

FINANCING OF HIGHER EDUCATION
WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE
MASSIFICATION THEREOF IN CHINA

by

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I declare that

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is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have
been indicated and acknowledges by means of complete references.

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SIGNATURE

(MR Y Q XUE)

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DATE

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Summary

The research focuses on the strategies for financing of higher education within the context of the massification thereof in China. The year 1999 was a turning point for the development of Chinese higher education. In that year the Chinese government decided to expand its higher education system rapidly. Since then Chinese higher education has experienced explosive expansion. The student enrolment in the Chinese higher education system increased from 5.87 million in 1998 to 17.57 million in 2003. The gross enrolment rate in Chinese higher education increased from 9% in 1997 to 17% in 2004. Chinese higher education changed during this transition process from an elite to a mass system.

During the expansion many problems emerged. These problems are related directly or indirectly to the issue of financing. Giving that China is still a developing country, how to resolve the financing problem is the key to the success of the transition from an elite to a mass system. Using a literature study and a qualitative inquiry, the research examined the general theories in the financing of higher education, the relevant experiences in the United States, Britain and India and the recent development of higher education financing in China.

The study reveals that to ease the financial constraints, it is important to develop non-traditional institutions to lower higher education costs. China established a diversified adult higher education system that expanded at about the same rate as its regular institutions. The study also found that few governments can afford a mass system. Therefore, it is necessary to seek non-governmental funds by strategies such as introducing tuition fees and developing private institutions. However, the fee policy should be paralleled by the student assistance policies so as to reduce the inequality in higher education provision. It is believed that theoretical knowledge gained from the research could contribute to the integration of the theories on the financing of higher education within the context of massification thereof.

Key words:

China – higher education - financing strategies – elite higher education – mass higher education