

# Demands and responses in Chinese higher education

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# Key issues

- \* What are major demands arising from Chinese social and economic transformation and their impacts on higher education in the recent decade or so?
- \* How has Chinese higher education responded to the demands?

# Landmarks of Chinese HE reforms

- \* 1978: the Third Plenary Session of the 11<sup>th</sup> Central Committee of the CCP held in December 1978
- \* 1985: the First National Education Conference (Decision on Reforming the Education System)
- \* 1993: the Outline for Education Reform and Development
  - \* “to introduce market forces to liberate education, create impetus for change, and encourage competition for improvement”,
  - \* “to use legislation to regulate new social relationships, practices and behaviour arising from the first strategy” (Law, 2002: 579).
- \* 1998: Action plan for vitalizing education for the 21st century (by 2010 the gross enrolment rate reaches 15%).
- \* 2010: the Outline for Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development (2010-2020).

# Some figures (2010)

- \* Enrolment in HE: 31.05 million
  - \* Enrolment in regular HEIs (excl. adult HEIs): 22.3 million
- \* Number of regular HEIs: 2358
  - \* Private institutions: 640 (degree awarding)
- \* Adult HEIs: 365
- \* Average student number/institution: 9298
- \* Gross enrolment ratio: 26.5%
- \* Student/Teacher Ratio: 17.33:1
- \* Expenditure/student: 16349,18 (budgeted+tuition)

# Social and economic changes and demands for higher education

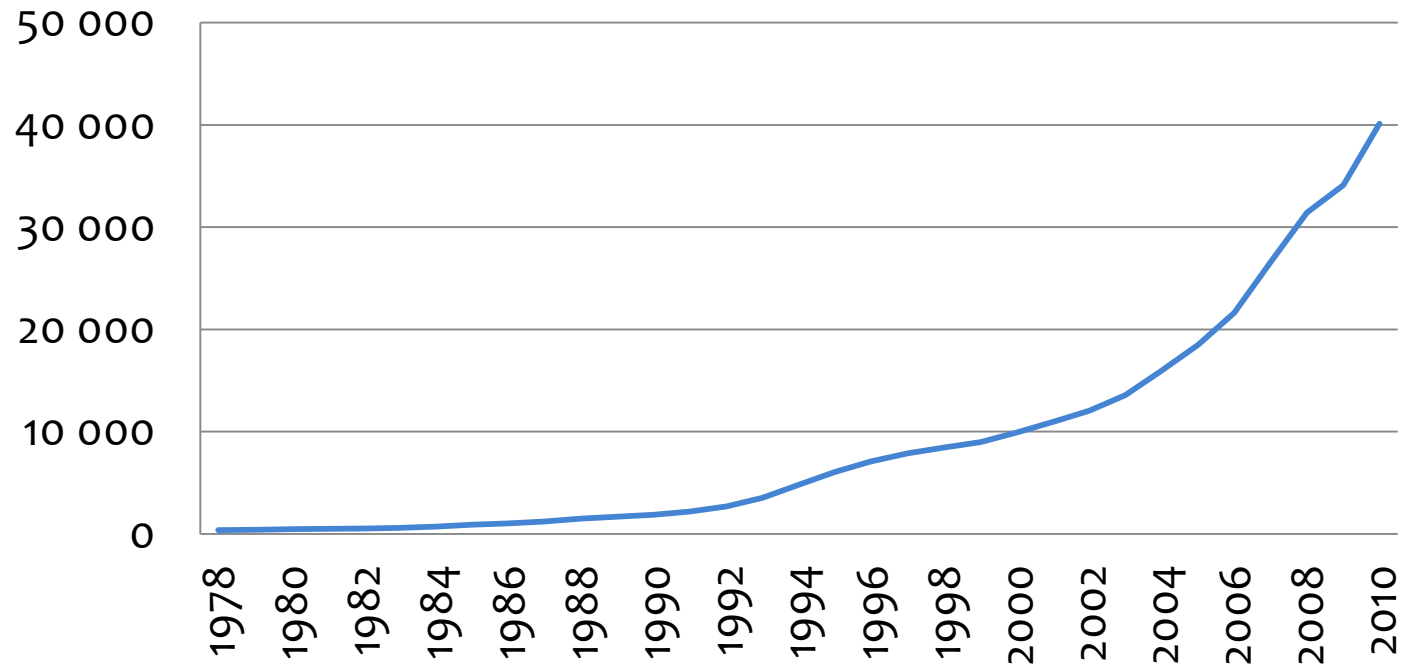
- \* Improvement of economic condition
- \* Changes of economic structure
- \* Urbanisation
- \* Disparities
- \* Globalisation
- \* Decentralisation of governance (1998 government reforms)
- \* Development of constitutionalism (put socialist market economy on a more solid legal ground)

# Social and economics changes and demands for higher education

- \* **Improvement of economic condition**
- \* Changes of economic structure
- \* Urbanisation
- \* Disparities

# Growth of GDP 1978-2010

Unit: billion yuan



# Incomes and expenditures of citizens

year	1990	2000	2009	2010
Income and expenditures (yuan)				
Urban per capita disposable income	1510	6280	17175	19109
Rural per capita net income	686	2253	5153	5919
Urban residents' per capita consumption expenditure	1279	4998	12265	13471
Rural residents' per capita consumption expenditure	585	1670	3993	4382
The balance of resident's deposits (per capita)	623	5076	19541	22619



# Demands for higher education

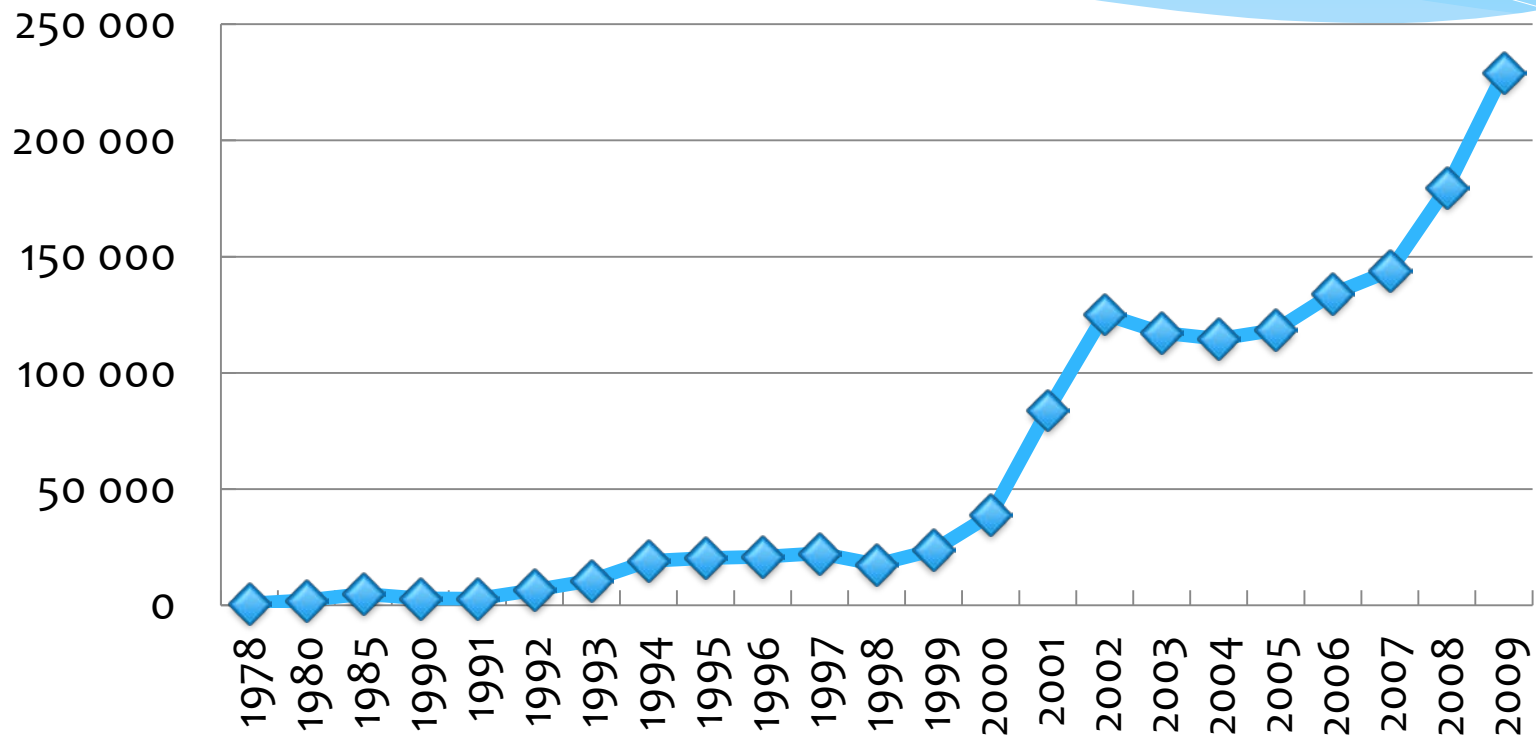
- \* Quantity

- \* 1998: 3.2 million students attending *gaokoa* (*national higher education entrance examination*)
- \* 2010: 9.57 million (also because of the expansion of secondary education)

- \* Quality

- \* Only 5.89% enrolled in Project 211 universities (top 122 institutions)
- \* Many students choose to pursue higher education abroad

# Number of students going to study abroad

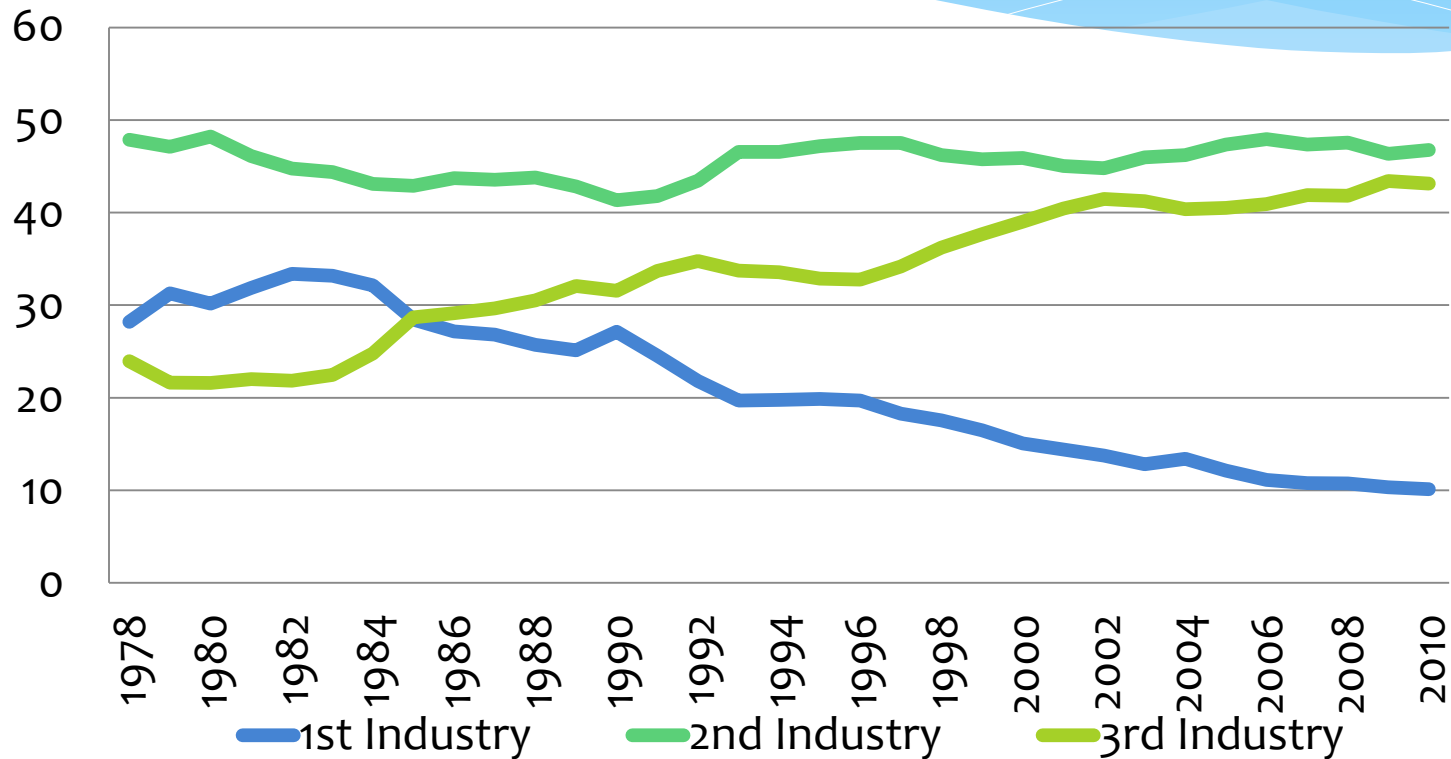


# Social and economics changes and demands for higher education

- \* Improvement of economic condition
- \* **Changes of economic structure**
- \* Urbanisation
- \* Disparities

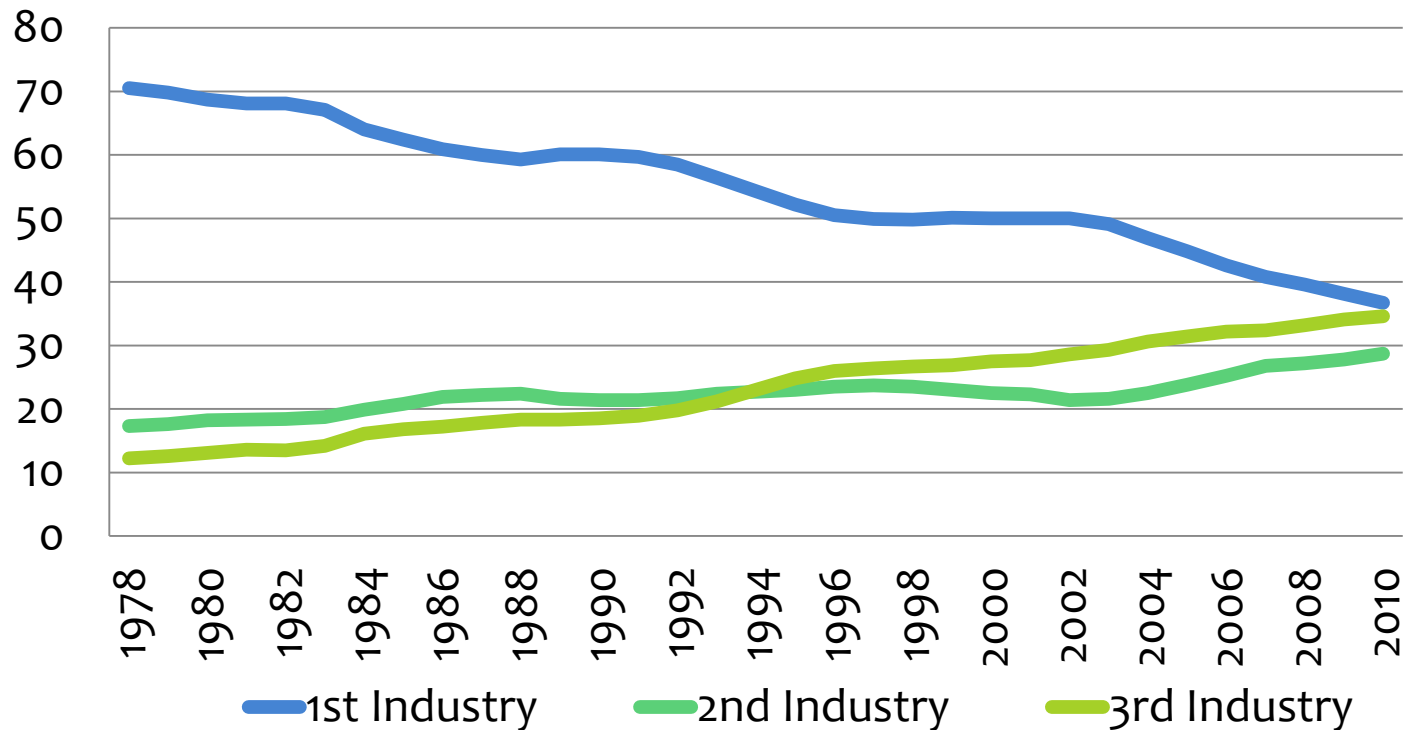
# The sector composition of GDP

Unit: %



# The composition of employment in the three industries

Unit: %



# Demands for higher education

- \* Cultivating higher quality and innovative human resources
- \* More engagement with society and economy

# Social and economics changes and demands for higher education

- \* Improvement of economic condition
- \* Changes of economic structure
- \* **Urbanisation**
- \* **Disparities**

# Share of population in rural and urban areas (%)

	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010
<b>Urban</b>	19.4	23.7	26.4	29.0	36.2	43.0	50.0
<b>Rural</b>	80.6	76.3	73.6	71.0	63.8	57.0	50.0



# Disparity among geographical locations

	East	Middle	West	Northeast
<b>Annual income per capita (yuan)</b>	25773.29	17302.96	17309.03	17688.18
<b>Expenditure on cultural and educational entertainment (yuan)</b>	2077.22	1281.60	1281.38	1278.95

# Disparity among income group in urban areas (2010)

	Lowest income	Low income	-Middle income	Middle income	+Middle income	High income	Highest income
<b>Annual income per capita (yuan)</b>	6704	10247	13971	18921	25498	34255	56435
<b>Expenditure on cultural and educational entertainment (yuan)</b>	6871	92899	12388	16693	21667	29012	47401

# Demands for higher education

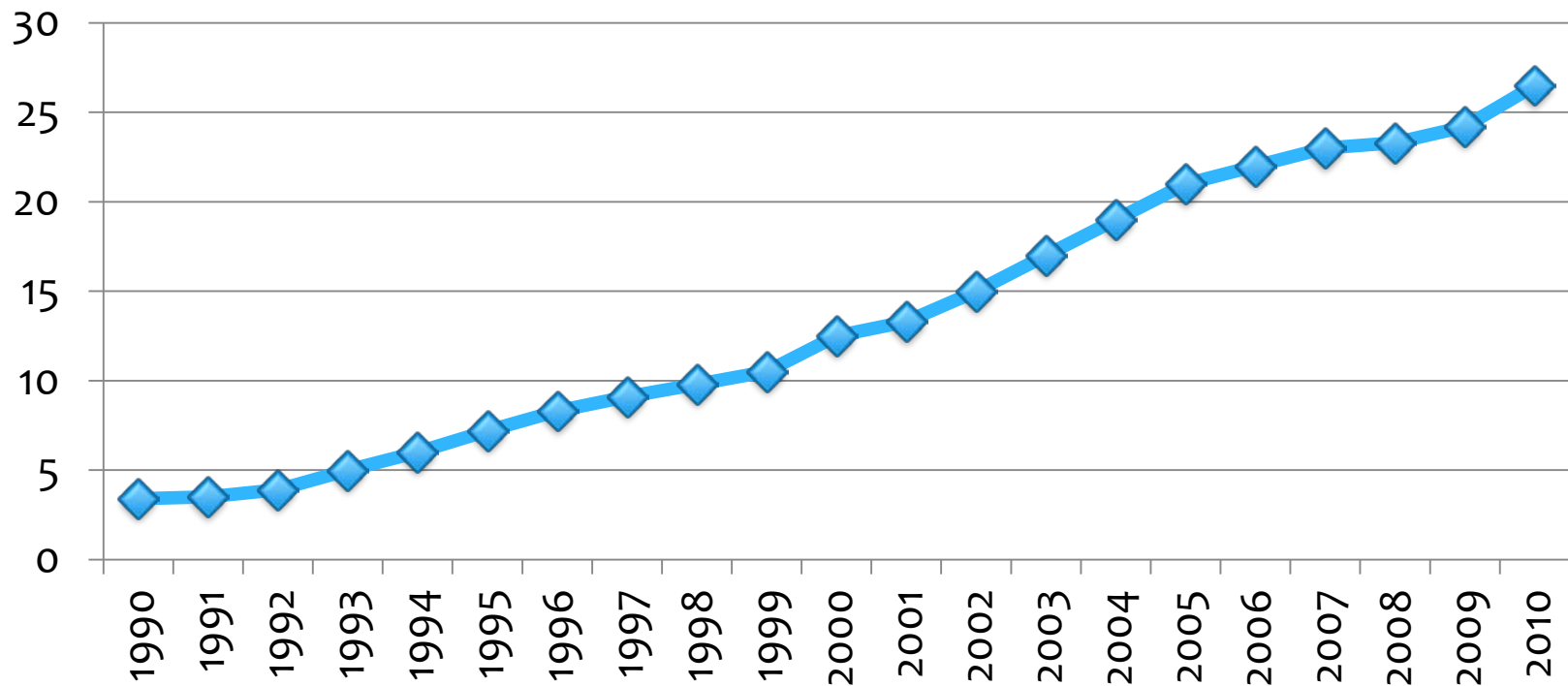
- \* Equity in access to higher education
  - \* Children of Immigration workers
  - \* Inequity between regions (different cut-off scores of gaokao)
  - \* Social and economic background (inequity in secondary education—quality of education at 2nd level affects access to higher education)
  - \* Unbalanced affordability among different families

Demands for higher education	Reforms as Responses to the demands
Private demands for quantity	Marketisation (private hed) Massification of hed
Private demands for quality	Quality assurance Internationalisation
Society's demands for high quality human resources and innovative talents	Building first class universities Expansion of post graduate education Internationalisation (joint education)
Society's demands for different types of human resources	Differentiation between academic education (mainly MOE's responsibility) and professional/vocational education (local responsibility)
Society's demands for close cooperation between university and industry (due to emerging knowledge based economy)	University-run enterprises University S&T park (university as shareholder) 2011 Project
Private and society's demands for equity in access to higher education	Student loan, Green gate (first enroll student, then discuss economic solutions) Special admission policies
Demands for improving legal system for running universities in the market economy	Modifying Education law, higher education law, teachers law, private education law.

# Responses in higher education

- \* Marketisation of higher education
- \* Massification of higher education
- \* Building first-class universities
- \* Strengthen the role of universities in economic development and innovation system
- \* Internationalisation of higher education

# Massification of higher education (gross enrolment rate)



# Reflections

- \* A rational approach to analysis helps understand some part of the reality
- \* But the interactions between demands and responses are more complicated than we have described
- \* The analysis of responses of Chinese higher education also needs to consider institutional factors, such as Chinese political system, culture and traditions.
- \*

# Vocational education as an example

- \* From a rational perspective, vocational education is expected to be fast developed according to the urgent and huge demands arising from the development in the manufacture and service industry
- \* Strengthening vocational education is also believed to be an effective approach to keep the balance between education and employment
- \* But due to a strong culture in China, almost all families want their kids to study in academic type universities rather than vocational colleges
- \* The vocational colleges mainly receive those students with lower academic performance



# Problems

- \* A few relations still need to be rationalised
  - \* between state, university and industry to be further improved
  - \* between education as public or private good
  - \* between autonomy and accountability
  - \* between efficiency and equity
  - \* between higher education expansion and labour market needs
  - \* Between quantity and quality