

The Current Impact of the Double Reduction Policy In Off-campus Training and K12 students Cases

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ABSTRACT

This paper reviews the current impact of the double reduction policy implemented in China, including the impact on K12 students and the off-campus training industry. The paper is a literature review, and the purpose is to illustrate the changes in the learning mode of K12 students and the restrictions that the off-campus training institutions encountered after the double reduction was implemented. There are numerous education enterprises that have reported transitions, layoffs, bankruptcies or shut down their off-campus tutoring service. Moreover, K12 students have returned to the normal school education instead of staying at the training institutions at the most time. Then, the quantity of homework has been adjusted to make students have more time to participate in after-class service, which contributes to their all-round development. The researcher analysed such impact through several statistics, data, surveys and coverages to show a more precise double reduction policy to the education-related readers.

Keywords: China's double reduction policy, Off-campus training, K12 students, School education, After-class service, All-round development.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the past several months, the double reduction policy in China has always been a heated topic, and has a profound impact on K12 students and off-campus training industry. This seems to be a common phenomenon that numerous education enterprises will face layoffs, transitions, or bankruptcies. Moreover, K12 students will also have to adapt to new learning modes. As far as I know, no previous paper has discussed the impact of the double reduction policy on K12 students and the off-campus training institutions. Therefore, this paper investigates what kinds of restrictions did the off-campus training industry encountered, and what are the changes in the learning mode of K12 students. This paper has made several contributions to the field of pedagogy, international education, and education technology educators and scholars to have a clearer awareness of the double reduction policy. Through reviewing and summarizing various information of the impact on the double reduction policy, the researcher aims to demonstrate from two aspects: (1) off-campus training industry; (2) K12 students.

2. OFF-CAMPUS TRAINING INDUSTRY

After the government issued the double reduction policy, some education and training institutions directly announced their dissolution and had completely ceased their operation. In addition, many online training institutions have begun to lay off employees. Under the pressure of double reduction, education and training institutions are under arduous circumstances. For the current education and training institutions, they must act in accordance with the relevant regulations of the country and can no longer do it recklessly. Only by embracing change and following the trend can they have a glimmer of life. Therefore, according to the policy, the restrictions of off-campus training institutions will be divided into qualification restrictions and financing restrictions.

2.1. Qualification Restrictions

The policy specifies that new curriculum-based off-campus tutoring institutions for students in compulsory education will no longer be approved in all places, and existing institutions are uniformly registered as non-profit institutions. The online curriculum-based training

institutions which are previously put on records have been changed to the examination and approval system.

As to the non-curriculum off-campus tutoring institutions, all localities should distinguish the categories among sports, culture, art, science, and technology, clarify the corresponding competent departments, formulate standards respectively, and strictly examine and approve. Seriously investigate and punish off-campus training institutions that do not meet the corresponding qualifications and carry out training without examination and approval.

As the improvement of the policy supervision, vast amounts of small and medium-sized off-campus training institutions are facing dilemmas. After standardized governance, China's off-campus training institutions will eliminate a large number of small and medium-sized institutions with intermingled good and bad. 2014 to Aug. 2021, the total number of education-related enterprises in China has increased from 4 million to 42 million [1]. In the education industry, enterprises with 0-100 million registered capital are the largest, then are the enterprises with 100-200 million registered capital. There is a logic that the lower the registered capital is, the more the enterprises are.

However, after the new double reduction policy was implemented, the education and training industry has been substantially affected, especially the end of the capitalization of K12 subject training, and the pause for capital's enthusiasm for the education and training industry and disorderly competition in the past. Virtually, there is a contradiction between the excessive pursuit, profit-seeking tendency of capital and fairness, public welfare of education [2]. In the first half-year of 2021, the number of investments in China's education industry fell sharply. The number of investments in the first six months is only 7 times, and the investment popularity of K12 fell to the lowest point.

2.2. Financing Restrictions

Curriculum-based training institutions are not allowed to go public for financing, and capitalized operations are strictly prohibited; those who have violated the regulations shall be cleaned up and rectified. On the other hand, listed companies shall not invest in curriculum-based training institutions through stock market financing, and shall not purchase the assets of curriculum-based training institutions by issuing shares or paying cash. Foreign capital shall not control or participate in curriculum-based training institutions through mergers and acquisitions, entrusted operations, franchise chains, and the use of variable interest entities [3].

The new policy acclaim that the relevant departments of the Central Committee, local party committees, and governments at all levels should

strengthen the management of off-campus training advertisements to ensure that mainstream media, new media, public places, various billboards, and online platforms in residential areas do not publish or broadcast off-campus training advertisements [1]. In recent years, many off-campus training institutions have adopted the Internet commercial marketing model, using a large number of funds for advertising and peer bidding. Some off-campus training institutions are marketing regardless of cost, resulting in utilitarian education. In December 2020, the education and learning industry has become the Top1 of Internet advertising, of which K12 accounts for the largest proportion of delivery costs [4]. The business atmosphere in the education industry is too strong, and the anxiety of parents spreads.

With the strengthening of supervision of the education and training industry in China, the stock prices of listed companies in China's education and training industry have been falling. After the new double reduction policy introduced on July 23, 2021, the stock price of New Oriental in the United States fell by -54.22% in a single day, the stock price of TAL fell by -70.76% in one day, NetEase Youdao fell by -42.81% in a single day, and Gaotu fell by -63.26% in a single day. On July 26, 2021, Hong Kong stocks of Excellent Education fell by -42.45% in a single day, and Scholar Education fell by -45.45% in a single day; A-share Doushen Education and ONLY Education closed at the daily limit [5].

Due to the stricter supervision of China's education and training industry, education and training institutions have to face layoffs. In the situation of type, many companies below will be introduced, including TAL, New Oriental, Zuoye Bang, Yuan Fudao, VIPKID, Gaotu, 51Talk, Zhangmen Education, which have also reported layoffs [6]. For example, the original plan of New Oriental was to lay off 4 million people at the end of August, but as of mid-September, fewer than 1 million people had been laid off [7]. Besides, as to the VIPKID, the proportion of layoffs is as high as 50%. The project called Excellent Training by Chinese and foreign teachers (also called "the Double Excellence") has suffered 50% layoffs. Similarly, the project called Enlightenment English and Mathematical Thinking has also received 50% layoffs [8]. Whether it is the reduction of personnel, the optimization of the team, or the adjustment of business, it indicates that China's education and training industry will enter the most painful transition period.

3. K12 STUDENTS

The double reduction policy clearly states the need to improve the management method of the assignment, specifically classify the total number of homework, and enhance the quality of homework design. In addition, it has also mentioned the importance of the after-school

service, expanding the learning space for students and exploiting various interest groups and club activities, which contain science, art, reading, labour, recreation, and sports, etc. Therefore, the impact on primary and middle school students will be focused on school education, after-class service, excessive homework, and the all-round development.

3.1. Return to Normal School Education

It is worth referring to the education reform policy in South Korea. The education equalization policy has been implemented by the authority since the 1970s. However, during the long period of reform, not all governments thoroughly implemented it on development. The proportion of the advocates and opponents is average. The advocates may reckon that such a policy has a positive impact on preventing social polarization based on educational inequality, whereas the opponents criticized that it deprives students of the right to choose education, and artificially narrows the gap between different degrees' students [9]. Virtually, among those frequent arguments, students have become the victims. Although Korea has the highest ranking in some international education tests, Koreans are commonly dissatisfied with the current educational system of schools. It is because Students' interest in learning has declined due to the excessive study, the increasing pressure and dissatisfaction caused by the examination-driven education system, and the loss of skills of teachers related to the prescribed national curriculum [10]. Nonetheless, even if Korean students do not like studying, they still can gain high scores. This may show us that South Korean students lean strongly on external motivation rather than internal motivation. Koreans are prone to believe that there has a close relationship between examination scores and access to power [11]. On the other hand, Korean students who have a fierce desire to study are not only for themselves, but for their parents. Korean parents always inculcate a notion to their children, which is the most authentic success is their children's success [12]. Hence, students' engagement in off-campus training institutions (also called shadow education) has been keeping at a high level. And the essential reasons for them are to prepare for the high-stake examination and to compete for admission to the top universities.

Compared with Korea, Chinese students who attend off-campus training probably do not just desire to gain supplementary help on their curriculum, what they really need is also the competitive edge in admission to selective universities [12]. Since the beginning of the 21st century, China's off-campus training industry has been expanding rapidly, and has gradually formed an integrated scale. In 2018, 32.4% of China's K12 education students participated in extracurricular tutoring, with a per capita tutoring expenditure of

4951.13 yuan and a total expenditure of 3303.94 billion yuan [13]. Whenever school is over, it is normal that K12 students to run around various training institutions. Such an unhealthy custom both increases the academic burden of students, and disturbs the stable development of schools. For many students and parents, the off-campus training industry not only increases the financial burden of families, but makes social inequity more severe.

Since South Korean President Moon Jae-in came to power in 2017, he has emphasized the policy of equalization of education. The core is to abolish those elite education bases to solve the problem of educational injustice [9]. Similarly, China's government aims to let primary and secondary students return to normal school education through the double reduction policy. School education is systematic. It not only focuses on students' acquisition of knowledge, but also emphasizes the dialogue and interaction between teachers and students, the exchange and communication between classmates to improve students' comprehensive literacy and various abilities [14]. Under the environment of school education, such massed learning truly focuses on the long-term development of students themselves.

3.2. Less Burden of Excessive Homework

There is a survey about the distribution of English writing scores in the senior high school entrance examination in a certain region. Among the more than 90 thousand junior high school graduates in a certain area, there were over 20 thousand students who got almost 0 points in the writing test questions with a full score of 15. And more than half (54,290 people) did not score more than half of the full score of this question (7.5 points) [15].

This shows that more than 2 thousand junior high school graduates can't even write a correct English sentence, and more than 5 thousand students cannot express one thing correctly in English. We may speculate through such a kind of phenomenon that their three years of English learning in junior high school, including a lot of exercise training, did not achieve the desired results [15]. This may prove that blindly using high-intensity exercise training has little effect on some students. Therefore, the excessive exercise training may have a huge adverse impact on students, and it is controversial to China's double reduction policy.

To carry out the double reduction policy more efficiently, it is imperative to control the amount of exercise training, seize the opportunity of exercise training according to different learning tasks at different phases, and enhance the investment in learning elements other than exercise training. Only in this way can it be conducive for students to broadening their learning paths and improve the benefits of exercise training.

Although high-intensity training method is suitable for single-subject assault, how to reasonably allocate the learning time of each discipline, make overall planning, and formulate a detailed learning plan may be more important [16]. After all, no matter how energetic the child is, it is impossible to adopt the high-intensity training method in every course. Children who rely too much on such a kind of method usually will form autosuggestion: familiar questions are easy to drive, and strange questions are rejected and afraid. Exercising intensively can make students become "practice makes perfect" through the accumulation of the number of questions and the improvement of proficiency, but it is also easy to gradually weaken students' thinking process [17]. This kind of pedagogy turns reasoning calculus into rote memorization, ignoring important links such as logical analysis and analogy induction, which eventually leads to the emergence of "high scores and low efficiency".

3.3. More Valuable After-class Service

The policy indicates that schools must prove the time and quality of after-class service, making full use of the priority of resources, developing an after-school service implementation plan, to exert after-class service efficiently. After-class learning is an effective supplement to classroom learning. It has strong autonomy and pertinence. It can fully highlight the personality of students and play an immeasurable role in students' study and life [18]. Teachers seize students' after-school learning links, appropriately provide students with the necessary guidance and optimize after-class delay services, which is of great benefit to students' independent learning ability [19].

During the after-class service, teachers will pay more attention to the situation of students' review, give specific guidance to enhance the knowledge understanding in class, and cultivate good learning habits, establish a substantial knowledge base for students [18]. Furthermore, as to those students who have a better degree, teachers can urge students to preview new knowledge, strengthen the awareness of independent learning. Some experts reckon that teaching students how to learn is much more significant than imparting knowledge to students constantly. Hence, teachers will be able to discipline students to find their own learning methods, increasing their thinking ability.

It is worthwhile to mention that the off-campus training institutions are far from comparable to such kinds of values that teachers and schools can convey to students. Compared with the school's after-class service, the off-campus training institutions may exist numerous downsides. Those private institutions are the good and bad are intermingled, and many of them are not qualified. Because there are no corresponding provisions in laws and regulations, the irregular staffing

of institutions is the biggest problem. They can neither guarantee the safety of students, nor give guidance and assistance to students in their studies.

3.4. Contribute to All-round Development

After the double reduction policy was implemented, Hongshan Middle School, Shaanxi province attaches great importance to cultivating students' thinking ability and innovative spirit. In recent years, Hongshan middle school has actively organized students to participate in provincial and municipal science and technology innovation competitions, youth patent applications, and other activities, and has obtained 112 national utility model patents. In 2021, Hongshan Middle School set up a new science and technology room through renovation and expansion, adding 20 new teaching equipment that can demonstrate different scientific principles, aiming to stimulate students' interest in science [20].

In addition, Hongshan Middle School has included paper-cut, folk embroidery, and other intangible cultural heritage in Shaanxi Province in the school-based curriculum, and established 16 student associations such as calligraphy, painting, paper-cut, chorus, and dance [20]. Regular activities have been carried out to help students achieve all-round development and reduce students' learning pressure, which has achieved remarkable results.

Generally, looking at the admission standards of world-famous universities, a comprehensive multi-factor method is also widely used to select students. When selecting students, these universities do not only choose the best grades, but also individuals who have acceptable grades, characteristics, potential, growth, and a greater possibility of success in the future. Things in the world have evolved from simple to complex. Human society has become more and more complicated, and society's requirements for children have also increased. Therefore, it is inadequate for those students who only have good grades. It is also imperative for teachers, schools, and parents to cultivate children's temperament and image, honesty and sense of responsibility, communication ability, dedication and teamwork spirit.

4. CONCLUSION

This paper reviews the current impact of the double reduction policy on off-campus training institutions and K12 students. With regard to off-campus training, it mainly contains qualification restrictions and financing restrictions, which include more strict approval of curriculum-based training institutions and prohibited listing financing for discipline tutoring institutions. With the improvement of the policy supervision, vast amounts of small and medium-sized off-campus training institutions are facing transitions, layoffs, bankruptcies or shut down their off-campus tutoring service. The

stock prices of listed companies in China's education and training industry have been falling to the lowest. In the first half-year of 2021, the number of investments in China's education industry fell sharply in a short time, and the advertising expenditure in the education industry also had the same situation. About the K12 students, the researcher discussed it through four perspectives: the emphasis of normal school education, the readjustment of students' homework, the validity of after-class service, and the expectation of the all-round development.

In light of the comparison with Korean education policy, China's government aims to let primary and secondary students return to normal school education through the double reduction policy, and have repeatedly stressed the significance of it. Then, a survey has been demonstrated that blindly using high-intensity exercise training has little effect on most students, thus the quantity of students' homework would be modified and the assignment form would be optimized. Next, the after-class service is the newest project made by the double reduction policy, which aims to tutor and cultivate students what to learn and how to learn during this period. The final part introduces a case launched by Hongshan middle school, Shaanxi province, where the school, teachers and students were all dedicated to the all-round development. The researcher also emphasized the imperative of the all-round development and illustrated its promising future. Additionally, future research should be devoted to the subsequent development of the off-campus training industry, how do they get out of the dilemma, and the future implementation for K12 students, will K12 students move towards a more brilliant future under the impact of the double reduction policy. These are still to be investigated in the future.

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