



# Exploring the Necessity of the Double Reduction Policy in China

Yizhe Zhang<sup>(✉)</sup>

Dulwich College Beijing, Beijing 101300, China  
angela.zhang23@stu.dulwich.org

**Abstract.** With implementing the Double Reduction Policy, China's education governance system has also undergone profound reform. This paper explores the necessity of the Double Reduction Policy in China from the perspective of students' and parents' current situations, the change of school regulations, and the impact on off-campus institutions. For the objective to achieve a higher quality education system, the government, schools, and students all need to cooperate to make corresponding changes. Following the reform of off-campus institutions, along with the regulation of public school policies, students and parents are becoming much more anxious. Pursuing an achievable and high-quality education is an important goal of this new policy. This paper reviewed twenty articles on Google Scholar to show that the new policy is a crucial reform opportunity for promoting China's educational progression by providing students and parents with a comprehensive and supportive education platform. It enhances the quality of school education and aims to reduce students' academic pressure to achieve diverse education. Therefore, this is crucial for progressing China's socialist education.

**Keywords:** Double Reduction Policy · China · Education reform · Pressure

## 1 Introduction

The pursuit of high teaching quality and an ideal teaching strategy is the goal of every country. Until recently, China has started to implement the Double Reduction Policy to ease the burden of the heavy workload of students and begin to prohibit curriculum-based off-campus tutoring institutions. The Ministry of Education in China had formulated policies and measures almost six times from as early as 2000 to 2015. However, the effect is not significant and efficient. Until July 24, 2021, the General Offices of the CPC Central Committee and The State Council implemented the new policy to effectively reduce K12 students' workload [1]. Due to the excessive homework load and off-campus training load, the government has implemented the Double Reduction Policy in the form of law through coercive means [2]. To approach a deeper understanding of the new policy, this article reviews the existing literature on the Double Reduction Policy. It aims to explore the necessity of the Double Reduction Policy by focusing on the perspectives of students, parents, K12 schools, and training institutions. This research topic has made some progress in recent years, including examining the purpose behind the Double

**Table 1.** Analysis of 19 papers of the necessity of the Double Reduction Policy on students and parents, school, and training institutions

| No. of papers | Context of the necessity of the Double Reduction Policy in China | References |
|---------------|--|------------|
| 6             | The current situations of students and parents                   | [2–7]      |
| 9             | The current situations of schools                                | [1, 8–15]  |
| 5             | The current situations of off-campus training institutions       | [16–20]    |

Reduction Policy and the discovery of some potential difficulties and solutions under the educational reform. However, existing studies have not completely solved all the problems caused by the Double Reduction Policy. For instance, there are some problems such as allocating teachers in the future and the management of educational institutions. This will lead to many social issues, such as teacher unemployment. In this paper, the keywords “China” and “Double Reduction” were used to search and select twenty articles from 2000 to now on Google Scholar.

## 2 The Importance of the Double Reduction Policy

This paper will mainly focus on the Double Reduction Policy’s necessity on public school students, parents, schools, and training institutions. The specific classification of the papers can be seen in Table 1.

### 2.1 The Current Situations of K12 Students and Parents

#### 2.1.1 Students’ Current Situations

In recent years, Chinese primary and secondary school students have been overwhelmed by the heavy academic burden; thus, it has considerably influenced students’ childhood happiness [3]. This latest policy makes profound changes that have taken place in the education field. The Double Reduction Policy can be effectively used to reduce the burden on parents and students to create a relaxed environment for students to exercise and cultivate their physical health. Meanwhile, allowing students to learn knowledge rather than being overwhelmed by books and examination papers.

Primary and secondary school students are faced with a heavy workload and off-campus training burden. It is widely acknowledged that maintaining a healthy body is the most crucial necessity of study. Therefore, there is no doubt that students have struggled to overcome their academic pressure. Students do not only need to complete the compulsory homework set by the school teachers; they also have to attend extra off-campus training activities on the weekend and during the holidays. Many children have taken all K12 courses from primary school to high school from the first grade [2]. In the earlier times, some students who lagged behind did improve their grades through training. However, recently, there has been a trend that every student decides to go training regardless of grades. The new policy demonstrates that the state values young people’s physical and mental health, while it shows the people’s willingness to rectify

the chaos in educational institutions and companies. This is critical for children, parents, schools, and even the country's future development [4]. In addition, since schools provide students with more extra after-school time to stay, they can use the additional time to ask academic-related questions to their teachers and finish the homework completely at school. Thus, students can spend extra time dealing with after-school activities, such as playing sports or playing the piano.

### 2.1.2 Parents' Current Situations

In addition, parents are overloaded with economic and energy pressure. This resulted in educational tragedy and subsequent psychological problems after promulgated the Double Reduction Policy. Contemporary parents had double-facing anxiety about the burden of finances and energy [5]. From the perspective of parents, as parents who know their children best, they should pay special attention to the cultivation of non-intellectual factors such as perseverance, self-control, emotional management, communication, and cooperation skills in the process of family education; on the other hand, they should carefully observe their children in the family performance, timely guide and educate children or give teachers feedback on their children's individual needs, and work with schools and teachers to help children break through bottlenecks in their growth [6].

Due to the fact that parents have to put more effort into taking care of their children's academic progression since the education can't be ignored, such as checking homework by themselves. Unfortunately, there is no denying that not all parents have a solid educated background, hence having the ability to tutor their children. Even if some parents are too busy to check homework every day and treat it as a routine. Consequently, as the minimizing of the off-campus institutions, this new policy has played an essential role in emphasizing the importance of teachers at school and highlighting the conversation between parents and school teachers [7]. Hence, there is no denying that students can behave more positively at school since they realize that they will lose the reliance on the learning out of school. All in all, this policy acts as a helpful tool to strengthen the relationship between parents, teachers, and students. Thus, it certainly improves the quality of school education significantly.

## 2.2 Schools' Current Situations

With the Double Reduction Policy, China's primary and secondary education has begun to adapt to a new environment. Public schools play an essential role in ensuring students' academic performance in the latest stage of school education under the background of reducing the burden of students' workload and off-campus training. For instance, in response to the Double Reduction Policy, measures such as "teacher turnover" and "strict division of key classes" were put forward, which aroused public opinion and attracted wide attention [1]. As for the role of advanced information technology in boosting the balanced development of high-quality teacher resources, some researchers believe that "online volunteer teaching" under the digital world can achieve excellent education to students from other places directly through the online meeting apps without leaving the school [8]. In addition to the changes of teachers, the regulation of homework has also

been influenced as the school assessment acts as the key to measuring a student's performance, including homework and examination grades. Although the imperial examination system has been abolished for more than 110 years in China, the imperial examination history of more than 1,300 years has exerted a profound influence on China, and the cruelty of its competition can still be felt through thousands of years [9]. Before recently, in the exam-oriented education environment. To obtain more comprehensive student 360 degrees appraisal measurements, teachers often assign a large or unlimited amount of homework to students, regardless of students' ability and other subjects' assignments [10]. Since homework was a necessary form of teaching. Teachers tend to assign much homework, thus resulting in students focusing most of their attention on finishing after-school assignments. Under the policy, the form of extracurricular homework has changed correspondingly. In addition to the reduced amount of homework, more homework forms are class-based, regarding the real essence of homework, enhancing students' abilities to absorb and review knowledge. Therefore, the most crucial aim of reducing the number of homework is to improve education efficiency [11]. Therefore, to strengthen the quality and efficiency of school education. This needs further to optimize the evaluation of school teachers' homework. After the Double Reduction Policy, teachers should pay more attention to the way of face-to-face feedback to guide students to complete written school assignments. Moreover, to ensure that teachers pay attention not only to the number of homework but also to the quality of work. Through the in-depth analysis of homework evaluation results, teachers comprehensively analyze students' knowledge systems, learning strategies, and learning attitudes [12]. Consequently, finding the key points to improve students' learning and paying more attention strengthens communication with students and parents. Thus, giving students timely feedback on evaluation results.

Furthermore, personality development is an essential aspect of all-around development. The imbalance of curriculum structure only attaches importance to knowledge courses but neglects literacy courses is one of the most severe issues in the regulation of public school curriculums [13]. In the process of implementing the policy, school education should meet the development needs of primary and secondary school students' various interests and specialties [14]. In addition to knowledge learning, school education should provide educational activities to train students' sports, aesthetic, and creative skills. According to the characteristics and talents of each student, specialized training of their interests and specialties is indeed necessary. Schools should also give students enough relaxing times during weekends and holidays, thus allowing them to have more opportunities to discover and explore their hobbies and talents instead of solely focusing on academic knowledge [15].

### **2.3 Training Institutions' Current Situations**

The problems exposed are also evident in the past two decades of vigorous development of off-campus training institutions. They are highlighted as the uneven quality of education, excessive intensification of education competition, and low level of education supervision [16]. With the strengthening of the new policy in China, numerous off-campus institutions have faced many dilemmas. Existing small and middle-sized off-campus institutions are uniformly registered as non-profit institutions. The policy

promotes the return of education services provided by off-campus training institutions to public welfare [17]. Consequently, these training institutions are not allowed to go public for financial purposes. Regarding the tuition fee of the training institutions in Hainan, the base price of a lesson is only about 25 yuan per class time [18]. Such a low price standard, even though this reflects the non-financial requirements for disciplinary training institutions to some extent; from the perspective of institutional operation, it will be difficult for institutions to pay teachers' salaries, rent, and management expenses according to this pricing standard. Before implementing the policy, the education and learning industry rose to the top one of Internet advertising in December 2020, with K12 accounting for the majority of delivery costs. According to the figure collected recently, about 36.7% of the total number of students in the public school participated in extracurricular tutoring classes [19]. The commercial atmosphere in the education industry is too tense, and parents' anxiety is spreading.

On the contrary, the new requirements for the approval of institutions provide them with arduous circumstances. Those off-campus institutions must follow the regulation precisely without any recklessness since the new policy limits the curriculum-based institutions in mainly two aspects: qualification and financial restrictions. There is supportive evidence that shows that the number of investments in China's education industry declined substantially in the first half of 2021. The number of investments made in the first six months was only seven times that of the previous six months, and K12's investment popularity has plummeted to new lows [20]. This is due to the policy that the government should strengthen the regulation to assure that the off-campus institution shuts down all the advertisements, whether published through media platforms or public places. Undoubtedly, following the policy also implies that China's education and training industry will face the most challenging transition period. Therefore, these institutions must consider the pressure of reform in order to survive in the period of such a crisis.

### 3 Conclusion

All in all, this paper reviews the influence of the Double Reduction Policy in China. With regard to the impact on students and parents, schools, along with the off-campus institutions, the significant attention on education starts a considerable transformation to thrive. Since the reform aims to emphasize and enhance the quality of education at school. Consequently, not only relevant schools and training institutions, even students and parents have to cope with some differences. Students should rely and focus more on the school education since the lack of off-campus support. Parents have to put more effort into their children's homework performance and constant interaction with school teachers. The future progression of China's education has to rely on the contribution from all aspects' involvements. Therefore, the influence on each part has played an essential role in promoting the future education prospect in China.

The improvement and enhancement of the Double Reduction Policy still require further exploration and adaptations. For instance, further studies need to examine more efficient school teaching strategies to achieve the teaching goals effectively. Governments have to consider the future movement of those off-campus institutions. Since the

banning of the K12 institution indicates a significant rate of teachers' unemployment, governments should provide them with a plan or guarantee of their future development. Consequently, scholars should find feasible and appropriate methods to solve these challenges and dilemmas presented with this new policy, and they should be perfected in the future education sector.

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