

Research on the Difference in Government Financial Investment in Special Education between Zhejiang Province and Guizhou Province

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Abstract:

Due to its significant importance in safeguarding the right to education for disabled children and adolescents, as well as promoting social equity and justice, the issue of financial investment in special education has now received widespread attention. However, there still exists the problem of uneven development of special education in different regions. This article analyzes the differences in special education government financial investment between Zhejiang Province and Guizhou Province. This article analyzes the differences in special education financial investment between Guizhou Province and Zhejiang Province due to factors such as different levels of economic development, policy orientation, population structure, and educational needs, based on the theory of educational equity and quantitative analysis, through data comparison and relevant literature research. These differences include but are not limited to differences in the quality of special education, differences in the allocation of special education resources, and differences in the popularization rate of special education resources. Based on this, this article proposes specific suggestions on how different entities such as society, the state, and the government should take action.

Keywords: Special education; financial investment; Zhejiang Province; Guizhou Province; difference

1. Introduction

In light of the progress of special education is an important indicator of the progress of a society's civilization. With the deepening of the concept of

educational equity and the gradual promotion of special education in China, the government's finances in the field of special education funding investment are increasingly receiving attention. Special education aims to satisfy the special education demands of chil-

dren and adolescents who are disabled, help them overcome physical and mental disabilities, acquire the ability and knowledge skills to adapt to society and achieve comprehensive personal development and integration into society. Special education is not only involved with the happiness and growth of individuals but is also an inevitable requirement for building a harmonious society and promoting social equity and justice. The country has issued a range of policies and regulations emphasizing the need to increase support for special education. Guizhou Province is located in the western region, with relatively lagging economic development and limited financial resources. The difference in economic development level has to some extent affected the ability and scale of the two provinces' financial investment in special education. It can be seen that a sharp contrast and important research value from the differences in government financial investment in special education. This article applies theories of public goods and educational equity, as well as quantitative analysis research methods.

2. Comparison of Differences in Government Financial Investment in Special Education Between Zhejiang Province and Guizhou Province

2.1 Government Financial Investment Policies for Special Education

The policy goal of Zhejiang Province's special education government financial investment is to consolidate and improve the mechanism for special education funding. To achieve this goal, Zhejiang Province continuously improves and implements the following measures, fully implementing and gradually increasing the per capita public funds for disabled students in the 15-year basic education stage. Based on the actual situation, various regions provide key support to weak links and key projects through coordinated subsidies from superiors and special subsidies; Appropriately expand the use of per capita public funds for special learning supplies for disabled students, intervention training, internships, transportation subsidies for sending teachers, etc; Fully implement the education assistance policy for disabled students, implement the policy of reducing tuition and accommodation fees for disabled college students on campus, and give priority to assisting such as scholarships, hardship subsidies, and student loans. In terms of policy, detailed allocation has been made for the configuration of special education schools in

various regions. For example, each county (city, district) needs to ensure the supply of special education places based on the needs of eligible disabled children and adolescents in the local area. At least one standardized special education school shall be established in counties (cities, districts) with a permanent population of over 200000; Counties (cities, districts) with a permanent population of less than 200000 should establish special education classes in ordinary schools with better educational conditions; Counties (cities, districts) with a large number of disabled children and insufficient existing school places should reasonably plan and layout the construction, renovation, and expansion of special education schools. Regions with conditions should establish a 15-year integrated special education school that connects kindergarten to high school. Include eligible disabled children who can receive education in child welfare institutions into primary and secondary education and manage their enrollment. Actively promote special education schools to establish special education classes in local child welfare institutions.

The policy goal of government financial investment in special education in Guizhou Province is to implement an annual public fund of 7000 yuan per year for special education students in the compulsory education stage by 2025 and to tilt the allocation policy towards special education for students in the preschool and high school stages. To achieve this policy goal, Guizhou Province continuously improves and implements the following measures to ensure that children and adolescents with disabilities of appropriate age who can receive education in child welfare institutions attend regular primary and secondary schools, as well as special education schools. Special education schools are encouraged to establish special education classes in child welfare institutions and include them in student enrollment management; Strengthen the funding guarantee for special education, improve the operating conditions of ordinary primary and secondary schools, kindergartens, and special schools, enhance the operational guarantee capacity of schools, and provide appropriate subsidies for transportation expenses, meal expenses, accidental injury insurance premiums, etc. for sending teachers.

2.2 Data Comparison

In recent years, Zhejiang province has had a high level of economic development, paying more attention to education, including special education, and making financial investments. The entry intensity is also relatively large. For example, the education expenditure is included in the

general public budget expenditure of Zhejiang Province in the first half of 2023. The output reached 122.402 billion yuan, up 13.0%. Guizhou province is also constantly increasing its investment in education to promote the development of education. From January to July 2023, the total general public budget expenditure of Guizhou province reached 344.334 billion yuan, of which the expenditure on education reached 64.593 billion yuan, an increase of 9.5% [1].

As shown in Table 1, in terms of investment structure, Zhejiang has a relatively high proportion of investment in personnel funds (such as teachers' salary, welfare, etc.), educational research, and rehabilitation training, while

Guizhou has a relatively large investment in infrastructure construction such as purchase of teaching facilities and equipment. The total financial expenditure of special education in Zhejiang province shows a trend of increasing year by year, and the investment scale is relatively large. In contrast, although the total financial expenditure of special education in Guizhou province is also increasing, the overall scale is still smaller than that of Zhejiang Province. In general, the investment growth of special education funds in Zhejiang province is relatively stable, and the growth rate is relatively fast. The growth rate of Guizhou province is more prominent in some years, but the overall growth trend is relatively unstable.

Table 1. Government investment in special education in Guizhou Province.

Year	Guizhou Province	Put into the project	Zhejiang Province	Put into the project
2018	3 hundred million yuan	Special education schools, improve teaching facilities, teacher training	6.34 hundred million yuan	School construction, teaching staff training, and the allocation of special education resources
2019	4 hundred million yuan	Popularize special education and improve the professional level of special education teachers	7.22 hundred million yuan	Construction of special resource classrooms in ordinary schools and professional training of teachers
2020	5 hundred million yuan	Improve the learning conditions and living environment of students with disabilities, and provide grants, etc.	8.5 hundred million yuan	Integrated services and care for children with disabilities
2021	6 hundred million yuan	The purchase of assistive devices, the construction of resource classrooms, and the development of related educational resources	8.8 hundred million yuan	Improve special education infrastructure, educational resources, and psychological counseling services
2022	7.5 hundred million yuan	We will support the reform of special education, including funding subsidies for special education schools and student grants	9.3 hundred million yuan	It is mainly used to support personalized education special education programs and vocational skills training for students.
2023	8 hundred million yuan	Improve the quality of education and increase vocational training and employment support for students with disabilities	10 hundred million yuan	The reform and development of special education ensure that every student with disabilities has equal educational opportunities

3. Reasons and Impacts of Differences in Government Funding for Special Education Between Zhejiang Province and Guizhou Province

3.1 Reasons for Differences in Financial Investment

The total economic output and fiscal revenue of Zhejiang

Province are much higher than those of Guizhou Province, just as the GDP of Zhejiang Province has been higher than that of Guizhou Province in the past decade, which provides more sufficient financial support for its special education sector.

In terms of policy orientation, Zhejiang Province pays more attention to quality improvement and innovative development in the formulation and implementation of special education policies, and has relatively high requirements and standards for funding investment; Guizhou

Province, while striving to increase investment, focuses more on ensuring basic education needs.

Regarding population structure, as of 2023, there will be 87 special education schools in Zhejiang Province, with 5332 disabled students enrolled in both special and regular schools, an increase of 806 students from the previous year. There are 27069 students enrolled in special education, an increase of 2201 from the previous year. According to available data in Guizhou Province, as of 2021, there were 77 special education schools, unchanged from the previous year, with 42351 special education students (including 30047 enrolled in regular classes), an increase of 298 from the previous year. The population and structure of special children in the two provinces are different, which also affects the demand and investment scale of special education funds.

Finally, due to different educational needs, Zhejiang Province has a high demand for diversified and personalized special education, which has driven an increase in funding investment, while Guizhou Province is gradually expanding the scope and quality of special education services based on meeting basic educational needs.

3.2 Impact of Differences in Financial Investment

Firstly, in terms of education quality, Zhejiang Province has advantages in teacher team construction, teaching facilities, curriculum research and development, etc. due to relatively sufficient funding investment, resulting in relatively high quality of special education. In the process of striving to improve the quality of education, Guizhou Province still faces some challenges brought about by insufficient funding.

Secondly, in the field of educational resource allocation, the developed economy gives Zhejiang a greater advantage in the overall distribution of educational resources, and special education resources are relatively abundant. A large amount of financial investment can attract excellent special education talents and improve the quality of the teaching staff. At the same time, the layout of special education schools is relatively reasonable and can meet the educational needs of special children in different regions. Zhejiang has also made good progress in the construction of information technology and curriculum systems for special education; Due to limited financial resources, special education resources in Guizhou are relatively scarce. The number and scale of special education schools may not meet the needs of all special children, and the stability and professionalism of the teaching staff also need to be

improved. There may be significant regional differences in the allocation of educational resources, and some special needs children in remote areas may have difficulty accessing high-quality special education services.

Thirdly, the difference in investment has to some extent led to an uneven distribution of special education resources between the two provinces, affecting the realization of educational equity. Special children in Zhejiang Province can enjoy higher quality and more comprehensive education services; Some special needs children in Guizhou Province may face certain difficulties in accessing educational resources.

Finally, the development status of special education is closely related to regional economic and social development. The development of special education in Zhejiang Province has provided strong support for its sustainable economic and social development; Guizhou Province has also promoted regional coordinated development and social stability to a certain extent by increasing investment in special education.

4. Suggestions on Government Financial Investment in Special Education

4.1 Increase National Coordination Efforts

The country should further strengthen the overall planning and macroeconomic regulation of special education funding, formulate differentiated support policies, and tilt towards economically underdeveloped areas. Establish a dynamic adjustment mechanism for special education funding, and regularly adjust funding standards based on factors such as economic development level, price index, and special education needs. The central government can increase special transfer payments for special education, tilt towards economically underdeveloped areas and areas with weak special education, and ensure the basic needs of special education in these areas [2].

4.2 Optimizing Local Policies

Each province should optimize its policy guidelines with regional characteristics based on its development characteristics. Zhejiang Province should pay attention to the connotative development of special education and improve the efficiency of fund utilization; Guizhou Province should improve its policy guarantee mechanism while increasing investment to ensure the rational allocation and effective use of funds. Relevant departments can establish a performance evaluation mechanism for local special ed-

ucation funding investment, reward areas with sufficient funding and high utilization efficiency, and hold accountable areas with insufficient investment and improper utilization [3]. Reasonably allocate special education funds based on factors such as the number, type, and educational needs of special education students, ensuring that the funds are used where they are most needed [4].

4.3 Strengthening Regional Cooperation

Each province can achieve resource sharing, experience exchange, and complementary advantages through regional cooperation, and jointly promote the development of special education. Special education schools in Zhejiang Province can share high-quality curriculum resources, teaching cases, and teaching methods with schools in Guizhou Province. For example, sharing teaching videos, courseware, lesson plans, and other resources through online platforms can promote the joint improvement of the quality of special education teaching in the two provinces. Two provinces can collaborate to develop special education courses and textbooks, combining their respective regional characteristics and educational needs to create a special education curriculum system with local characteristics. It is recommended that special education research institutions and universities in the two provinces carry out cooperative research, jointly apply for research projects, and share research results [5]. For example, conducting joint research on the effectiveness of financial investment in special education and the innovation of special education teaching models can provide a scientific basis for the formulation of special education policies in the two provinces.

4.4 Encourage Social Participation

Actively guide social forces to participate in special education, broaden funding channels, and alleviate government financial pressure. Encourage enterprises, social organizations, and individuals to support special education through donations, scholarships, and other means, and broaden the sources of funding for special education. By establishing a special education volunteer service system, volunteers can be encouraged to participate in activities such as special education teaching and rehabilitation training, thereby reducing financial pressure [6].

4.5 Establish a Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism

Establish a sound monitoring and evaluation mechanism for special education funding, timely grasp the investment

situation and effectiveness, and provide a scientific basis for policy adjustments and decisions [7]. The two provinces can jointly develop a performance evaluation index system for special education financial cooperation projects, including indicators for project implementation progress, fund utilization efficiency, and teaching quality improvement. The performance evaluation index system should have scientificity, operability, and comparability, providing a basis for the evaluation of cooperative projects [8]. At the same time, it is recommended to organize a team of experts to conduct regular performance evaluations of collaborative projects, and the evaluation results will serve as an important basis for project adjustments and fund allocation. Performance evaluation can use methods such as questionnaire surveys, field visits, and data analysis to ensure the objectivity, accuracy, and fairness of the evaluation results. To promptly rectify and handle problems that arise in cooperative projects, and to hold accountable those who violate regulations by the law [9]. At the same time, strengthen the publicity and promotion of the implementation effect of the project, and enhance social awareness and support for financial cooperation in special education.

5. Conclusion

There is a significant difference between Zhejiang Province and Guizhou Province in the financial investment of the special education government, which is influenced by many factors such as economic development level, policy orientation, population structure, and so on. To realize the fair development and quality improvement of special education, it is necessary for the state, local governments, and all walks of life to work together to take effective measures to narrow regional differences, optimize resource allocation, improve the efficiency of fund use, and let every special child can enjoy a fair and quality special education.

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