

The Influence of the Imperial Examination System on the Phenomenon of Internal Competition in the College Entrance Examination in China, Japan, and South Korea

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Abstract:

The imperial examination system, as an important means of selecting officials in ancient China, has undergone thousands of years of evolution. It has not only profoundly influenced China's history and culture, but also had an undeniable impact on the modern college entrance examination system and the phenomenon of educational competition in China, Japan, and South Korea. The issue of internal competition in the college entrance examination has attracted widespread attention in today's society. It not only concerns individuals' educational pressure and quality of life but also poses challenges to the country's education equity and talent cultivation model. In the context of globalization, the traces of the imperial examination system still affect the college entrance examination systems of these countries to some extent and have received widespread attention. This article analyzes the impact of the imperial examination system on the internal competition in the college entrance examination in China, Japan, and South Korea, and focuses on the universal influence of the imperial examination system on education internal competition worldwide. Based on this, this article proposes the following suggestions: relevant education departments need to consider the integration and innovation of different education models in the context of globalization, to achieve sustainable development of education.

Keywords: College entrance examination, internal competition, imperial examination system

1. Introduction

In the long history of China, the imperial examination system, as an important system for selecting talents, played a decisive role from the 6th century to the early 20th century. Its unique examination mechanism and selection principles shaped the intellectual class of ancient society and had a profound impact. The imperial examination system, with its fair and open competition, selected batches of talented and beautiful people, which not only influenced China's education system but also shaped the cultural and social structure of East Asia to a certain extent. However, with the development of modern society, especially in the field of education, this article sees a global phenomenon--internal competition in the college entrance examination, which refers to the education phenomenon of excessive concentration of educational resources and unprecedentedly fierce competition pressure, especially in the three East Asian countries--China, Japan, and South Korea, this phenomenon is particularly significant. The "pursuit of the highest public" of the imperial examination

is progressiveness and universal beyond the times. Promoting social mobility has a positive demonstration significance for improving the current social structure. The rigorous legislation of the imperial examination system to ensure its authority and fairness urgently needs reference from the current examination legal system. The practical significance of studying the imperial examination system is not only reflected in the inspiration and reference for the construction of the current education examination system, but can also be extended to many aspects of education and even politics, from the perspectives of fairness, social mobility, and examination legislation of the imperial examination system [1].

2. Different Impacts of the Imperial Examination System on the Chinese, Japanese, and Korean College Entrance Examinations

The imperial examination system had a certain positive impact on the phenomenon of internal competition in the college entrance examination of the Three Kingdoms

period. It provides a relatively fair selection mechanism that motivates individuals to work hard, and through the imperial examination, many people can advance from the bottom of society to the ruling class. Secondly, it also promotes cultural development. Through the imperial examination, many excellent literary works and ideological achievements can be disseminated and promoted. The imperial examination system also helps to select high-quality talents, select students with high academic abilities and comprehensive qualities, and provide talent support for the development of the country. At the same time, it also promotes social stability to a certain extent. Despite the fierce competition in the college entrance examination, it provides a relatively fair upward path, allowing people from different backgrounds to have the opportunity to change their destiny through hard work, thereby reducing social dissatisfaction and turmoil. However, due to differences in national cultural and social backgrounds, the impact of the imperial examination system on different countries also varies.

2.1 The Impact of the Imperial Examination System on China's College Entrance Examination

In China, the imperial examination system was once the main way for elites to advance in ancient society, emphasizing the popularization of knowledge and the inheritance of culture. However, with the changes of the times and the influence of educational development and social reality, the imperial examination system has become the embryonic form of exam-oriented education to a certain extent. This evolution has led to a greater emphasis on students' mechanical memory of knowledge and examination skills in the educational process, resulting in excessive competition for educational resources and intensified educational competition. The modern college entrance examination system to some extent inherits the legacy of the imperial examination system, and students often need to invest a lot of time and energy in preparing for exams to stand out in the fierce competition. Although this transformation can enhance students' memory of theoretical knowledge and learning, it overlooks individual differences among students and creates a serious phenomenon of mental and substantive learning internalization. It can be seen that the imperial examination system has had a profound impact on China, involving the overall development of the education system.

2.2 The Impact of the Imperial Examination System on the Japanese College Entrance Examination

In Japan, although China's imperial examination system was not directly implemented, during the legal era (Nara

period and early Heian period), Japan also implemented a system of recruiting officials through examinations [2]. This system was influenced to some extent by the Chinese imperial examination system, although there were significant differences in its implementation compared to the Chinese imperial examination system. This system continues to develop and evolve, influencing the current development of higher education in Japan. In Japan, the pursuit of higher education is also fiercely competitive, and students face enormous pressure to further their education. This pressure not only comes from the expectations of families and society but also from the competition for high-quality educational resources. The concept emphasized by the imperial examination system of "studying well leads to officialdom" has been continued in Japanese society, making the college entrance examination an important way to change one's destiny [3]. However, this has also led to the intensification of the phenomenon of internal competition in Japanese education, where students often need to spend a lot of time outside of class for tutoring and preparation.

2.3 The Impact of the Imperial Examination System on the Korean College Entrance Examination

The Chinese imperial examination system is an ancient talent selection system that lasted for over 1300 years since the Tang Dynasty and was a major feature of ancient Chinese culture. The imperial examination system is a similar way of selecting talents in Korean history and an important part of Korean history and culture. This system has played an important role in Korean history. In South Korea, the college entrance examination is regarded as an important turning point in life, and students have made tremendous efforts to enter their ideal universities. This effort is not only reflected in the learning of knowledge but also the exercise of psychological qualities [4]. The competition in South Korea's college entrance examination is extremely fierce, and students often need to go through long periods of preparation and multiple mock exams. This competitive pressure not only comes from schools and families but also from society's excessive expectations for higher education. The concept of "selecting scholars through literature" emphasized by the imperial examination system has been reflected in Korea, making the college entrance examination an important criterion for measuring a person's abilities and values.

3. Analysis of Reasons for Differences

The imperial examination system has had a certain impact on the phenomenon of internal competition in the college entrance examination in China, Japan, and South Korea,

but the specific ways and degrees of influence vary depending on the education system and cultural background of each country. The college entrance examination systems in China and South Korea are closer to the traditional imperial examination system, with fierce competition and emphasis on exam results. Japan, while retaining some of the influences of the imperial examination system, is also striving to develop a modern education system in an attempt to reduce excessive internal competition. Overall, the historical influence of the imperial examination system still left a certain imprint on the education system of the Three Kingdoms, but the development of modern education is gradually changing this situation. Although the phenomenon of internal competition in the college entrance examination exists in China, Japan, and South Korea, the performance and degree of internal competition vary due to differences in education systems, family and social expectations, exam content and forms, and socio-economic factors. The phenomenon of internal competition in China is relatively severe, while in South Korea it is more concentrated in the competition for prestigious schools, while in Japan it is relatively mild, more reflected in respect for individuality and interests.

3.1 Historical and Cultural Inheritance

The imperial examination system has a history of implementation in China, Japan, and South Korea, among which China's imperial examination system is the most mature and perfect, and has had a profound impact on later generations. The imperial examination system emphasized the selection of talents through examinations, and this concept has continued to this day to some extent, influencing the college entrance examination system of the Three Kingdoms. Especially in the East Asian cultural sphere, the Confucian philosophy of "learning well leads to officialdom" emphasizes education and exams as the main means of social mobility. The Chinese college entrance examination system is based on the principle of "score only" and strongly emphasizes exam-oriented education. Due to fierce competition, many students and families invest a lot of time and resources in tutoring and training, resulting in a clear phenomenon of internal competition. In addition, society has a high level of recognition for higher education, and the admission scores for universities are generally high, leading to increasing pressure on students to pursue good grades. The South Korean education system places a high emphasis on academic achievement, especially the 'Suneung' exam, which has a profound impact on students' future. The social and cultural emphasis on success and competition in South Korea, coupled with frequent tutoring, has led to extreme internal competition. Compared to China, South Korea's internal competition is

more reflected in its pursuit of specific prestigious universities. The Japanese education system also attaches great importance to exams, especially the "University Entrance Examination Center Exam". However, Japanese culture places relatively more emphasis on individual development and interest cultivation, and although there is also a phenomenon of internal competition, it is relatively less significant than in China. At the same time, there is a high diversity of universities in Japan, with some universities having more lenient admission standards and a wider range of choices for students, which reduces competition pressure.

3.2 Social Structure and Allocation of Educational Resources

The imperial examination system played a role in selecting talents and maintaining social order in Chinese history. This system has to some extent shaped the Chinese people's social values of valuing education and advocating knowledge. In Japan and South Korea, although the influence of the imperial examination system is relatively small, the high school entrance examination system in both countries still reflects the emphasis on education and social competitiveness [5]. The population density of the Three Kingdoms is high and the resources are limited, which easily leads to unlimited competition for limited resources and exacerbates the phenomenon of internal competition in the college entrance examination.

3.3 Economic Development Level and Higher Education Demand

As a developing country, China is facing employment pressure and higher education demand from a large population. With the development of the economy and the increasing emphasis on education, the level of competition in the college entrance examination has also intensified. In contrast, as developed countries, Japan and South Korea, although also have the phenomenon of internal competition in the college entrance examination, have a higher level of higher education popularization and relatively high university admission rates, so the pressure of the college entrance examination may be relatively small [6].

3.4 Family and Societal Expectations

The importance that families attach to education is reflected in their investment in education, and many families are willing to spend a lot of money on their children's extracurricular tutoring. Society generally believes that university education is the key to changing one's destiny, therefore students face enormous family and social pressures, leading to an exacerbation of the phenomenon of internal competition. Japanese families have relatively diverse educational concepts. Although they also value

education, families show greater tolerance and diversity in their children's career choices and life directions. The relatively reasonable social expectations have reduced the burden on students. The definition of success in South Korean society is very narrow and mainly focused on academic and career achievements. The expectations of families and society for children are generally high, which leads to students facing great competitive pressure in their studies, resulting in internal competition.

4. Conclusion

In summary, the impact of the imperial examination system on the internal competition of the Chinese, Japanese, and Korean college entrance exams is complex and profound. It is not only reflected in the intensity of educational competition but also its inherent values and cultural heritage. Despite significant changes in the educational environment of modern society, the spirit of the imperial examination system still shapes the educational ecology of these countries to some extent. Looking ahead to the future, further research can focus on the universal impact of the imperial examination system on educational involution on a global scale, as well as how to reform the education system, draw on historical experience, and find

effective ways to alleviate involution. It is also necessary to consider the integration and innovation of different educational models in the context of globalization, to achieve sustainable development of education.

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