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Shaping the educational policy field: 'cross-field effects' in the Chinese context

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ABSTRACT

This paper theorises how politics, economy and migrant population policies influence educational policy, utilising Bourdieusian theoretical resources to analyse the Chinese context. It develops the work of Lingard and Rawolle on cross-field effects and produces an updated three-step analytical framework. Taking the policy issue of the schooling of internal migrant children as an example, it analyses how a range of fields – political, economic and public policy – 'export' their logics of practice into the educational policy field (as a sub-field of the public policy field) and consolidate the changes. The cross-field effects shape the state school enrolment policy and the relative positions of agents and the relative value of their capital in the educational policy field. This paper demonstrates the analytical capacity of Bourdieusian theoretical resources for policy analysis in the Chinese context, by illustrating how the inequalities experienced by migrant families have been intensified in education by cross-field effects.

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1. Introduction

In China during the last three decades of urbanisation, millions of rural labourers have left their hometowns in order to work in urban areas. In 2014, nationally there were 168.21 million migrant rural labourers (National Bureau of Statistics of China 2015) with 12.95 million migrant children¹ of compulsory education age (Ministry of Education of China 2015). These internal migrants do not hold a household registration (Hukou) in the places where they are working and many of them belong to low-income groups. In state primary/secondary school recruitment, the schools give first priority to children with a local household registration card. Therefore, in big cities with huge migrant populations, migrant children have encountered many difficulties accessing state schools² owing to a shortage of places once the schools have recruited local students. At the same time, most migrant parents cannot afford to send their children to private schools, which have relatively higher costs. It was not until 1996 that the central government promulgated the first national policy on migrant children's schooling. Since then the policy development has undergone fluctuation with a trajectory from procedures that meant state schools were hard to access

(1996–2001), to a relaxation of the criteria demanded from migrant families (2001–2013), and in more recent years, a return to more demanding criteria in order to gain a place at an urban state school (2013–). In this paper, I will identify the reasons for the most recent changes using Bourdieusian-influenced theories. This body of theory has the potential to support my exploration of how political and economical factors shape educational policy and, eventually, produce particular policy changes.

In the late 1990s, when an increasing number of migrant children arrived in urban areas and had difficulties accessing local schools, this schooling issue started to appear on the policy agenda of central government. As noted above, the development of central and local governments' policy has undergone three major stages. In the first stage (1996–2001), there was no policy assumption that receiving municipalities and state schools should facilitate migrant children's schooling. As a result, in metropolitan cities like Beijing and Shanghai, some unregistered and informal private schools (specifically running for migrant children) have emerged since the late 1990s. In 2000, there were 152 such schools, serving 17,000 migrant children.³

In the second stage (2001–2013), central government policies declared explicit responsibility for the receiving municipalities and state schools. *The State Council's Decision on the Reform and Development of Fundamental Education* (2001) asserts that 'the receiving municipalities and state schools should be the mainstream channels for recruiting migrant children into compulsory education'. This policy was therefore called 'Two Mainstream Channels (TMC)' for short. Following this policy, the central government gradually constructed an 'equal compulsory education for migrant children (ECEMC)' policy system by 2006. During this period, although there were still lots of migrant children unable to enrol in local state schools owing to the limitation of the recruitment quotas,⁴ the receiving municipalities were working hard to accept as many migrant children as possible. In order to achieve this goal, the municipalities set up loose and accommodating state school enrolment criteria for migrant children.

However, these loose state school enrolment criteria changed after 2013. In Beijing and Shanghai, the city and district level governments started to set up stricter state school enrolment criteria for migrant children, requiring parents to obtain a number of documents. In 2014, the Ministry of Education policy *The Decisions on Facilitating Students' Accessing the Nearest Junior Secondary School without Exams* links the migrant children's school enrolment criteria to the urban developmental plan, the aim of population control and the capability of educational resources. By doing this, the policy legitimates restrictions placed by the local municipality on migrant children's enrolment in state schools. This drastic policy change has brought hardships to many migrant families. As a result, many migrant children have to either go back to their parents' hometown to study, or to stay in the city and enrol in unregistered and informal private schools.

Why did the education policy change after 2013? There are myriad studies about the schooling of migrant children, but less is known about how the policy is developed and enacted and under what contexts. The main foci of the existing literature are: migrant children's difficulties in state school enrolment (Donzuso 2015; Fan 2007; Wang and Holland 2011); their schooling experiences in unregistered informal private schools (Goodburn 2015; Wang 2008; Wu 2011); their schooling experiences in state schools, including their academic performance (Bo and West 2015; Goodburn 2009; Li 2009), relationships with local children and teachers (Kwong 2011; Lan 2014; Mu and Jia 2016) and their social,

emotional and psychological development (Li et al. 2010; Liu and Li 2012; Xu 2009; Zhang and Luo 2016); and the social stigma or discrimination they face (Chen et al. 2011; Dong 2009). While some existing studies have discussed how the policy influences the educational provision for these children (Fan and Peng 2009; Liu, Liu, and Yu 2017; Mok, Wong, and Guo 2011; Qian and Walker 2015; RGCNIER 2008), very few scholarly analyses have explored power relations between the different actors involved in the formation, enactment and development of the policy.

According to my empirical data, the impetuses for change after 2013 are not entirely for the sake of education. The policy change is driven by dynamic factors in and outside the education domain, including (but not limited to): the development of the population policy; the change of political leaders; the needs of the economic sector; and the pressures that the migrant children have brought to the local education sector. In short, educational policy is continuously influenced by politics, economy and other public policy domains, yet these influences are intertwined and function in a non-linear way. Therefore, we need an explanatory framework to outline the directions, scopes, dynamics and effects of these influences on education policy, whilst in the meantime present the complexity of the cross domain effects. With this regard, Bourdieu's field theory offers a unique way to conceptualise the power-relations in and between the social domains.

2. Cross-field effects: how is the educational policy field shaped by other fields?

'A field is a structured social precondition, a field of forces, a force field' (Bourdieu 1998, 40–41). Bourdieu notes that as a social 'precondition', field has its (invisible) structure with various actors located in various 'positions' within the field. In accordance with the field's structure, there is also an (unequal) power relation among the actors with visible struggle and invisible 'force' operating among them. Bourdieu suggests that there is also an (unequal) power relation between fields. Some fields (e.g. economic field) occupy a dominant position in the social space over others (e.g. artistic field or education field) and the distribution of the relative positions of fields is according to 'the objective hierarchy of forms of capital, economic and cultural capital in particular' (Bourdieu 1996, 270). The relative positions produce (unequal) interactions between fields. For example, in the contemporary artistic field, patronage (from the economic field) and censorship (from the political field) can shape the artists' actions (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 109–110). Bourdieu's work provides the foundation for other scholars' studies of the interrelations between fields.

Bringing Bourdieu's field theory into educational policy studies, Ladwig (1994) makes an initial attempt to examine 'what it would mean to analyse educational policy as a social field'. In Ladwig's account, the field of educational policy can be distinguished from the field of education. The way Ladwig theorises the relative autonomy of educational policy field is to explore the agents' objective positions, dispositions (*habitus*) and capitals that are specific to this field. Following Ladwig, some researchers have conceptualised education policy, science policy and journalism as individual fields (Lingard and Rawolle 2004). They have further explored educational policy in either broad or more specific contexts, producing conceptualisations of the global educational policy field (Lingard, Rawolle, and Taylor 2005) and field of higher education policy (Maton 2005). Extending the theorisation of educational policy as a field, Lingard and Rawolle have explored 'how today educational policy

can be spawned from developments in other public policy fields' through 'cross-field effects' (2004, 361). Their argument is based on a case study of the Australian scientific policy *The Chance to Change*. They have conceptualised five general categories of cross-field effects, including: structural effects, event effects, systemic effects, temporal effects and hierarchical and vertical effects (Lingard and Rawolle 2004; Rawolle 2005). Among the five effects, the spirits of event effects and systemic effects resonate with my re-conceptualisation of cross-field effects, hence I further develop these concepts by enriching their meanings and adding analytical elements and use them in this paper. Yet before elaborating how I have developed Lingard and Rawolle's work, I will give a brief introduction of event and systemic effects in their accounts. The event effects relate to specific occurrences whose impacts cascade between fields. This concept resonates with my data in that the alterations in migrant children's schooling policy were shaped by changes in migrant population policy. The systemic effects relate to broad changes in the values underpinning social fields, and are usually more incremental than event effects. As shown in my data, some respondents report that they can see connections between the change of educational policy and the change of political leaders and their governing priorities and strategies. In short, Lingard and Rawolle's work on cross-field effects provides a valuable preliminary framework to explore how educational policy can be shaped by other social domains.

While acknowledging the contribution of Lingard and Rawolle (2004), I identify the following aspects of their research that are in need of development. First, while summarising five general categories of effects, Lingard and Rawolle (2004) have not conceptualised the nature of cross-field effects.⁵ The indeterminacy of this key concept limits the explanatory power of the analytical framework. Yet they have offered a unique approach to reveal the nature of the effects through their discussion of 'mediatization'. They theorise mediatization as a process in which the logic of practice of the journalistic field continuously shapes the style and presentation of scientific policy texts, making the policy 'more amenable for media up-take' (Lingard and Rawolle 2004, 371). Their attention to the logic of practice (Bourdieu 1990; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992) resonates with my analysis of the policy text and interview data, as it shows that underpinning the change of migrant children's policy is the change in the local government's definition of the type of citizens they want. The concept of logic of practice can help one to understand the logic of the educational policy and how it is shaped by other fields. Second, Lingard and Rawolle indicate that there are some 'connections between different fields' (2004, 368), serving as the precondition of the cross-field effects. However, they have not developed this idea by pointing out what the connections are and how they work. As shown by my data, the social domains (education, population policy, politics and economy) are connected by the migrants themselves and the government departments in central and local level; these actors are all agents in Bourdieu's account. Enlightened by the data, I conceptualise the agents as the connections between fields, serving as part of the cross-field mechanisms. Finally, Lingard and Rawolle have not focused on Bourdieu's level one field analysis (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992) to map out the distribution and hierarchy of the journalistic field, the policy fields, and the field of power in the social space. As Bourdieu states, the field analysis involves three necessary and internally connected moments and in the level one analysis 'one must analyse the positions of the field vis-à-vis the field of power' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 104). This is necessary for my analysis as it provides a holistic perspective to examine the power relations between fields.

Using my empirical data to address the limitations in Lingard and Rawolle's work, I have added several elements (the logic of practice, the role of agents and the level one field analysis) and reconstructed the cross-field effects framework. The updated framework contains three analytical steps: Step 1: outline the interrelated fields, including their distribution/hierarchy within the field of power, their logics of practice and the agents they share. Step 2: explore how field A 'exports'⁶ its logic of practice to field B through the agents in dominant positions. Step 3: explore how the changed/'confined' logic in field B shapes the relative values of different configurations of capital, the agents' relative positions and the ways they exert their capital in the struggle for position within the field.

3. Data and methods

This paper presents findings from a research project with Beijing and Shanghai as sites. As typical metropolitan cities, Beijing and Shanghai present the common situation of migrant children's education in Chinese metropolitan cities. The findings from these two cities can inform, but not be generalised beyond, the research setting. This research adopts semi-structured interviews and policy texts as two major data resources. As policies typically 'posit a restructuring, redistribution and disruption of power relations' (Ball 1994, 20), the policy text offers valuable data for researchers to deconstruct the power relations underneath the policy. Yet the analysis would be superficial if I selectively look at what is written in the policy text. The value of the interview data is that it reflects the experiences, interpretations and attitudes of the various actors involved in the policy, providing a more comprehensive version of the policy enactment.

In my fieldwork during 2014–2015, I conducted face-to-face and telephone interviews with 96 interviewees. As the policy I am looking at is relevant to children's schooling, the people in the government educational department and schools can be considered as the key stakeholders. I started with contacting government officers and school headteachers through my social network. Snowball sampling was also used as some interviewed headteachers connected me to their friends who are also headteachers or government officers. After I gained access to schools, I took a 'top down' sampling strategy by asking the headteachers to connect me to teachers, then asking teachers to connect me to parents, and then to the children. In Beijing, I interviewed 53 persons, including seven government officers, eight headteachers and senior leadership team members, 11 teachers, 15 migrant parents,⁷ 7 migrant children, three local parents and two local children. In Shanghai, I interviewed 42 persons, including 3 government officers, 12 headteachers and senior leadership team members, 6 teachers, 13 migrant parents, 4 migrant children, 2 local parents and 2 local children. I also interviewed one officer in the Ministry of Education. In addition, I have analysed a series of key policy texts. In the political field, I have analysed a series of central government policy documents related to the fundamental political principles of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee since 2002. In the field of public policy, I have analysed the central government policies mentioning migrant population promulgated since the 1980s. In the field of educational policy, I have analysed a series of migrant children's schooling policy texts promulgated by the Ministry of Education and municipalities of education in city and district levels in Beijing and Shanghai since 2001.

The interview voice recordings, which are all in Chinese Mandarin, were transcribed into Chinese characters. As for the policy documents, most of them are only published in

Chinese. Considering that the meaning of the original conversations or policy items might be lost if translated, I did not translate the Chinese words into English. As my analysis was based on the Chinese version, when I decided to cite a particular piece of data in the paper, I then translated those sentences into English. I did not invite/hire professional translators to do the translation for me, since they may not be as familiar with the research context as I am. While acknowledging that back translation may (or may not) improve the quality of the translation, I did not use this service owing to the financial constraints of this project. The emergence of the codes and themes and the further data analysis (including paper writing up) are data driven. Specifically, it is the fieldwork data that ‘directs’ me to seek theoretical support from Bourdieu’s field theory and finally adopt the cross-field effects framework, as I have elaborated in Sections 1 and 2. Yet to some degree my data analysis can also be considered as theory laden, since I have consulted Bourdieusian writings and kept them in mind throughout my research design and data analysis. It cannot be denied that my research is shaped by Bourdieusian theory from the beginning. In short, both theoretical resources and data were woven with each other throughout the research process, and it is hard to assert which one has played a lead role in producing the research findings.

4. Cross-field effects in the Chinese context

4.1. Mapping out the interrelated fields in the social space

In Bourdieu’s account, ‘it is one and the same thing to determine what the field is, where its limits lie, etc., and to determine what species of capital are active in it, within what limits, and so on’ (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 98–99). In empirical work, the field-specific capital, together with the agents who struggle for/with the capital, is the key to outlining a particular field. With regard to the policy of migrant children’s schooling, three fields and a sub field can be conceptualised in my research context: political field, economic field and public policy field with its sub-field of educational policy.

In the political field, the main agents include individuals (politicians, social organisation leaders, bureaucrats, state employees) and institutions (central and local government departments, think tanks, semi-state institutions). The ‘organisational resource’ (Lu 2002),⁸ namely, the administrative power, is the main configuration of field specific capital, for which the agents compete. Compared with the political field, the economic field has a broader range of agents, including the state organisations, private sector institutions, managers, labourers and costumers. This field is marked by the economic resources (especially material profits) for which the agents compete.

Like the economic field, the field of public policy has a wide scope of agents from the state sector (politicians, bureaucrats, state employees) to civil society (social organisations), the private sector (industries and companies) and individual citizens. Yet in the public policy field, the economic resource is not the only dominant configuration of capital. In the meantime, what the agents compete for is not limited to achieving economic, cultural, organisational (political) resources, but also the allocation of resources in an ‘authoritative’ way (Ball 1990, 3). The field of public policy contains many sub-fields that are in line with the established domains of social life, such as education. Accordingly, some policies, such as educational policy, mainly function within the boundaries of their specific domains. There are also policies that involve the allocation of resources across various public domains and

are thus influential across various sub-fields. For example, the population policy influences the resources that different population groups are entitled to, including medical, employment, educational and pension-related resources.

When shifting from the public policy field to its sub-field of educational policy, there is a qualitative leap. Bourdieu reminds us that '[e]very subfield has its own logic, rules and regularities, and each stage in the division of a field ... entails a genuine qualitative leap' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 104). If compared with the public policy field, the field specific capital in the educational policy field is narrowed down to the cultural and economic resources in the educational system. In the meantime, while the educational policy field also has a wide scope of agents, its dominant agents are narrowed down to state education related departments and individuals, which are in dominated positions in the state administration system. The above features have positioned the educational policy as a dominated sub-field in the public policy field in my research context.

The distribution and hierarchy of these fields in the social space is visualised through a two-axes figure⁹ (Figure 1). As shown by the figure, the political field is contained in the field of power. As the organisational resource determines the 'exchange rate' between different types of capital in other fields (Bourdieu 1996, 265), the agents in the political field occupy dominant positions in other fields. The dominant agents in the economic field, such as the lead individuals and organisations in the state and private sector, also occupy a dominant position in the field of power, since they own strong economic resources. As a sub-field of public policy, the educational policy field occupies a subordinate position, since its agents have limited organisational and economic resources. As shown in the figure (see the orange zone), some agents are shared by the above fields and are functioning as the connections between fields. These agents are government educational departments at central, city, and district level, and the central government (State Council, CCP Central Committee). Located within the field of power, the governments and officers act as dominant agents in the field of public policy and its sub-field of education policy. These agents can transfer the logic of practice from one field to another, as I will elaborate later.

According to Bourdieu, a well-rounded field analysis includes three-levels¹⁰: the first is to analyse the position of the field vis-à-vis the field of power; the second is to map out the objective structure of the positions of the agents in the field; and the third is to analyse the habitus of the agents and the way they exert their capital (see Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, 104–105). In this section, the focus has been on the level one analysis, namely mapping out the individual fields and their connections and the hierarchy of these fields within the field of power. It serves as the foundation to understand the event effect and systemic effect, which I will elaborate in the following two sections. Furthermore, the level two and three analyses will be conducted alongside my analysis of these two effects.

4.2. Event effect

Two types of cross-field effects (namely, 'event effect' and 'systemic effect') can be identified as moving between these fields and the sub-field. Through an event effect, the changes in the migrant population policy in 2013 lead to the changes in the migrant children's schooling policy. My analysis starts with the situation in the educational policy field before 2013.

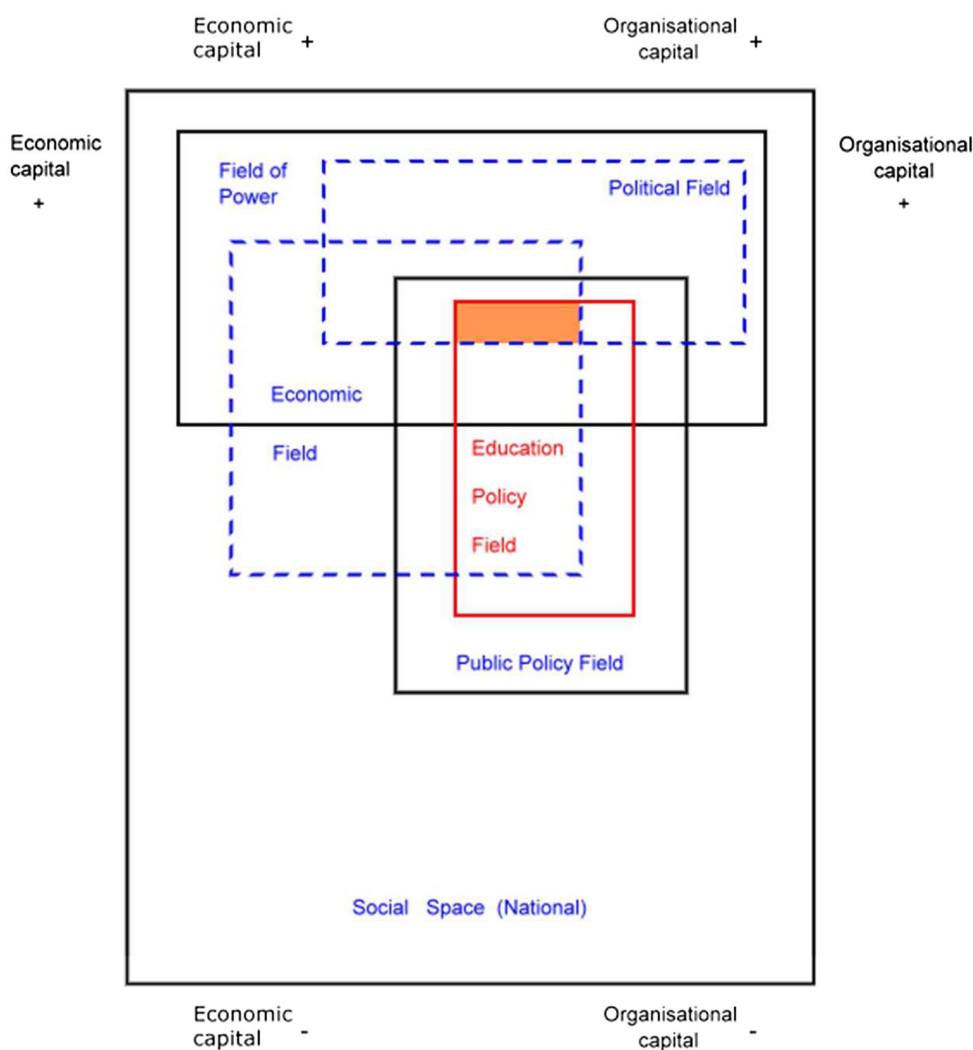


Figure 1. Mapping out the interrelated fields in the social space.

4.2.1. The educational policy field (before 2013)

Before 2013, 'social justice logic' was acting as the logic of practice in the educational policy field. Accessing state school for children of compulsory education age in one's place of residence was widely recognised as a basic right of all children, no matter migrant or local, by a range of agents, including central government, city government, district government, migrant families, state school headteachers and teachers. Under this logic, the central government launched the 'Two Mainstream Channels' policy in 2001, which was followed by a series of later policies. Accordingly, Premier Jiabao Wen wrote the following inscription for a state primary school specialising in recruiting migrant children in 2003: '[u]nder the same sky, (migrant and local children) should grow and progress together', which as a metaphor implies that all children have equal educational rights. With the authority of central government, this social justice logic was imposed on the agents in the educational policy

field. Although there were some oppositional voices from local state schools and parents, their voices were marginalised in that period, as I will elaborate below. Despite difficulties, for instance the lack of state school enrolment quotas for migrant children, the city and district governments in Beijing and Shanghai tried to enrol as many migrant children as possible through a variety of mechanisms. Ministry of Education officer A summarised why the central government is motivated by social justice:

First, this is written in the Compulsory Education Law. Second, we are under pressure from public opinion. Third, the migrants have indeed contributed to the urban development. Fourth, if the migrant children cannot receive quality education, they might become ‘rubbish citizens’ in the future – that is not a good result for both themselves and society. Finally, although some local governments are ‘lazy’ in fulfilling their responsibilities, we in central government are not, because we are the institution who is responsible for the migrant children’s education ultimately ... In sum, as a socialist state, the government has the responsibility to protect citizens’ educational rights.

From A’s statement, we can find an ‘invisible logic’ that connects all the arguments: the government’s awareness of citizens’ legal rights, of the equal opportunity discourse in the public opinion and of social justice as an underlying ethical principle. As subordinated institutions of the central government, the city governments in Beijing and Shanghai have also worked hard with their resources. The Shanghai Municipality of Education has given a large amount of funding to transform the former unregistered private schools for migrant children into registered schools during 2008–2011. Similarly, the Beijing Municipality of Education negotiated with state schools to ask, or sometimes require, them to enlarge their class sizes, add new classes without recruiting more teachers, and rebuild their professional music and fine arts classrooms into regular classrooms, as reported by many school headteachers and government officers I interviewed. Although the schools have received additional funding to cover the expenses incurred by recruiting migrant children, the headteachers in the interviews complained that the schools’ regular teaching has been interrupted in order to make these accommodations. For example:

Along with accepting extra numbers of migrant children, our class size becomes 45 per class, yet a reasonable class size should be 38 per class according to the government regulation. With this excessive class size, teachers feel stressed and the children are not able to receive enough teaching resources as they had before. What’s more, we used to have four classes in each grade, but now the number has increased to five, without an increase in the number of teachers. That means all the teachers’ workloads are increased ... In order to meet the needs of the newly added classes, we have to rebuild our professional music and fine arts classrooms, which we have spent money to build up, into regular classrooms ... We understand that accepting extra numbers of migrant children is a ‘political task’, so we cooperate with the government positively. But I have to say that this is not good for education for its own sake. (Headteacher of State Primary School B)

This statement reflects the schools’ helplessness when faced with the government’s policy, as a ‘political task’. Here we can identify a conflict between social justice logic and what the headteacher perceives to be quality education (‘education for its own sake’). It is important to note that social justice is understood here as being about access, rather than a more broadly conceived version of social justice, which would incorporate quality, too. This version of social justice produces increasing workloads for state school teachers and decreasing teaching resources for students. In the meantime, it marginalises the school’s voice in the educational policy field.

Similarly, the city and district governments' hard work in fulfilling its social justice responsibility did not translate into total commitment from government personnel. Rather, the migrant children had become a prominent source of pressure for administrators. As Beijing Municipal of Education officer B says:

In recent years, we have been under great pressure beyond our capabilities: first, the fast increasing number of migrant children goes far beyond our state school recruitment quota. This is the biggest problem we are facing. Second, the floating nature of migrant children brings lots of difficulties to our planning of the state school recruitment quota, which should be based on the statistical data of the exact number of migrant children in certain school districts.

B's argument is that the city and district-level government does not have unlimited resources and solving all migrant children's schooling problems seems an 'impossible mission' for the government at these levels.

There were indeed some opponents of the social justice logic, for example, local parent A said:

State school education, as social welfare, should only be open to selected migrants, since not all of them are as contributive to this city as we local people ... Nowadays there are just too many migrants competing with us for the social welfare that they do not deserve ... But our voice has not been heard by the government and state schools.

As reflected in Parent A's disappointment, the oppositional voices against the dominant social justice logic were marginalised in the educational policy field and did not result in any changes to government policy. In contrast, under the social justice logic, the identity of 'migrant people' became a form of symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1986) in the field of education in that period. The city and district governments and state schools responded to their appeal for access to education positively. The migrants' confidence and satisfaction can be deduced from an interviewed migrant parent's description of the situation in the years before 2013:

In the past years, there were no difficulties for our children to enrol in state schools in this school district. Almost all of my friends' children had enrolled in state school. This had led to our optimistic expectation for the future ... What we thought was simple: every child has the educational right [to attend a state school], don't they?

Under the social justice logic, migrant children were in a better position compared with the disadvantages they experienced before 2001. With the symbolic capital of being 'migrants', they were able to enrol in state schools without needing to employ particular reserves of social and economic capital.

4.2.2. The public policy field (2013): changing logic of practice

Since the 1980s, restricting the population size of metropolitan cities has been a constant theme in central government's public policies, which have been designed to combat overpopulation in super-large cities and its negative influences on urban development (Hao 2014; Michieka and Fletcher 2012). *The Regulation on the Criteria of Setting Up Cities and Towns* (1986) proposed the idea of restricting the population size of big cities, which was adopted in the following policies. For instance, *China's 12th Five-Year Plan for National Economic and Social Development* (2011) states that 'the super-large city should limit its population size in a reasonable manner' (my emphasis).¹¹ Greater pressure was created in 2013 when the *Decision of the CCP Central Committee on Major Issues Concerning Comprehensively Deepening Reform*¹² required that 'the super-large city should limit its population size in a strict way' (my emphasis), thus removing the option of local discretion and urging local

authorities to stick to strict restrictions. After 2013, the main policy tool that the government has adopted to restrict migrant population size is establishing stricter admittance criteria for migrants trying to access social welfare. For instance, in the *Opinions of the State Council on Further Promoting the Reform of the Household Registration System* (2014), the central government outlines its principles for setting up admittance criteria for migrants who want to obtain the local household registration. The indicators of the criteria include: having a legal and stable job; having legal and stable accommodation (including renting); the length of time that the person has participated in the social insurance scheme; the length of time that the person has been living in the city uninterrupted.

Before 2013, the migrants as agents were in a better position in the public policy field compared with post-2013. Before 2013, the focus of their struggle with regard to staying in the city was around employment, rather than access to welfare. They were able to utilise their social/economic/cultural capital, which they gained mainly from their previous experiences in their rural hometowns, to interact with employers in the job market in order to find a job in the city. Yet after 2013, following the series of policies (as important events), the central government managed to change the structure of the relative positions of agents in the field. The logic of population policy has been changed so that certain types of social welfare, such as medical, employment, educational and pension-related resources, are now only open to migrants who are 'contributive' to the city's economic and social development. Migrants' struggles with other agents are no longer focused solely on competing in the job market but also on meeting the social welfare admittance criteria established by the government. These criteria set stronger economic, social and cultural competency requirements for migrants, placing the migrants in a more disadvantaged position in the field. As I will argue, after 2013, some migrant families had to activate more of their social and economic capital in order to try to access state school education (as a particular form of social welfare).

4.2.3. The educational policy field (after 2013)

Since 2013, sanctioned by the State Council, the city municipalities of education in Beijing and Shanghai, as dominant agents in the educational policy field, started to consider state school education as a form of social welfare that is only open to migrants who are 'contributive' to the city. Although the social justice logic still exists, it is no longer at the core of the discourses active within the educational policy field. Now, the government is concerned with how to select the children whose parents are 'contributive' to the city. In Beijing, the city municipality of education started to require 'Five Documents'¹³ pertaining to residence and employment criteria in 2012, and went further in 2014 when the city municipality required the district municipalities to set up further specific requirements to make it clear what can be considered as 'contributions'. Taking the *Proof of Employment* as an example, in the year 2015, the Xicheng District Municipal of Education established four further specific requirements related to this document. First, provide both parents' proof of employment; second, if the parent runs a personal business, s/he should have paid taxes in Xicheng; third, one of the parents should work in Xicheng; fourth, the parent should have already paid social insurance for at least three months. Here we can identify that requiring the applicant to provide the *Proof of Employment* is a means to ensure that this person is able to contribute to this city (or more specifically, to this district) by paying tax and social insurance, contributing to the city through both working and consuming there. If both of the parents are working, then the contributions that this family can make are doubled. Additionally,

paying for the social insurance for at least three months means that the applicant is not only a ‘contributor to the city’, but also a ‘stable contributor to the city’. Only when the migrant parents provide all of the above documents and meet all of the specific requirements can their children enrol in local state schools. Beijing Municipal of Education Officer B strongly appreciates the efficiency of the criteria system:

the underlying principle and main function of the criteria system is to help us judge who is truly working for this city and who is not. If you meet our criteria, you are considered as ‘truly working for this city’.

Through the criteria system, the local government legitimates its own definition of ‘what kind of migrants can be considered as “contributive” to the city and hence deserves the educational welfare of this city’. Here, the ‘social welfare logic’ has been adopted from the field of public policy to its sub-field of educational policy by the dominant agents.

Another ‘benefit’ of this criteria system for the government is that the established criteria generate an ‘eligibility discourse’ and the hardship that some migrant children are facing seems no longer a problem, or a source of pressure, for the local or central government, as the ineligible applicant can now be positioned as illegitimate, demanding and irrational. For example, when being asked about the hardship of migrant children in state school enrolment, Officer A (Ministry of Education) responded that:

Whether there is a ‘hardship’ or not depends on what kind of people you are. There is no difficulty for the eligible children [who have got all the required criteria] to enrol in state schools. However, if you are ineligible yet still insist to apply for a state school, you will face difficulties. But if you go back to your hometown and enrol in the state schools there, as required by policy, again, there would not be any difficulties for you. Therefore, our basic attitude is that, if you are not eligible, please apply for the state schools in your hometown, and your seat will be guaranteed.

Comparing this statement with the same person’s statement on why the central government has the motivation to help as many migrant children as possible enrol in the state schools before 2013 (cited above in Section 4.2.1), we can see clearly the shift from the social justice to social welfare logic. The developmental direction of the policies is backwards, returning to the pre-2001 era. Both pre-2001 and post-2013 policies try to reduce the receiving municipality’s responsibilities for migrant children’s schooling, and both produce further hardships for migrant children. Yet, compared with the pre-2001 policies, the post-2013 ones seem shrewder: they do not reject providing state school education for migrant children; what they reject is providing education for those who are not ‘eligible’. With the eligibility discourse, the post-2013 policy appears to be more legitimate than previously. The educational needs of (some) migrant children are not simply ignored as appeared to be the case pre-2001, but positioned as illegitimate demands.

Many migrant parents argue that they are ‘contributive’ to the city, so their children deserve state school education. For example:

It is unfair to established admittance criteria against our children, since we are also contributors to this city like the local people. I have been working in Beijing for more than ten years, undertaking the dirtiest and hardest jobs. And finally, my daughter is not allowed to enrol in state school. It is unfair! (Migrant parent E)

Here, the migrant parent also adopts the social welfare logic to argue that they are ‘contributive’ to the city’s development. However, since ‘contributor’ is defined by the government through its legitimated criteria, the migrant parents’ voices have been marginalised and

their understandings of making a contribution to the city, such as ‘undertaking the dirtiest and hardest jobs’, rendered unjustifiable. This is different from the situation immediately before 2013, when migrant children could access urban state schools relatively easily with their symbolic capital of being a ‘migrant’. Nowadays, the migrant parents need to try hard to obtain the required documents to prove that they are ‘contributive’. For example, migrant parent E reports her first-hand experience:

we have to try some ‘special’ ways to get all the required documents: with the help of my friends, I have signed a fake job contract and a fake house-renting contract with others, at the expense of paying some money ...

Here we can find intense forms of social and economic capital being wielded by the migrant families in order to get their children enrolled in state schools, and this situation is again different to that immediately before 2013. In other words, the position of the migrants becomes more disadvantaged in the field of educational policy.

Another drastic change is the nature of educational policy. Now, the state school enrolment criteria have become an apparatus of government ‘population control mechanism’, as Pudong District Municipal of Education Officer K (Shanghai) reports:

Now the state school enrolment criteria in Shanghai can be considered as a sub-system of the residential certificate policy [a type of migrant population policy] ... To a large degree, we chose these state school enrolment criteria to meet the needs of the government’s migrant population control policy ... Here, education is treated as a certain type of social welfare.

As a statement is confirmed in the *An Explanation of the Policy of School Enrolment in Compulsory Education Age* (2014), promulgated by the Shanghai Municipal of Education. This policy clearly reveals the changed nature of the educational policy, now working as a population control mechanism of the government. This mechanism works well, according to the views of government officers in both Beijing and Shanghai. These officers report that since 2013, many migrant parents have sent their children back to their hometowns for schooling, so they feel that the pressure on the city and district governments has been reduced.

From this discussion, we can outline the way that the event effect works: when an important event (the change of government population policy in 2013) happens in the field of public policy, it changes the logic of the field; then, the agents in dominant positions in the educational policy field introduce the changed logic from the public policy field. In the meantime, the changes in both fields are consolidated under influences from political and economic fields, via the field of power, through systemic effects.

4.3. Systemic effect

4.3.1. The changed political logic: the rise of economic logic in the field of power

During 2012/2013,¹⁴ there was a change of logic in the political field as a result of the leadership transition in central government. In the period that Jintao Hu was President (2002–2012/2013), the dominant political discourse was ‘the construction of a harmonious society’, which is reflected in a series of policy texts, including *The Decision of the CCP Central Committee on Several Main Issues Concerning the Construction of A Socialist Harmonious Society* (2006). In accordance with this discourse, the pursuit of social justice was the logic of practice in the political field. As the Chinese political leaders, as agents, occupy a dominant

position in the field of power, their pursuit of social justice brought this logic to a dominant position in the field of power. After the leadership transition (2012/2013-), the dominant central government political discourse changed to ‘realizing the China Dream of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation.’ President Jinping Xi has elaborated the meaning of ‘China Dream’ in many speeches, political conferences and interviews, claiming that ‘the idea in essence is to make the country prosperous and strong, rejuvenate the nation, and see that the people are happy’¹⁵ (国家富强, 民族振兴, 人民幸福). Under this discourse, pursuing national prosperity becomes a dominant logic in the political field. While this logic is not directly opposed to the social justice logic, it emphasises the nation’s economic and social competence. The political leaders’ pursuit of economic and social competence enhances the relative value of economic capital within the social value system. Accordingly, a logic emphasising economic rationality has been brought to a dominant position in the field of power. The economic logic, which has not been changed in substance owing to the leadership transition, embodies itself in the population policy as the workforce who can meet the needs of the market in the city are welcomed, and would be offered commensurate social welfare. Under this economic logic, the discourse of a harmonious society is no longer at the core of the field of power.

4.3.2. The field of public policy (and its sub-fields) under the systemic effect

The field of power constantly produces a systemic effect on the field of public policy (and its sub-field of education policy) before and after 2012/2013. Before 2012/2013, there was no policy rigorously restricting urban population size in the field of public policy, as the strict restriction of the migrant population’s access to services in cities will bring hardship to migrants. It can further lead to civil unrest, great opposition and accusations of inequality against the government, which is not what the central government hopes to see under the logic of pursuing of social justice. When it comes down to the field of education policy, the nature of systemic effect is reflected in the Ministry of Education Officer A’s statement:

The central government has attached importance to solving the problems of migrant children’s schooling, because this issue has a direct influence on our citizens’ well-being, on social stability, on social harmony, on urban development, and finally, on the future of our socialism.

Here, Officer A connects migrant children’s schooling policy to a broader political agenda, namely, ‘social stability’, ‘social harmony’ and ‘the future of our socialism’. The values of social stability and social harmony are in accordance with the social justice logic in the field of power.

However, after 2012/2013 with the marginalisation of the social justice logic, there is less of a necessity for the central and local government to worry too much about the potentially negative consequences of setting strict restrictions on migrant populations. Promoting economic and social development at the same time as reducing the population burden through the selection of workforce becomes the core of the government’s concerns in terms of population. In addition, this new logic in the public policy field is consolidated by the rising prominence of economic logic in the field of power. Accordingly, the local municipalities of education follow the intuition of the central government. As observed by Officer D (Beijing Municipal of Education):

You might have observed that, after the leadership transition in the central government, the ‘Two Mainstream Channels’ policy seems to be rarely referred to by the central government.

It indeed occasionally refers to this policy, but the frequency is reduced compared with the situation before.

As a result, the 'exporting' of social welfare logic from the field of public policy into educational policy field (through event effect) was consolidated by the economic logic in the field of power through systemic effect.¹⁶

5. Conclusion

Adopting Bourdieusian theoretical resources, this paper offers a unique understanding of how politics, economy and migrant population policy influence educational policy in the Chinese context. It contributes to Bourdieusian theorising by offering a framework to explore the interactions among fields. Bourdieu does not pursue a general theory on the interactions of fields, leaving researchers a space to work within their particular research contexts. Based on the Australian context, Lingard and Rawolle (2004) have written innovatively on 'cross-field effects'. In my research, instead of simply appropriating the idea of cross-field effects into a new space, I have addressed several limitations to it with the support of my empirical data. I have integrated the logic of practice as a key element of the cross-field effects analysis. I also conceptualised the agents as the points of connection between different fields. In addition, I have added Bourdieu's level one field analysis into Lingard and Rawolle's framework. Based on these works, I have produced an updated framework to outline the directions, scopes and dynamics of the cross-field effects (see the last paragraph of Section 2).

Applying Bourdieu's level one field analysis, I have mapped out the distribution and hierarchy of the individual fields (with the sub-field) and the field of power in the social space with the educational policy field occupying a subordinate position (see Figure 1). This has revealed how the logic of one field is exported to another field by which agents under which effect. Extending Lingard and Rawolle's conceptualisation of event effect and systemic effect, I have identified that the event effect functions in an 'active' way, producing direct influence from the public policy field to the educational policy field. The systemic effect functions in a 'passive' and 'static' way with indirect influence from the political and economic fields on the public policy field via the field of power. These two effects function synchronously. In addition, by conceptualising the interrelations between a field and its sub-field(s), and between the field of power and other fields, I have extended the analytical scope of the cross-field effect framework. Finally, my conceptualisation of the systemic effect also identifies a mechanism of functional homology between individual fields and the field of power (Bourdieu 2005) and extends Bourdieu's theorising. That is, the logics of the individual fields are consistent with the logic of the field of power through the dominant agents; in the meantime, the dominant agents in certain fields (such as political leaders in the political field) can convert the changes in these fields into the change of the logic of the field of power. Acknowledging that any theoretical or empirical claims are particular to the spatio-temporal contexts in which are generated, my work is not aiming to produce a 'general theory' that is applicable to all fields under all contexts. Yet it can still be valuable for further research, especially the exploration of the interactions between the educational policy, population policy, politics, and economy.

Putting this analytical framework into practice, we can identify some changes which have increased migrant children's hardship in state school enrolment after 2013, and which have

not been revealed by the existing research. Under the event effect, state school education becomes a type of social welfare only open to migrants who are 'contributive' (as defined by the government) to the city's development and educational policy becomes a mechanism of population control deployed by the government. As a result, the city and district government sets up a series of strict state school enrolment criteria, establishing stronger economic, social and cultural competency requirements for migrants. Under the systemic effect, the current social welfare logic in the educational policy field is reaffirmed by the rising strength of economic logic in the field of power. The migrant group's symbolic capital of being 'migrant' has been diminished, and their position is again one of marginalisation. As a result, for those migrant families who cannot exert their social/cultural/economic capital to meet the state school enrolment criteria, their educational appeal to schools has been marginalised, although in an apparently legitimate manner. While this research is a 'research of policy' instead of 'research for policy' (Fay 1975; cited in Ball 1997), it still offers some implications for the policy-makers, as it reveals that the migrant children, taken together, have become more disadvantaged in the educational policy field after 2013. This situation deserves much wider social awareness, in order that access to state education in the city where their parents live is available to all children.

Notes

1. In the existing literature, there are different names for children from low-income migrant worker families without local household registration: 'migrant children' 'immigrant children' 'children from migrant workers' families' or 'floating children'. Although different names are used in academic literature, scholars are referring to the same group of children. In this paper, I will use 'migrant children'.
2. The 'state school' (公办学校) is the fully government-funded school, which does not charge for tuition fees. Yet the private-funded school (私立学校 or 民办学校) does charge. In spite of their different funding sources, both state school and private school follow the national curriculum and are under the direct supervision of the local government municipality of education.
3. Data resource: government unpublished data, reported by Officer B (Beijing Municipal of Education) in my interview.
4. This phenomenon is reflected by the amount of unregistered and informal private schools in that city. In Beijing, the number of these schools was 263 in 2005 and 128 in 2010.
5. In another paper, Rawolle has summarized cross-field effects as 'effects that result from the interrelations between fields' (Rawolle 2005, 709). But this summary is still a literal explanation rather than a conceptualization.
6. It is important to note that 'field' is a theoretical concept, a way of thinking through the social world, instead of a social reality (Ladwig 1994). Therefore, the use of the term 'export' here is in a metaphorical sense to present how the agents transfer the logic of field A into field B, which will be elaborated in more detail below. Yet the social actors may be aware that the social life can be divided into certain sectors or aspects, such as politics, economy and education. Thus they see the existence of these sectors/aspects as reality. Both the perspectives of the researcher and the actors are presented in this paper.
7. According to the National Bureau of Statistics' (NBS) definition, 'migrant rural labourers' are 'those who have their household registers (hukou) registered in rural areas but are working outside their villages'. Admittedly, this is a heterogeneous group with striking inner-group differences with regard to people's social economic status (such as occupation). In my fieldwork, I follow the NBS' definition and I do not differentiate people's occupations when selecting rural migrant interviewees. It turns out that the majority of my migrant interviewees are working as manual labourers while a small number of them are not. Regardless of their

various differences, they share some common situations in their children's education, as I elaborate in this paper.

8. In the Chinese context, the organisational resource refers to the political and/or social resources derived from the political and bureaucrat system, or broadly, from the state sector. Those who work in government departments or as state entrepreneurs tend to find it easier to access the organisational resource than people working in the private sector (see Lu 2002).
9. Two axes figure is frequently used in Bourdieu's work to present the chiasmatic structure of the positions of the agents in particular fields and fields in the broader social space (see, for example, Bourdieu 1996, 267, 268, 269).
10. It is important to note that the three levels are conceptual, and in an empirical investigation there is no sequence of from where the analysis starts (see for example, Hardy 2012).
11. The term 'population' here refers to the migrant population because this policy does not require that people with local household registration move out.
12. In this document, the 'reform' refers to the 'Opening up and reform' since 1978.
13. The 'Five Documents' include: Proof of Employment, Proof of House Renting/Ownership, Proof of No Guardian in the Hometown, Temporary Residential Permit, and Household Registration Card.
14. The years 2012–2013 can be seen as the 'transitional period' of political leadership: the leadership position of CCP (General Secretary & Chairman of the Central Military Commission of CCP) were transferred from Jintao Hu to Jinping Xi in 2012, then the leadership position of the state (President & Chairman of the Central Military Commission of the State) were transferred from Jintao Hu to Jinping Xi in 2013.
15. Xi said this sentence in his speech in the closing ceremony of the 12th National People's Congress assembly, in which he was selected as the President of P. R. China.
16. One might argue that this model is unidirectional without exploring the effects from the educational policy field to other fields, which is another aspect of the complexities of field exchange. While acknowledging this potential research gap, I would note that this is not the interest of investigation in this paper, which focuses on how politics, economy and migrant population policies influence educational policy.

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