



# The Current Situation, Evolution and Trend of the Research on Educational Funds in China — Bibliometric Analysis of CSSCI Journals from 2001 to 2021

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**Abstract:** Finance is the cornerstone of national governance, and education funding is an important basis for education development. Since the beginning of this century, Chinese scholars have made great progress in the research of education funds, and gradually developed towards professionalism, standardization and cutting-edge. Through bibliometric analysis of journal papers since the beginning of this century (2001-2021), it is found that Wang Shanmai and other scholars have maintained a high degree of activity in their research on China's education funds, and impurities such as *Education Development Research* have maintained a high degree of attention in their research on China's education funds. In the past 20 years, China's research on education funds has mainly focused on issues such as education funds, compulsory education, higher education, and education financial system. At the same time, education equity, basic education, rural education and other aspects are also hot spots in this century. The research on education funds in China has gone through three stages: exploration period, development period and vigorous development period, but there are deficiencies in interdisciplinary system, research methods and theoretical innovation. In the future, China's education funding research needs to look at education from the perspective of education, seek cross collaboration in multidisciplinary fields, standardize and improve the empirical research methodology system, and build an academic city-state with Chinese characteristics based on localized education funding practice.

**Keywords:** Education Funds, Knowledge Map, Co-word Analysis, Cluster Analysis

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## 1. Introduction

Finance is the cornerstone of national governance, and education funding is an important basis for education development. After more than 30 years of unremitting efforts in reform and opening up, China has opened up the path of socialist education with Chinese characteristics, built the world's largest education system, guaranteed the right of hundreds of millions of people to education, and made great achievements that have attracted worldwide attention. However, from a worldwide perspective, China still has a large gap compared with developed countries in terms of the scale of education investment, the level of education development, and the utilization efficiency of financial education expenditure. Since the beginning of this century, Chinese scholars have made great progress in their research on education funds, which

reflects the hot topics of theoretical research on education funds in China at different historical stages and the difficult problems in policy practice. The research on education funds is helpful to understand the role of education funds in the whole education development system, and also helps to outline the transition process of a country's education economic development in a period of time. The research on education funds in China has been accompanied by the historical process of the popularization of higher education. In recent years, with the proposal and gradual promotion of the high-quality education system strategy, the research on education funds has gradually become a hot topic of academic research. Based on this, this paper will use the form of knowledge map and Citespace software to conduct a bibliometric analysis of the research on education funds in China's academic circles since this century (2001-2021). Objectively analyze the research status, evolution

path and development trend of China's education funding research, and promote related research to a deeper level.

## 2. Research Methods and Data Sources

### 2.1. Research Method

Since the introduction of Mapping Knowledge Domains (MKD) in China in 2005, it has been widely used to analyze the research status and evolution process of literature knowledge [1]. Citespace knowledge visualization mapping software developed by Professor Chen Chaomei is one of the most popular knowledge mapping software at present, which helps to explore the frontiers of disciplines, select research directions Carry out knowledge management and assist scientific and technological decision-making. This paper will use Citespace software to sort out the research status of education funds, mainly from the three dimensions of time series analysis, author cooperation network, and journal distribution. The analysis of the influence of academic works in the field of education funds research since this century mainly comes from the dimensions of co citation of authors, co citation of literature, and co citation of journals; The analysis of the evolution path of education funding research mainly comes from the time zone view dimension; The analysis of the research hotspots and trends of education funds mainly comes from the frequency, centrality, clustering characteristics and emergence of keywords.

### 2.2. Data Sources

The data collected in this paper comes from the Chinese Social Science Literature Index CSSCI (Chinese Social Sciences Citation Index) database, which contains journals with

high authority and academic reference value in the field of social science. After preliminary screening, it is determined to search under the title of education funds and education finance. The time period is selected from 2001 to 2021. The documents with less academic nature or less relevant to education funds research, such as news reports, interviews, book reviews and conference notices, are excluded. After the duplicate items are deleted, 740 effective research papers are collected. After format conversion through Citespace software, To form a basic data information source for bibliometric analysis.

## 3. Descriptive Statistics of China's Educational Funds Research

### 3.1. Time Series Analysis

According to the number of CSSCI journal papers in the field of education funding research of CNKI from 2001 to 2021, the line chart drawn is shown in Figure 1. From the overall trend, the number of research papers on education funds is relatively stable in the annual distribution trend. The number of papers issued in the three-year period from 2008 to 2012 is relatively large, while the number of papers issued in 2001, 2002, 2016, 2020 and 2021 is relatively small. Before and after the year with a large number of papers, the country has issued important documents on reform in the field of education funds, For example, in 2008, the Notice on Exempting Students from the Urban Compulsory Education Period from the Study and Miscellaneous Fees was issued, which triggered extensive discussion in the academic community in the following years.

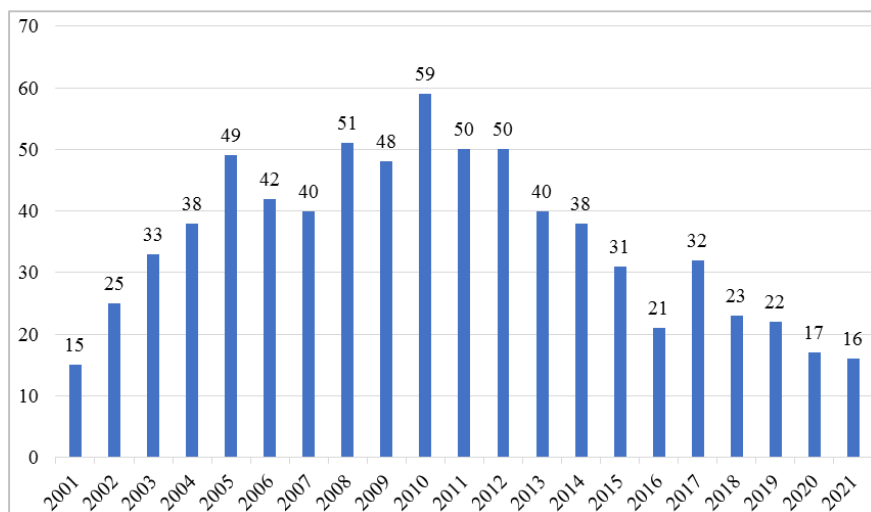


Figure 1. Annual distribution of the number of papers on education funding research.

### 3.2. Cooperation of Authors

The knowledge map analysis of the author's cooperation can clearly show the main researchers in the field and their cooperation. In Citespace software, selecting "Author" as the node type can generate the author's cooperation network

diagram (Figure 2). The number of nodes generated is 60, the number of connections is 13, and the network density value is 0.0073. In general, domestic scholars have a relatively close research cooperation relationship in the research of education funds, Scholars who maintain high activity (4 or more articles) in this field are Cheng Gang, Liu Zeyun, Hu Yaozong, Liu

Tianzuo, Liu Jianfa, Li Xiangyun, Zhao Hongbin, Du Yuhong, Zhang Xuemin, Wu Kaijun and Sun Zhijun. It can be seen

from Figure 2 that these scholars often maintain relatively frequent academic cooperation with other scholars.



Figure 2. Distribution of authors' cooperation.

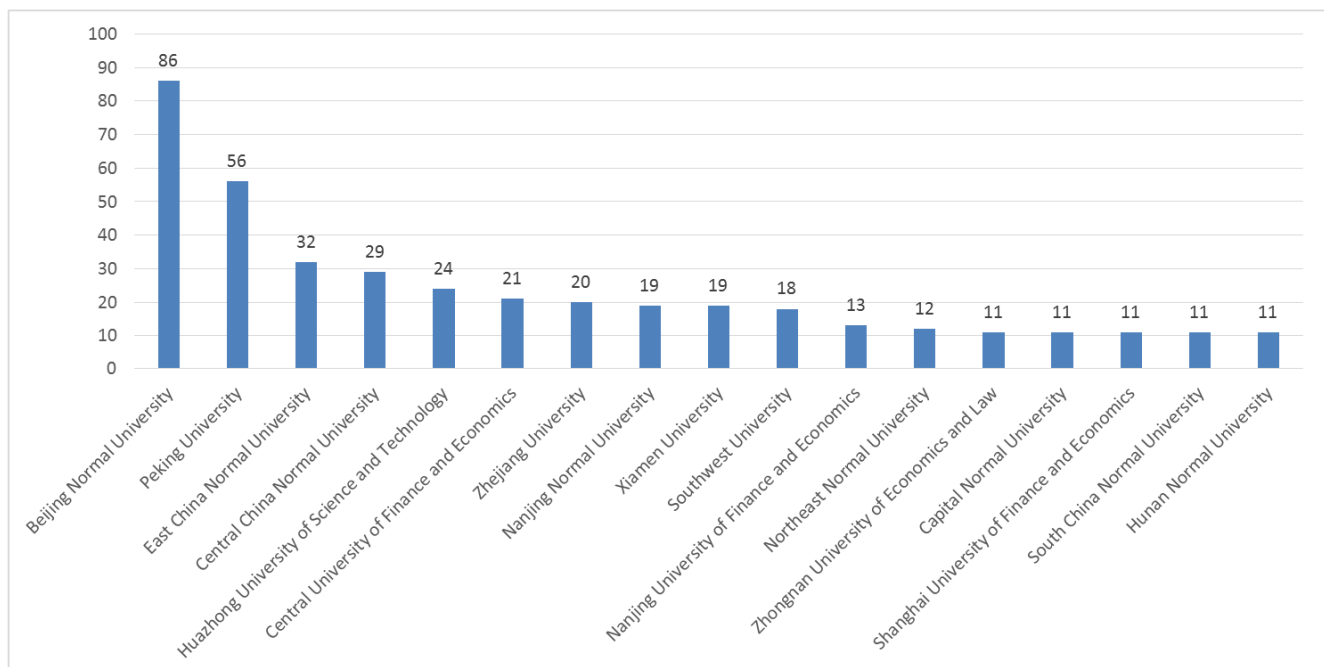


Figure 3. Distribution of documents issued by research institutions.

### 3.3. Distribution of Research Institutions and Periodicals

It can be seen from the distribution chart of research institutions' publications (Figure 3) that the universities that

maintain high activity in research on education funds are Beijing Normal University, Peking University, East China Normal University and Central China Normal University, and the number of publications in related fields is far higher

than that of other academic research institutions. In addition, Huazhong University of Science and Technology, Central University of Finance and Economics, Zhejiang University, Nanjing Normal University, Xiamen University, Southwest University, Nanjing University of Finance and Economics Northeast Normal University, Central South University of Economics and Law, Capital Normal University, Shanghai University of Finance and Economics, South China Normal University and Hunan Normal University also sent 10 or more papers, and there is little difference in the number.

According to the distribution of journals with the largest number of papers (Figure 4), the journals with the largest number of papers are Education and Economy (98 papers) and Education Development Research (88 papers), which are far higher than other journals, indicating that these two journals maintain a high degree of attention to the research on the direction of education funds. In addition, from the perspective of the subject type of journals, the journals with more papers are distributed in the fields of education, economy and management, and are all authoritative journals or high-quality journals in this field.

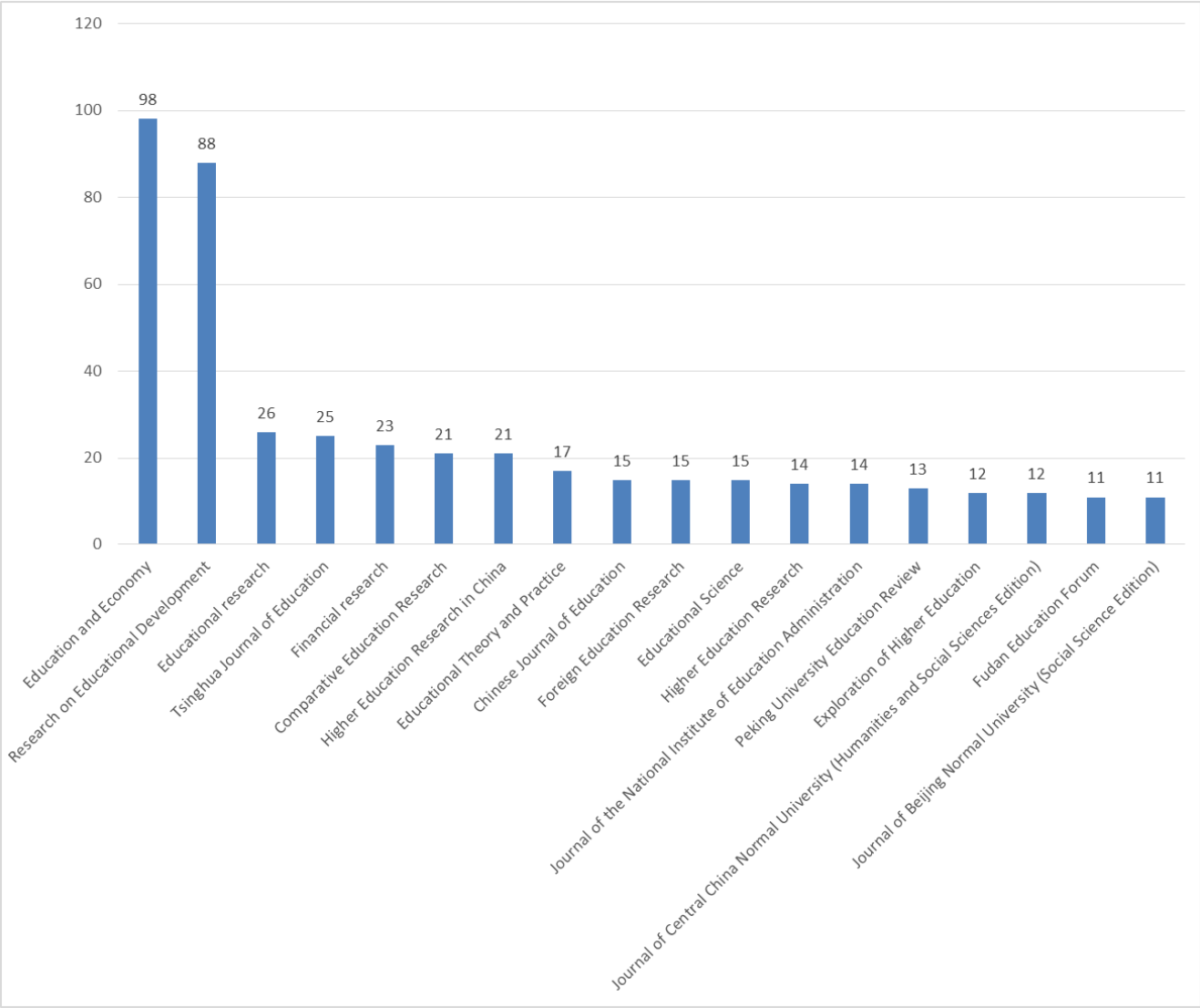


Figure 4. Distribution map of periodicals with papers.

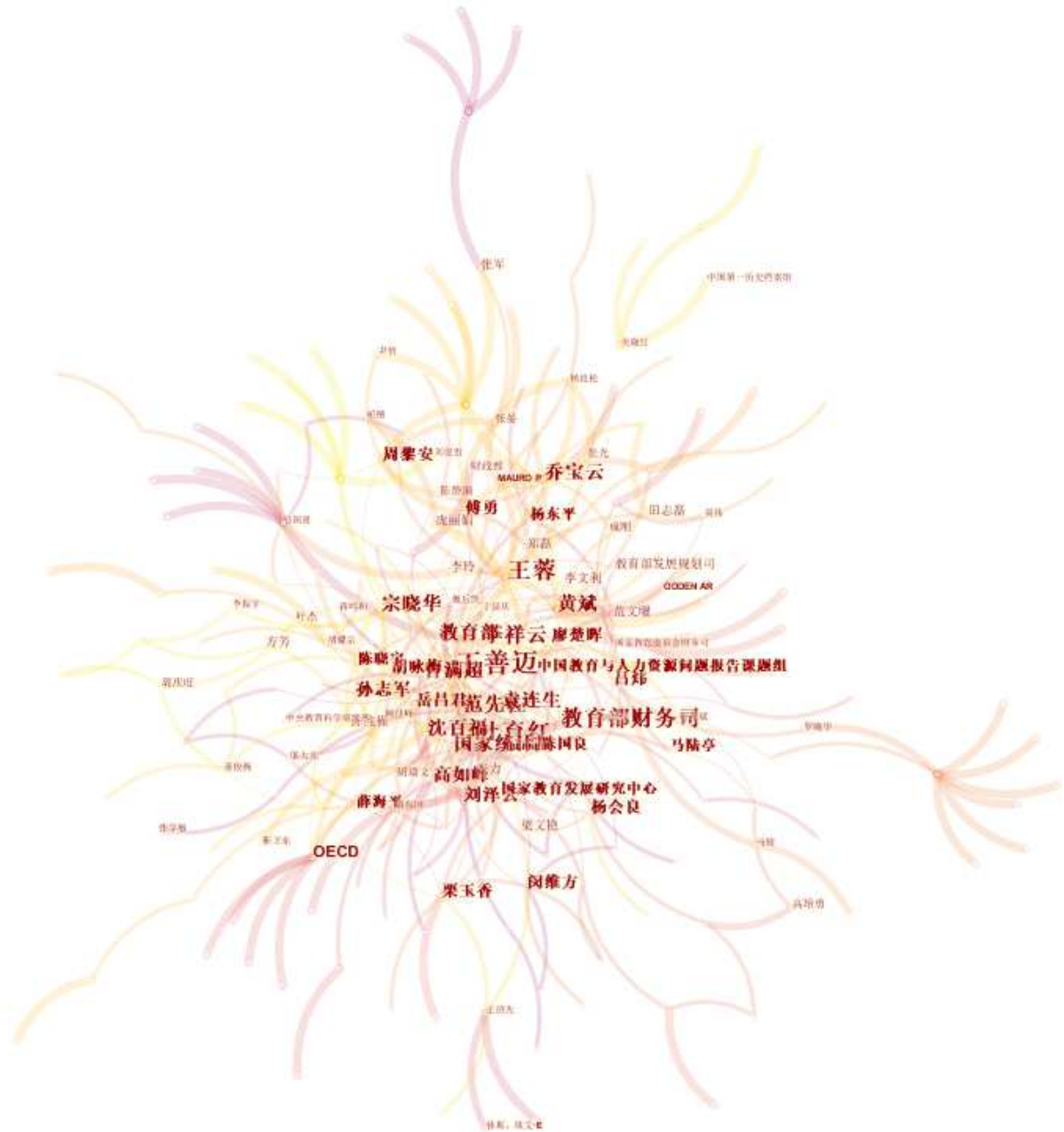
4. Analysis of the Characteristics of Educational Funds Research Literature

4.1. Analysis of Co Citation of Authors

Author Co citation Analysis (ACA) is a commonly used method to measure the academic community in the discipline

field. If two scholars' papers are cited by another paper at the same time, the two scholars have a co citation relationship. The more co citations, the closer the two scholars' academic "examples" are. The co citation of authors in Citespace software is shown in Figure 5. The node type is "Cited Author", the threshold is set to (2,2,20) (2,2,20) (2,2,20) (2,2,20), the Pruning method is "Mini mum Spanning Tree", the number of nodes formed is 237, the number of connections is 409, and the network density is 0.0146.

Xiaohua (16 times), Shen Baifu (16 times), Yuan Liansheng (16 times), Huang Bin (15 times), Gao Rufeng (15 times), and Sun Zhijun (15 times). It can be seen from this that foreign scholars' research in the field of education funding has a greater impact on the Chinese academic community, and some domestic scholars have a higher academic influence in the field of education funding research.



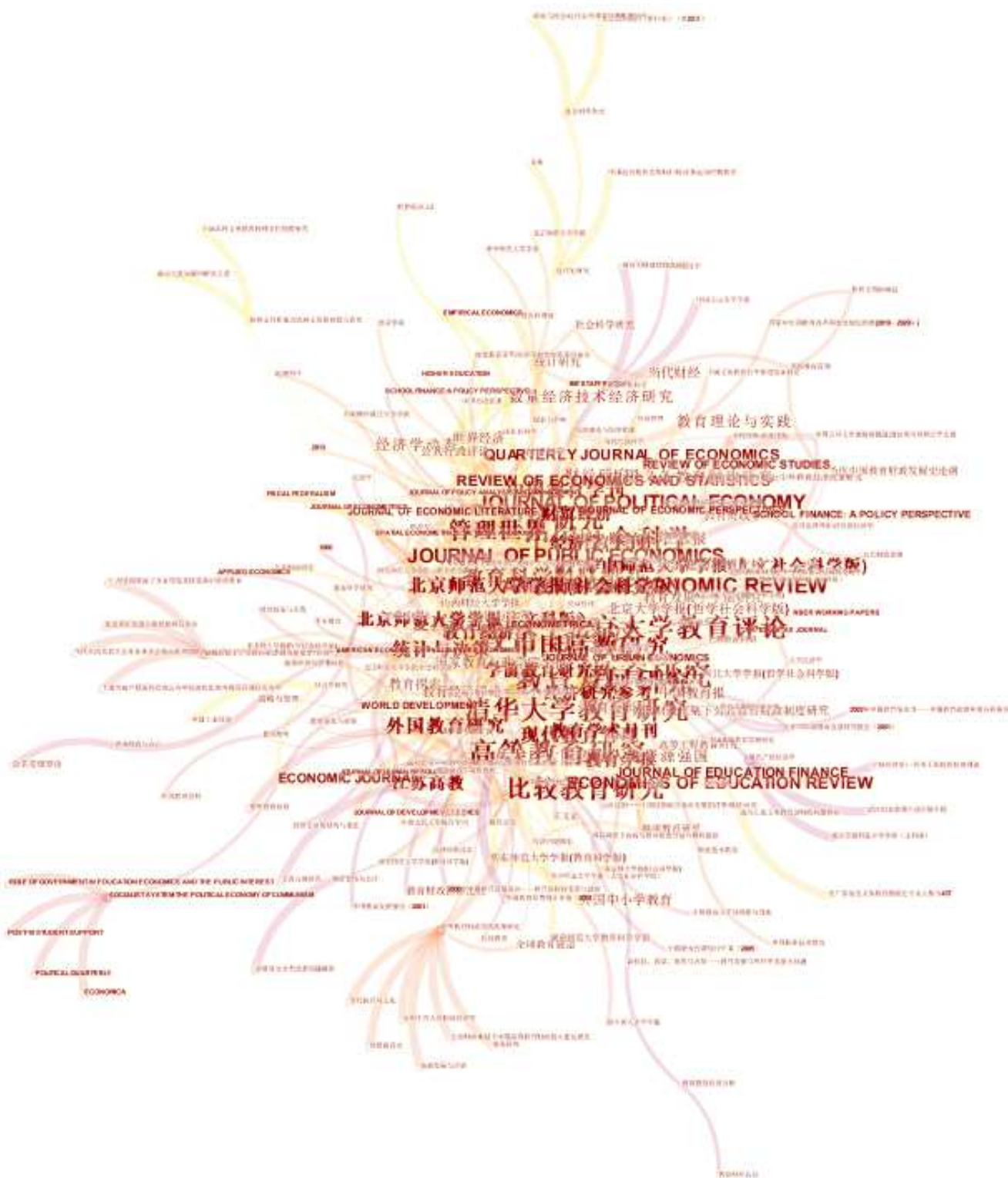
**Figure 5.** Knowledge map of co citation of authors.

Journal Co citation Analysis (JCA) is mainly used to evaluate the academic influence of journals, which can more accurately determine the status of journals in the discipline. If the papers of two journals are cited by another journal at the same time, the first two journals have a co

citation relationship. If more co citations occur, it means that the academic "" distance between the two journals is closer. The co citation of authors in Citespace software is shown in Figure 6. The node type is "Cited Journal", the threshold value is set to (2,2,20) (2,2,20) (2,2,20), the Pruning method is "Mini mum Spanning Tree", the number of nodes formed is 239, the number of connections is 488,



Research (73 times), Peking University Education Review (62 times), Tsinghua University Education Research (55 times), China Social Sciences (55 times), Economic Research (52 times), Comparative Education Research (45 times), China Higher Education Research (44 times), Management World (34 times), Financial Research (32 times), and Education Science (31 times).



**Figure 6.** *Atlas of Co cited Knowledge of Journals.*



compulsory education [3]. On the basis of previous studies, Chen Xiaoyu (2012) summarized China's historical data, compared relevant data from other countries, and reviewed and looked forward to the source structure, distribution structure and use structure of China's education funds [4]. Sun Zhijun (2010) conducted a systematic and rigorous econometric analysis of the incremental effect and distribution effect of the compulsory education financial reform based on the data of schools in three provinces and at the county level, using the "quasi experimental" design and double difference method. The research results found that the reform improved the level of the compulsory education funds from the financial allocation and the fairness of the distribution. Those schools that received less financial allocation funds before the reform, After the reform, the financial allocation increased significantly. However, no matter from any aspect, the reform has not produced obvious effect on the total amount of funds [5]. Fan Xianzuo (2009) comprehensively and deeply analyzed the initial results achieved since the implementation of the "new mechanism" through several surveys of some counties and cities in the central and western regions, and pointed out the main problems after the implementation of the "new mechanism": the rural compulsory education funds are still insufficient, the actual income of some teachers has declined, the education fees are still arbitrary, and the debt burden of "universal education" is heavy. On the basis of analyzing the causes of the existing problems, this paper puts forward countermeasures such as increasing public financial input, innovating the allocation and management of rural compulsory education funds, and establishing a rural teachers' salary guarantee mechanism [6]. Chen Chunjin (2017), based on the newly released statistics of education funds in various countries by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, analyzed the total amount and structural characteristics of education funds in major countries in the world from the dimensions of investment scale and allocation structure of education funds, and found that the proportion of financial education funds in China's GDP is close to the average level of upper middle income countries, but there is still a significant gap compared with high-income countries. In terms of fund allocation structure, China's higher education capital expenditure ratio is too high, and the proportion of recurrent expenditure, especially personnel expenditure, is seriously low [7]. Wu Wei (2005) analyzed the current mechanism and mode of financial appropriation for higher education in China. On this basis, he proposed the reform direction of the mechanism and mode of financial appropriation for higher education in China from

the national macro level: to build a tripartite coordinated operation mechanism of "government intermediary school", from a single "comprehensive quota plus special subsidy" model to a "formula plus contract" composite model, And the transformation from a single parameter formula to a multi indicator formula [8]. Ye Jie (2017), based on the data of average expenditure on education funds per student of ordinary primary schools, ordinary middle schools and ordinary colleges and universities in all provinces, autonomous regions and cities from 1998 to 2013, used Gini coefficient, Theil coefficient and their decomposition techniques to investigate the inter provincial differences of average expenditure on education funds in China and their trends, structures and changes, and calculated the contribution of per capita financial income to inter provincial differences [9]. Liu Jungui (2013) found that in the middle and later period of the "12th Five Year Plan", the number of migrant workers' children accompanying them in cities during the compulsory education period will continue to increase, and the expenditure on compulsory education per student also shows a gradual growth trend. Therefore, the guarantee of compulsory education funds for migrant workers' children across the country will face greater pressure. To establish and improve the system and mechanism for guaranteeing the compulsory education funds for the children of migrant workers in cities, we should correctly understand and distinguish the special attribute of the compulsory education of the children of migrant workers in cities as a public product. The guarantee of the compulsory education funds for the children of migrant workers in cities moving within the province should be coordinated by the provincial government, and the guarantee of the compulsory education funds for the children of migrant workers in cities moving across provinces should be borne by the central finance. Wang Rong (2008) empirically analyzed the influencing factors of the behavior of local governments' educational fiscal expenditure in China. The study found that there is a negative correlation between the level of economic development and public education expenditure. A large proportion of the state-owned economy in the overall economy will weaken the proportion of education expenditure in fiscal expenditure. Under the same other conditions, the proportion of primary industry output value is large in regions, The proportion of financial expenditure on education and the proportion of public investment in education are relatively low, and the fiscal system below the provincial level has a significant impact on the proportion of education expenditure in total financial expenditure [10].

*Table 1. High cited literature information.*

No	Document name	Author	Journal	year	Times cited	Total cites
1	A Comparative Analysis of the Educational Development Level of China's Provinces	Wang Shanmai	Educational Research	2013	6	124
2	China's Fiscal Decentralization and Primary Compulsory Education	Qiao Baoyun	China's Social Sciences	2005	6	997
3	The Structure of Educational Funds in China: Review and Prospect	Chen Xiaoyu	Education and Economy	2012	5	81



No	Document name	Author	Journal	year	Times cited	Total cites
4	Financial Reform of Compulsory Education: Incremental Effect and Distribution Effect	Sun Zhijun	Educational Review of Peking University	2010	5	57
5	New Mechanism of Rural Compulsory Education: Results, Problems and Countermeasures	Fan Xianzuo	Journal of Central China Normal University (Humanities and Social Sciences Edition)	2009	4	68
6	Investment scale and allocation structure of education funds in major countries in the world	Chen Chunjin	Research on higher education in China	2017	4	86
7	Exploration on the reform direction of the mechanism and mode of financial appropriation for higher education in china	Wu Wwei	Jiangsu Higher Education	2005	4	52
8	The Inter provincial Differences of Educational Expenditure per Student in China: Internal Structure, Development Trend and Financial Reasons	Ye Jie	Research on Educational Development	2017	4	21
9	Research on the guarantee of compulsory education funds for migrant workers' children	Liu Jungui	Educational research	2013	4	59
10	An Empirical Study on the Educational Fiscal Expenditure Behavior of Local Governments in China	Wang Rong	Journal of Peking University	2008	4	168

## 5. Analysis on the Hot Spots and Evolutionary Paths of Educational Funds Research

### 5.1. Hotspots in the Study of Educational Funds

In bibliometric analysis, the frequency of keywords reflects

the academic interest in this field, while the centrality index reflects the position of this keyword relative to other keywords. The high-frequency and high cardiology keywords are often the research focus and focus in this field. In Citespace software, set the node type as keyword, and use the pathfinder network routing algorithm and Pruning the merge network pruning type to form the keyword co-occurrence knowledge map, as shown in Figure 8.



**Figure 8.** Keyword co word knowledge map.

Table 2. High frequency keyword list.

Number	Keyword	Frequency
1	Education expenditure	143
2	Compulsory education	122
3	Higher Education	88
4	Education finance	71
5	Financial system	25
6	Financial input	23
7	Educational equity	15
8	Transfer payment	12
9	Educational input	12
10	Elementary education	12

The key words involved in the research of education funds are relatively broad. The distribution of the topics (10 or more) that are more concentrated in the current research is

shown in Table 2. Through the preliminary analysis of the research topics, it can be found that in the past 20 years, China's research on education funds has mainly focused on education funds, compulsory education, higher education, education financial system and other issues, as well as on education equity, basic education Rural education is also a research hotspot in this century.

5.2. An Analysis of the Evolution Path of Educational Funds Research

Further analysis of keywords through Timezone View can clearly show the update and interaction of literature, thus forming the evolution path of research in this field (Figure 9).

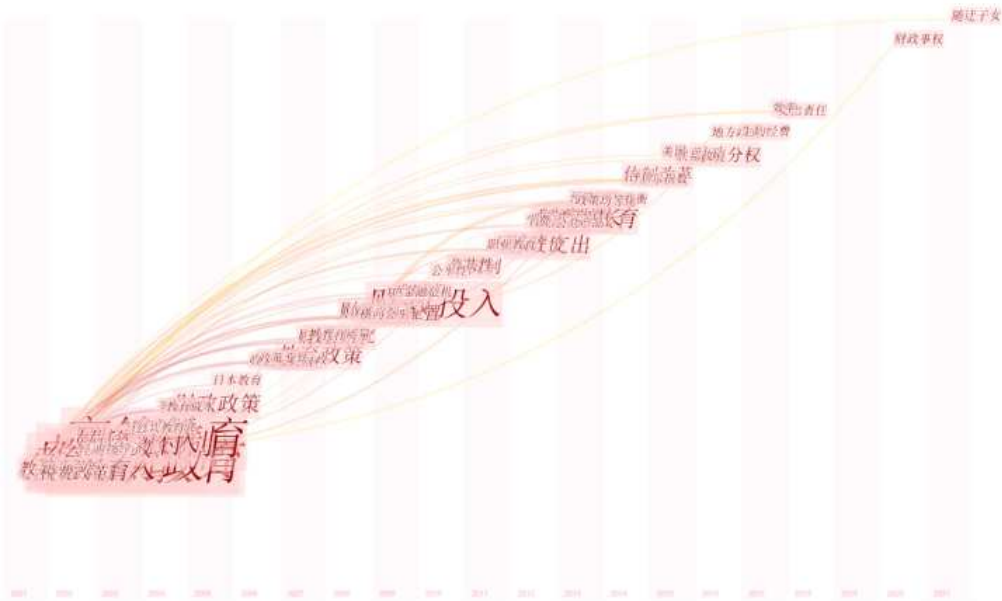


Figure 9. Hotspot Keyword Time Zone View.

Detect the prominence of keywords in Citespce, and set  $f(x) = ae^{-ax}$ ,  $a_1 / a_2 = 2$ ,  $a_i / a_{i-1} = 2$ , the number of states = 2, gamma=0.6, Minmun Duration=2, Burst items found=10. The distribution of the highlighted values of the obtained nodes is shown in Figure 10.

Top 10 Keywords With The Strongest Citation Bursts

Keywords	Year	Strength	Begin	End	2001-2021
Elementary Education	2001	3.52	2001	2003	■■■■■
Rural Education	2001	2.88	2001	2004	■■■■■
Financial System	2001	6.68	2003	2006	■■■■■
Educational Equity	2001	2.59	2007	2009	■■■■■
Financial Input	2001	5.56	2010	2018	■■■■■
Expenditure	2001	3.13	2011	2013	■■■■■
Preschool Education	2001	3.37	2012	2018	■■■■■
Economic Growth	2001	3.12	2012	2014	■■■■■
Education Finance	2001	2.92	2013	2014	■■■■■
Fund Input	2001	3.39	2017	2018	■■■■■

Figure 10. Highlighting knowledge map of key words.

According to the prominence of key words in the field of education funding research in different years in Figure 9 and Figure 10, it can be found that the research on China's education funding from 2001 to 2004 was mainly focused on basic education and rural education. From 2003 to 2006, he mainly focused on the relevant issues of financial system reform, among which the more prominent policy text was the Notice of the State Council on Deepening the Reform of the Rural Compulsory Education Funds Guarantee Mechanism issued in 2005, which proposed to gradually integrate rural compulsory education into the scope of public financial security, and establish a rural compulsory education funds guarantee mechanism with central and local sub projects and proportional sharing. From 2007 to 2009, they mainly focused on the topic of education equity, among which the more prominent policy text was the Notice on the Exemption of Students' tuition and miscellaneous fees from Urban Compulsory Education issued in 2008, which proposed to comprehensively promote free compulsory education. From 2010 to 2018, we will focus on financial input and expenditure, pre-school education, economic growth and other topics. The loosening of the registered residence reform system and the central government's increased investment in education will enable migrant children to enter public schools more equitably.

## 6. Conclusion and Discussion

### 6.1. Deficiencies in the Study of Educational Funds in China

In general, China has made great progress in the research of education funds since the beginning of this century. The number of research papers, especially high-quality research papers, has increased year by year in the vertical direction, the scope of horizontal research has gradually expanded, and the number of cross disciplinary research related to economics, management, statistics, psychology and other disciplines has also increased, but there are still major deficiencies compared with foreign research. On the one hand, there is a lack of original and new theoretical research results [11], and on the other hand, there is no clear research development context. In the late 1970s, especially since the 1990s, western educational finance research has been very active, with research fields expanding and research achievements enriching. Its characteristics are mainly reflected in four aspects: first, emphasis on the macro comparative study of international educational finance [12]; Second, the micro level of school finance in - depth study; Third, the quantitative research on educational finance is more emphasized; Fourth, most research results were completed by economists [13]. At present, China's research has a good reference to the existing achievements abroad [14], but there is still a big gap in forming a unique theoretical system based on the practice of localization. Since the beginning of this century, China has almost no original

theoretical construction of education funding research, which has also become the direction of China's efforts in the field of education funding research.

In terms of research methods, the early domestic research on education funds mainly focused on normative research, focusing on the strategy research following the path of "raising problems, analyzing problems, and solving problems". With the gradual penetration of empirical research methods in the field of humanities and social sciences, the proportion of empirical research in domestic research on education funds has been increasing in recent 10 years, and there is a trend of flooding. Many journals focus too much on mathematical statistics technology in the selection of papers, while ignoring the value of the research topic itself. In addition, in the field of education funding research, there is still a lack of high-quality qualitative research papers, and the use of field research methods is relatively lacking. In terms of research content, there is a trend of over tracking hot issues in domestic research, paying more attention to practical issues and relevant policies, while paying less attention to the originality of theory and multidisciplinary synergy [15].

### 6.2. The Development Direction of China's Educational Funds Research

From the existing research, at present, the research literature on education funds in China is increasing year by year, the academic circles pay more and more attention to education funds, and the practical practice of education funds is also changing with each passing day [16]. In the future, the development direction of China's education funding research is mainly reflected in three aspects: First, it is necessary to carry out education funding research in the thinking pattern of "looking at education from education", and strengthen the interdisciplinary coordination of education funding research. Education itself is not limited to a specific discipline field, so the research on education funds will increasingly tend to "look at education out of education". The research on education funds will be placed under the collaborative framework of management, economics, pedagogy, psychology, sociology, politics and other disciplines [17], and in-depth research on education funds will be conducted from various perspectives. Second, we need to further enrich and optimize the empirical research method paradigm of education funds [18]. In the past 20 years, empirical research methods have been paid more and more attention in the field of education funding research, and have been widely applied. However, many empirical research papers are still lacking in standardization, scientificity, objectivity and reliability. Therefore, it is necessary to further strengthen the awareness of problems in the field of education funding research, pay attention to the support of basic theories, improve the reliability of empirical data, and pay attention to the scientificity and cutting-edge of data analysis methods. Third, we need to further focus on the practice of localization of education funds. The practice of localization in China

provides more and more research materials for the research of education funds, thus providing fertile soil with rich nutrition for the cultivation of the theoretical system of education funds research with Chinese characteristics. This requires the academic research on education funds to be based on the practice of localization of education funds investment, so as to establish an academic city-state of education funds research with Chinese characteristics.

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