

Study on Higher Education Sustainable Development of China's Western Region

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to put forwards some suggestion on Higher education sustainable development of China's western region based on analyzing it's develop situation.

Key words: Land use planning; Land management; Land use; China

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INTRODUCTION

Higher, post-secondary, tertiary, or third level education refers to the stage of learning that occurs at universities, academies, colleges, seminaries, and institutes of technology. Higher education also includes certain collegiate-level institutions, such as vocational schools, trade schools, and career colleges, that award academic degrees or professional certifications.

China's Western Region includes 5 autonomous regions and 7 provinces. The autonomous regions are Guangxi, Inner Mongolia, Ningxia, Tibet and Xinjiang. The provinces are Chongqing, Gansu, Guizhou, Qinghai, Shaanxi, Sichuan and Yunnan. Although China is emerging as a strong economy, disparity among the regions' development has widened in the past 30 years

since it opened its door in 1978, The western region development is slower than the other region. However, China's western region is very important not only in economy area, but also in other's area. For instance, the region covers 5.38 million square kilometers, 56% of the country land area, and has a population of 287 million people, 22.99% of the national total. The territory of the western region is vast, its population sparse, and its undeveloped economic resources need to be strengthened and exploited. Of the China's poor who lack adequate food and clothing, the majority live in this region. It is also the region in which most of China's minority nationalities live. Natural resources in the western region are very rich. Total water resource account for 82.5% of the nation's total, and utilized water reserves account for 77% of the total, though only 1% of these reserves has been used. The region's mineral reserves are also huge. According to statistics for verified reserves, the region holds 36% of the nation's coal reserves, 12% of its petroleum and 53% of its natural gas reserves. 120 out of 140 categories of verified natural mineral resources are found in the western region, with some rare metal reserves among the richest in the nation if not the world. Its tourist and cultural resources are also rich. In this region, we find the clay warriors and horses of the First Emperor's tomb, the Mogao Caves, Jiuzhaigou, etc.

China's western region has gained great achievements in economic development over the period of 1978-2011, for example, the economic growth rates of central, western and northeast China in 2009 were 12.6%, 13.4% and 11.6%, respectively, higher than the 10.7% growth of eastern China. But as far as the higher education in the China's western region, it lags behind the central and eastern part of China presenting representing as follows: funds input are inadequate, the numbers of the university and college is smaller, the scale of the students is also smaller and the Structure of higher education is not so reasonable. The problem is not only bad for the higher

education sustainable development, but also bad for economic sustainable development in the context of there is short of human capital especially high High-tech talents. While higher education is an important way for manpower capital investment and manpower training. On the other hand, the higher education can function in the following fields: (i) Ensure equality regardless of race gender, language, religion or economic or social distinctions, or physical disabilities. (ii) Educate, train and undertake research to contribute to the sustainable development and improvement of society as a whole and ensure the development of highly qualified graduates and responsible citizens. Provide opportunities for higher learning and for learning throughout life. (iii) Ensure that higher education institutions exercise ethics and scientific and intellectual rigour in their various activities, providing a focus for forecasting, warning and prevention. For this, personnel and students should enjoy full academic autonomy and freedom while being fully responsible and accountable to society and so on.

So it is important to realize the higher education sustainable development of China's western region. In view of this, the paper put some policy suggestion for

promoting the higher education sustainable development based on analyzing its problems. The paper unfolds as follows: the next section introduces some current situations of higher education in this area. The third part analyzes of the problems in the higher education in China's western regions. And last part put forwards some suggestion on how to promoting the Chinese western regional higher education sustainable development.

THE SITUATIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN CHINA'S WESTERN REGIONS

Scale of Higher Education in China's Western Regions

The indicators which can measure the scale of higher education are the number of colleges and universities, number of students, number of Bachelor, Master and Ph.D. degree-granting. Over the period of 2003-2007, the abovementioned indicators are listed as the following tables (see Table 1, Table 2).

Table 1
Scale of Higher Education in China

Year	The number of colleges and universities					Number of students				
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
The whole	1552	1731	1792	1867	1869	1108.6	1333.5	1561.8	1738.8	1765.2
The average	47.03	52.45	54.30	56.58	57.86	33.59	40.41	47.33	52.69	53.41
Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai	166	175	177	185	195	107.8	120.1	132.2	138.9	139.2
The average	55.33	58.33	59	61.67	62.35	35.93	40.03	44.07	46.7	47.1
The central China	485	552	574	581	592	356.9	439.8	521.0	580.4	592.1
The average	40.42	46	47.83	48.42	49.17	29.74	36.35	43.42	48.37	49.21
The eastern China	523	595	613	641	653	408.4	490.4	576.7	650.7	675.12
The average	65.38	74.38	76.63	80.13	82.13	51.05	61.3	72.09	81.34	82.12
The western China	378	409	428	460	464	235.4	283.1	331.8	368.7	356.7
The average	31.5	34.08	35.67	38.33	4.12	19.62	23.59	27.65	30.73	31.35

Source: China Statistical Yearbook 2010

Table 2
Percentage of the Indications in Different Region in China

Year	The number of colleges and universities					Number of students				
	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai	10.7	10.11	9.87	9.90	9.93	9.72	9.00	8.46	7.99	7.87
The average	3.57	3.37	3.29	3.3	3.4	3.24	3	2.82	2.62	2.60
The central China	33.70	34.37	34.21	34.33	34.53	36.83	36.76	36.93	37.42	38.12
The average	4.21	4.30	4.28	4.29	4.31	4.61	4.60	4.62	4.68	4.71
The eastern China	31.25	31.89	32.03	31.12	32.12	32.19	32.98	33.36	33.38	34.12
The average	2.60	2.66	2.70	2.59	3.10	2.68	2.75	2.78	2.78	2.89
The western China	24.35	23.62	23.88	24.64	25.23	21.23	21.23	21.24	21.20	21.34
The average	2.02	1.97	1.99	2.08	2.09	1.77	1.77	1.77	1.77	1.75

Source: China Statistical Yearbook 2010

Table 4 and Table 5 show that there is fast development among the different regions. But compared with other regions, China's western regions develop more slowly than the others regions. For instance, the number of colleges and universities in China's western regions is fewer than the average level of China. And number of students is far fewer than the central China and the eastern China. In all, there is a small scale of higher education in China's western regions.

Develop Level of Higher Education in China's Western Regions

The comprehensive strength of higher education is an important measure of the quality development of higher education. The indicators of the number of key universities, the Chinese university outstanding young teachers ranking, national excellence teachers, national quality courses and high level research project were chosen to evaluate the develop level of higher education in China's western region. The indicators are listed as Table 3.

Table 3
The Numbers of Key Universities and the Ranking Before 100 in 2006

	The numbers of key university	The ranking before 100
Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai	49	31
Eastern China	51	20
Central China	32	23
Western China	27	18
Sum	145	100

Source: <http://www.eol.cn>; <http://www.rank98.com/>

Table 3 shows that there are 27 key universities in China's western regions, but 51 in eastern China, 32 in central China. It shows that the quality of higher education in western China is lower than the other regions.

THE MAIN RESTRICTING FACTORS IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION OF CHINA'S WESTERN REGIONS

Economic Factors

The set of fundamental information that affects a business or an investment's value. Various economic factors need to be taken into account when determining the current and expected future value of a business or investment portfolio. For a business, key economic factors include labor costs, interest rates, government policy, taxes and management so, economic factors is very important for a country or a region. The overall level of economic development of the China's western region has a direct impact on the ability of supplying support of higher education. It is obvious that this can also affect the

development of higher education. In fact, economy development is relatively backward for China's western regions. So this affect the local government fund the local higher education. On the other hand, lower economic development means lower income. So the parents can't afford to all the children's fee in higher education. They only can send one child to the university if they have more children; they have nothing to do but drop out.

The Natural Environment

Most of the regions in China's western region is mountainous, plateaua and short of water, serious soil erosion. So natural conditions are relatively poor in China's western region. Especially in Yunnan and Guizhou province, Ningxia Hui Autonomous region and Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous region, their infrastructures are comparatively poor. A major impediment to economic development, especially in the poor, remote western region, is the shortage of transportation infrastructure. Infrastructure development has helped in reducing poverty and further promotes higher education development. But the poor natural environment factors hinder the development of higher education development of China's western regions.

Traditional Cultural Factors

The western region is the main settlements of Ethnic Minorities in China, China is a multi-ethnic society dominated by the Han ethnic group. According to a National Census held in 2000, there are currently 56 ethnic groups living in the border of the people republic of China. The total population in ethnic autonomous region is 6569.66 million, of which the minority population is 3905.11 million, accounting for 56.03% of the total population of ethnic autonomous regions. Minority cultural practices of the traditional concept of constraint national development of higher education. Tibetan Buddhist minority areas, herders masses of enthusiastic religious activities, is willing to send their children to the temple when the Lama, rather than send their children to go to school, donations to repair the temple of high enthusiasm over the enthusiasm of fund-raising school.

The Structure of Higher Education is Unreasonable

The structure of higher education in China under the planned economy, there are four major problems of the discipline structure lag, fuzzy hierarchical type structure, the geographical layout of the structural imbalance, inadequate management structure. The irrational structure of higher education directly affects the employment of college students

The old concept of talent in the western middle one-sided pursuit of higher education enrollment rate, the western higher education and economic construction of western divorced, higher education in the west will not help in the development of western phenomenon. Higher

education in western development to the two poles: one pole in the pursuit of high academic qualifications, the other pole is to leave school, truancy, and increase in new illiterates, dampened the enthusiasm of the western office of higher education. Why is there such a situation? The fundamental question is: macro does not profoundly good western higher education and the western economy, and actively coordinates the relationship between good western general educations.

SUGGESTIONS ON PROMOTING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN CHINA'S WESTERN REGIONS

Increase the Input into Higher Education for China's Western Regions

There are three main sources for China's higher education input. There are: government spending, education fund or donation from enterprises or individuals. It is obvious that the main body of investment for higher education is local government, especially the provincial government. For instance, in 2010, the national higher education funding was 9879.45 billion yuan, increased by 12.66% over the previous year. But the state financial expenditure only increased by 8.70%. This is not enough for higher education development. The funds are the first elements of the development of higher education. To promote the sustainable development of higher education in the western region, it is essential to increase the inputs for higher education. (1) Increase provincial finance investment in higher education; for China's western regions, it is important to establish the investment on higher education compatible with the public finance system. Government should become the main investment body for higher education and the fund sources should be ADVERTISED. On the other hand, the central government should increase financial transfer payments to higher education in the western region. Furthermore, the government should encourage and guide public investment in the development of higher education by cutting taxes, the government should increase funding for those students who are in obligations of higher education stage or secondary vocational school with financial difficulties. (2) The government should strengthen the management of higher education funding in order to improve use efficiency. On one hand, the government should establish a scientific, standardized management system to management of higher education funding in accordance with relevant laws and regulations; On the other hand, the government should strengthen the audit and supervision for the higher education funding in order to reduce its loss.

Implementing the Strategy of Giving Priority to the Development of Higher Education

Firmly established that higher education is the foundation, science and technology are primary productive forces concept. Western leading cadres at all levels should be a profound understanding of human resources is the most valuable asset. Technological development and rapid economic development requires a large number of highly qualified personnel. Talent is through the higher education. Therefore, the government should put the development of higher education in the primary position. Secondly, higher education has a very important role and an irreplaceable position in the socio-economic development. Therefore, the government must be driven by western rapid economic development through the development of higher education.

Should Adjust the Structure of Higher Education in the Western Region

To change the status of the western development of higher education lags behind, changing the concept of the "examination-oriented higher education", to promote quality higher education, higher education closer to the needs of the local economic and social development should be by adjusting the structure of higher education. Combination of local economic and social development requirements, and cultural characteristics, to reform the management system of higher education, training objectives, the school system, teaching contents and methods to enhance the relevance and practicality of higher education, improve the capacity of higher education services.

Higher vocational education is one of the best ways to comprehensively improve the quality of workers. The western region must speed up the development of higher vocational technical education oriented to the job market needs. The first is to strengthen the publicity on the rural vocational and technical higher education, the western vocational higher education should continue to promote agriculture, technology and education combining and implementation of rural practical talent training project. The third is to strengthen the team building. Rural vocational and technical teachers.

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