

# ***A Study on the Governance of Online Education Policies for Off-Campus Training Institutions in Primary and Secondary Schools from the Perspective of Teachers***

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**Abstract.** This paper investigates the governance of online education policies in off-campus training institutions for primary and secondary schools from the teachers' perspective. As key actors in policy implementation, teachers possess critical experiential knowledge that bridges the gap between regulatory frameworks and classroom realities. Drawing on semi-structured interviews with 5 experienced teachers from various subject areas, the study explores how national policies affect teachers' instructional practices, professional development, and perceptions of agency. Findings reveal that while these policies promote standardization and educational equity, they also introduce challenges such as limited teaching flexibility, increased administrative burden, and reduced innovation space. Nonetheless, teachers demonstrate significant adaptability by restructuring lesson formats and exploring blended and student-centered approaches under regulatory constraints. The research highlights the importance of establishing a supportive policy environment that includes professional development systems, participatory governance, and psychological support mechanisms. It concludes that sustainable online education governance requires strict policy design and an inclusive framework that empowers teachers as active contributors to educational reform.

**Keywords:** Teacher Perspective, Online Education Governance, Off-campus Training Institutions, Teacher Professional Development

## **1. Introduction**

Building on the importance of governance in education policy, this study focuses on the role of teachers in shaping and responding to the regulatory frameworks governing online education in off-campus training institutions for primary and secondary students. As frontline practitioners, teachers possess unique experiential insights into how policies surrounding course content, instructor qualifications, class duration, and data security are implemented in real-world educational settings. Understanding these perspectives is vital for evaluating the effectiveness and feasibility of current governance mechanisms.

This paper investigates the governance of online education policies from teachers' perspective, with particular attention to how institutional mandates align—or conflict—with pedagogical realities. Through semi-structured interviews with experienced educators working within or in close collaboration with off-campus training institutions, the study explores how teachers interpret, adapt to, and sometimes challenge regulatory requirements. These firsthand accounts highlight the benefits of enhanced oversight, such as improved instructional quality and better protection of learner rights, and the practical challenges educators face, including time constraints, platform limitations, and policy ambiguity.

The study starts by reviewing online education governance literature, pinpointing models in both local and global settings. Interview data is then incorporated to reveal the dynamics between policy creation and teaching. The goal is to determine which policy aspects either support or impede effective teaching and professional independence.

## **2. Literature review**

### **2.1. The current situation of online education policy research**

Existing research indicates that online education for primary and secondary schools shows a diversified trend in expenditure, focus, equipment usage and study duration. Off-campus online training mainly adopts three models: personalized stratified teaching, flipped classroom and dual-teacher teaching. While these models offer distinct benefits for enhancing learning outcomes, challenges persist, including disparities in instructional quality, constrained development of institutional resources, and ambiguities in revenue generation strategies [1].

The cognition and feedback of the teaching group on online education policies are also important considerations for policy implementation. Research has found that some teachers believe that policy governance can enhance the quality of education and promote industry standardization. Still, some teachers are concerned that strict supervision may limit students' learning choices and affect their career development [2].

### **2.2. Main components of mental resilience**

In terms of policy governance, many countries adopt different regulatory strategies. In the United States, market dynamics and industry self-regulation are the primary mechanisms, whereas China employs stringent oversight to guarantee equitable access to education and the judicious distribution of resources [3]. The research on the K-12 online education standards in the United States shows that this system is learner-centered and at the same time puts forward higher requirements for teachers' abilities. These experiences can provide references for online education reform in China [4].

Specifically, the Chinese government has issued a series of regulations for online education by off-campus training institutions. For instance, the Administrative Measures for Off-campus Training Institutions stipulate that online education institutions must undergo strict approval to meet the course quality standards and teacher qualification requirements. To foster a level playing field, standardized pricing structures for online education have been implemented to curb price gouging and hidden fees [5].

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1. Participation sample

In terms of sample selection, the study adopted the purposeful sampling method and invited five after-school class teachers from Beijing to participate in the interviews. These teachers are respectively affiliated with subject-based off-campus training institutions (such as Chinese, mathematics, and English) and have at least three years of online teaching experience. They can also provide in-depth observations on the implementation effects of policies.

#### 3.2. Process

First, clarify the research objective, that is, from the perspective of teachers, analyze the implementation of the online education policies of off-campus training institutions in actual implementation, the challenges they face and the potential optimization paths. At this stage, research questions were formulated, qualitative research methods were determined to be adopted, and semi-structured interviews were used as the main way of data collection.

Through purposeful sampling, representative teachers in off-campus training institutions are selected. The interviewed teachers should meet the following conditions: having at least three years of online teaching experience, currently or previously teaching at off-campus institutions, and being familiar with relevant online education policies. Finally, five interviewees were selected, covering subjects such as Chinese, mathematics, and English.

Based on an extensive literature review and policy document review, an interview outline was formed, which includes: teachers' understanding of the policy, implementation in teaching practice, problems encountered, coping strategies, subjective opinions and suggestions on the policy effect.

The interviews will be conducted one-on-one online, each lasting 20 to 30 minutes. The researchers recorded the data with the respondents' informed consent and transcribed it into a transcript after the interview to ensure the integrity and analyzability of the data.

The interview texts were annotated paragraph by paragraph using the open coding method, and several core themes were summarized, such as "Adjustment of teaching content", "Pressure of policy implementation", "Professional identity of teachers", etc.

Strictly abide by ethical norms, anonymize the information of all respondents to ensure that personal privacy is not leaked.

Finally, a research report is written based on the analysis results. The feedback from teachers is compared with the policy text to reveal the actual gap between the institutional design and the teaching scene, and targeted policy optimization suggestions are put forward.

#### 3.3. Analysis strategy

This study adopted a qualitative analysis strategy to process and interpret the interview data. Firstly, during the data organization and transcription stage, all interviews were recorded after obtaining the written informed consent of the interviewed teachers, and were transcribed into a transcript after the conclusion. The researchers proofread the recorded content word by word to ensure the accuracy of the data and conducted a preliminary text cleaning, deleting irrelevant content.

Then, the researchers adopted the Open Coding method. Instead of presetting labels, they conducted the initial coding based on the repeatedly occurring keywords and concepts. For example,

expressions such as "difficulty in policy implementation" and "adjustment of teaching resources" are extracted as initial codes.

During the Axial Coding stage, researchers classified and integrated the initial codes, aggregated similar codes into higher-level thematic categories, and further established the logical connections among these themes.

Subsequently, the Selective Coding stage is entered to identify the core proposition of the research and organize the data around this proposition.

Regarding theme construction and theoretical interpretation, the research combines the theories of educational policy implementation and those related to teachers' professional development to conduct cross-case analyses of the viewpoints of different teachers, explain the mechanisms behind their behaviors, and enhance the theoretical depth of the research.

## 4. Results

### 4.1. The influence of policies on teachers' career development

Through in-depth interviews with five teachers of after-school classes, it was found that the current online education policies have significantly influenced teachers' career development, presenting dual characteristics of promotion and restriction.

On the one hand, the introduction of policies has promoted the improvement of teachers' professional qualities. Many interviewed teachers said that the strict requirements of the policy on the qualifications of teachers have prompted them to pay more attention to teaching ability and knowledge renewal. For instance, an English teacher in Beijing with five years of online teaching experience mentioned: "The institution requires us to have a teaching qualification certificate and regularly participate in teaching and research training. Although the pressure is high, it has improved our teaching level."

On the other hand, some teachers have also reflected that the policy has imposed restrictions on their career development paths. Especially under regulations such as prohibiting the employment of in-service primary and secondary school teachers and restricting teaching hours, the teaching opportunities of some part-time teachers have been compressed. A math teacher said, "Originally, our teaching was most concentrated in the evening. The course schedule has to be adjusted due to policy restrictions that allow live streaming no later than 9 p.m. Sometimes, the number of students also decreases, and the income becomes unstable." Furthermore, some teachers are concerned that, against strict supervision and frequent record-filing, the space for course innovation is restricted and teaching is gradually tending towards homogenization.

### 4.2. The influence of policies on teachers' teaching content

In the interview analysis, "The impact of policies on teachers' teaching content" has become an important recurring theme. Through in-depth interviews with five teachers from off-campus training institutions for primary and secondary schools, the research found that the current online education policies, under the dual effects of constraints and guidance, have significantly affected teachers' planning of teaching content, the freedom of course design, and the way course resources are used.

On the one hand, the standardized guidance of policies on teaching content helps to clarify teaching boundaries. Many interviewed teachers pointed out that the policy requires that teaching content not exceed the syllabus and that it should conform to the national curriculum standards. To a certain extent, this has unified teaching requirements and helped curb off-campus training

institutions "getting ahead". A Chinese language teacher mentioned, "Previously, we would speed up the progress according to the demands of students' parents. Now, we must strictly follow the national curriculum standards, which instead makes the teaching approach clearer, and we no longer blindly cater to parents." To a certain extent, this policy norm has promoted the return of curriculum content and the essence of education.

However, the policy restrictions on course duration (each class should not exceed 40 minutes) also impact the organization of teaching content and the depth of knowledge. Teachers need to compress knowledge points and adjust the teaching pace. Sometimes, they have to choose some extended content initially planned to be taught. A primary school English teacher said, "I originally wanted to take the children to read the original picture books and do language extension exercises, but now the time in one class is too tight, so I can only focus on the exam-oriented content."

In summary, the policy's execution has improved the uniformity and oversight of educational material. However, instructors are worried about the decrease in academic autonomy and the constrained possibilities for creativity. While curriculum standards offer guidance, excessive standardization could result in teaching content becoming uniform, which would reduce the potential for customized and varied instruction.

## 5. Discussion

### 5.1. Support system for promoting teachers' career development

First of all, teachers generally call for the establishment of a continuous professional development mechanism. In the interviews, many teachers stated that although the policy requires a teaching qualification certificate, there is a lack of subsequent systematic training and growth paths. An English teacher from Guangzhou pointed out: "What we need is not just qualification certifications, but training that can truly enhance teaching abilities, such as how to design online courses and how to use AI tools to assist teaching." This demand is in line with the "Professional Ladder" concept proposed by the Department for Education of the United Kingdom, emphasizing that teachers should receive targeted professional development support at different career stages [6]. Furthermore, leveraging information technology to construct scalable teacher development systems is the key to enhancing teachers' adaptability and teaching innovation capabilities [7].

Furthermore, when teachers are confronted with the curriculum compression and content standardization brought about by policies, they urgently need the support of teaching reconstruction capabilities. A Chinese language teacher said, "In the past, we could freely expand, but now we have to finish teaching within the prescribed scope and keep records for future reference. The pressure is huge." OECD (2020) posits that teachers' capacity for adaptable curriculum architecture is crucial for navigating policy limitations and realizing individualized pedagogy, a skill that should be fortified via targeted professional development and augmented resource allocation [8].

### 5.2. Promote the innovation of online education models

In promoting the innovation of online education models in off-campus training institutions for primary and secondary schools, the perspective of teachers provides key practical perspectives and improvement clues. The study revealed that policy governance not only shapes pedagogical practices but also, to a certain degree, incentivizes educators and institutions to pursue instructional innovation while adhering to established guidelines. This phenomenon is highly consistent with the viewpoint in the existing literature that "policy incentives drive educational reform" [9].

Firstly, the strict restrictions imposed by the policy on the length of class hours, the scope of content and teaching time prompt teachers to optimize the course structure and teaching pace under limited conditions. In the interviews, many teachers mentioned that to cope with the regulation that a single class should not exceed 40 minutes, they attempted to "miniaturize" the teaching content, break it down into more logical learning modules, and supplement it with interactive teaching links. This change aligns with the "structural reconstruction" strategy emphasized in [10], which involves redesigning the teaching and learning processes within the platform and regulatory framework to enhance learning efficiency and the student experience.

Moreover, fueled by technological advancements and supportive policies, certain educators are now venturing into blended learning methodologies, effectively merging digital and physical classroom experiences. This includes pushing pre-class learning materials, using interactive software to enhance classroom participation, and tracking learning data after class.

Therefore, it is suggested that in future policy governance, on the premise of ensuring adequate supervision, "innovation experimental zones" or "flexible curriculum Spaces" should be reserved to enable teachers to carry out controllable innovations within the framework of rules.

## 6. Conclusion

As the direct participants in policy implementation, teachers' perceptions and practices are of great significance for understanding the actual effectiveness of online education policy governance. Research has found that most teachers agree with the original intention of the policy, especially in terms of standardizing teaching content, preventing "running ahead of the curriculum", and safeguarding students' physical and mental health. The policy has played a positive role. However, teachers also pointed out that there are still certain rigidity and uncertainties in implementing the policy, such as the complicated course filing process and the limited space for teaching innovation.

Online education policies have profoundly impacted both teachers' career development and teaching content. Regarding qualification certification, course design, and teaching time restrictions, policies have promoted the standardization of teaching activities and driven up the demand for teachers' professional growth. Meanwhile, the pressure of role transformation and curriculum reconstruction faced by teachers is increasingly evident, and a systematic support mechanism is urgently needed to alleviate external pressure and internal challenges.

Moreover, teachers have demonstrated high adaptability and innovation when facing policy pressure. They actively adjust the teaching structure, introduce new strategies such as blended teaching, modular design and digital resource integration, and seek a balance between compliance and innovation.

Overall, policy governance research from the perspective of teachers indicates that the current online education policies for off-campus training institutions in primary and secondary schools have achieved initial results in ensuring educational equity and regulating market order.

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