

# Reunderstanding of Primary and Secondary School Operations under the Background of Double Reduction

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**Abstract:** Burden reduction is a hot and difficult issue in today's education reform. The determination and efforts of national education policy and administration to promote students' burden reduction work are also evident in the eyes. In July 2021, the General Office of the CPC Central Committee and The General Office of the State Council issued the Opinions on Further Reducing the Homework Burden of Students in Compulsory Education and the Burden of Off-campus Training, proposing to "comprehensively reduce the total amount and length of homework and reduce the heavy homework burden of students". Homework problems affect the growth of hundreds of millions of students and the lives of thousands of families. This paper analyzes the problems existing in primary and secondary school homework from the aspects of the quantity, form, content and evaluation of homework, explores the causes, emphasizes the development of students, and seeks countermeasures for homework reform, so as to improve the quality of education and teaching and promote the healthy growth of students

**Keywords:** Burden reduction operation; Reform countermeasures

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## 1. Introduction

In order to comprehensively promote quality education and meet the requirements of the times, China has issued the "Outline of Basic Education Curriculum Reform (Trial)", which clearly sets out specific reform goals. The new curriculum reform has brought significant changes to curriculum design and the learning lives of teachers and students, but the reform in the field of homework is relatively weak. Scholar Chen Ying proposed, "If textbooks and teaching methods are updated, but homework is still traditional, it cannot be said that curriculum reform has been implemented. Whether students can obtain high-quality homework is closely related to the quality of homework management. Only homework management that reflects the spirit of the new curriculum can contribute to the implementation of the goals of the new curriculum."<sup>[1]</sup>

## 2. Literature Review

In ancient China, 'homework' originally referred to the labor or taxation of servants. With the development of social productivity and continuous improvement of production methods, it gradually became used for manual, technical, physical, and mental work. For example, Confucius advocated in his teaching practice the idea of "learning while learning"; Cicero, an educator in ancient Rome, placed greater emphasis on homework. He advocates the practice method, which enhances the eloquence of orators through simulated speeches and practicing writing.

Firstly, homework can guide students to construct the meaning of life. Homework refers to the reproduction of a certain type of work or parallel activity in social life. During the process of completing homework, students need to step out of campus, into nature, into society, and into life, in order to experience the true meaning of life and construct its meaning.

Secondly, homework can promote students to learn how to learn. Homework has the characteristic of independence. The process of students completing homework is a process of continuously refining their understanding of knowledge and reconstructing it, which helps to enhance their metacognitive level and learning efficacy. Homework has the characteristic of openness. During homework activities, students can make full use of various educational resources, which helps to enhance their ability to solve practical problems.

Finally, homework is the link between teachers, students, and students. Homework is an intermediary for dialogue and

communication between teachers and students. Students express their views and demonstrate their thinking processes through homework. Teachers understand students' ideological changes and gain insight into their subtle changes by reviewing homework. The process of students completing homework is a process of learning from each other's strengths and weaknesses, and promoting each other, which helps to cultivate students' sense of responsibility.

### **3. Analysis of the current situation of primary and secondary school operations in China**

In July 2021, the General Office of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council issued the "Opinions on Further Reducing the Homework Burden and Extracurricular Training Burden of Students in Compulsory Education Stage", proposing to "comprehensively reduce the total amount and duration of homework, and alleviate students' excessive homework burden". We urgently need to analyze the problems in primary and secondary school homework, explore the reasons, seek solutions, and promote students' comprehensive development.

Homework is the "running tool" for students on the learning track and the "catalyst" for promoting their comprehensive growth. However, in actual education and teaching, the function and role of homework have narrowed down to consolidating and strengthening knowledge and scores, losing its expected characteristics and functions, and having a serious impact on the achievement of educational goals.

Currently, the main problems in homework for primary and secondary schools are as follows:

#### **3.1 The number is out of control, and the homework is repeated, which increases the burden of students**

Violent homework involves the problem of homework losing control, manifested as a large amount of homework, long completion time, and students being immersed in the ocean of homework all day long. Weston, Osgood, and Key found through their research that the time spent on homework (time being a direct measure of quantity) is linearly correlated with students' academic performance. That is, when the homework time reaches the optimal time, students perform the best, but once it exceeds this time, students' academic performance will decline.<sup>[2]</sup>

#### **3.2 The form is rigid, and too much attention is paid to the uniformity of steps**

Standardized homework refers to the rigid, rigid, and uniform form of homework. Its harm is enormous: a serious lack of targeting and hierarchy can make students with strong abilities unwilling to do it in low-level repetition; Make students with weaker abilities feel helpless due to the difficulty of their homework. Uniform homework not only causes students' boredom and resistance, but also hinders the development of their creative thinking.

#### **3.3 The content is single, obliterating students' interests**

The student world is composed of the "knowledge world" and the "life world". Therefore, homework should balance the content of both worlds and not neglect one. Non life oriented homework refers to content that is limited to the "knowledge world", making it difficult to reflect the meaning and value of life, and causing students to lose a strong interest in learning.<sup>[3]</sup>

#### **3.4 The evaluation is simple and affects the operation effect**

Simple grading homework refers to the singularity of the evaluation processing subject, form, and content of homework, which is the alienation of homework in the evaluation dimension. The alienation in the dimension of homework evaluation is due to external reasons, such as excessive class size and excessive homework grading. Simple grading homework only focuses on the "doing" of students' homework, without emphasizing the evaluation and feedback of completion quality. The alienation of homework in the evaluation dimension has caused homework to lose its role in communication, feedback, and promoting student development.

### **4. Measures and prospects of operational reform**

The implementation of the new round of curriculum reform emphasizes reducing students' burden and promoting homework reform. Based on the phased characteristics of homework research in primary and secondary schools in China, we should explore the innovation and development of homework research from the implementation of the "double reduction" work, design new homework that conforms to the outline, cultivate students' core literacy, and promote their comprehensive development.

#### **4.1 Change the concept and practice the new concept of work**

Professor Li Xueshu proposed a homework view from epistemology to existentialism in the new direction of homework reform in primary and secondary schools. He believes that based on the perspective of existentialism, homework is not only a "technical construction" process to achieve cognitive goals, but also a "poetic dwelling" process for the development and creation of students' life meaning.<sup>[4]</sup> Professor Zhang Jizhou combines contemporary knowledge and learning perspectives to propose a diversified value concept for homework, emphasizing the exploration and experiential learning of knowledge, highlighting the intrinsic value of

knowledge, and focusing on the comprehensive development and life value of individuals. The ultimate goal of homework is the freedom, harmony, and comprehensive development of students' physical and mental health.<sup>[5]</sup>

#### **4.2 Learn from others, change traditional forms, and advocate “new” assignments**

Many scholars support reducing students' workload according to teaching objectives. In terms of homework evaluation, Harris Cooper believes that teachers' feedback on homework is primarily about guiding students to correct errors and improve accuracy; Furthermore, grading students' homework; Secondly, provide criticism or praise based on whether the homework has been completed and correctly done; Finally, the teacher provides some rewards based on the homework situation, and these four methods can be used interchangeably depending on the context<sup>[6-9]</sup>.

#### **4.3 Pay attention to the tracking of operation status and promote operation reform in a long-term way**

The current “double reduction” work is being vigorously promoted and implemented nationwide, and has shown initial results, but the hidden incentives that lead to heavy homework burdens for primary and secondary school students still exist. Therefore, researchers can conduct tracking surveys from school management, teacher implementation, parent feedback, and other aspects, focusing on the improvement level of homework burden issues, implementation issues of homework work promotion, etc., to objectively and systematically investigate the implementation of policies.

### **5. Conclusion**

In short, homework reform should be student-centered, and homework should become a process for students to shape themselves and develop into “complete individuals”. Allowing students to enjoy the pleasure of seeking knowledge through homework activities is not only necessary to ensure their healthy growth, but also to enhance the aesthetic quality of life and professional interest of teachers. It is also an inevitable requirement for the comprehensive implementation of basic education curriculum reform and the promotion of quality education

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