

# The Formation Logic and Counteractions of Parents' Educational Anxiety Accompanying the Introduction of Double Reduction Policy

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## Abstract

After the implementation of “double reduction” policy, parental education anxiety becomes a hit subject in the society. Aimed to figure out formation logic and countermeasures of it, this paper adopts literature survey method, through numerous researches, discovers that on the one hand, the policy has comprehensively standardized cram schooling market, optimized the homework design and relieved students’ burden, which renders the overall educational ecology sustainable. But on the other hand, affected by multiple factors, such as the weakening function of family education, the imbalance between the supply and demand of educational resources, single selection criterion and unpredictable educational deviation, parents’ educational anxiety keeps swelling, bearing several features like the heterogeneity of anxiety, classification of anxious crowds, different stages of anxiety and intergenerational mobility. Therefore, only by synchronous implementation of multiple measures, reconstructing education ecological system, standardizing the policy and continuing to strengthen faculty force, can we relieve parental education anxiety and give a push to the genuine implementation of “double reduction” policy.

**Keywords:** double reduction policy, parents’ educational anxiety, basic educational ecology, compulsory education

## 1. Introduction

As the current educational contradictions in China are becoming increasingly severe, educational anxiety has become an urgent social problem to be solved. For the sake of promoting the quality and equality of education, the General Office of the Central Committee of China’s Communist Party and the General Office of the State Council on July 24, 2021 jointly released the Opinions on Further Reducing the Burden of Homework and Off-Campus Training for Compulsory Education Students (the “Opinions”). Based on the Opinions, the “Double Reduction” policy emphasizes on a reduction in the total amount and time of commitment required by school homework and a reduction in the burden of off-campus or after-school training programs. Nevertheless, subject to the imbalance in the allocation of social education resources, parents’ educational anxiety is more severe due to new factors. As a result, the implementation of the Double Reduction policy should be to reshape the healthy ecology of basic education, adhere to the collaborative “family-school-society” sustainable education system, exploring a way to alleviate parents’ educational anxiety.

## 2. The Connotation of Parental Educational Anxiety

Anxiety, a common psychological phenomenon, refers to an unpleasant emotion that arises when an individual anticipates a certain negative consequence or vague threat to occur, characterized by nervousness, anxiety, worry and fear (Lin, Yang, & Huang, 2004). In Freud’s view, anxiety is the crux of various psychological problems, and addressing it helps to achieve twice the result with half the effort (Freud, 2003).

Educational anxiety refers to the different forms and degrees of anxiety experienced by all educational participants (including students, teachers and parents) in the process of educational activities (Zou, 2023). With

the outbreak of the COVID-19, the proposal of the "Double Reduction" policy and the popularization of artificial intelligence, the internal contradictions of education have become increasingly fierce, and educational anxiety has completely influenced the entire educational circles, which has increasingly become a significant social phenomenon and a serious normalization problem.

What's more, parental educational anxiety is a highly representative special situational anxiety. The core connotation of it is the negative emotional, such as worry, unease, anxiety and panic, arising from the uncertainty of the children's educational process and results. In the process of interacting with external support systems, parental educational anxiety is mainly manifested in concerns about educational resources, social environment, personal abilities, children's academic performance, and uncertainty in future development. Physically, it is mainly manifested in a series of behavioral coping responses such as excessive attention to children's academic performance, excessive intervention in children's spare time and oppressive education for children. Since the implementation of the "Double Reduction" policy, off-campus training institutions have been restricted, and quality education resources have become increasingly scarce in society, and parents' competition for education resources has made educational anxiety increasingly serious (Chen & Xiao, 2014). The competition for educational resources by parents has made educational anxiety growingly serious.

### **3. Main Features of Parental Educational Anxiety**

#### *3.1 Heterogeneity of Anxiety Content*

According to studies on parental educational anxiety before the implementation of the "Double Reduction" policy, the content of parental educational anxiety in the past was similar in nature, with the basic goal of improving students' academic performance, or in short, raising students' test scores. And most parents also possessed a similar means of education, i.e., off-campus training. The introduction of the "Double Reduction" policy has not only gradually diversified the themes of burden reduction, such as a substantial reduction in the burden of students' schoolwork and a drastic reduction in the scale of off-campus training institutions, but has also led to the emergence of complex and diverse patterns of anxiety in family education. The economic capital of family education is no longer an important element affecting parents' educational anxiety, and the role of cultural capital in family education has been emphasized (Lu, Gao & Zhi, 2023).

#### *3.2 Classification of Anxious People*

Some research has shown that parents' perceptions of their children's education vary according to social class, with middle-class parents being significantly influenced by their children's academic performance. They desire to secure their own social status through their children's good academic achievements, leading to more severe anxiety due to uncertainty about their children's educational process and outcomes. On the other hand, families in the upper and lower classes have lower expectations of their children's academic performance and usually do not have high expectations of their children's educational outcomes. As a result, parental educational anxiety is prevalent in our middle class (Chen et al., 2021).

#### *3.3 Anxiety Level Stages*

In terms of the degree of parental educational anxiety, the level of parental educational anxiety produces different degrees and types of educational anxiety as a result of the influence of different educational means, goals and contents at different stages of kindergarten, elementary school, middle school, high school and university. Parents' negative emotional states such as worry, anxiety, apprehension and panic about their children's growth and future development are most pronounced in the process of implementing education for their children in kindergarten and elementary school (Zou, 2023).

#### *3.4 Intergenerational Transmissibility of Anxiety*

Parental educational anxiety has been spreading through communication with schools and other parents, developing into a widespread phenomenon of educational anxiety in society. Under the influence of the "Double Reduction" policy, parents spend more time with their children, and negative psychology is easily transmitted to children through the family environment, affecting their cognition of academic development and increasing their inappropriate behavior at school, which negatively affects adolescents' physical and mental health and academic development.

### **4. The Current Situation and Characteristics of Parental Educational Anxiety in the Context of the "Double Reduction" Policy**

Before the implementation of the "Double Reduction" policy, there was already educational anxiety among parents. After its implementation, the manifestations of educational anxiety have become more diverse. Currently,

educational anxiety has become a true reflection of parents' mentality in China, running through the entire process and cycle of educational activities.

#### *4.1 The Current Situation of Parental Educational Anxiety*

With the implementation of the "Double Reduction" policy, subject-based training organizations have been restricted and controlled, and the burden of students' schoolwork in the compulsory education stage has dropped significantly. According to the results of a survey conducted by Urban Insight, 42.5% of the parents surveyed believe that educational anxiety has become more serious after the implementation of the "Double Reduction" policy (Chen, 2023). Obviously, the implementation of the "Double Reduction" policy has reduced the pressure of students' schoolwork, but it has not shaken the current ecology of basic education, which is characterized by high screening and strong competition. And it has also created a new type of educational anxiety among parents while relieving their original educational anxiety (Zhu & Luo, 2023).

#### *4.2 Characteristics of Parental Anxiety in Education*

##### *4.2.1 Fear of the "Prerequisite of Educational Opportunity"*

Educational opportunity, also known as access to education, is defined narrowly as access to formal schooling at all levels, and broadly as the opportunity to choose any avenue of education to receive and achieve the success in studies (Gu, 1998).

The entrenched ideology of exam-oriented education and the vanity of comparing with one another make parents attach great importance to the prerequisites for their children in the context of a highly selective education. Parents want to create good education and living conditions for their children from the very beginning, and "school district housing" has become an important resource that affects education opportunities. According to the Chinese Parents' educational anxiety Index Survey Report (2018), more than half of parents are anxious about not being able to buy the best school district housing for their children. After the implementation of the "Double Reduction" policy, the Ministry of Education has implemented reforms to school selection methods, such as multi-school zoning, large school districts, and shared school districts, which have effectively eliminated the strong correlation between high-quality schooling and overpriced housing, and relieved some of the parents' anxiety about school selection.

However, parents' anxiety about further education remains serious. The implementation of the "Double Reduction" policy has drastically reduced the size of off-campus training institutions, and the original balance between supply and demand for education and training resources has been upset. Parents, faced with the lack of quality education resources and the accompanying distrust of the reduction of schoolwork under quality education, have become more and more aggressive in using a variety of means to obtain training services, such as participating in "study tours and research", "high-end housekeeping" and other disguised education training, and requiring their children to participate in various academic competitions, obtain various certificates, or develop high-intensity pre-school education in order to improve their children's competitiveness. As a result, parents' anxieties about the pressure to go to higher education still need to be urgently addressed.

##### *4.2.2 Concerns about "Differences in Educational Environment"*

Educational environment refers to the conscious creation of situations for the cultivation of human beings, which can be generally categorized into family educational environment, social educational environment and school educational environment (Gu, 1998). In the practice of the "Double Reduction" policy, collaborative education of multiple responsibility subjects of "family-school-society" is the general trend of education development. Under the influence of the "Double Reduction" policy, the status of off-campus training institutions in students' academic development has gradually declined, and the school has become the main field of students' learning, which makes the school's educational environment particularly significant. The infrastructure of the school, the psychological factors in the learning environment and so on, have become a growing concern for parents.

On the other hand, parents need to give higher attention to the influence of the internal family environment on the state of their children's educational development. The role of family education in students' development is becoming increasingly important, and parents need to provide higher spiritual support, shape a good educational environment, and optimize the influence of the family environment. At the same time, parents need to improve their grasp of psychological factors, such as parental expectations for the future development of their children, family attitudes towards the acquisition of knowledge and so on, which have become an important influence on the children's development path.

##### *4.2.3 Pressure to "Invest more in Education"*

Investment in education refers to the sum of human, material and financial resources that society and individuals directly and indirectly invest in the field of education (Gu, 1998). In the Family Education Promotion Law enacted in 2022 [错误!未找到引用源。](#) (Zhang & Cai, 2021), family education is explicitly defined as the nurturing, guidance and influence of parents or other guardians on minors, rather than broadly expanded to include the influence of family members on each other. Parents are required to have a sense of responsibility as the first teachers and to assume the main responsibility for implementing family education. This means that parents' investment in their children's education needs to be increased, and their children's development cannot be categorized solely as the responsibility of the school.

Under the "Double Reduction" policy, parents no longer have the sole responsibility of being assistants to teachers in schools, and the importance of family education is becoming more and more apparent. Family education is based on the fundamental task of establishing morality and focusing on the developmental goal of "putting morality first" which requires parents to cultivate their children's awareness of character and the rule of law, among other qualities. Parents have yet to recognize the need for a change in their role, or have difficulty adapting to it, which creates further pressure for increased investment of time and funds in family education. In addition, the demand for parents' own capacity development has also increased. This calls for the "Double Reduction" policy to strengthen the guidance provided by schools and society on family education, and to help parents change their roles.

#### 4.2.4 Uncertainty about the "Change in the Means of Education"

Educational means is the educator to achieve a certain educational purposes adopted by the activities of the way and method of the general term, mainly refers to a variety of educational tools, educational methods and forms of educational organization and so on (Gu, 1998). In the era of the popularization of exam-oriented education, parents rely on major training institutions and schoolwork arrangements for their children's education and the degree of excellence of their children's performance in the examination as a simple standard of judgment.

With the implementation of the "Double Reduction" policy, the evaluation of students' academic achievements has become more diversified, with greater emphasis on the implementation of quality education, and no longer based on a single academic achievement as the evaluation criterion for the level of students' abilities. In the face of this change in education policy, the means of education have also changed. In the past, parents had similar educational tools at their disposal, i.e., off-campus training, but the implementation of the "Double Reduction" policy has made it no longer the best facilitator of students' academic ability development. The change in the purpose of education requires parents to explore more educational tools that are conducive to the comprehensive development of their children. Parents who have already adapted to exam-oriented education will obviously find it difficult to adapt to the new educational approach in a short period of time.

#### 4.2.5 Concerns about "Unknown Educational Outcomes"

Educational outcome means that after receiving a certain stage of education, the development of knowledge, ability, character and other aspects of the educated person meets the requirements of the corresponding cultivation objectives, and obtains a fair and objective evaluation (Gu, 1998). Parents' anxiety about education results mainly includes anxiety about their children's academic performance. Parents' anxiety about educational outcomes mainly includes anxiety about their children's academic performance and employment prospects, which are important indicators for evaluating the quality of school teaching, parents' educational achievements and students' personal development.

The traditional Chinese cultural concept of "A good scholar will make an official" has influenced generations of Chinese people. For thousands of years, education has played a crucial role in the development of life as an important means of class advancement. Parents generally place high expectations on education as the decisive way to change their children's destiny. The instrumental value of education is infinitely magnified and becomes a vehicle for parents' utilitarian developmental philosophy. Parents further recognize the positive relationship between input and return, thus possessing extremely high educational expectations. While the instrumental value of education has been exaggerated, the results of education linked to the educational process have become the concrete presentation of whether the instrumental value of education has been perfectly realized.

The implementation of the "Double Reduction" policy has vigorously promoted the concept of quality education, drastically reducing the burden of schoolwork on students and downsizing the size of off-campus training institutions. With the reduced academic burden on students, many parents have become skeptical about whether such an education model can truly promote students' personal development. In order to alleviate parents' anxiety about educational outcomes, the government should realize practical and objective evaluation of academic achievements, improve the mechanism for evaluating students' abilities, and take students' all-round

development as the basic direction to prove to parents the superiority of quality education compared with exam-oriented education. Besides, it should also conduct the reasonable use of the academic evaluation mechanism to promote the reduction of coursework and improve quality, and to ensure the scientific development of students. In addition, the full implementation of quality education needs to be premised on a comprehensive return to the values of education, which means transforming utilitarian values, lowering expectations of the instrumental value of education, and fostering a scientific outlook on nurturing and success, so that education can return to its essence of nurturing people.

## **5. The Generative Logic of Parental Education Anxiety under the Background of “Double Reduction” Policy**

According to the previous analysis, after the implement of “double reduction”, some measures have been taken to alleviate the original educational anxiety of parents, but at the same time, parents have produced a new type educational anxiety, which bears new characteristics and are characterized in various ways. According to the previous analysis, after the implementation of the “double reduction” policy, the relevant measures have alleviated the original educational anxiety of parents, but at the same time, parents have produced new educational anxiety. These anxieties have new characteristics and are characterized in a variety of ways. Education anxiety is essentially a kind of human emotional reaction, and human nature is the sum of all social relations. Parental education anxiety is essentially the embodiment of social problems in the process of education. The causes of parental education anxiety are not single, but multifaceted. Therefore, this section analyzes the deep-seated causes of parental education anxiety from four aspects: family educational function, educational resources, educational evaluation system and parents' educational expectation.

### *5.1 The Contradiction between New Requirements for Family Education and the Weakening of Its Existing Function.*

Educator Kremin, who advocates the idea of “Educational Ecology”, regards education as an organic, complex and unified system. According to him, education not only bears the professional attributes, but also social ones as a part of social ecology, where all factors (school, family, nation) about education are organically and closely connected (He & Yang, 2021).

In the past decades of home-school cooperation, children's learning activities occurred frequently in schools. On the face of it, parents participated in their children's academic guidance, but factually they were merely followers of school education. After the implementation of the “double reduction” policy, students' extracurricular time increases in large quantities, which necessitates the return of family education to reconstruct the educational ecology system. Meanwhile, the new policy strongly calls for guidance and empowerment for family education. However, under the old policy, the school-centered home-school cooperation pattern has long been widely recognized and followed by parents. They entrusted their children to schools and seldom got involved in their education. This explains why the new cooperation pattern under the “double reduction” policy suddenly requires parents to invest a lot of time and energy in their children's education, which inevitably leads to their powerlessness and educational anxiety. The “Attitudes Towards „Double Reduction“ Policy of National Compulsory Education Stage Parents” carried out by the Central Propaganda Department of the Communist Youth League and the Social Survey Center of China Youth Daily also shows that up to 73.2% of parents consider their inability and powerlessness to educate as the main source of their educational anxiety.

The weakening of family education function is related to the long-time deficiency of home-school collaborative education. Even after the implementation of the “double reduction” policy, the transformation of the collaborative education pattern is still stuck in deep trouble. There are still some problems regarding home-school cooperation, such as weak awareness, imperfect mechanism and poor effectiveness of cooperation. Also, the distribution of power and responsibility in home-school collaborative education is not clear enough. On the one hand, some parents shirk their responsibilities and rely too much on schools. On the other hand, many parents show their distrust of schools, and according to a survey, parents have different levels of concern about the quality of school teaching (Qi, 2023). 68.3% of parents are worried about whether the after-school service is substantial, and 63.3% of parents doubt whether the service is efficient and useful (Yang & Yuhang, 2022). Out of this distrust, parents arrange numerous “squeezing” cram schools for their children, which actually transforms their children's learning mode to a deformed one, cram schools as the main and schools as the supplement. There is no doubt that these two modes are abnormal home-school relationship in contemporary society. One is completely entrusting children to schools, and the other is crazy competition for external educational resources with the help of family capital. The common defect of them is that they both outsource family education to the great extent, thus weakening the dominant position of parents in children's education. But now, with the

implementation of “double reduction” policy, the withdrawal of cram schools, together with the alleviation of burden on homework and exams, makes it necessary for parents to return to the dominant position of family education and increase their participation in children’s after-school study. In this case, the sharp rise of parental education responsibility far exceeding their original bearing capacity, coupled with other pressure sources such as parents’ low educational level and limited time to educate, parents are prone to become educationally anxious.

### *5.2 The Friction between Limited Supply and Excessive Demand of Educational Resources*

Looking at the 5000-year-old Chinese civilization, the spiritual creed of “A good scholar will make an official” has long been melted in the blood of Chinese people and has become a kind of self-evident collective consciousness. It has also directly affected the educational concepts of Chinese parents. In the short term, parents’ educational expectation presents in the form of better academic performances. In the long run, they hope that their children can enter the middle and upper classes of society. In this case, high-quality educational resources become the “ticket” for their children to climb the ladder, and the supply of educational resources is also pushed to the focus of parents’ attention. It can be said that a large part of parents’ anxiety depends on the balance between the supply and demand of educational resources. The lower the supply, the higher the degree of parents’ educational anxiety (Wu & Cheng, 2022).

After the implementation of the “double reduction” policy, the supply and demand relationship of educational resources is inevitably unbalanced. For one thing, the educational department severely cracks down on the chaos of off-campus training, trying to bring down the training heat. For another, exam-oriented education is still showing a strong development trend, and the public’s demand for it continues to grow. It is in this case of imbalance between supply and demand of educational resources that parents are prone to “jump the gun” and fall into the “resource war”, thus becoming more agitated and nervous. In addition, attributed to the shrinking public cram school market, the cost of private training will inevitably soar, which enables high-yield families to compete for high-quality educational resources, while low-income families are only turned away (Yang, 2023; Kan, 2022). Under this circumstance, some ordinary family parents will choose to borrow money to make cram schools accessible to children, thus bearing huge economic pressure; other parents only see children’s peers, before their very lips, get improved by attending training courses, which makes them more anxious.

The imbalance between supply and demand of educational resources is also reflected in the school. A major goal of the “double reduction” policy is to improve the quality and service level of school education, enabling it to play a leading role in education field. Therefore, the quality of school teaching will be brought into unprecedented focus (Yao & Ling, 2023). Under this background, how to introduce high-quality after-school services and optimize homework design will be the two major hurdles for schools to implement the “double reduction” policy. On the one hand, schools should construct an after-school service system to meet the diverse needs of students, standardize service standards, and promote service levels. On the other hand, teachers should change the traditional “excessive assignments tactic”, reasonably regulate the homework structure, and explore more scientific problem-solving strategies, which place a greater demand on teachers’ ability and accomplishment (Gao, 2022). However, the problem lies in the fact that although the nation has made efforts to promote educational equality, affected by regional, urban-rural and inter-school differences, the implementation degree of the policy in different regions is not the same, and the problem of uneven educational level and quality still exists. For example, a survey shows that there are still 30.4% of primary and secondary schools that have not yet carried out after-school services. This phenomenon not only makes ordinary school parents feel disappointed at school, but also powerless about their children’s future, which emotion eventually evolves into educational anxiety (Fu & Ma, 2023).

### *5.3 The Conflict between Multiple Evaluation System and Single Selection Criterion*

Academician Zhu Qingshi once criticized the current situation of Chinese education in an interview: “The malady of Chinese education lies in the selection rather than the cultivation of talents.” Indeed, the fundamental task of education should be cultivating all-around students. Hence, developing students’ diverse abilities and weakening the grade-based evaluation criteria should be listed as the top priority in today’s education reform (Zhu).

In October 2020, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the State Council issued the “Overall Plan for Deepening the Reform of Educational Evaluation in the New Era”, which explicitly puts forward to prohibit labeling students based on scores, break the simplification of talent selection and optimize the way of talent screening. However, as far as the current situation is concerned, in the context of fierce competition in education, score remains the main criterion for evaluating students. The college entrance examination is still the baton in education field and the threshold for most students to enter the upper class. The

solidified thinking of “score first” has always been rooted in the deep hearts of many parents (Fu & Ma, 2023). In the face of the situation that the long-term goal of children’s all-round development and the short-term goal of improving academic performances are difficult to be compatible, on the one hand, parents worry that their children are burdened with excessive academic pressure and hope that their children can achieve diversified development; on the other hand, they may feel nervous if their children are overtaken by their peers and then shunted into vocational schools. It is this ambivalence of “how to balance academic performance and overall accomplishment” that keeps haunting parents and stimulating their educational anxiety.

#### *5.4 The Deviation between High Educational Expectation and Educational Reality*

Almost all Chinese parents’ long-cherished wish is to expect their children to have a bright future. This urgent desire directly leads to parents’ high educational expectations for their children, as most parents have long been inculcated that education is the only way to change destiny. Once children fail to meet their expectations, parents will be depressed, worried and nervous. This is the very point of view of “Educational Expectation Theory”. However, realistic conditions are always unable to support high expectations of all parents, which will definitely leads to different levels of expectation deviation. It is the gap between the ideal and the reality that brings educational anxiety (Yin et al., 2022).

Yu Xiulan, a scholar, found in her research that about 65% of parents hope that their children can get admitted to “985” and “211” colleges, which is far from the actual admission rate of these schools (Yu, 2020). It reveals the cruel fact that not every child can gain success. To make matters worse, the “double reduction” policy vigorously advocates vocational education and calls on schools to train technical talents. Therefore, “streaming education” ensues: after the senior high school entrance examination, those who get good grades have the opportunity to enter high schools to gain cultural knowledge, while the other worse half can only attend technical schools to learn vocational technology. This kind of “Knockout differentiation” brings down the estimated results of education and thus conflicts with parents’ previous high expectations. Plus, many parents find it shameful to accept their children as blue-collar workers. So the deviation only makes them more anxious.

The gap between high educational expectation and educational reality is also reflected in children’s academic performance. After the implementation of the “double reduction” policy, the benefits of some cram schools receive violation, so they begin to spread anxiety, blindly advocating competition and elimination, which puts parents in a constant state of anxiety (He, 2022). Confronted with this, the most direct and common response of parents is to carry out “intensive parenting”, over-intervening children’s lives, enhancing their learning intensity and compressing their rest time. But dramatically, a large amount of extracurricular training not only cannot promote children’s academic performance, but may lead to their fear and resistance towards study, thus resulting in a decline in grade. The pay being disproportionate to the reward, this estimated result will increase the deviation between previous high expectations and the educational reality, and because of this, parents may sink into self-doubt and eventually get involved in the vicious circle of “deviation-anxiety-over-investment-deviation increase” (Yin et al., 2022).

## **6. Coping Strategies for Parents' Educational Anxiety in the Context of the "Double-Decrease" Policy**

### *6.1 Reconstructing the Educational Ecosystem to Solve Parents' Difficulties through Diversification of Subjects*

The education ecosystem is a large-scale, multilevel and multidimensional ecosystem (Ren & Bai, 1992). For children, the family, the community and the school are the places they most often visit and are closely related to their lives. However, with the increasingly severe “involution” situation, family education has become a subsidiary product of school education, and community education has been silently relegated to the periphery, breaking the balance of the educational ecosystem. In this author's opinion, the "Double Reduction" policy is not only aimed at extracurricular tutorial organizations, parents and schools, but also at the entire education ecosystem, in order to maintain the balance of the education ecosystem to promote education equity. The main force to restore the balance is the diversification of the main body, only when the home, the school and the society cooperate can the difficulties of parents be truly solved

#### **6.1.1 Examining the Educational Role of the Community and Transforming Traditional Educational Models**

As a form of social organization, community and education are supposed to work hand in hand. Community education can develop social and educational redistribution in order to create a more just and equitable society and to promote coordination and cooperation between local governmental and voluntary agencies (Hargreaves, 1985). However, in the traditional model of education, our educational resources are mainly concentrated in schools and educational institutions, and the function of community education has long been underdeveloped.

On May 17, 2023, the General Office of the Ministry of Education made a request on the enrollment of

secondary school students, which emphasized that all localities should follow the principle of the source of students should come from families who live near the school scientifically and reasonably delineate the school enrollment area, standardize the collection of registration information, improve the mechanism of orderly acceptance, and effectively guarantee the fair opportunity of school enrolment (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2023). The "enrollment area" is often based on the community around the school as a unit, re-examining the educational role of the community, optimizing the ecology of the school district, maintaining the balance of the educational ecosystem is of great significance.

In order to reduce parents' economic pressure and solve the situation of primary and middle school students having "nowhere to go and no one to take care of them" after school, the Government issued the "Guiding Opinions of the General Office of the Ministry of Education on Doing a Good Job in After-school Services for Primary and Middle School Students", which emphasizes that "the majority of primary and middle school schools should actively coordinate with the resources from the school, the community, and the out-of-school activity centers to do a good job in after-school services (Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2017). It encourages third-party organizations to participate in after-school services. At present, after-school services are plagued by inexperienced teachers, heavier burdens on teachers, limited means of support, an insufficient service, and services that are not emphasized, which reduces the effectiveness of after-school extended hours services and lowers parents' trust. Diversification of the main body is a strong guarantee to reduce burden, and is the inevitable choice for the effective implementation of after-school extended hours service. Community integration into after-school services is not a precedent in our country, countries such as Japan, actively mobilizing community forces to participate in after-school services, dispersing the burden on schools and parents, and helping students better integrate into society (Qu, 2019). The integration of the community into the main body of "burden reduction" is an important manifestation of the educationalization of society, which should help children to realize the importance of lifelong learning and to draw learning nutrients from the environment.

Unlike primary and secondary school students, college students have more time at their disposal. According to related studies, the current situation of college students' vacation life is characterized by a lack of planning and arrangement of their vacation time, and a wide variety of leisure activities, but the quality of life is not high (Wu, 2012). Why don't we integrate this young force into community education, so that college students can also become a member of the "multiple subjects", to solve the difficulties of after-school extended service, and also enrich the vacation life of college students? As one of the suppliers of "shadow education", these private tutors' influence on the double-decrease policy should not be underestimated. According to the data survey, 36.7% of college students have engaged in tutoring, and wage and safety issues are their main concerns (Xu & Wang, 2017). Under this circumstance, the community acts as a public place intermediary for children and college students, and provide activities for both sides, which to a greater extent will solve the safety of college students tutoring, and realize the integration of resources. The community should utilize every place in the community such as children's homes, cultural corridors, swimming pools, etc. to promote the coordinated sharing of resources and sustainable development. While children broaden their horizons and enrich their after-school lives, college students are also able to exercise their interpersonal skills, learn about society and find a sense of self-worth and identity.

#### 6.1.2 Correcting the Mindset and Clarifying the Importance of Home Education

The role of family education is very important on the road to burden reduction. The Law of the People's Republic of China on the Promotion of Family Education clearly states at the legal level that the fundamental task of family education is to establish morality and nurture people (Laws of PRC, 2021), which defines the position of parents in family education. The turnover of policies and uncertainty about the future will reduce parents' sense of inner security; therefore, during the critical period of promoting the interface between policy implementation and practice, public trust with education administration and schools as advocates should be strengthened to enhance parents' sense of security (Yang & Yuhang, 2022). School-society collaborative parenting in our country has achieved certain results, but lacks a systematic mechanism of collaboration.

In order to realize the effective integration of educational resources, each small educational ecosystem should depend on the community or the school as a medium, and invite experts to carry out the double reduction policy interpretation lectures, guiding parents to change their "double reduction" policy cognitive misunderstandings (Yu & Yao, 2022). Secondly, we should organize "Double Reduction" survey meetings to convey parents' heartfelt messages to organizations and increase the means for superiors to understand public sentiment. Thirdly, we should tap into online platforms to let parents understand the latest education policy guidelines and enhance their information screening ability. Fourthly, we should rely on public service facilities in urban and rural



communities to set up community parenting schools and other family education guidance service stations[37]. Additionally, regular parenting classes and family education guidance sessions should be held, with resources especially skewed towards families with lower economic and cultural capital and left-behind children. Last but not least, grade and classroom family committees should be elected, where parent representatives are invited to participate in the classroom, giving their opinions on curriculum construction, which at the same time will help teachers improve their level of competence.

### *6.2 Policy Oriented Approach to Resolving Difficulties*

#### 6.2.1 Reform of the Evaluation System from "Points" to "People"

On the road to the implementation of the double-decrease policy, the secondary school entrance examination and the college entrance examination often "take the blame", and the "mastermind" behind is the imperfect evaluation system. Evaluation is the baton, which is the embodiment of the externalization of value. Exactly how to evaluate students, not only can not lose fairness, but also to ensure the overall development of students, which is an important issue in the construction of education evaluation system. Our country should reform the education evaluation system, breaking down the solidified idea of "learning and excellence", and rely on information technology, data statistics to re-plan the investigation pathway, dealing with the relationship between the common basis of cultivation and individualized cultivation (Bian & Zhang, 2022). We should shift from educating points to people.

#### 6.2.2 Stepping Up the Crackdown on the Chaotic Situation of Education and Training Institutions and Maintaining A Fresh Education Environment

In September 2023, the Ministry of Education issued the Interim Measures on Administrative Punishments for Out-of-School Training, which intensified efforts to combat the chaotic phenomenon of tutoring institutions and maintain a clean educational environment. While the number of existing education and training institutions has shrunk considerably, there are still some tutorial institutions hiding in the shadows. Therefore, specialists should liaise closely with the community, relying on community self-investigation and regular visits to community stores to close down non-compliant training institutions; at the same time, further improve the network monitoring platform, protect the information of whistleblowers and publicize the reporting and monitoring hotlines to the public; and set up a sound monitoring system to regulate the conditions for approval of business licenses.

### *6.3 Continuously Expanding the Radius of Quality Teacher Education and Raising the Average Level of Education*

#### 6.3.1 Provinces and Municipalities Lead the Formation of Master Teacher Workshops to Enhance Teacher Quality

A large number of studies have shown that among the various forms of teacher learning, the expert-led joint study of classroom teaching is the most popular among teachers and has the most obvious effect on their improvement (Quan, 2009). The essential attribute of the master teacher studio is the community of practice (Zhu, 2014). The essence of a master teacher's studio is a community of practice, so provinces and cities should take the lead in organizing master teacher studios to expand the scope and narrow the schooling gap between schools. At the same time, the scope of "master teachers" can be defined as school teachers, retired teachers, or former teachers in the teaching profession, so as to build a buffer platform for re-employment in the teaching profession. Schools should take the initiative to share the resources of master teachers with the community and attract backbone teachers from other schools to join, adopting the model of "1 master teacher + n members + m districts" to cultivate a shared cultural field (Zhu, 2014).

#### 6.3.2 Implementing the Teacher Rotation System and Expanding the Scope of Rotation

Many parents believe that choosing a school means choosing a teacher and that their children will have a good future if they are taught by good teachers. Not to mention the fact that parents have different definitions of "good teachers", the idea of equating "choosing a school" with "choosing a famous teacher" is inherently flawed. In order to promote educational equity and double reduction policy, and reduce parental anxiety, the General Office of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and the General Office of the State Council made new strategic adjustments to narrow the inter-school gap, issuing the "Opinions on Constructing a High-quality and Balanced System of Basic Public Educational Services," emphasizing that we should "start from the actual situation in different areas, such as urban and rural areas" June 2023. The Opinions on Building a Quality and Balanced Basic Public Education Service System emphasized the need to "start from the practical realities of different areas, such as urban and rural areas", to "orderly" implement the plan for the exchanging roles

continually between school principals and teachers, and to "scientifically" promote the reform of the management of the "county-controlled and school-employed" teachers system (Basic Public Education System, 2023).

Currently, teacher rotation focuses on the movement of urban teachers to rural areas, with little movement between cities and regional economic zones. Considering the actual geography geographical situation of our country, teacher rotation can be shifted from district to "first and second level administrative districts", "special districts and neighboring districts", and economic zones and economic belts. Between economic zones and economic zones, teachers can be arranged to go out to exchange and study, so as to realize the coordinated development of the region with this kind of wide range of teachers' mobility and rotation. At the same time, the wishes and demands of teachers should be fully taken into account, and the rotation system should be linked to material incentives and psychological encouragement, so as to make the system more humanistic and to improve teachers' professional well-being.

## **7. Summary**

This study reveals that after the implementation of the "double-decrease" policy, the characteristics and manifestations of parents' educational anxiety show diversified features, analyzes its formation factors, and explores solutions and strategies: the government should promote the unification of the evaluation system and selection standards, and explore the reform of the education evaluation system. Additionally, it should take policy as the guideline to expand the radiation area of high-quality teacher education, and reduce the differences in the distribution of educational resources. In order to alleviate the contradiction between the supply and demand of educational resources, improve the balance between the requirements and functions of family education, and elevate the status of community education, the community should build a new type of educational ecology in the mode of "home-school-society" synergy, pushing forward the implementation of the policy of multi-principal education, and expanding the new ways of sharing educational resources. Parents should clarify the main role of family education and form a new era of educational thinking.

According to the previous analysis, after the implement of "double reduction", some measures have been taken to alleviate the original educational anxiety of parents, but at the same time, parents have produced a new type educational anxiety, which bears new characteristics and are characterized in various ways. According to the previous analysis, after the implementation of the "double reduction" policy, the relevant measures have alleviated the original educational anxiety of parents, but at the same time, parents have produced new educational anxiety. These anxieties have new characteristics and are characterized in a variety of ways. Education anxiety is essentially a kind of human emotional reaction, and human nature is the sum of all social relations. Parental education anxiety is essentially the embodiment of social problems in the process of education. The causes of parental education anxiety are not single, but multifaceted. Therefore, this section analyzes the deep-seated causes of parental education anxiety from four aspects: family educational function, educational resources, educational evaluation system and parents' educational expectation.

### **Competing interests**

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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Obtained.

### **Ethics approval**

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### **Data availability statement**

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

### **Data sharing statement**

No additional data are available.

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