**Can Everyone Benefit from Higher Education?**

In the current landscape of higher education (HE), defined here as university education, an increasing global demand is observed, which is putting a strain on national budgets. The university degree has become a perceived gateway to improved job opportunities. This raises a pressing question: can everyone truly benefit from higher education?

Exploring this question involves a deep dive into the financial implications of HE, the potential quality erosion with increased student numbers, the fairness of taxpayer support for future high earners, and strategies to ensure accessibility for gifted students from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The focus of this exploration is China, the world's largest higher education system. This discussion aims to contribute to the ongoing debate on whether access to HE should be universally available or selectively granted, considering the associated costs and benefits.