

Reflecting on the Problems and Causes of After-School Services in the Double Reduction Policy from the Perspective of “Integrated Learning Time”

-- A Study of XF Primary School in RH Town

Le Ma

School of Education, Inner Mongolia Normal University, Inner Mongolia, China.

2292851665@qq.com

Abstract. Based on the perspective of “integrated learning time”, this study uses participant observation and semi-structured interviews to examine the dynamic process of school after-school service implementation and reveal the hidden generation mechanism. The study finds that due to reasons such as the vicious cycle of educational competition, slack management system, lagging in supporting guarantees and lack of evaluation and assessment, the implementation of school after-school service policy is inadequate, the service content is simple, the service resources are limited, and the service personnel is homogeneous. In order to promote the effective implementation of after-school services, the baton of examination-based education should be truly changed to form a benign educational competition; The state, government and schools should cooperate to form a complete and systematic management system; Society should focus on quality improvement and optimize the support of after-school services; The evaluation system should be improved to provide perfect assessment standards. In this way, after-school services in China can better serve as a powerful support for the “double reduction” policy, meet the diversified needs of students, and promote the development of students in various aspects.

Keywords: integrated learning time; double reduction policy; after-school service; participant observation; semi-structured interview.

1. Introduction

In July 2021, in response to the current problem of students’ heavy burden of schoolwork, the General Office of the CPC Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council issued the “Opinions on Further Reducing the Burden of Students’ Homework and After-School Training at the Compulsory Education Stage”[1] (hereinafter referred to as the “Opinions”). The O “pinions” call for continuous improvement of after-school services to meet the diversified needs of students, specifically putting forward programmatic requirements such as ensuring the duration of after-school services, improving the quality of after-school services, broadening the channels of after-school services, and making better free online learning services to promote the overall development of students. However, after-school services in China are still in a state of exploration with some practical dilemmas [2]: teachers’ low level of participation due to the out-of-balance payoffs and rewards, the content of services deviates from expectations, parents’ low level of support due to the deviation of service content and expectations, schools’ low level of participation due to the inefficient management and the lack of security systems. Teachers, parents, and schools play a relatively important role in students’ growth, but they have not done a good job of putting after-school services in place, resulting in a difficult path.

However, in order to improve students’ thinking, judgment, problem-solving skills and creativity, some countries put into action a comprehensive, interdisciplinary and practical teaching activity called “integrated learning time”. In Japan, in particular, the “Draft Curriculum Standards for Elementary and Secondary Schools” issued in December 1998 and March 1999 clearly stipulate that each grade from the third year of elementary school and up will have an average of two hours of “integrated learning time” per week. In 1998, Japan’s “General Principles of Learning”[3] also stipulated that “each school shall conduct interdisciplinary and integrated learning and learning based

on students' interests and concerns, etc., in accordance with the actual situation of the district, school, and students". The "integrated learning time" is integrated into students' learning as a new curriculum that allows students to learn in the society and focuses on the integrated application of knowledge of sub-disciplines, which can well develop students' viability and sociality. However, according to previous research, the implementation of "integrated learning time" in Japan is currently carried out in schools with good conditions (with certain resources and financial support), and the implementation conditions are limited. This phenomenon also exists in China, and the problem of inequality in educational resources exists between regions and between urban and rural areas. It is worth reflecting on how to maximize the benefits of after-school services with limited resources and meet the needs of different subjects. Meanwhile, in the PISA test conducted by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) in January and February 2002, the ranking of mathematics dropped by five places and that of reading comprehension by seven places. Japanese scholars have criticized "comprehensive study time" as affecting students' basic academic ability, but it remains to be further investigated whether "basic academic ability" can truly measure a student's overall learning ability.

In general, the "integrated learning time" has basically formed its own set of curriculum system in continuous exploration and development. Schools have become more distinctive, more diversified in students' development, and more concerned about society and the life around them. To a certain extent, schools have achieved their educational goals, enabling students to master the basic subject knowledge, and then to organically link the knowledge of different subjects, and to apply the theoretical knowledge to practice through a variety of forms to focus on both the cultivation of knowledge and the cultivation of ability. It will help to change the status quo of the separation of name and reality of after-school services in China, which is a problem of inadequacy of policy communication, simplification of service content, limitation of service resources, and singularity of service personnel.

2. Study on the Status Quo of Integrated Learning Time and After-School Services in China

2.1 Study on the Status quo of integrated learning time

The "integrated learning time" focuses on the selection of topics from three aspects: (1) International understanding education, information education, environmental education, and health education to promote the physical and mental development of students and to keep pace with the times; (2) Subjects of interest and concern to children. Interest is the best mentor for students, and what interests students is what interests the school, and what concerns students is what concerns the school; (3) Topics with local and school characteristics. Each school should have its own characteristics led by a unified norm.

1) Comparative Study of "Integrated Learning Time" Curriculum and Chinese Integrated Curriculum

Huang Wei [4] and Yu Qinfang [5] compare the "integrated learning time" in Japan with the "integrated practical activities" and "research studies" proposed in China respectively. Based on the different political, economic, and cultural backgrounds of the two countries, they analyze the educational objectives, curriculum content, and management from multiple perspectives, and then conclude that each country should choose a policy approach that fits its national conditions. They point out that "integrated learning" is appropriate in a country like Japan, which has a small area, a small population, and a developed economy. But for a country like China, which has a large area, a large population, and a great imbalance of educational resources between regions, the appropriateness of integrated learning needs to be further discussed.

2) Study on the Status Quo of the Implementation and Evaluation of the "Integrated Learning Time" Curriculum

Cui Changsook [6] explained the purpose, content, and implementation of “integrated learning time” from the course itself, making it clear that integrated learning time is needed to develop students’ “survival skills”, to create special schools, and to integrate the needs of school, society, and family. She also points out that the relationship between subjects and “integrated learning time” should be handled well, that objective conditions and students’ characteristics should be taken into account in the selection of topics, and that educational resources such as family and society should be fully utilized. However, her study lacks the evaluation of the effect of any new thing, which will have its good or bad effects, and the timely adjustment from the feedback and evaluation of the effect can promote the new thing to grow better. In the study of Nan Yulian [7], it is mentioned that various evaluation methods such as observation method, work evaluation, file evaluation, improvised behavior evaluation, self-evaluation and mutual evaluation can be adopted, and multiple subjects such as students, teachers, or parents can be evaluated. This has inspired me to conduct this investigation and the subsequent research.

In summary, previous studies on integrated learning time, whether comparative study or status quo study, have been conducted from the perspective of “integrated learning time”. But in this thesis, I will use it as a theoretical perspective to reflect on the problems and causes of after-school services under China’s double reduction policy from the perspective of “integrated learning time”.

2.2 Study on the Status Quo of After-School Services in China

After-school service is a product of the development of education to a certain stage. At present, how to arrange after-school services in school in order to meet the diversified development requirements of students while reducing the burden of parents. Meeting the requirements of students’ physical and mental development, and still enabling students to have a pleasant and relaxing school time, have become a problem faced by every school in the compulsory education stage.

In the “Opinions” issued in July 2021, there is this specific description of after-school services: (1) To ensure that after-school service time. Service time is generally not less than 2 hours. Generally, it should end no earlier than the normal local closing time. The implementation of flexible classroom commuting, transfer and other measures should be supported. (2) To improve the quality of after-school services. Remedial tutoring should be conducted for students with learning difficulties. Learning space should be expanded for students who have the energy to learn more. Do not use the after-school service time to teach new lessons. (3) To expand after-school service channels. After-school services on weekdays are generally undertaken by school teachers. Schools with insufficient teachers can hire retired teachers and qualified social professionals to participate. (4) To do the best free online teaching services. “Online classroom” can be opened to offer teachers targeted lesson preparation and offer students personalized learning to provide high-quality, free supportive resources.

Lu Changchun [8] makes a questionnaire survey to analyze the current situation of after-school service in an elementary school in County F from the four dimensions of after-school service: goal, content, resources, and evaluation. It is proposed that the current after-school service in China has the problems of ambiguous goal orientation, single form of content, lack of resources in schools, and lack of evaluation system. From the consideration of government, schools and society, it is proposed that schools should clarify the educational management goals, enrich the content of after-school service, strengthen the construction of teachers and establish a scientific evaluation system. Constructive countermeasures such as the government should provide multi-channel financial guarantee and the society should improve its public service capacity are enlightening to my research. However, although it is mentioned in the study that after-school services should be enriched, it is not clear how to enrich the after-school contents in order to meet both teachers’ high-quality teaching needs and students’ educational expectations, how to ensure students’ performance while making them feel happy and relaxed, and how to let students apply their subject knowledge to a variety of after-school services. These are the questions I will explore from the perspective of “integrated learning time”. In this study, I will make up for the lack of dynamic observation of the process in the previous study, and I will analyze the pain points from the dynamic observation of the implementation of after-school services.

In this thesis, I will analyze XF Primary School in RH Town as a case study, using various research methods such as in-depth participant observation and semi-structured interviews. As an intern, I record the implementation of after-school services in the school, interview senior teachers to understand their views on the implementation of after-school services in the double reduction policy; communicate with school leaders to understand how they issue documents related to after-school services, how they implement the documents, and what are the dilemmas in the implementation process; communicate with students of different grades to understand what they see in after-school services, how these activities bring them feelings, and what they have gained. Finally, from the perspective of “integrated learning time”, I reflect on the current situation and problems of the implementation of after-school services in China’s current policy of double reduction, and explore what measures should be taken to bring our after-school services to a higher level, so as to meet both the needs of teachers' teaching quality and students’ educational expectations.

3. Research Design

The study uses in-depth participant observation and semi-structured interviews to examine the current situation of the implementation of after-school services in the double reduction policy based on the theoretical perspective of “integrated learning time”. The study aims to present the dynamic process of school after-school service implementation, reveal the hidden mechanisms, and explore the real problems of school after-school service in practice.

RH Town XF Primary School, founded in the 1960s, has a long history of establishment and has always insisted on high standard of teaching quality to build the school's popularity and attract parents and students from the surrounding villages and towns. Due to the continuous expansion of student population, the school established a new campus in 2012, expanding the school's footprint, increasing the staff of various types of workers, and improving various service facilities to meet the different needs of students and parents. At the same time, for the convenience of students from the surrounding villages and towns, the school has become a unique rural elementary school on the banks of the Qin River by implementing a boarding system for the first time, with students staying entirely at the school from Monday to Friday and having their living and learning conditions managed by the school administration. This elementary school, which occupies most of the student population in RH town, has a pivotal position in the area.

XF Primary School actively implements the “double reduction” policy. In September 2021, the school formulated its own “Primary School After-school Service Implementation Plan” (hereinafter referred to as the “School-Level Plan”) in accordance with the work plan of the County Education Bureau and its own actual situation. The school promise to upload and disseminate the program to meet the needs of students after-school services, alleviate the practical difficulties of students' parents, and further enhance the capacity of education services. At the same time, the two hours of after-school service time and the content of after-school service for each grade are clearly arranged (Figure 1). This is the schedule of after-school service activities of XF Primary School. From the table, it can be seen that the school actively arranges the after-school service with a two-hour program from 15:40 to 17:40 every afternoon, which includes activities such as group school dances and running, as well as activities to develop students’ interests such as handicraft, calligraphy, iron hoop rolling, melodica and etc. However, in the process of actual operation, only the weekly school dance and running are better implemented, while other activities are often taken up by classroom teachers on the grounds that teaching tasks have not yet been completed, resulting in the two-hour after-school service becoming entirely two hours of classroom tutoring. In addition, classroom teachers keep written records of the activities of the after-school service in a timely manner, and the head teacher also make timely stage summaries of the after-school service.

年 级	时 间	星期一	星期二	星期三	星期四	星期五
一	15:40—16:40	校园舞 跑步	跳绳	手工	书法	美术
	16:40—17:40	拼音王国	数学	讲故事	阅读	班队会
二	15:40—16:40	校园舞 跑步	跳绳	手工	书法	美术
	16:40—17:40	写话训练	数学	经典诵读	阅读	班队会
三	15:40—16:40	校园舞 跑步	滚铁环	舞蹈	书法	口风琴
	16:40—17:40	语文	数学	英语	科学	班队会
四	15:40—16:40	校园舞 跑步	足球	舞蹈	口风琴	书法
	16:40—17:40	语文	数学	英语	科学	班队会
五	15:40—16:40	校园舞 跑步	乒乓球	口风琴	书法	舞蹈
	16:40—17:40	语文	数学	英语	科学	班队会
六	15:40—16:40	校园舞 跑步	篮球	舞蹈	剪纸	书法
	16:40—17:40	语文	数学	英语	科学	班队会

Figure 1 After-school service schedule at XF Elementary School

The researcher was referred by an acquaintance to XF Elementary School as an intern for a 2-month internship to follow up on the implementation of after-school services at the school. The researcher kept a participant observation log by carefully recording the content of the after-school service in regular meetings and observing the implementation of the after-school service in daily life, and a semi-structured interview with several school leaders, teachers, and students. The names of people and schools were anonymized in the text for research ethics. By coding, classifying, and organizing the research data in the above two ways, the researcher was able to gain insight into the operation of after-school services at XF Elementary School, analyze the current situation of after-school services after the implementation of the double reduction policy based on the theoretical perspective of “integrated learning time”, analyze the pain points, and make constructive suggestions.

4. Status Quo of the Implementation of After-School Services under the Double Reduction Policy

4.1 Inadequacy of Policy Communication

One of the main manifestations of the current superficiality of after-school services is the lack of policy communication as Director Zhang, director of education, said:

“There are actually no specific and clear requirements for after-school services from higher levels. Only in the document of the double reduction policy there is mention of strengthening after-school services and carrying out activities according to the school's own characteristics, but there are no specific requirements. Our school has developed a school-level program for after-school services after considering its own situation.”

It can be seen that although our country has clear requirements in the “Opinions” to ensure the time of after-school services, improve the quality of after-school services, broaden the channels of after-school services, and make the best free online learning services, after layers of communication, they remain superficial as they are not heard in the local grassroots schools after layers of communication.

In an active response to the after-school service, RH Town launched the “Summer Care Service”, which mainly targeted children who were left unattended because their parents were busy at work. The school would provide appropriate space and caregivers to offer children simple summer schoolwork, quality development and hands-on education in three sessions of about 10 days each. Students and parents would participate voluntarily, but a fee of \$7 per person per day would be charged. The purpose of the program was to promote the development of students in various aspects and to enrich their vacation life, but the results were not satisfactory as no one participated. Through interviews with the relevant people, we learned that Xiao Li's mother did not let her child participate in this activity because she was not willing to pay for it. Xiao Yang's mother said she didn't let her

child participate because she thought she should let her child play and relax during the holidays. She felt that this kind of care service was similar to attending a class. Teacher Zhao, the school's music teacher, said to me:

“Originally, I wanted to volunteer as music teachers are quite scarce in this village. But I was reluctant to go in the end because the service fee I was given was so small that it was not enough to cover the fare of a round trip drive.”

This shows that the summer care service was not properly implemented. On the one hand, parents misunderstood the program due to poor communication from school leaders and classroom teachers. On the other hand, there was a conflict between school teachers and parents about the cost of the service, as parents did not want to pay for the service and volunteer teachers felt that the cost was too low, so the program ended up with no participants. In conclusion, the after-school service still has the problem of operationalizing the relevant policies in the current implementation stage, and the policies are not communicated properly. Whether it is municipal, county or school-level leaders, classroom teachers, classroom teachers or students' parents should all take responsibility.

4.2 Simplification of Service Content

The school's arrangements for after-school services include tutoring students in homework, independent reading, participating in various interest groups, club organizations or audio, physical, aesthetic and labor activities, and watching films suitable for children. Students with learning difficulties should get more help, and students who have the energy to learn more should receive more guidance. After-school services should not be turned into group teaching or group tuition.

However, the researcher observed that the services were still dominated by self-study sessions for homework, and continued even after dinner time. The interest groups and club activities mentioned in the program were not really implemented. During the communication with Student Fan, she expressed that her favorite school time was the recess after the second class in the afternoon, where she could go running, jumping rope, walking and relaxing with her partner. She hoped for more such time. In addition, she also said she likes singing, acting, painting, etc., but the school did not organize these artistic activities, so her interests were put on hold. However, in the interview with Student Lv, she expressed that she liked the current after-school service. The two-hour after-school service allowed her to go outside to do some simple physical activities and also allowed her to finish the after-school homework assigned by the teacher indoors, which reduced the burden of studying.

Through the communication with the two students, I found that they have very different personality characteristics. Fan is cheerful, a big-hearted girl with many hobbies and likes to participate in group activities, so she expressed her dissatisfaction with the current after-school service. Lv, on the other hand, is a quiet girl who loves to study and does not have many other interests, so she is satisfied with the current after-school service. This shows that after-school services should be tailored to meet the diverse needs of students, rather than uniformly prescribing what activities students must do at a certain time, and should enhance students' self-selectivity.

4.3 Limitation of Service Resources

The school is affected by various factors such as teachers, space and equipment. It is difficult to achieve a wide variety of after-school services. Director Yan, the school's director of political education, said:

“Most of our students here are from the surrounding villages and towns, and it is inconvenient to travel back and forth every day. In order to ensure the safety of students, they are basically boarding at school, unable to go out from Monday to Friday, so that they can only use the limited school resources for activities, such as playing basketball, badminton and shuttlecock on the playground, etc. The school also has a number of vegetable gardens that students sometimes work with teachers to take care of and experience the joy of working.”

It is clear that the school has limited resources for after-school services, and can only use the limited resources within the school, while the resources outside the school are unattainable.

“For a rural elementary school like ours, with a remote location, it’s difficult to reach out-of-school resources, such as youth centers. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.” Director Zhang, the director of education, said the same thing.

4.4 Singularity of Service Personnel.

The school’s after-school service staff can be described as entirely staff involved. In a conversation with Ms. Wu, who has been teaching for more than two decades, she said:

“Since I have been teaching for decades, I have developed my own set of teaching mode and it is adapted to the background of test-based education. Now that I am nearing retirement, I don’t have much energy for some innovation in after-school services.”

Teacher Guo, who has been teaching in this school for two years, also said that she was reluctant to innovate because there are no special requirements and rigid assessments for after-school services, so doing or not doing it does not have a great impact on her. She is already working in several jobs, also with two sub-courses of art and science, which is already very tiring. It can be seen that both young teachers and senior teachers do not attach enough importance to after-school services, or the current situation of teachers in schools does not allow them to have the energy to do more experiments and innovations.

I also had the opportunity to interview a parent in the Parent Committee, who said, “The classroom teacher rarely communicates with us about the after-school service. The only thing I know about after-school service is what my child told me when he or she came home from vacation.” She also expressed to me that if she could, she would love to be involved in the management of the school’s after-school service and grow up together with her children, hoping that her children would play well when they should play and learn well when they should learn.

This shows that the school is relatively homogeneous in this area of service personnel, with faculty members being the main focus. However, the faculty members do not place enough emphasis on using their own interests to mentor students across disciplines and to bring out the innovative and research-oriented nature of the teacher role itself. Parents do not have more means and opportunities to be involved in the management of after-school services. Likewise, the school has not adopted ways to attract folk artists, intangible cultural heritage bearers or caring members of the community to participate and expand the types of after-school service staff.

5. Analysis of the Pain Points of After-school Services in the Double Reduction Policy from the Perspective of Integrated Learning Time

Based on the investigation of the status quo of the implementation of after-school services in XF elementary school in RH town, the researcher will then analyze the problems of after-school services under the current double reduction policy in China from the following four dimensions of “integrated learning time”: its implementation background, management system, social security, and evaluation and assessment to address the pain points.

5.1 Vicious Cycle of Educational Competition

Although the country now strongly advocates quality education and cultivates socialist builders and successors who develop morally, intellectually, physically, aesthetically and laboriously in an all-round way, but as Director Yan, the director of political education, said, “China is still in the context of test-based education, and for every child, the high school entrance exam and the college entrance exam are undoubtedly two important turning points in their life path. As these two exams are selective exams, there is bound to be educational competition, then schools and teachers also give priority to students’ academic performance and pay more attention to the improvement of teaching quality.” Teacher Liang, the leader of the senior language teaching and research group, also said, “At present, China is still a talent assessment system based on academic qualifications. If the baton of education does change, our after-school service can also have substantial changes.” So, a large part

of the reason why after-school services are not currently being implemented well is the result of a vicious cycle of educational competition.

The integrated learning time is a new curriculum in the context of “liberal education”. The educational environment at the time was focused on the development of students’ survival skills and the development of innovative and international talents to better adapt to society. Therefore, the integrated learning time was successfully implemented under such a baton. In contrast, although China has been advocating quality education for many years, the national baton is still test-based education. Selective examinations still test students’ mastery of subject knowledge and lack the assessment of comprehensive ability. Therefore, the growing competition in education makes the development of after-school services in China a long way to go.

5.2 Slack Management System

After-school services are new to schools in a new historical period and are a current focus of national attention that administrators cannot afford to neglect. However, the current slack management system is the main reason for the operationalization of the after-school service policy. The school asks its staff to prepare for the upcoming inspection two or three days in advance, including the documentation and implementation of after-school services, to ensure that it would pass the inspection successfully. Inspections by the higher authorities are also operational, not in written forms, but cannot go deep into the students to check the real implementation of the after-school service in the school. In addition, the school’s internal management of after-school services is confusing. The number of participants in after-school services is large, and there are many different types of programs and levels of participation. It is not easy to manage after-school services in a scientific and orderly manner. School administrators have retreated in the face of difficulties, and direct inaction has seriously hindered the development of after-school services. “Integrated learning time” appeared as a new thing in the process of education reform in Japan. After several revisions, it has been incorporated into the normal teaching system and placed on the same level of importance as the general curriculum. At the same time, the system is also more standardized and systematic, with different forms of presentation in primary, secondary, and higher education, and has been widely implemented in various places, with strict management at all levels, without neglecting the formality. In contrast to our after-school service, both internally and externally, it presents a situation of slack management and poor response, like a scattered plate of sand without cohesion.

5.3 Lagging in Supporting Guarantees

1) Absence of legislative protection

It is a recognized fact in the education field that legal protection is indispensable for education development. However, the legal protection of after-school services in China is not perfect, especially the legislation for after-school services in boarding schools is not complete. At this stage, the after-school service is mainly proposed to solve the “3:30 problem”. Urban students are dismissed at 3:30 p.m., but most working parents do not get off work until 6:00 p.m. to pick up their children. This has resulted in the creation of after-school services, which are led by school teachers, during which students can do some classroom tutoring or other activities to develop their interests. In the case of boarding schools, however, students stay at the school all day. With a 24-hour service provided by a teacher, the two hours of quality after-school service cannot be achieved if the teacher does not have sufficient energy. In contrast, the curriculum of “integrated learning time” has been continuously improved through the whole process of education reform in Japan, and the legislation has been constantly improved in practice. In 2008, the Ministry of Education revised and improved the “Guideline for Learning”, and established a comprehensive legal system with detailed regulations on the strengthening of the system, environmental preparation, guidance system, operation system, learning objectives, content, curriculum implementation, teacher training and evaluation system. In addition, it has kept pace with the times and has taken action in practice, giving high priority to

legislation to enable schools to proceed smoothly. In our country, the lack of strong legal protection makes the policy only formally, but not fundamentally implemented.

2) Limited protection of environmental facilities

A large part of the reason for the simplification of the content of after-school services and the limitation of service resources in schools is the lack of environmental facilities protection. The state advocates that after-school services should be multi-channel and diversified, making full use of various resources around, but there is a great imbalance of educational resources in China, especially in rural and urban areas. Students in urban areas can make full use of public facilities such as libraries, multimedia classrooms or youth activity centers and museums, but students in rural elementary schools do not enjoy such resources. Hard geographical reasons and artificial lack of financial chain lead to the lack of environmental facilities security in our country.

Because of its unique nature, “integrated learning time” involves a lot of independent inquiry and hands-on activities. Therefore, in 2008, the Ministry of Education released the “Guidance for Elementary and Junior High Schools - Integrated Learning Time”, which clearly states that the school environment should be strengthened to ensure learning space, multi-functional facilities and a large space for teachers or open spaces. The library and information environment are also prepared so that students can find the materials they need in a timely manner, giving them a great deal of autonomy with the environment in place. In contrast, our country does not pay much attention to the environmental facilities, lacking clear and specific requirements and adequate funding. Without external guarantees in place, it is difficult to make substantial changes internally.

3) Weak protection of teachers

The diversity and diversification of after-school services also places higher demands on teachers, and the lack of teacher security is an important reason for the homogeneity of service providers. More specialized art teachers are reluctant to go to rural areas, resulting in subject class teachers in rural elementary schools holding several jobs. Teacher Guo, who has been teaching for five years, said: “Here the burden of teaching is too heavy and there is no energy to innovate the content of after-school services. I entered the school as an elementary English teacher, but took on subjects such as language and art. In addition, I didn’t know how to innovate for after-school services to meet the diverse needs of students, so I simply went with the flow and didn’t take after-school services to heart.” It is evident that not only do rural elementary school fail to attract excellent teachers, but also teachers serving in schools are not able to perform after-school services well due to their limited ability and energy.

“Integrated learning time” is an interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary curriculum. The richness of its content determines the diversity of the curriculum resources, which require deep consideration by teachers and effective use according to student participation. Teachers, who seem to be “retired”, play a more important role in these activities. For this reason, the teachers of “integrated learning time” are required to hold a national integrated learning workshop once a year, so that they can exchange and learn from each other. At the same time, the Department of Integrated Learning Specialization has been established in colleges and universities to train teachers of integrated learning time courses and to improve their professional skills. So far, many elementary and middle schools in Japan have teachers specializing in integrated learning time. Therefore, the quality and quantity of teachers for after-school services in our country are not up to standard, and after-school service personnel are homogeneous.

5.4 Lack of Evaluation and Assessment

The lack of evaluation and assessment is an important reason for the simplicity of the service. Whether it is evaluation and assessment of students to see if they gain and grow from the after-school service, or evaluation and assessment of teachers to see if they are creative and research-oriented to put the after-school service really in place, the evaluation system for after-school service in China is incomplete. In the interview with Director Yan, the director of political education, I learned that the school’s assessment of teachers is only limited to the quality of teaching, and there is no set

examination of the quality of after-school service for teachers, no assessment criteria, and even less set evaluation of after-school service for students. At the same time, in a conversation with language teacher Wu, she said, “The reason why the current after-school service is formal and not in place, teachers are not willing to work hard, a large part of it is related to the evaluation and assessment standards. The school’s evaluation and assessment of teachers still depends on student achievement, we will be criticized by the school leadership if we do not grasp the students’ achievements, so we still have to compress time to improve the quality of teaching.” However, “integrated learning time” has a well-developed evaluation system, which is carried out through three aspects, namely the evaluation of students, the evaluation of teaching and learning, and the evaluation of instructional programs, whose evaluations are set with appropriate evaluation criteria. Each school evaluates according to its own situation and continues to improve. The objects of evaluation can be work, publication, discussion, and attitude, and the methods of evaluation can be observation method, file bag evaluation, impromptu evaluation, other evaluation or self-evaluation. The curriculum can be improved through continuous feedback. In conclusion, from the perspective of “integrated learning time”, we can see that there is still much room for improvement in the evaluation and assessment in China, from institutional guarantee to grassroots implementation.

6. Summary and Suggestions

This paper presents a dynamic case study on the implementation of after-school service policy. Using participant observation and semi-structured interviews, the study tracks the current status of the implementation of after-school service in XF elementary school in RH town, and reveals that there are problems such as inadequate policy implementation, simplistic service content, limited service resources, and single service personnel. Based on these problems, the pain points of after-school services in China are analyzed from the theoretical perspective of “integrated learning time”, which is caused by the vicious cycle of educational competition, slack management system, lagging in supporting guarantees and lack of evaluation and assessment. Of course, the implementation of education policy is a complex enough and always incomplete event to show multiple faces. The case study I use may not be a complete microcosm of the whole society. But because of the complexity and social nature of educational issues, some of the problems in the case studies are more or less the same problems that exist in society. By studying specific case studies, we can dig deeper into the problems from the grassroots implementation situation. So that we can analyze the pain points, make timely adjustments to our after-school service policy, and promote the development of “precise”, “practical” and “effective” direction.

To promote the efficient implementation of after-school services under the “double reduction” policy, we need to work on the following aspects: First, we should really change the baton of exam-oriented education and form a benign educational competition. Efforts to change the current traditional concept of valuing only academic qualifications and marks in society, and to strengthen quality education should be made. With the support of the “double reduction” policy, we should consider from the students’ perspective and cultivate socially adaptable talents. Second, the state, government and schools should cooperate to form a complete and systematic management system. As the saying goes, “Nothing can be done without rules”. Everything needs an external binding uniform. After-school services should also be the same, from the state to the local and then to the school, layer by layer, to form a complete management system, preventing falsification and formality. Third, we should focus on quality improvement, optimize after-school service support guarantee. Strengthen legislation and policy protection, and improve the relevant laws and regulations for boarding schools. Environmental facilities should be put in place, and the benefits of after-school services should be maximized under the limited resources available. We need to fully mobilize social forces to strengthen the teacher guarantee for after-school services. Fourth, we should improve the evaluation system and provide perfect assessment standards. For teachers, it should not be limited to the assessment of teaching quality, but also include the evaluation of the implementation of after-

school services; For students, it should not be limited to the assessment of learning achievements, but also include the evaluation of the learning outcomes of after-school services. In short, in the implementation of after-school service policy, it is necessary to coordinate the interests between different subjects. This will ensure the maximum realization of the objectives of after-school services, and the implementation of China's after-school service policy can achieve a qualitative leap.

References

- [1] . the General Office of the CPC Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council issued the "Opinions on Further Reducing the Burden of Students' Homework and After-School Training at the Compulsory Education Stage". *Educational Development Research* (Z2), 33.
- [2] Zhou, Lele & Cheng, Ling. (2022). The Dilemma of Implementing After-school Services under the "Double Reduction" Policy and How to Crack it. *Jiangsu Education Research* (02), 72-76.
- [3] Japanese Elementary School Learning Guideline: General Rules. *World Education Information* (19), 36-41.
- [4] Huang W. (2005). Reflection on the Comparison between the Japanese Courses of "Time of Integrated Study" and Chinese "Integrated Practical Activities". *Comparative Education Research* (07), 12-16.
- [5] Yu Qinfang. (2002). A Comparison of New Highlights of Curriculum Reform in China and Japan: "Research-based Learning" and "Integrated Learning Time". *Teaching and Management* (22), 76-79.
- [6] Choi, Chang-sook. (2001). An Overview of "Integrated Learning Time" in Japanese Elementary and Secondary Schools. *Academic Education* (02), 47-49+46.
- [7] Nan Yulian. (2017). The Research and Enlightenment of "Comprehensive Study Time" Curriculum in Japanese Primary and Secondary School (Master's thesis, Yanbian University).
- [8] Lu Changchun. (2020). Research on the Present Situation, Problems and Countermeasures of After-school Service in Rural Primary Schools – Take F School in Gushi County as an Example (Master's thesis, Henan University).
- [9] Zhang, Bing & Cheng, Tianjun. (2021). An Expedient Execution: The Action Logic of School after-Class Service. *Educational Development Research* (Z2), 50-58.