

# Accumulated Disadvantages: An Analysis of the Pathways to Basic Education Inequality for Migrant Children

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**Abstract:** With the acceleration of urbanization, a large number of rural workers have flocked to cities, and the issue of basic education for their children has become increasingly prominent. These children confront with numerous educational inequities for their family background, household registration system, economic conditions, and others. They are at a disadvantage in terms of enrollment opportunities and the distribution of educational resources, furthermore, in psychological support and social integration. This inequality affects the personal development of migrant children and even poses challenges to the stability and harmony of the entire society. Therefore, a deep analysis of the pathways to inequality in basic education for migrant children is of great significance for educational equity and social harmony. This paper aims to provide a reference for the formulation of relevant policies by analyzing the pathways to inequality for migrant children basic education, so as to promote the realization of educational equity.

**Keywords:** migrant children, basic education, inequality, pathways of generation

## Introduction

Currently, as urbanization accelerates and the number of children accompanying their parents to urban areas continues to grow, the elementary education of these children has attracted widespread attention. Basic education, as the cornerstone of personal development and social progress, is of great significance to these children. However, in reality, migrant children face significant disparities compared to local urban students in terms of access to schooling, acquisition of educational resources, and educational experience. These inequalities not only affect the future of migrant children but also impact social equity and harmony. Exploring the pathways that lead to these disparities holds important theoretical and practical value for improving educational policies and ensuring educational fairness.

## 1. Challenges and difficulties faced by migrant children in basic education

### 1.1 The restrictions of household registration system

The primary challenge faced by migrant children in receiving basic education in cities is the household registration system. The household registration system has long divided the Chinese population into rural and urban households, and this dual structure has led to an uneven distribution of educational resources. Migrant children, for their lack of urban household registration, often find it difficult to enjoy educational resources on par with children with city household. They may be restricted to attending specific schools or have to pay high fees for schools attendance, which increases their families' economic burden and limits the children's opportunities for quality education. The household registration system also leads to more obstacles for migrant children in the process of academic advancement.

## **1.2 Inequality in educational resource allocation**

Another challenge faced by migrant children when receiving basic education in cities is the inequality in the distribution of educational resources. There is a significant gap in educational resources between urban and rural areas, with urban schools typically having better teaching staff, facilities, and funding. Their household registration restrictions disabled them to assigned to schools with relatively inferior educational resources, where may lack adequate teaching materials, modern teaching equipment, and experienced teachers. This inequality in educational resources is also reflected in curriculum design and teaching quality. Migrant children may not receive an education at the same level as their urban registered peers, affecting their academic development and educational opportunities in their future. Furthermore, due to limited school resources, migrant children may not receive the personalized attention and support they need, which further exacerbate their educational disadvantages.

## **1.3 Cultural adaptation and identity recognition**

Migrant children also face the challenges of cultural adaptation and identity recognition when receiving basic education in cities. They move from a familiar environment to a completely new city and need to adapt to a new culture, language, and social environment. This process of cultural adaptation may bring psychological pressure and confusion about identity recognition, affecting their motivation to learn and academic performance. In schools, migrant children may feel isolated due to language barriers and differences in living habits, which may lead to a lack of confidence and an unwillingness to actively participate in classroom activities and social interactions.

## **2. Reducing inequalities in basic education for migrant children: countermeasures and suggestions**

### **2.1 Reforming the household registration system to promote educational equity**

Reforming the household registration system to promote educational equity is the primary strategy to reduce inequalities in basic education for migrant children. The household registration system has long been a major barrier to equal education for migrant children. By gradually eliminating the restrictions of household registration on educational resources, it can ensure that migrant children can enjoy the same educational opportunities in cities as children with local household registration. This includes reforming college entrance examination policies to allow migrant children to take the exams in their place of residence, reducing the educational discontinuity caused by household registration migration.

### **2.2 Enhancing cultural adaptation support and promoting social integration**

Enhancing cultural adaptation support is an essential measure to help migrant children integrate into urban life. Schools and communities should offer multicultural education and exchange activities to help migrant children understand and respect different cultural backgrounds, while also allowing local students to understand and accept migrant children. This includes offering language courses to help migrant children improve their language skills, as well as organizing cultural festivals, sports activities, and more to enhance communication and understanding among students. Through multicultural education and exchange, migrant children can better understand their own cultural identity and also learn to respect and appreciate the diversity of other cultures. Cultivating this ability to adapt culturally is crucial for their long-term development, helping them to be more confident and open in their future social lives.

### **2.3 Strengthening family support to alleviate economic pressure**

Strengthening family support is an essential pathway to improving the educational situation of migrant children. Governments and social organizations should provide family education guidance and resources to help migrant families understand how to effectively support their children's learning. This includes organizing parent workshops, offering educational materials and online resources for families, and establishing parent support groups where parents can share experiences and support each other. At the same time, the government should alleviate the economic pressure on migrant families through social welfare policies. This includes providing financial assistance, housing subsidies, and childcare services, allowing parents to have more time and energy to focus on their children's education. By reducing economic

burdens, migrant families can better invest in their children's education, thereby improving their academic achievements and expanding opportunities for future development.

#### **2.4 Promoting policy coordination and building a comprehensive support system**

The government should establish an inter-departmental working mechanism to coordinate the efforts of education, civil affairs, human resources, and social security departments to jointly address the issues faced by migrant children in education, life, and employment. A social environment conducive to the growth of migrant children can be formed by policy coordination, thus reducing the barriers they face in different areas of life. Policy coordination involves not only the cooperation between government departments but also the widespread participation of all sectors of society. Businesses, non-governmental organizations, and communities play a significant role by providing resources, services, and support to build a social support system that benefits the development of migrant children. Life, and employment can be ensured Through multi-party collaboration, comprehensive support for migrant children in education, finally, promoting their social integration and personal development.

#### **2.5 Enhancing teacher quality and optimizing their teaching methods**

Encouraging teachers to adopt a various of teaching methods, such as cooperative learning, project-based learning, and personalized instruction, to cater to the diverse learning styles and needs of students. Improving teachers' professional qualities and teaching skills will provide migrant children with higher quality education, helping them overcome learning obstacles and achieve academic success. Enhancing teacher quality not only contributes to improving teaching quality but also strengthens teachers' care and support for migrant children. Through professional training, teachers can better understand the cultural backgrounds and psychological needs of migrant children, providing more considerate and effective educational services for students. Additionally, diverse teaching methods can stimulate students' interest in learning, increase their engagement and motivation, thereby promoting their overall development.

#### **2.6 Expanding educational resources by utilizing information technology**

The use of information technology is an innovative way to expand the educational resources available to migrant children. With the development of the internet and mobile technologies, IT offers new possibilities for education. Governments and educational institutions should utilize online education platforms, mobile applications, and virtual reality technologies to provide migrant children with a wealth of learning resources and interactive experiences. By establishing digital libraries, online courses, and remote education projects, geographical limitations can be overcome, allowing migrant children to access more high-quality educational resources. Additionally, information technology can be used to provide personalized learning support, such as intelligent tutoring systems and learning analytics tools, to help teachers and students better understand progress and needs, offering targeted guidance and feedback. Leveraging information technology not only enriches educational resources but also enhances the flexibility and accessibility of education. Through online platforms, migrant children can access learning materials anytime, anywhere, participate in interactive discussions, and enjoy personalized learning experiences.

#### **2.7 Establishing a diversified evaluation system to promote personalized development**

Establishing a diversified evaluation system is pivotal to promote the personalized development of migrant children. Traditional educational assessments often focus on standardized tests, which may not meet the needs of all students, especially the migrant children who may be at a disadvantage in standardized tests due to differences in language, culture, or educational background. Therefore, educational departments should explore and adopt diversified evaluation systems, including formative assessments, performance assessments, and self-assessments, to more comprehensively evaluate students' learning outcomes and potential for development. A diversified evaluation system not only focuses on students' academic achievements but values the cultivation of their creativity, critical thinking, cooperation abilities, and emotional attitudes, among other non-cognitive skills. Through this type of assessment, the strengths and interests of migrant children can be better identified and encouraged, providing them with more personalized learning pathways and support.

### **3. Conclusion**

The government should continue to refine relevant policies to ensure the equitable distribution of educational resources, eliminate household registration barriers, and provide more support and opportunities for migrant children. Schools and educators need to adopt more inclusive and diverse teaching methods, pay attention to the personalized needs of migrant children, and help them integrate into the learning environment. Parents and social organizations should also actively participate in it, providing necessary family education and social support, as as to jointly create an environment conducive to the growth and development of migrant children. These comprehensive measures are hoped that the inequality in education for migrant children will be gradually reduced, thus promoting the overall progress and harmony of society. Every child should have the opportunity to receive a fair and quality education,this is our common responsibility and pursuit.

### **Conflicts of interest**

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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