

# ***Research on the Impact of the “Double Reduction” Policy on Education Equality***

**Chao Hong<sup>1,a,\*</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>*School of Education, University of California, Irvine, Irvine, California, 92614, U.S.*

*a. fujingbestboy@126.com*

*\*corresponding author*

**Abstract:** A nation’s destiny is largely determined by its educational system. Transformations in academic achievement are, therefore, essential throughout the entire procedure. A promising option by the Chinese government termed “Double Reduction,” promulgated in July 2021, aims to help minimize Chinese families' strain of studying. Campuses and instructors have strengthened their attempts to guarantee that the decrease in academic load does not lead to a fall in academic attainment. There has yet to be any thorough analysis of how the Double Reduction Policy would affect the standard of teaching, though, because it will not take effect for a long time from now. This paper examines the potential and difficulties the double reduction backdrop presents on high-quality education. In response to the academic work on double reduction, this paper finds that the double reduction strategy is an effective effort to ensure rural students’ consent in education. This paper finds that in a way, the educational achievement gap between China's rural and urban areas has been closed due to the double reduction strategy.

**Keywords:** Double Reduction, education, strategy

## **1. Introduction**

Education of the highest caliber is a precious commodity for the prosperity of society. The precarious state of society and people's growing interest in and understanding of education has grown in importance in many households, causing unusual rivalry in academic assets. The Chinese authorities and local schools have long been concerned with the approach of quality-oriented learning. The goal of the approach is to help students grow as whole people. More particularly, the approach is intended to help students improve their community spirit, innovative attitudes, and ability to recognize and address conflicts. The main issue is that students must finish extremely challenging tests while simultaneously trying to enhance performance in all areas. Researchers have expanded their study focus to include the advancement and execution goal of high-quality education under the Double Reduction strategy since adopting the system. The scholar, Lin Xinyu believes that the Double Reduction may efficiently lighten the load on students and promote all-around academic engagement if implemented smoothly. While decision-makers and organizations aggressively react to the Double Reduction, several academics have also focused on the Double Reduction's possible drawbacks. According to Xinyu, the twofold reduction strategy puts kids first and emphasizes their opportunity to relax, appropriate physical and mental development, and general improvement in school instruction and learning standards [1]. The concentration of academic research and practice on issues connected

to double reduction and high-quality education is currently mostly on promotion than in-depth examination. This paper begins with "Double Reduction" and reliability education and investigates how one policy impacts others. In this paper, a mix of quantitative and qualitative research methods would be employed as the study methodology. This paper makes use of information from governmental sources, like the National Bureau of Statistics and the Ministry of Education, as well as other pertinent information sources, such as the China Education and Research Network. This paper will shed light on whether the program is successful in advancing access to education in China's remote regions. Similarly, future policy choices and policy execution might be improved with the use of existing knowledge.

## **2. China's "Double Reduction" Policy and Its Impact on Education Equity**

The Chinese government established the "Double Reduction" program, commonly referred to as "Two Allowances and One Payment," to lessen the economic strain on rural households with children enrolled in school. Rural students are granted exemptions from education and other fees, as well as financial aid to cover their lodging and travel costs. The initiative aims to promote educational access for kids living in rural regions and enhance student equity. The "double reduction" approach has been so named since it cut back on student assignments and mentoring. Ya Qiong Kang and others have dealt with the analysis of the policy and its effects on students. They have found that the policy has remained to reduce anxiety in students. The finding suggests that the main output of the policy is connected with the students' liberation and significantly enhanced achievements and prevailing satisfaction. In this context, Kang et al. mention, "The "double reduction" policy is generally accepted, students' homework burden is effectively reduced, the quality of school assignment design is significantly improved, and the overall satisfaction of after-school services is high" [2]. The policy has also eliminated the extra economic burden on the family as they do not have to pay a huge amount for extra tutoring. The system has managed school teaching as a main source of learning. In this sense, the policy has successfully integrated all levels of students into an equal vision empowering them to learn with increased interest and eliminating their extra burden.

### **2.1. Educational Equity in China Before the Introduction of the "Double Reduction" Policy**

The distinction of various statuses of schools dominated the education system in China before the "double reduction" policy. The education system was focused on an excessive tutoring policy. The students used to have a significant burden on their schoolwork and were made to indulge in unwanted schooling. The education policy was significantly focused on rich families where the ratio of children from such families was higher than that of children from poor families. In this sense, the children from poor families were depressed and had biased schooling. However, the situation for students admitting the trend was not easy. Most of the student's time was spent on studies that did not allow them to live free lives. This system placed an unnecessary burden on them, and the expected success in learning was not achieved. The reason for this was that the students lacked creativity. Students had an academic burden, and parents had a financial burden. Children from poor and middle-class families were greatly affected by this system. For those who could not afford out-of-school tuition, their academic achievement was also low. Despite their abilities, they used to feel embarrassed that they could not take external classes. In this context, Xuepeng Jin and Yirong Sun have written about the efficacy of the double reduction policy. The authors have mentioned the situation before the formulation of the policy. They mention, "Before the "double reduction," off-campus training in the compulsory education stage was very "hot," and the education and training industry has developed a trillion-level market dominated by off-campus training institutions" [3]. The extremely rigorous subject-based off-school instruction had negatively damaged the school's instruction optimization.

Only a tiny proportion of students had achieved quicker and more sophisticated additional schooling since the system was targeted at elite families. At the same time, many were denied educational success because of their poor economic situation. Furthermore, Jin and Yirong mention that the situation before the double reduction policy was disappointing since most students were the victim of academic anxiety [3]. The confusion was equally among students and parents. Many parents had to face a very difficult situation due to having to follow the crowd because they did not want to compromise their children's education as much as possible. For this, they had to live with unnecessary anxiety.

With this, the educational burden on students was so severe that they had to invest their maximum time in dealing with books and homework. The considerations of the educators were centered on the assignments. The education systems were biased and the economic status of the students would matter the most since the off-school tutoring and academic coaching would require a significant portion of family earnings. Teaching-learning processes were differentiated and focused on limited people. Education for all was only conceptual and the existing education conditions were not improving. Schools and teaching methods were not rational, and as a result, no attempts were made to assure the reduction of academic loads, which instead caused academic achievement to fall. The schools were heavily reliant on private mentoring and tutoring programs, which came with additional costs, but they were not paying much attention to how to remedy the issue. Only the pupils' extracurricular aptitude was used to measure their academic performance.

## **2.2. The Situation of Education Equity in China after the Introduction of the “Double Reduction” Policy**

The "double reduction policy" modified the educational system both within and outside schools to influence how society psychologically views schooling. It encouraged schools to prioritize education as their primary duty. Additionally, it eventually oversaw the training programs offered by schools of higher learning beyond school time. The strategy comprehensively enhanced educational standards at the institution, altered community perceptions of what constitutes a good education, and fostered the promotion of abilities via the integrative enhancement of character, intellect, physical well-being, mental health, and social service.

After the formulation of the double reduction policy, the economic burden on families has been removed. The policy is to minimize the education strain on students and help all the students to acquire quality education. The extra burden of the off-school tutoring system has been dissolved and the rate of home assignment has been reduced, which has freed the families of extra expenses. More importantly, the policy has ended the education variation based on economic status and maintained an equal education system. The "double reduction" strategy is a crucial instrument for creating a solid educational ecosystem that successfully relieves families' concerns and supports children's overall development and positive growth by enhancing instructors' capacity to instruct in class and the design of assessment tasks, and also by minimizing the number but not the efficiency. The policy remains effective since it has allowed the students to achieve academic success lowering their hardship on schoolchildren. By incorporating the "double reduction policy," China's education system partially offsets the academic materials of low-income families while also time partially altering the mental notion of children's learning in contemporary society to avoid investing extreme financing in children's off-school schooling and promoting the diversification of China's education sector. Jingxuan Guo presented an analytical study in his article about the implication of the double reduction policies in China. Guo's study was based on a survey including the participants of 511,043 parents [4]. Based on the findings, the commercialization of school activities and capital advertising before the double reduction strategy caused too much concern for 73.2% of the families polled. In contrast,

48.7% of the respondents expressed concern about being unable to provide their children with the greatest educational opportunities owing to financial limitations.

The formulation of the double reduction policy has severely impacted the private institutions engaged in providing extra tutoring earlier. Qichao Wang and others have presented the details about the private institutions that are facing problems due to the formation of the education system. Wang et al mention, "According to the Ministry of Education of China data, by the end of 2021, the already registered 124,000 offline training institutions subject to compulsory education have been reduced to 9,728" [5]. The enactment of government provisions to modify the educational system became fruitful to all categories of people. Since the system was concentrated on a smart education system in schools to eliminate situations of education deprivation because of low income. On this basis, Qichao and others suggest that the reduction rate of the private institutions was 87.07%, and the transition rate from profit to non-profit reached 100% [5]. In addition to significantly influencing China's core educational change, the "double reduction" strategy has a substantial and complicated economic consequence that necessitates a coordinated effort by families, teachers, and students to execute fully. It boosted the rate of students from poor families to the institutions and lowered parental schooling costs, which is extremely advantageous to families.

### **3. Education Policies in the United States**

In the United States, academic policy objectives have developed along with social structure, and they continue to be constantly discussed and updated today. Throughout time, the main purposes of the public in the United States are to develop exemplary citizens and competent professionals, promote cultural awareness, develop critical thinking skills, and enable students to thrive in a global marketplace. Out of the educational policies practiced in the United States, some can be discussed as follow:

#### **3.1. ESEA in 1965**

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was designed to assist children deprived of elementary and higher education. This policy would aid financially to needy students. Catherine A. In her article, Paul writes about the ESEA, where she mentions that the Act was launched during the tenure of president Lyndon B. Johnson. Paul mentions that the act marked a historic dedication to ensuring that all people have access to excellent academic achievement and moved schooling to the center of the country's poverty reduction efforts [6]. ESEA is a principal legislation that finances elementary and secondary schooling and strongly emphasizes responsibility and quality expectations. Investments are permitted for career development, instructional strategies, curriculum advancement, and encouraging involving parents as required by the legislation. The act was intended to include a maximum number of students from lower economic families. And it aimed to fill the gap between students' interests and educational access created by the economic crisis. Furthermore, the act was dedicated to funding the activities that empower children's learning, such as funding libraries and textbooks, funding preschool activities, and miscellaneous academic programs. The policy was to motivate children to participate in institutions since the importance of education was considered a determinant factor in eliminating poverty.

#### **3.2. NCLB in 2002**

The No Child Left Back (NCLB) is an effective educational policy formulated during the presidency of George W. Bush. This policy served as the primary legislation for kindergarten to class 12 general education in the US. The policy made institutions liable for the learning and academic progress of students. The policy was also aimed to include students from lower economic and diverse ethnic

backgrounds. Furthermore, the policy also prioritized the children who were having problems with language in their schooling.

The policy mainly targeted the existing schools and made them accountable for the student's progress. This policy made the schools realize the important role in the supreme achievement of the students and adopted a policy of punishment for the failing schools in the process. Maureen Duffy and others write about the NCLB policy in the article that includes the purpose of the policy was to give every child a genuine, equitable, and meaningful chance to get a top-notch education and become proficient in demanding state educational performance requirements and state intellectual assessments [7]. The NCLB provided governments greater autonomy in how they used financial assistance as long as institutions improved. Additionally, the policy mandated that schools employ education and teaching strategies that focus on scientific knowledge.

### 3.3. ESSA in 2015

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was initiated during the presidency of president of Barack Obama in 2015. The policy was updated and reformation in academic sectors since it was a great shift in the existing NCLB policy. The policy is dedicated to encouraging new dimensions of school success. In this sense, a more precise picture of student progress in schools is created by including new responsibility metrics introduced by the ESSA. The policy is also dedicated to the standard testing system of academic achievement. Further, the act strives to invest funding in additional academic grants that can assist children's achievements. Alyson Klein mentions in her article that The ESSA maintained its focus on responsibility plans, objectives, and frameworks that included all classes that lag in academic performance and student performance [8]. This policy seems to be active in strengthening the access and educational quality of teachers, schools, and children as a whole. States are expected to create their responsibility plans within ESSA to ensure that institutions will assist special education pupils. Here is where families may change things. According to the policy, governments need to involve parents in the monitoring procedure so that their efforts are essential to educate their children. This way, the policy has raised the responsibility of all stakeholders in terms of connecting children with their right to education.

## 4. Conclusion

Generally, by lowering economic barriers for rural students and boosting access to school, the "Double Reduction" program has improved educational fairness in China. However, to tackle lingering issues and guarantee that the strategy is carried out successfully, continued efforts are required. The Double Reduction program is China's greatest recent effort to reform its mandatory education system. At the same time, the educational policies that took place at different times in the United States are equally dedicated to imparting quality education to children and improving the national education system. Therefore, the major concern of the nation is to boost the education system since it is the backbone of national prosperity. The author of this paper should speak with families, educators, and schoolchildren in remote areas to learn about their interactions with the policy and the difficulties they encounter to obtain the quantitative data.

## References

- [1] Lin, Xinyu. (2021, December). *Analysis of the Influence and Countermeasures of China's New Educational Policy "Double Reduction."* In *2021 4th International Conference on Humanities Education and Social Sciences (ICHESS 2021)* (pp. 822-826). Atlantis Press.
- [2] Kang, Y. Q., et al. (2022). *The Impact Of China's Double Reduction Policy On Elementary School Students' Home Education. Proceedings of SOCIOINT 2022- 9th International Conference on Education & Education of Social Sciences.* <https://doi.org/10.46529/socioint.202210>.

- [3] Jin, X., & Sun, Y. (2022, February). *Does Double Reduction Policy Decrease Educational Pressures on Chinese Family? In 2021 International Conference on Education, Language and Art (ICELA 2021)* (pp. 771-776). Atlantis Press.
- [4] Guo. (2021). *Brief Analysis of the "Double Reduction" Policy and Some Reflections. International Conference on Education Technology and Information System (ETIS 2021)*.
- [5] Qichao Wang et al. (2022). *Understanding China's Double Reduction Policy on Educational Economy, Global Economic Observer, "Nicolae Titulescu" the University of Bucharest, Faculty of Economic Sciences; Institute for World Economy of the Romanian Academy, vol. 10(1), Pp.63-69.*
- [6] Paul, C. A. (2016). *Elementary and secondary education act of 1965. Social Welfare History Project.*
- [7] Duffy, M., Giordano, V. A., Farrell, J. B., Paneque, O. M., & Crump, G. B. (2009). *No Child Left Behind: Values and research issues in high-stakes assessments. Counseling and Values, 53(1), 53-66.*
- [8] Klein, A. (2014, March 31). *The Every Student Succeeds Act: An ESSA Overview. Education Week, <https://www.edweek.org/policy-politics/the-every-student-succeeds-act-an-essa-overview/2016/03>.*