no longer suffered from perplexities. At fifty, I knew what the biddings of Heaven were. At sixty, I heard them with docile ear. At seventy, I could follow the dictates of my own heart; for what I desired no longer overstepped the boundaries of right» [24]. Zhuangzi, another philosopher in ancient China, said that «My life is bounded, and knowledge is boundless» [25] emphasizing the necessity of lifelong education. And the old motto «One is never too old to learn» is even more popular in China. From the cultivation of Islamic followers to the education philosophy of Plato, from the visionary Owen to the modern educator Comenius, the concept of lifelong education is mentioned by them without exception. As a result, lifelong education can be seen as the universal expectation and classic ideal of human society concerning education.

The concept of modern lifelong education is firstly proposed by John Dewey. Although he did not use the word «lifelong education» and «lifelong learning», he stated clearly, «The real education comes from leaving school, and there is no reason to show that education should be stopped before death» [26, p. 25]. Dewey believes that education is a process of continuous reorganization, reconstruction and transformation. Education should not be stopped after a person leaves school. Schools should not only serve children and young people, but also be open to adults for adult learning. The more you learn, the more you will grow. After the 1960s, lifelong education as a concept of modern education was widely disseminated in countries all over the world. In 1965, on the 3rd International Conference on the Promotion of Adult Education by UNESCO, Paul Lengrand proposed «Education should run through people's lives» in his report *Lifelong Education*. In 1972, UNESCO published Faure Edgar's report *Learning to Be*. The book mentioned three basic concepts «lifelong education», «lifelong learning», and «learning society». «If learning included the whole life of a person (both its length and its aspects) and the entire society (both education resources and its social, economic resources), we must continue to advance to a realm of learning society in addition to carrying out necessary overhauls of the 'education system'». «We can no longer earnestly acquire knowledge once and for all, and we need lifelong learning to build an evolving knowledge system 'learning to be'» [27]. The International 21st Century Board of Education, headed by Jacques Delors, clearly stated in the report *Learning-the Treasure Within* submitted to UNESCO that lifelong education is

the key to entering the 21st century and is based on the four pillars, which are learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be (4L) [28]. The report marks the initial formation of the system of lifelong education theory. Lifelong education, lifelong learning, and constructing the learning society have become the current international ideological thought. Many developed countries regard it as one of the social and educational policies.

Since the 1990s, the CPC Central Committee and the State Council have issued legal provisions and related policies concerning lifelong education and lifelong learning. In 1993, *China Education Reform and Development Program* put forward the concept of «lifelong education» formally in the central document. *Education Law of the People's Republic of China*, promulgated and implemented in 1995, states in Article 11, «The state shall fit in with the needs of the development of socialist market economy and the social progress, accelerate educational reform, promote the coordinated development of all kinds of education at all levels, establish and perfect the whole life education system». And it states in Article 41, «The state shall encourage schools, other educational institutions and social organizations to create conditions for the whole life education of citizens». At the practical level, adult continuing education is the most important part of lifelong education and lifelong learning. The Chinese government has always promoted the reform and development of adult continuing education. As of 2016, the number of continuing education for higher education in the nation was 12,29 million. Supported by The Open University of China, the nation accredits continuing education results, accumulates and converts the pilots. There are already more than 70 certified credit centers in the country and five local open universities undertake the construction of the «bank of credits». In terms of non-diploma continuing education, the number of people receiving non-diploma continuing education for higher education was 8,63 million in 2016, increasing by 118,5 % over 2012. In 2012–2016, the national people's lifelong learning week was held continuously, with more than 100 million people participating in it. Additionally, community education and education for the aged population are extensively developed, and the elderly and other groups in the training have also exceeded 100 million.

III. The Future Trend of Contemporary China's Education

In an important transition period from a manufacturing powerhouse to a country of innovators and from a country with larger scale of human resource to a country rich in human resources, it is the key to the future development of education to effectively tackle the profound changes of China's education in the strategic and opportunity period of development, conscientiously summarize and reflect on the practical experience and development charac-

teristics in the process of education reform, and step into a path of innovation with its own characteristics. In particular, China's education shows the overall trend of the intension, legalization, internationalization, innovation and informatization in its modernization development path.

1. Intensive Development

Extensive and intensive type of development are two different ways in high-quality and balanced development of compulsory education. The former focuses on the external force of education to promote the balance of educational resources, while the latter focuses on the internal force of education to promote the balance of education quality [29]. Intensive type of educational development or connotative development refers to structural optimization, quality improvement, and strength enhancement. It is a relatively natural historical development process, and development is more from internal needs. Under the overall background of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects, education fairness must emphasize the improvement of quality and efficiency on the basis of balanced development. In the future, China's education reform should continue to promote the intensive development of education and measure the promotion of people's all-round development and adaptation to the needs of society as the fundamental standard of education quality. It should be noted that education cannot ignore quality in exchange for the enhancement of fairness. Therefore, the key to intensive development is to establish an education development concept centered on improving quality.

Specifically, the intensive development of future education should be embodied in three aspects: first is to further promote comprehensive reforms in education. We should innovate ways providing education for public services, expand the coverage of high-quality education resources and better meet the needs of selective education; we should further mobilize the initiative of social forces to participate in the organization of education, deepen the decentralization and the transformation of government functions, focus on serving the country's overall strategy and open the educational filed wider to the outside world in an orderly manner. Second is to promote coordinated growth of all kinds of education at all levels, solving the unbalanced and uncoordinated problems of education development; to strengthen preschool education in rural areas, promote balanced development in compulsory education, diversification of senior middle schools, as well as encourage industries and enterprises to participate in vocational education, and enhance the construction of the special education guarantee mechanism; thereby deepening the advancement of the learning society's framework and mechanism and providing learners with flexible and convenient services. The third is to further stimulate the vitality of education and give full play to the society's initiative in participating in education, establishing and improving the institutional

mechanisms for multi-party participation in education governance and evaluation; by strengthening the construction of high caliber with moral integrity and teaching expertise and increasing education investment, we would raise informatization and internationalization level in education. Meanwhile, we target at rule of law in education by strengthening education guarantees so that universal education can be popularized and human resources can be developed. We also dedicate to meet the national strategy by optimizing the quality and structure of human resources so that the capability of serving economic growth and social progress can be strengthened and that finally the establishment of a moderately prosperous society can be vigorously supported in all respects. On the whole, the only way for the development of China's education reform is to further clarify the core principle and strategic requirements for the intensive development, and to promote the leap-forward transformation of China's education from extensive development to intensive development. This is not only a reflection of the quality and rapid development of education, but also a response to the people's pursuit of education fairness with quality. It is also a major shift in the strategic adjustment and development mode of promoting balanced education in China.

2. Legalization

The rule of law and the rule of man are two important forms of social governance in the history of mankind, both of which have existed for a long time in a specific social context. It is education that serves the foundation of the construction of a society based on the rule of law. Education is conducted under the control of legal norms, and legal norms play an increasingly important role in educational practice. The development of modern education is actually a history of legislation. It clearly shows that education is increasingly linked with the destiny of the country. Education has gradually evolved into a national effort and regulating education through the law is an inevitable choice for the country. *The Decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on Major Issues Concerning Comprehensive Promoting the Rule of Law* released by the Fourth Plenary Session of the 18th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China has provided political guarantees for the socialism with Chinese characteristics and national rejuvenation, having the great epoch-making significance. As an important task of modern countries, education development should reflect the requirements of the times in the governance of the law. From the law-based governance to the rule of law in education, it is an inevitable trend that the education development goes to the process of legalization.

Specifically, education legalization is a practical process of ensuring the order of education and achieving educational goals through coordination, regulation, and guidance of educational relations, educational behavior, and educa-

tional development [30]. First of all, the realization of the rule of law in education should be based on the legalization of educational relations. Through the law, the rights of the educational subjects in educational relations can be guaranteed, all kinds of educational work can be smoothly carried out according to the plan and ultimately the educational goals are ensured to be achieved. Establishing a complete legal system of education is a prerequisite for the legalization of educational relations and what the law regulates are the educational relations within the institutional framework. The basic content of the legal relationship is the rights and obligations between its subjects, and the important content of the educational legal relationship based on the legal system is the right relationship of the educational subjects. Secondly, realization of the rule of law in education should be based on the legalization of educational behavior. Educational behavior is a direct dynamic manifestation of educational relations, mainly manifesting by education administration, school management, education implementation, education participation and so on. The legal basis of education administration means the legality of administrative act, the authority scope of the administrative subject, the content of the administrative act, and the procedure of the administrative act. The standpoint of school management is to better implement education. The legislation of education administration aims to create a better external and internal environment for education implementation, leading to promote the legislation of education implementation within itself. Lastly, the core issue of education legalization is to legally protect the priority to develop education. In other words, compared to other aspects of society, education, a social enterprise that specializes in the cultivating talents, should be one step ahead of others and has appropriately advance development. It is an important part of the country's development strategy to firmly give priority to education under the protection of the law. All in all, education legalization is a process, a comprehensive long-term process of coordination, interaction, and mutual promotion of the education relations, education behavior, and education development under the role of legal norms.

3. Internationalization

With rapid advance and widespread sharing of global educational resources, competition and cooperation in the education field are faced with more opportunities and challenges. Therefore, in China's future education development, we should more consciously explore local characteristics in international comparisons and reference, and properly deal with the relationships between globalization and localization, between ethnicity and modernity. President Xi Jinping points out that «China will strengthen educational exchanges with other countries, open its educational field wider to the outside world, and actively support the development of education in developing countries. We

are determined to work with peoples of all other countries towards a brighter future» [31, p. 191]. The Ministry of Education issued the *Implementation of 'the Belt and Road' Education Initiative*, a national implementation plan for the «Belt and Road» strategy in the education field. It also points out that China will work with countries along the route to expand people-to-people and cultural exchanges, strengthen personnel training and jointly create a brighter future for education. The central government proposed to deepen the «opening up education to the outside world» in the new era and jointly build the «One Belt and One Road» initiative by the education circle. It is a major strategic move under the trend of world multi-polarization and globalization, and an important choice for the educational community to adapt to cultural diversity and human communication. It highlights the relentless pursuit of education for building a community with a shared civilization for mankind.

The internationalization of education in the future needs to further promote the «bring in» and «going out» strategies to promote reform and development through tolerance and opening-up, so as to comprehensively upgrade the level of education in China. Specifically, there are three key points as follows: firstly, to strengthen pragmatic cooperation with major powers, neighboring countries, and developing countries in order to form a situation in which education is open to the outside world with emphasizing on promotion and win-win cooperation, so as to enhance the international influence and competitiveness of China's education. Secondly, to bring in quality resources is the key point. We plan to deepen education cooperation and exchanges with developed countries in all kinds of fields at all levels. Meanwhile, we focus on «going out» and expand education cooperation and exchanges with developing countries. Thirdly, we must create the characteristics of education in different regions during the process of opening up. We should support the eastern region to improve the level of education opening to the outside world, take the lead in running modern and world-class education with Chinese characteristics, and intensify policy inclining. At the same time, we should support the central and western regions and the northeast region to continuously expand the breadth and depth of education opening to the outside world as well as guide those regions to make the good use of geographical advantages.

Promoting internationalization of education needs to raise our own education level as a nation, demonstrate our own cultural confidence, and tell Chinese stories well. President Xi Jinping emphasized that «promoting education to the outside world requires both reference to international experience and the promotion of the brilliant traditional Chinese cultures» and «let us tell the stories of China well and make our voices heard», which put forward new requirements for promoting the education internationalization. In the future, China will play an important role in the global economic and political arena.

Therefore, we must establish a long-term foundation and cultivate a large number of international talents having international perspectives, knowing international affairs, being able to participate in the international affairs, and having international competitiveness. In summary, further expanding education opening-up and enhancing exchanges and cooperation are of great significance for the international development of China's education. China needs to proceed from an international perspective and build a modern educational system with world-class standards and Chinese characteristics in the future.

4. Innovation

Under the globalization and innovation in the new era, the *National Education Development Thirteenth Five-Year Plan* puts forward: «We must insist that innovation is the primary force driving development and must give innovation top priority in overall national development». At the same time, the report of the 19th National Congress also puts forward innovation-driven development strategy and emphasizes that «innovation is the primary force driving development». Along with the country's growth from «becoming big» to «becoming strong», in the field of education, China ought to develop from a country with larger scale of human resource to a country rich in human resources. The important task of building a strong modern education country is to improve the quality of talents, cultivate the innovative professionals, and renovate the talent-cultivation mechanisms. In September 2017, the General Office of the CPC Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China issued the *Opinions on Deepening the Reform of the Educational System and Mechanism*, which states: «Innovative education is to be carried out through the entire process of personnel training, establishing and improving professional dynamic adjustment mechanisms, perfecting the curriculum system, strengthening the construction of textbooks and training bases, improving the credit system, implementing a flexible learning system and encouraging teachers to innovate teaching methods. And we should further promote collaborative education and the institutionalization of collaborative training talents» [32]. The above arguments cover all aspects of the cultivation of innovative talents including the concept of talent cultivation, disciplines, courses, teaching materials, training bases, credit system, teaching methods, collaborative education and so on, proposing the new requirements for the education development in China.

To be specific, first of all, the important mission and responsibility for education in the new era is carrying out innovative education through the entire process of personnel training, that is, to integrate innovative spirit, thinking, will, and quality into the entire personnel training system. It is a conscious action for students to pursue academic development and prepare for their future career. Secondly, the key to innovative education development is to fur-

ther perfect the curriculum system, strengthen the construction of textbooks and training bases, improve the credit system, and implement a flexible learning system. These contents refer to the core of innovative talent cultivation directly. Thirdly, teachers should continue to innovate teaching methods. The teaching methods are closely related to the curriculum system, textbooks, and elastic schooling system. Schools should encourage teachers to improve school effectiveness through innovating teaching methods and ensure that the capable teachers have the energy and opportunity to innovate, and then explore student-centered innovative education model. Finally, further promoting collaborative education and the institutionalization of collaborative training talents is an important feature of modern education governance. In the process of talent training, we need to encourage other entities to participate in all aspects and strengthen the cooperation between research institutes, enterprise and schools. Additionally, we need to make goal-oriented research and free exploration research complementary to each other and form a new model of learning while teaching and collaborative education.

5. Informatization

The development of science and information technology has had a profound impact on China's education in an all-round, whole-process and revolutionary manner. Promoting education modernization through education informatization is the only way for China's education development. President Xi accurately grasped the new characteristics of the development of the information age. He clearly pointed out that «China has persistently promoted education informatization and strove to expand the coverage of education resources by means of informatization». This ideology inherits the idea of strengthening the integration of education and science and technology in the socialist education theory with Chinese characteristics and make new and profound judgments on the basic connotation, basic features, and basic laws of modern education [33].

In particular, the first is to attach great importance to the role of information education in promoting the development of education. China must accelerate the construction of educational information infrastructure, integrate education informatization into the overall strategy for the development of national informatization, deploy educational information networks ahead of schedule, make full use of high-quality resources and advanced technologies, innovate operational mechanisms and management models, integrate existing resources, and build advanced, efficient, and practical digital education infrastructure. In the meantime, we need to promote the digital campuses construction and implement multiple ways to access the Internet to facilitate the interconnection of information systems. The second is to adhere to the deep integration of information technology and education. We must strengthen the

quality education resources development and application, strengthen the construction of online teaching resources system, introduce high-quality digital teaching resources promoting the integration and innovation of information technology and education actively, strive to build a networked, digital, personalized and lifelong education system and form a learning environment where everyone learns, learns everywhere and learns all the time. The third is to build a national education management information system. We must formulate school basic information management requirements, accelerate the process of school management informatization, promote the standardization and normalization of school management, build a national digital teaching resource pool and public service platform for effective sharing and covering all levels of education and complete a perfect national and provincial educational information database as well as monitoring and analysis systems such as education quality, student mobility, resource allocation and the conditions of graduates employment. In short, the information-based society needs to change education through information technology, with special emphasis on relying on the Internet to realize the connection between the world of life and the world of education. This means that informatization development of China's education in the future needs to cultivate a social digital education resources service market, explore to establish the management norms of «Internet + Education», and develop new forms of Internet education services.

In conclusion, this article gives a brief overview of China's educational reform and development in the new era, summarizes three philosophies influencing the status quo of education in China, analyzes four values orientations or essential goals of China's educational development, and discusses the five trends and challenges of China's education development in prospect.

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