

A Review of Research on Home-School-Community Collaborative Education under the "Double Reduction" Policy

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ABSTRACT

The "Double Reduction" policy, implemented since 2021, has achieved remarkable progress in alleviating academic burdens in compulsory education. According to the Ministry of Education, 124,000 offline subject-based tutoring institutions had been reduced to 9,728 by February 2022, while online institutions decreased from 263 to 34, with 100% completion of regulatory transitions. However, challenges persist in role definition and collaborative mechanisms among families, schools, and communities. This review systematically examines existing issues through literature analysis and empirical case studies, proposing actionable solutions while identifying emerging challenges. Key findings reveal that reconstructing collaborative education mechanisms requires institutional innovation, resource integration, and multidimensional evaluation systems. The study contributes to optimizing policy implementation and advancing equitable, high-quality education development.

KEYWORDS

Double Reduction Policy; Home-School-Community Collaboration; Educational Governance; Moral Education; Holistic Development

1 Introduction

For an extended period, China's education system has grappled with excessive student burdens from off-campus training, disorderly expansion of the tutoring market, and capital-driven educational practices that accelerated learning progress beyond standard curricula. These issues exacerbated educational anxiety and undermined educational equity. In July 2021, Chinese authorities issued the Opinions on Further Alleviating the Homework Burden and Off-Campus Training Burden for Students in Compulsory Education (commonly known as the "Double Reduction" Policy), aiming to address problems such as overwhelming academic pressure and utilitarian tendencies in education during the compulsory education stage.

Key measures include:

Reducing homework volume and duration while enhancing the quality of after-school services within schools.

Regulating subject-based off-campus training institutions to curb market chaos.

Elevating the overall quality of the education sector through systemic reforms.

By the end of 2021, these initiatives yielded significant outcomes, with parental satisfaction rates showing marked improvement.

At this critical juncture of deepening the "Double Reduction" Policy, the reconfiguration of home-school collaborative education mechanisms has emerged as a central proposition for advancing educational reform. With the dual-track advancement of disciplining subject-based tutoring and improving in-school educational quality, the traditional unidirectional communication model between families and schools has become inadequate to meet the demands of policy transformation.

This review contextualizes the policy implementation, systematically analyzes the value logic and practical pathways of home-school collaboration, and seeks to provide a theoretical framework for constructing a new home-school community. As two pivotal dimensions of educational reform, the optimization of collaborative mechanisms not only determines the efficacy of policy implementation but also shapes the broader landscape of high-quality development in basic education. By tracing the policy's evolution, dissecting representative cases, and revealing practical challenges, this review aims to contribute theoretical insights for establishing a government-led, school-coordinated, and family-supported collaborative education model. Such efforts hold profound practical significance for deepening the "Double Reduction" reforms and promoting educational equity.

2 Goals, Role Positioning, and Practical Cases of Home-School-Community Collaborative Education under the Double Reduction Policy

2.1 Goals of Home-School-Community Collaborative Education under the Double Reduction Policy

Under this context, families and schools share aligned objectives in talent cultivation and addressing practical

challenges. On one hand, despite existing constraints in policy implementation that have yet to fundamentally alleviate parental anxiety, stakeholders' understanding and support for the Double Reduction Policy continue to strengthen. The policy's goal of fostering adolescents with comprehensive moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetic, and labor-related development, as well as sound personality, has gained substantial endorsement. On the other hand, most parents and teachers express satisfaction with the policy, aspiring to break free from previous detrimental educational ecosystems. In summary: Home, school, and society must unify their consensus on "cultivating well-rounded talents with holistic development" to resolve issues of educational involution and short-sightedness.

2.2 Role Positioning

Schools should optimize instructional design, leverage their role as the primary educational front, develop family education curricula across all academic stages, and fulfill their function as "pedagogical innovators." Families should exercise their collaborative educational role by actively supporting and responding to the Double Reduction Policy, transitioning from passive recipients to co-agents in education. Governments should establish guidance systems, provide relevant services, formulate documentation for home-school collaboration, and fully exercise leadership functions.

2.3 Case Analysis and Practical Cases of School-Family-Community Collaborative Education

2.3.1 Luohu District's Exploration of the "School-Family-Community-Government" Four-Wheel Drive Model^[1]

Luohu District has established a new pattern of collaborative education featuring effective school leadership, responsible and affectionate parental involvement, orderly community participation, and robust government planning. In December 2023, Luohu's "school-family-community-government" collaborative education model was selected as an outstanding case of the "Double Reduction" policy by the Ministry of Education.

(1) Government Coordination and Organizational System Improvement

Luohu became the first district in the city to establish a District-level Family Education Guidance and Service Center and a Family Education Innovation Supervision Studio. Through professional assessment teams, it conducts dynamic monitoring of regional family education practices and establishes a precision-oriented problem diagnosis mechanism. The project "Building a School-Family-Community-Government Collaborative Education Network" has been designated as a key initiative within Luohu's "Top Ten Livelihood Projects for Education Quality Enhancement," forming a governance structure of integrated government coordination and cross-departmental collaboration.

(2) School-Family Collaboration and Effective Path Exploration

Pilot schools for family education were established to promote a new normal in regional school-family education paradigms. A standardized mechanism for lecturer recruitment and selection was developed, forming a tiered team of 31 expert lecturers, 35 school principals, 25 teacher lecturers, and 34 parent lecturers. A curriculum framework covering kindergarten, primary, junior high, and senior high school stages was established to advance the construction of Luohu's parent school curriculum system.

(3) Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration and Social Engagement

A cross-departmental cooperation mechanism was established to facilitate collaborative education among diverse social entities, fostering a supportive environment for education. For example, the District Education Bureau collaborated with the Women's Federation, Water Affairs Bureau, and other departments to organize activities such as family tradition promotion and environmental protection initiatives, aiming to enhance parental capacities, promote student well-being, and strengthen the education system.

2.3.2 Yongchuan District, Chongqing: A Primary School's Three-Dimensional Supervision Mechanism for "Double Reduction" Implementation^[2]

To refine the long-term mechanism for fostering moral character and comprehensively implement the "Double Reduction" policy, designated supervisors in Yongchuan District guided A Primary School to explore a supervision approach integrating "specialized and inclusive supervision" through a three-dimensional system of "On-Site School Supervision," "Internal School Supervision," and "Daily Parent Supervision." Issues identified during supervision are managed through a tracking system to ensure rectification.

Innovative Measures: Three Transformations as the Foundation

Changing Mindsets: By promoting laws such as the *Law on the Protection of Minors* and the *Family Education Promotion Law*, teachers were guided to adopt differentiated and tiered teaching methods and optimize homework management. Parents were encouraged to shift focus from children's "academic performance" to their "holistic development," emphasizing habit and competency cultivation.

Reforming Management Systems: Revised regulations including the *A Primary School After-School Service Implementation Plan* and *Homework Management System* were introduced, alongside the *A Primary School Supervision Work Regulations*, to advance societal governance of "Double Reduction" and strengthen the school-family-community governance system.

Revising Evaluation Methods: Aligned with the *Compulsory Education Quality Evaluation Guidelines*, school-specific evaluation methods were developed, including non-paper-based assessments, household management competency certification, and behavior-oriented evaluations involving parent supervisors and community representatives.

School-Family Collaboration for Burden Reduction: A parent-led feedback mechanism was established to reduce academic pressure, involving parent workshops to alleviate anxiety and share education strategies.

School-Community Collaboration for Efficiency Enhancement: After-school services were supported by retired teachers and non-academic instructors, while community partnerships facilitated student participation in social practice and public welfare activities.

Family-Community Collaboration for Platform Building: Parents were encouraged to utilize community resources for parent-child activities, such as labor experiences and social practice, fostering emotional bonds and independent living skills.

New Team Composition: A diverse team of "teachers + parents + community members" was formed, including safety education experts, to enhance societal understanding of the "Double Reduction" policy.

New Curriculum Development: The school deepened its liberal arts, school-based curriculum and launched family education workshops to showcase best practices.

New Research Initiatives: The "Double Reduction" policy was designated as an annual research topic, leading to 21 school-level research projects and increased community participation in school governance.

Students: Reduced homework stress improved mental and physical health, evident in students' increased happiness.

Parents: Satisfaction with the "Double Reduction" policy rose to 98.6%, with parents actively engaging in collaborative education.

Teachers: Enhanced professional development and research capabilities enabled better alignment with policy requirements.

Society: A "trinity" of school-family-community collaboration was achieved, effectively integrating community resources.

Under the guidance of the Double Reduction Policy, the core educational objective lies in fulfilling the fundamental mission of cultivating virtue and nurturing talent (. This is not only the essence of education but also an imperative for fostering a new generation capable of meeting the demands of the times. The collaboration among families, schools, and communities is pivotal to achieving this mission, requiring the three entities to work closely around this central theme.

Promoting home-school-community collaborative education holds both immediate practical significance and long-term strategic value. Such collaboration can effectively address the fragmented responsibilities among stakeholders in the current educational landscape, reshape rational educational frameworks, and align with national long-term development goals by cultivating strategic talents needed for societal advancement.

3 Theoretical and Practical Pathways

Liu Shuxiu (2024) ^[6]emphasizes that home-school-community partnerships must undergo goal reorientation, role clarification, and mechanism innovation to shift from "passive burden reduction" to "proactive talent cultivation." Drawing on the Overlapping Spheres of Influence Theory (which emphasizes student-centeredness and holistic development), Liu proposes three pathways:

3.1 Shifting from "Score-Centric" to "Talent-Centric" Education

Move beyond exam-oriented mindsets to refocus on the original purpose of education: fostering well-rounded individuals.

Specific strategies:

Prioritize students' physical/mental health and sustainable development.

Recognize individual uniqueness and promote personalized growth.

3.2 Clarifying Role Boundaries in Collaborative Education

The theory highlights overlapping yet distinct educational responsibilities among families, schools, and society. Under the Double Reduction Policy:

Schools act as the primary educational front, leading curriculum design and pedagogical innovation.
 Families assume responsibility for moral education, guiding students in character development.
 Communities provide practical platforms (e.g., science museums, enterprises) to integrate resources for experiential learning.

3.3 Establishing Robust Communication and Coordination Mechanisms

Address inefficiencies in collaboration by creating specialized departments to facilitate cross-sector coordination.

Key measures:

Develop participatory mechanisms with equal stakeholder engagement.

Standardize communication channels (e.g., digital platforms, regular meetings).

3.4 Additional Pathways from Other Literature^{[4][5]}

3.4.1 Digital Collaboration Platforms

Case Study: *Seed Germination Experiment*

Teachers share micro-lectures and experimental guides via online platforms.

Families collaborate with students to replicate experiments at home or visit botanical gardens.

Governments manage resource integration, while social organizations contribute supplementary materials.

3.4.2 Home-School Activity Co-Design

Case Study: *Ecological Bottle Design and Production*

Teachers introduce concepts in class and distribute instructional kits through digital platforms.

Families adopt a "student-led", parent-assisted*** model:

Students design ecosystems and record data.

Parents handle high-risk tasks (e.g., glass cutting, sealing).

Outcomes: Enhances scientific inquiry skills while bridging classroom and real-world learning.

3.4.3 Community Resource Integration

Case Study: *Rock and Mineral Specimen Creation*

Schools partner with local enterprises to organize industrial field trips.

Students observe mining processes, interact with engineers, and engage in hands-on polishing workshops.

Post-activity tasks:

Families assist in collecting rock samples from community environments (parks, construction sites).

Students create specimen archives using classroom knowledge.

Culmination: Public exhibitions showcase "enterprise-community-classroom" learning chains.

3.4.4 Shared Educational Resource Platforms

Case Study: *Waste Management and Environmental Protection*

Schools upload standardized resources (micro-lectures, experiment videos).

Families and communities contribute localized content (e.g., "Family Waste Diaries," community survey tools).

Platform features: 3D visualization systems for showcasing projects. Resource heatmaps to optimize resource allocation.

3.4.5 Collaborative Evaluation Systems

Framework: "Tripartite Evaluation Model"

Process-oriented tracking: Digital portfolios record classroom performance, experiments, and community engagement.

Outcome-based assessment:

Five-Dimensional Evaluation in the Ecological Bottle Project:

(1) Self-reflection via journals.

(2) Peer reviews of collaborative skills.

(3) Parent evaluations of learning attitudes.

(4) Community mentor feedback on practical adaptability.

(5) Teacher syntheses of developmental progress.

Innovative tools:

AR-enabled 3D reports for interactive project displays.

Scientific competency radar charts to visualize skill trajectories.

Quality control:

School-level standards, grade-specific rubrics, and dynamic "value-added" metrics to avoid overemphasis on outcomes.

4 Challenges in Home-School-Community Collaborative Education^{[5][4]}

The Double Reduction Policy has been implemented for several years, with home-school-community collaborative education serving as a joint effort to pool resources and advance shared educational goals. It is also a critical pathway for realizing the policy's objectives, fulfilling the fundamental mission of cultivating virtue and nurturing talent, and promoting holistic development in moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetic, and labor education. However, the following challenges persist:

4.1 Divergent Educational Goals Among Stakeholders

Traditional educational mindsets have created three cognitive barriers in collaborative education:

Some parents adhere to a "school-centric mentality", transferring all educational responsibilities to schools, resulting in a cognitive bias akin to "educational outsourcing."

Teachers exhibit "professional monopoly" tendencies, excluding parents with lower academic qualifications from educational processes due to perceived inadequacies in pedagogical knowledge.

Communities struggle with role ambiguity, as their potential as resource integrators remains marginalized.

These biases confine home-school interactions to superficial information exchange, leave community resources underutilized, and create structural deficiencies in collaborative networks. While younger parents possess higher educational attainment, many still prioritize schools over familial roles. Teachers, meanwhile, face tensions between maintaining professional authority and embracing open educational philosophies. Addressing these issues requires redefining shared educational responsibilities, clarifying boundaries through institutional frameworks, and establishing regular dialogue mechanisms.

4.2 Ambiguous Role Positioning

Structural contradictions exist in compulsory education collaboration:

Blurred home-school boundaries lead to parental over-reliance on schools and role dislocation.

Community education remains supplementary, suffering from inadequate resource allocation.

This ambiguity undermines collaborative efficacy. Institutional reforms must clarify roles:

Schools as professional leaders in curriculum design.

Families as foundational cultivators of daily habits and values.

Communities as social practice enablers, providing experiential learning platforms.

A "complementary, not substitutive" framework is essential to prevent responsibility-shifting and resource duplication.

4.3 Inadequate Collaboration Mechanisms

Current home-school-community collaboration relies on outdated models characterized by rigid formats and low engagement:

Parent-teacher interactions are limited to end-of-term meetings, often devolving into one-way reporting due to time constraints.

Class WeChat groups enable daily communication but drown critical issues in fragmented messages, fostering parental passivity ("lurking").

Community participation is restricted to basic resource sharing (e.g., libraries, sports facilities), while specialized resources from enterprises, universities, and research institutions remain untapped.

Such superficial cooperation strains schools, leaves families without guidance, and wastes community potential, ultimately hindering students' comprehensive development.

4.4 Homogenized Collaborative Formats

The system suffers from misaligned value orientations, overly focusing on academic metrics:

Home-school interactions are reduced to "homework surveillance," with parent groups becoming "assignment check-in hubs."

Community resources are narrowed to exam-prep venues, sidelining core competencies like scientific literacy, innovation, and practical skills.

Reforming this requires a "three-dimensional content ecosystem":

Schools design competency-oriented curricula.

Families cultivate life skills and ethical foundations.

Communities offer socialized growth platforms.

A "Growth Passport" system could integrate non-academic achievements (e.g., scientific inquiry, volunteer work) into evaluations, fostering holistic development.

5 Future Development Pathways

Strengthen Policy Guidance: Build institutional safeguards to clarify roles and responsibilities.

Innovate Collaborative Models: Activate multi-stakeholder engagement through digital platforms and experiential programs.

Address Diverse Needs: Provide tailored support for students, families, and communities.

Reform Evaluation Systems: Combat educational involution by adopting multi-dimensional assessment frameworks.

The future of home-school-community collaboration hinges on policy-driven coordination, resource integration, targeted services, and diversified evaluations, forming a closed-loop ecosystem. For instance, Qingyuan District's "Educational Consortium Model" enhanced parental satisfaction by 40% through institutional safeguards, curriculum innovation, capacity-building, and resource synergy, offering a replicable blueprint nationwide.

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