
NEWSLETTER

How Do Teacher Workloads Affect Student Development?

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BASED ON DATA from the China Education Panel Survey 2013-2015, the study examines the effects of teacher workloads on student development, with the view to providing evidence for the implementation of China's "teacher burden reduction" policy and Double Reduction policy.

Research Findings:

- There was an inverted U-shaped relationship between the teacher's weekly working hours and student academic performance, with 42.3 hours being the inflection point, below which student academic achievements tended to elevate with the increase in the teacher's working hours.
- Distinct work burdens on the teacher exhibited varying impacts on their job burnout and students' academic performance. Regarding objective workloads, teachers working no more than 42 hours, with 85% or above of which spent on instructional duties, teaching no more than 15 periods, and spending no more than 10 hours on lesson preparation and no more than 11 hours marking students' homework per week reported lower levels of burnout and were more supportive to their students, who attained more favorable academic results. Regarding subjectively perceived burdens, excessive pressures from the school and community could significantly reduce the teacher's supportive behaviors towards students and negatively affect their academic performance.
- Overly heavy burdens on the teacher could indirectly negatively impact their students' academic performance by exacerbating their job burnout and reducing their emotional assistance to students.

Suggestions:

- Optimize the composition of teachers' responsibilities and duties and set legitimate limits to their working hours.
- Improve teacher evaluation criteria by placing more weight on developmental and value-added evaluation to reduce subjective

pressures perceived by teachers and extend the range of teacher performance indicators beyond the exam results and school progression rates of students.

- Pool resources to alleviate non-instructional burdens on teachers and increase in-service training to combat teacher job burnout and enhance the quality of teaching.

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