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A QUALITY EDUCATION FRAMEWORK BASED ON BASIC EDUCATION REFORM FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN SHENZHEN

ZHANG RUIXUE



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THESIS PRESENTED TO QUALIFY FOR A
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

FACULTY OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
SULTAN IDRIS EDUCATION UNIVERSITY

2025



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

When I finished the last chapter, I felt a sense of emptiness. Everything I had experienced before seemed like a dream. During this four-year doctoral journey, I received help and support from countless people. After this journey, I will embark on an unknown road alone again. I love exploration, and the unknown always brings me surprises and unexpected gains. It is my parents' 100% support, encouragement and trust that enabled me to come to Malaysia to study. They always stood by me when I encountered difficulties, enlightened me, inspired me, and made me believe that the future must be bright. They are the backbone of all my achievements. Thanks to my supervisor, whose expertise always gives me inspiration when I encounter problems, who always calms me down when I am nervous, and whose kindness and authority are the greatest guarantee for me to complete my thesis. I am grateful to everyone who has helped me, to everything I have experienced, and to myself for my perseverance. I will always cherish the precious time I spent studying at UPSI, which will become the most beautiful part of my life and the most shining milestone.

ABSTRACT

This study aims to construct a cognitive framework for quality education within the context of basic education reform. Adopting an interpretivism philosophical stance, the research employed qualitative methods, with semi-structured interviews conducted with 34 frontline teachers in Shenzhen, China. These interviews were supplemented by document analysis and government statistical data. A systems analysis approach was applied throughout the research process. Data were coded and analyzed thematically using NVivo 12, and findings were derived through inductive reasoning. To ensure the reliability and validity of the data, quality control measures such as expert consultations, pilot interviews, and dual-coder verification were implemented. The study resulted in a systematic framework comprising four key components: input, implementation, output, and assessment. The framework is specifically designed for application at the primary school level. Ultimately, this framework serves as a practical guide for both novice and experienced teachers in understanding the goals of quality education, selecting appropriate pedagogical approaches, applying effective teaching strategies, and achieving desired educational outcomes. Furthermore, the study offers an innovative theoretical perspective by bridging the gap between the ideal vision and practical realities of quality education, emphasizing a paradigm shift from passively meeting educational needs to actively creating them



KERANGKA PENDIDIKAN BERKUALITI BERASASKAN REFORMASI PENDIDIKAN ASAS UNTUK SEKOLAH RENDAH DI SHENZHEN

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan membina satu rangka kerja kognitif bagi pendidikan berkualiti dalam konteks reformasi pendidikan asas. Berpandukan fahaman falsafah interpretivisme, kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif, dengan data utama diperoleh melalui temu bual separa berstruktur bersama 34 orang guru berpengalaman di Shenzhen, China. Temu bual ini turut disokong dengan analisis dokumen dan data statistik kerajaan China. Pendekatan analisis sistem digunakan sepanjang proses penyelidikan. Data telah dikodkan dan dianalisis secara tematik menggunakan perisian NVivo 12, manakala penemuan diperoleh melalui penaakulan induktif. Bagi menjamin kebolehpercayaan dan kesahihan data, pelbagai langkah kawalan kualiti telah dilaksanakan, termasuk perundingan pakar, temu bual rintis, dan pengesahan oleh dua pengekod. Kajian ini menghasilkan satu rangka kerja sistematik yang merangkumi empat komponen utama iaitu keperluan asas, pelaksanaan, hasil pembelajaran dan penilaian. Rangka kerja ini direka khusus untuk diaplikasikan pada peringkat sekolah rendah. Secara tidak langsung, rangka kerja ini berfungsi sebagai panduan praktikal kepada guru baharu dan berpengalaman dalam memahami matlamat pendidikan berkualiti, memilih pendekatan pedagogi yang bersesuaian, melaksanakan strategi pengajaran yang berkesan, serta mencapai hasil pembelajaran yang diinginkan. Selain itu, kajian ini turut menyumbang satu perspektif teori yang inovatif dengan merapatkan jurang antara visi ideal dan realiti pelaksanaan pendidikan berkualiti, serta menekankan perubahan paradigma daripada sekadar memenuhi keperluan pendidikan secara pasif kepada mencipta keperluan secara aktif.



CONTENTS

	Page
DECLARATION OF ORIGINAL WORK	ii
DECLARATION OF THESIS	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
ABSTRACT	v
ABSTRAK	vi
CONTENTS	vii
LIST OF TABLES	viii
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	x
LIST OF APPENDIX	xi
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Research background	2
1.3 Problem statement	4
1.4 Research objectives	11
1.5 Research question	12
1.6 Theoretical framework	12

1.7 Conceptual framework	20
1.8 Terms of definitions	26
1.9 Importance of research	31
1.10 Summary	34

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction	36
2.2 History of Chinese education	38
2.2.1 Education in ancient China (before 1840)	38
2.2.2 Education in modern China (1840-1949)	40
2.2.3 Education in contemporary China (1949 to now)	42
2.3 Basic education reform	45
2.3.1 Content of basic education reform	47
2.3.2 Basic education and reform in Shenzhen	52
2.4 Quality education	57
2.4.1 Development process of quality education	57
2.4.2 Quality education and basic education reform	64
2.4.3 Problems in quality education	70
2.4.4 The practice and exploration of quality education in Shenzhen	75
2.5 Basic education and quality education in foreign countries	79
2.5.1 The United States of America	80
2.5.2 The United Kingdom	82
2.5.3 Finland	84

2.5.4 Japan	86
2.6 Research on the existing quality education framework	90
2.6.1 Literacy definition project	94
2.6.2 Core literacy framework for student development in China	95
2.6.3 Singapore core literacy framework	98
2.7 Summary	99

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction	103
3.2 Research paradigm	105
3.3 Participant	108
3.4 Instruments	113
3.4.1 Validity	117
3.4.2 Reliability	118
3.5 Research data	120
3.5.1 Data collection methods	120
3.5.2 Data analysis method	124
3.5.2.1 Literature method	128
3.5.2.2 Content analysis	130
3.5.3 Tidy data	132
3.5.4 Statistical software	135
3.6 Summary	138



CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction	140
4.2 Demands of quality education	143
4.2.1 Society demands	145
4.2.2 Students' spiritual demands	148
4.2.3 Long-term coexistence with exam-oriented education	154
4.3 Developmental cognitive framework of quality education	160
4.3.1 Quality education input	164
4.3.1.1 Prerequisite of quality education	166
4.3.1.2 Schools	190
4.3.1.3 Teachers	203
4.3.1.4 Student group	213
4.3.2 Implementation of quality education	218
4.3.2.1 Curriculum and teaching	224
4.3.2.2 Family and social support	249
4.3.3 Quality education output	254
4.3.3.1 Knowledge	256
4.3.3.2 Skills and abilities	260
4.3.3.3 Scholastic achievement	263
4.4 The supervision and assessment system of quality education	268
4.4.1 Student-level assessment	278
4.4.2 Teacher -level assessment	285



4.4.3 School-level assessment	293
4.5 Summary	299

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction	303
5.2 Conclusion	304
5.2.1 Quality education from meeting demand to creating demand	305
5.2.2 The concept of talent training needs to be constantly updated	310
5.2.3 The contradiction between quality education and the country's talent selection way is the direction of reform	318
5.2.4 The reform of quality education assessment system is difficult	324
5.3 Discussion	332
5.3.1 Internal and external contradictions of quality education	337
5.3.2 The feasibility of quality education is reduced from top to bottom	352
5.3.3 Beware of "matthew effect"	361
5.3.4 Misunderstanding of chinese traditional culture	365
5.4 Recommendations	376
5.4.1 Combine advantage education with quality education	377
5.4.2 Pay attention to the application of information technology in quality education	380
5.4.3 Reduce the pressure of teachers' non-teaching tasks	382
5.4.4 Strengthening home-school cooperation	385
5.5 Study limitations	389
5.6 Research prospect	391

REFERENCES	395
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LIST OF TABLES

Table No.		Page
1.1	Basic Data of Primary, Junior and Senior High School Education	27
2.1	Subject Distribution of Literature with Basic Education Reform and Quality Education as the Retrieval Condition	37
2.2	Core Literacy Connotation of 16 Courses in China's Compulsory Education Stage	62
2.3	Pilot Areas and Tasks	72
2.4	Four Aspects of Quality Education Should be Improved	74
2.5	Framework of Quality Education Resource Database for Higher Vocational Students	91
2.6	Literature of "Basic Education Reform", "Quality Education" and "Quality Education Framework"	101
3.1	Research Design	105
3.2	Basic Data of Primary Schools in Shenzhen	110
3.3	Information Collected About the Participants	111
3.4	Basic Information of Study Participants	111
3.5	List of Encoding Documents	137
4.1	Statistics of Teachers	187
4.2	Key Factors Affecting the Implementation of Quality Education in Primary Schools	222
4.3	The school institution that includes comprehensive quality services	223
4.4	Selection of innovative quality education activities in Shenzhen primary schools	231
4.5	Self-check Items of Quality Education Teaching	292

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure No.		Page
1.1	Theoretical Framework	12
1.2	Conceptual Framework	20
1.3	Rates of Return to Human Capital Investment from James J. Heckman	33
2.1	Human Quality System	64
2.2	The Reference Frame of The Core Literacy Concept of Deseco	95
2.3	Core Literacy Framework for Chinese Students' Development	96
2.4	Global Competency Teaching Framework	97
2.5	Singapore Core Literacy Framework	99
2.6	Annual Trend of "Basic Education Reform", "Quality Education" and "Quality Education Framework"	102
3.1	Total Sample Size Calculated by G-power	110
3.2	Development, Debugging and Use Path of Instrument	115
3.3	Literature classification	133
4.1	Developmental Cognitive Framework of Quality Education	161
4.2	Annual expenditure on education in Shenzhen	182
4.3	Number of primary schools, teaching staff and full-time teachers in Shenzhen	205
4.4	The way to promote the quality education	220
4.5	Supervision and Assessment System of Quality Education	298

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CPC	Communist Party of China
CNKI	China National Knowledge Infrastructure
Compulsory	Compulsory Education Law of the People's Republic of China
Education Law	Education Law of the People's Republic of China
MOE	The Ministry of Education of China
Outline	Outline of the National Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development Plan (2010-2020)
RPC	Peoples Republic of China
SEC	State Education Commission of the PRC
The State Council	The State Council of The People's Republic of China



LIST OF APPENDIX

- A INTERVIEW OUTLINE
- B INTERVIEW PROTOCOL



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter first introduces the background of the research, explores the birth of quality education in the wave of basic education reform, and the challenges and opportunities facing the current educational environment. On this basis, three core objectives of the research are clearly put forward, and the practical problems of the research are stated. Then the theoretical and conceptual framework of the research is presented, and the limitations of the research are frankly pointed out. The three most important concepts in the early stage of the research, basic education, basic education reform and quality education were explained in detail in subheading 1.8. At the end of

the chapter, the importance of the research in promoting educational reform and optimizing the practice of quality education is further emphasized.

1.2 Research background

China's basic education reform has always resonated with national development. Deng Xiaoping, an outstanding leader who promoted the reform and opening up process of modern China, once pointed out that education is the most fundamental cause of a nation. To achieve socialist modernization, science and technology are the key and education is the foundation. He emphasized that the development of basic education should be placed in an important position. The "Compulsory Education Law of the People's Republic of China" (hereinafter referred to as the "Compulsory Education Law") promulgated by China in 1986 guarantees the popularization of basic education in the form of law. The "Outline of China's Education Reform and Development" in 1993 clearly stated that basic education is the foundation project for improving the quality of the nation, and for the first time proposed the goal of transforming primary and secondary education from "examination-oriented education" to "quality education". This set the tone for subsequent education reforms to be oriented towards quality education.

Entering the 21st century, a wave of global education reforms has surged. Developed countries such as the United States, Britain, France, and Germany have promoted basic education reforms for the 21st century, emphasizing the cultivation of

innovative ability and comprehensive quality. China has also kept up with the pace of the times. The promulgation of the Outline of Basic Education Curriculum Reform (Trial) in 2001 launched a basic education reform with the goal of “deepening education reform and comprehensively promoting quality education”. Comprehensively promoting quality education has become a major decision for China’s education development. In 2006, quality education was included in the Compulsory Education Law, which marked that quality education has since risen to the national will.

However, quality education still faces many challenges in practice. Educators have different understandings of the connotation of quality education, and the public also has disputes about its promotion methods. Although the government vigorously advocates quality education and experts and scholars have proposed a wealth of practical plans, the problem of students’ comprehensive quality is still prominent. Some students have obvious shortcomings in moral quality, national sovereignty awareness, life ability and values, and some even seriously lack the basic humanistic qualities as a person. What is more worthy of attention is that the boundary between basic education and exam-oriented education is gradually blurred, and quality education faces the risk of being marginalized in practice.

In the new historical position, Shenzhen as a pilot demonstration area of socialism with Chinese characteristics, shoulders the important mission of exploring the way for national education reform. In recent years, Shenzhen’s basic education reform has taken “good education for children and excellent education for students”

as its goal, and has comprehensively promoted high-quality development of education. In terms of curriculum reform, Shenzhen took the lead in carrying out the construction of a national demonstration zone for new courses and new textbooks, and developed a curriculum system with local characteristics. Especially in the field of science and technology innovation education, Shenzhen's primary and secondary schools generally offer courses such as artificial intelligence and programming, focusing on cultivating students' innovative spirit and practical ability. At the same time, Shenzhen vigorously promotes the internationalization of education, and cultivates students' global vision and cross-cultural communication skills through international understanding education.

Based on the above background, this study is guided by Marxist educational theory, based on Shenzhen's reality, and drawing on advanced domestic and foreign experience. It aims to construct a quality education framework that is in line with national education policies and has Shenzhen characteristics, providing educational support for Shenzhen to build a pilot demonstration zone of socialism with Chinese characteristics, and also providing a "Shenzhen sample" for the national basic education reform.

1.3 Problem statement

The concept of quality education originated in the 1980s in China and has become an important part of national education. There is no doubt that the development of



quality education is an important task of basic education, but quality education still has not reached its potential after decades of development, whether it is schools or all circles, their efforts in educating students' quality and are always far from the actual gains. All kinds of documents on quality education issued by the government launched out with great vigour, but the local implementation is vague. Front-line teachers are usually unwilling to devote time to solving the problems of quality education and still put most of their energy to completing the specified teaching tasks.

Huang (2006) believes that the implementation of quality education is the biggest educational reform after China's reform and opening up, and it is also a reform that must be implemented. (p.24-25). But rather than reform, quality education is now more like a good wish. The ideal quality education has not yet come to practice, it has been "scared" by the exam-oriented education back.

He Dong Chang, the former Minister of Education, drafted the Report on the widespread tendency of exam-oriented education in basic education and related suggestions in 2005, which was full of worries about the current situation of education in China and analysed the improper implementation of educational policies. It is pointed out that in some places and schools, there is a behaviour of belittle quality education and pursuing the enrolment rate one-sided, and the students' academic burden is getting heavier and heavier, which has a negative impact on the all-round development of students. Seventeen years later, the current situation of quality education is still not optimistic. Problems such as the unclear orientation of quality education and the difficulty in narrowing the gap between the ideal and reality of



quality education continue to exist and will be persist for a long time. The following are three current issues in line with the research background. The gaps between these problems and the desired goals is the direction of subsequent research. Solutions to these problems are the focus of this study.

I. Is there sufficient research on the quality education framework now?

First of all, there is no doubt that scientific quality education theory can help educators better implement quality education and formulate practical strategies for students' quality education in teaching. However, the formation and development of actual quality education theory is extremely slow, and systematic research on the quality education framework is still insufficient. In the past decade or so, the number of articles published on quality education has been decreasing. If the popularity of educational topics is proportional to the number of articles published, then this is not a good phenomenon.

Secondly, from the background information of the investigation, there are few framework studies focusing on the cognition of quality education in basic education. According to the search of China National Knowledge Network, there are 36 literatures related to "basic education reform" and "quality education" since 1995, among which there is no article on education framework. There are 42 papers related to the "quality education framework". There are not many direct studies on the quality education framework. Recent related frameworks include Liu (2021) Xi Jinping's quality education system; Wang(2016) "Quality education teaching goal framework from the perspective of system theory"; Xin, Jiang and Liu (2013) "Core literacy

model for students in compulsory education”; Yang, Wu, Mao, and Yang (2011) “Reflection-based construction: cognitive framework and practical principles of quality education”. The themes of the remaining frameworks are mainly education evaluation indicators, higher vocational quality education and online quality education.

From the existing data, the current research on the quality education framework is still insufficient. Existing research often focuses on a certain aspect or a certain stage of quality education, lacking a comprehensive and systematic combing and construction of it. This leads to the difficulty for educators to find a complete and clear framework to guide the implementation of quality education in actual operation; secondly, with the continuous deepening of basic education reform, the requirements for quality education are also constantly increasing. The existing quality education framework often fails to fully reflect the new concepts, new goals and new requirements of basic education reform, and it is difficult to meet the actual needs in the context of basic education reform. In addition, the existing framework also has deficiencies in operability and evaluability. Many frameworks are too abstract or theoretical to be directly applied to educational and teaching practices; at the same time, there is a lack of effective evaluation mechanisms to evaluate the implementation effect of quality education, which is not conducive to the continuous improvement and optimization of quality education.

When Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Tsinghua University in 2021, he emphasized that efforts should be made to build an academic system with Chinese characteristics, Chinese style and Chinese style. Quality education with Chinese

characteristics must go through long-term exploration and constant setbacks to become a vital education. During this period, the emergence of a quality education framework focusing on the basic education stage is necessary.

II. How about the infiltration of quality education into front-line teaching?

The school is the main position for the implementation of quality education, and the classroom with the participation of teachers is the central place for quality education. The integration of quality education and classroom teaching is an important guarantee for students' quality. However, as a front-line teacher, it is very difficult to integrate quality education into daily teaching, especially in the poor atmosphere of quality education. In addition to classroom teaching, after-school education is also a part of school education In China. However, after-school education involves the taking up teachers' personal life time, few schools are willing to spend their minds on after-school education. In this case, it can be said that the current quality education is not only difficult to enter the classroom, but also difficult to appear outside the classroom.

Based on the current implementation stage of quality education, teachers' awareness of quality-oriented education is more important than their detailed understanding of quality-oriented education knowledge. Teachers should and must understand the spirit of quality-oriented education and cannot stagnate in mechanically completing teaching tasks. Although this is indeed difficult to achieve under the current severe form of exam-oriented education, it is very difficult for teachers to truly reflect the concept of cultivating children not only in theoretical

knowledge, but also in teaching the good qualities that children should possess as independent individuals and living people. Teachers consciously create a good educational growth atmosphere for children, realize the importance of the role of teachers in quality education, and form a benign communication with students' parents, these are all part of quality education.

Outline of the National Medium and Long-term Education Reform and Development Plan (2010-2020) (hereinafter referred to as the Outline (2010-2020)) issued by The Ministry of Education of China (hereinafter referred to as MOE) (2010) mentioned that "The concept of education is relatively backward, the content and methods are relatively old, the schoolwork burden of primary and secondary school students is too heavy, and it is difficult to promote quality education". (p.7). Although quality education is an important link in the reform of basic education, the decision-makers who make rules and the stakeholders of the reform often overestimate the action and passion of the participants and underestimate the complexity, integrity and systematicness of the reform process. It is understandable that every reform cannot be put in place in only one step, and any social reform cannot satisfy everyone completely, nor can it completely solve all the existing problems. At the same time, if quality education can never be implemented on students, what is the use of these policy documents, research results and suggestions.

No matter in which region, which city, which school, once the quality education enters the practical application level, there will be many obstacles. Many efforts to cultivate students' qualities have failed to meet expectations, and even many

unexpected results have occurred. With the increasing timeliness of the news media, various problems caused by the incomplete development of national quality are frequently exposed. The lowering of age and malignancy of juvenile delinquency are becoming more and more difficult to imagine. Some young teenage girls are proud of their carrying a baby, promoting and showing off such “pregnancy fashion” on social media. The information screening ability of minors cannot match the smooth flow of information channels. Both the existing problems in reality and the potential crisis are putting forward requirements for the quality of minors.

The solutions to the problems of students’ quality usually cannot produce immediate effects, the law of quality education is quite complex, and the derivative problems of individual quality cannot be accurately predicted. When the time to solve the problem becomes infinitely long and the origin of the problem is difficult to trace, the original problem is easy to give rise to new problems.

III. What is the relationship between basic education and productivity?

In 2016, the International Statistical Information Center of the National Bureau of Statistics mentioned in “International Comparison Shows that my country’s Labor Productivity Has Grows Fast” that my country’s education model is gradually improving, shifting from a model that focuses on acquiring knowledge to a quality education model that emphasizes innovative thinking, which is conducive to the continued growth of my country’s labor productivity in the future.

Basic education is a people-oriented education, and the goal of education should be to promote the socialization of people. But nowadays, local documents and even school documents like to link basic education with social productivity, which is not wrong, and a well-educated person is indeed beneficial to the improvement of productivity. However, for children in compulsory education, especially those in primary school, the healthy and complete growth of the individual is the primary goal of education, rather than directly becoming a person with productive labor capacity. The mandatory nature of productivity does not need to be fully demonstrated in the basic education stage.

Hao (2011) mentioned in his article that the goal of education is to cultivate talents and to cultivate useful talents, which is also the goal of school education. (p.4.). Talent is the key for a country to occupy a strategic initiative in the fierce international competition. For a country like China with a population of 1.4 billion, starting from education, turning population pressure into a talent advantage is an important means to improve national competitiveness.

1.4 Research objectives

The ultimate goal of this study is to construct a framework of quality education that is adapt to the reform of basic education. Three specific sub-objectives are as follows:

- I. Analysis of the specific needs of quality education based on the current basic education reform.
- II. Develop a complete cognitive framework for the development of quality education, including the design of the input, implement, output and assessment system of quality education.
- III. Establish a quality education supervision and assessment system that can be carried out at the three levels of students, teachers and schools to ensure the effective implementation of quality education.

1.5 Research question

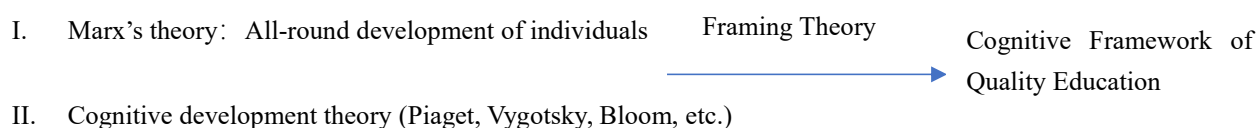
The following is a list of questions that will be answered in the study based on the study objectives.

- I. What are the demands of quality education based on basic education reform for primary schools in Shenzhen?
- II. What are the specific items of development cognitive framework of quality education?
- III. How to assess the implementation of quality education from student, teacher and school levels?

1.6 Theoretical framework

Figure 1.1

Theoretical Framework



I. The theory of all-round development of individuals

The theory of “all-round development of individuals” in Marxist philosophy scientifically reveals the law of human development, which has a strong pertinence and important guiding significance for the connotation of quality education and the reform of basic education in China. The principle of seeking truth from facts in Marxist thought, the understanding of human nature, and materialistic thinking are all suitable for analyzing educational phenomena and problems.

Li (2008) thinks that Marx’s stipulation on the all-round development of individuals is carried out from three aspects: First, the all-round development of people is the ability to develop in an all-round way. Secondly, a person with all-round development is a person who develops freely in rich and comprehensive social interaction and social relations. Marx regards people’s all-round development as a historical process of continuous development (Li,2008). Marxist theory emphasizes the interaction between individuals and society, which is consistent with the

requirement of socialist education theory with Chinese characteristics to focus on cultivating socialist builders and successors with all-round development of morality, intelligence, physique, aesthetics and labor.

Marx once said: “The degree to which a theory is realized in a country is determined by the degree to which the theory meets the needs of the country.” The New Outline of Education published by Yang XianJiang, a Chinese Marxist educational theorist and educator in 1930, is the first book in China that systematically uses Marxist viewpoints and methods to explain educational principles and link theories with China’s reality. Many excellent books on quality education research have been published, such as Tian Zheng’s “Research on the Management and Evaluation Practice of the Ladder Development of Quality Education” in 2008; Mao ZongShan’s “Introduction to Quality Education” in 2007; Liu CangJin’s “Modern Quality Education Theory” in 2007, etc.

Marxism has always pursued the realization of human freedom and all-round development as its fundamental pursuit. China’s quality education aims to promote the development of people’s comprehensive quality, which is highly consistent with the Marxist theory of all-round development of people and is the concrete embodiment of this theory in China’s educational practice. Quality education is both an inevitable requirement for achieving the all-round development of people and an important way to achieve it.

The theory of all-round development takes the degree of human development as a value scale to measure social progress and provides methodological guidance for promoting the all-round development of people. Raising the cultivation of human quality to the national strategic level is not only a continuation and innovation of Marxist theory, but also promotes the process of China's education reform. Guided by the theory of the all-round development of human beings, it helps to examine quality education from the macro perspective of social development and provide a scientific world view and methodological support for solving educational problems.

II. Theory of Cognitive Development

The classical cognitive development theory has important application value for primary school quality education. As one of the important theories of pedagogy and cardiology, cognitive development theory discusses the development process of individual thinking, cognition and knowledge, and provides theoretical support and guidance for the implementation of education. These theories allow teachers to recognize the individual differences and cognitive development characteristics of students more clearly, so as to design the appropriate teaching strategies to promote the students' cognitive development and learning achievements.

i. Piaget's theory of cognitive and moral development

Piaget's theory of cognitive development emphasizes the gradual maturation and transformation of children's cognition. He proposed four stages of children's cognitive development, namely, the sensorimotor stage (0-2 years old), the pre-operational stage (2-7 years old), the concrete operational stage (7-12 years old), and



the formal operational stage (12-15 years old). These stages reveal the transformation and development of students' thinking. Teachers can design corresponding teaching activities and courses according to students' current cognitive ability and thinking level to promote their learning and development.

Generally, the age of students receiving primary education will be around the ages of 6 and 12. According to Piaget's view, children in the lower grade of primary school are in the pre-operational stage. Children at this stage are generally self-centred and unable to objectively understand things, and not yet capable of abstract operational thinking. Children in the middle and upper grades of primary school are in the concrete operation stage, and the thinking characteristics of children in this stage are able to think backward, which requires the support of concrete things and needs to rely on specific experience to maintain the level of individual logical thinking. In addition, according to Piaget's stage of children's moral cognitive development, children aged four-nine years old are in the stage of heteronomous moral judgment. In this period, children's moral judgment is highly influenced by the outside world. If the child's individual quality can be carefully cultivated at this time, it is absolutely beneficial for them to establish their own subjective value standards in the future.

ii. Vygotsky's theory of social culture

Lev Vygotsky's theory emphasizes the influence of social environment on individual cognition and learning, especially the importance of social interaction in cognitive development. He believes that learning is achieved through interaction with others and participation in real situations in social activities, and in this process of



interaction, children can internalize and use higher cognitive functions. Therefore, in the teaching process, it is very important to creating a positive learning environment, which can promote cooperation and communication between students. Teachers can use social and collaborative learning environments to promote students' learning and cognitive development while fostering their social and collaborative skills.

In addition, he proposed the concept of the zone of proximal development, that is, individuals through cooperation with others, are able to reach a higher level of development above their current level. This suggests that social environment and cooperation have a positive effect on cognitive development.

The common point between Vygotsky's theory and quality education is that both focus on the overall development of students and emphasize the shaping role of learning environment and social interaction on individual learning and cognitive development.

iii. Bloom's cognitive theory

Bloom's contributions in the field of cognition have a certain connection with quality education, especially in the setting of educational goals and curriculum design. Bloom's cognitive taxonomy provides a framework to help educators design learning goals at different levels. He proposed a hierarchy of cognitive goals, including knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Primary school students are in a critical period of upward development of cognitive level, educators need to reasonably design teaching content and tasks according to students'

cognitive development level, and promote the improvement and development of students' cognitive ability. These cognitive goals can help teachers clarify the learning goals of students and design corresponding assessment tools and strategies to evaluate students' learning outcomes.

Overall, Bloom's taxonomy provides a way to clearly define learning goals and integrate those goals into curriculum design, while quality education emphasizes the importance of integrated student development, prompting educators to consider how to design curriculum to meet students' holistic development needs. Combining the two can help educators better plan lessons and ensure that students are fully developed and nurtured in multiple ways.

III. Framing Theory

The concept of frame originated from Bateson, then Goffman introduced it into cultural sociology, and later it was introduced into mass communication research, which has become an important point of view in qualitative research. Goffman believes that frame is an important evidence for people to transform social reality into subjective thought, that is, the subjective interpretation and thinking structure of events by people or organizations. Framing theory posits that the way something is presented (the frame) influences people's choices about how to process that information. Based on Goffman's thought, frame theory can be used to identify and understand quality education. If the reality is brought into the thinking of frame construction in the research, the final research results will be more appropriate to the real situation of quality education.

Combined with the background of this research, it can be considered that frame is a cognitive structure, and the significance of frame analysis should be to clarify which factors play a role in the process of frame construction, what is the interaction between them, and why there is such a relationship.

Goffman defines a frame as a cognitive structure used by people to understand and interpret social life experience, which enables its users to locate, perceive, determine and name seemingly infinite concrete facts. Gitlin then developed Goffman's concept and came up with a clearer definition: a framework is "the criteria used to select, emphasize, and represent what exists, what happens, and what matters."

Gamson, a researcher of frame theory, points out that "a frame is an organized central idea or clue story that provides meaning for a series of events." Gamson's definition of framework is divided into two levels, one is "boundary", which can be extended to the regulation of social events; Second, it refers to the "architecture" that people use to interpret social phenomena. People construct meaning from the framework to understand the causes and context of social events.

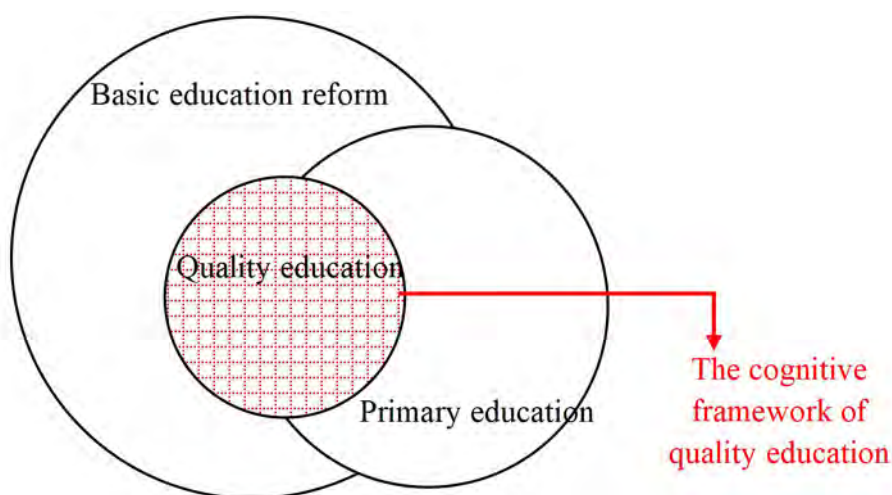
Based on the above definition of frame, it can be considered that "frame" is a kind of cognitive and presentation of things, through the selection and processing of things, highlighting specific connotations, expressing certain ideas, and these ideas reflect specific cultural values. Frame theory is often used in the study of cognitive problems.

What kind of framework is used to process information will affect the results of people's processing of information, value judgments, attitudes and behavioural responses to things, which is called the framework effect. Even if the events are essentially the same, people's reactions or decision-making choices will be very different because of the different frameworks of the text. This means that the framing effect is not absolute.

1.7 Conceptual framework

Figure 1.2

Conceptual Framework



I. Primary education

At present, basic education in China includes early childhood education (around ages three to five), compulsory education (around ages six to fifteen), high

school education (around ages sixteen to nineteen) and literacy education. Primary education is one of the stages of compulsory education, and the object of education is generally children aged six-twelve. According to Article 2 of Chapter 1 of the Compulsory Education Law: “Compulsory education is an education that all children and adolescents of school age must receive and is implemented uniformly by the state. It is a public welfare undertaking that the state must guarantee. Compulsory education has four major characteristics: compulsory, universal, free and basic. Among them, compulsory is the most essential characteristic of compulsory education. The compulsory characteristic can basically guarantee that all children of school age in the country can receive the most basic education.

Primary school is a necessary stage for children to transition from kindergarten to middle school. At this stage, children begin to receive systematic learning. For children at this stage, they must first be educated as a complete person, and then develop healthily and happily in other social roles. The main teaching content of primary schools at present involves basic knowledge and skills in various subjects, such as Chinese, mathematics, English, etc. These basic knowledge are essential for a person’s all-round development, further study and career development. Through good primary education, children can establish a positive learning attitude and good learning habits, cultivate comprehensive qualities and creativity, and shape correct social emotions and values. Through reasonable planning and effective implementation of primary education, we can lay a solid foundation for the future development of children and inject continuous vitality into the future development of the country.

II. Basic education reform

The reform of basic education is a series of complex practical activities carried out purposefully to address the unreasonable existence in basic education. The reform of basic education means that people are not satisfied with the current education and pursue a better education. After China's reform and opening up, it has entered a new situation of creating socialist modernization in an all-round way. Deng Xiaoping put forward three orientations: "Education should face modernization, the world and the future", which has become the general policy of China's educational reform.

Yuan (1992) knew "reform" in this way: Reform can have different intensity, it is the change to good direction; The duration of reform can be long or short, and different levels of education reform have different intensity and duration (Yuan, 1992). Zhang (2009) precisely refined the connotation of "educational reform", and he believed that educational reform is a practical activity for the reform subject to change the actual educational situation based on a certain educational purpose. One of the reasons for the reform of basic education is that the quality of students cannot be well educated in the current basic education system, and quality education does not meet the requirements of the development of the times (Zhang, 2009).

III. Quality education

Quality education itself is an aspect of basic education, but also the task of basic education reform. Quality education in primary school aims at the all-round development of students. It not only focuses on imparting subject knowledge, but also emphasizes on cultivating students' comprehensive literacy, ability and trait. The goal

of quality education in primary schools is to cultivate all-round development of students, so that they have good academic standards and also have the ability and quality to respond to social needs, so as to better adapt to future social development and changes. If the core competencies of children of the primary school age can be given a certain degree of stability, it will increase the possibility of them transferring to higher level quality. Here are some key concepts in quality education:

Comprehensive literacy: The comprehensive literacy of primary school students includes cognitive, emotional, social and practical aspects. Students not only acquire knowledge, but also develop comprehensive abilities such as problem solving, innovative thinking, communication and collaboration.

Core competencies: Focus on cultivating students' core competencies, including critical thinking, innovation ability, information literacy, etc. These core competencies are considered to be the key to students' success in the future society.

Comprehensive development: Focusing on students' cognitive, emotional, social, practical and other aspects, emphasizing comprehensive development in different fields, not just a single development in subject knowledge.

Personalized education: Taking into account the differences of each student, respecting and developing the student's personality, and meeting the individual needs of students through differentiated teaching methods and allocation of resources.

Diversified education: Emphasis on meeting the interests and subject development needs of different students through diversified educational content and methods, making education more flexible and innovative.

Interdisciplinary integration: Promoting the integration between different subjects, help students build a more comprehensive and integrated knowledge system, and cultivate interdisciplinary thinking and problem-solving abilities. Combining subject knowledge with practical applications and cultivating students' practical abilities and problem-solving abilities through practical activities and projects.

Social-emotional education: Focus on cultivating students' social-emotional qualities such as social responsibility, teamwork skills, and communication skills, so that they can have better social adaptability.

Lifelong learning ability: Emphasis on cultivating students' learning interest and motivation, so that they have the awareness and ability of lifelong learning and adapt to future social changes.

These concepts constitute the basic ideas of the cognitive framework for the development of quality education, aiming to guide educational practice to pay more attention to the comprehensive development and individual needs of students in order to cultivate a new generation of citizens with multi-faceted literacy. In the context of basic education reform, this framework helps promote the development of the education system in a more comprehensive, personalized, and innovative direction.



IV. Developmental cognitive framework of quality education

Quality education aims to cultivate students' ability to develop in an all-round way and improve their overall quality. It covers the cultivation of students' intelligence, moral character, emotions and other aspects. In order to promote the development of quality education in primary schools, the study chose to establish a framework to promote individual cognition of quality education. At the school level, the framework aims to guide schools and educators to pay more comprehensive attention to students' comprehensive qualities, rather than just the teaching of subject knowledge, and to build a bridge between macro-level educational goals and the cultivation of students' comprehensive qualities in educational practice.



First, the framework emphasizes students' active learning and independent development. Teachers can stimulate students' interest and curiosity through rich and diverse learning resources and situation creation, and guide students to actively explore and construct knowledge; Secondly, the framework attaches great importance to the cultivation of students' comprehensive abilities. Within this framework, we should not only focus on the teaching of subject knowledge, but also focus on cultivating students' innovative thinking, problem-solving skills, communication and collaboration skills, etc; In addition, the framework also emphasizes the changing role of teachers. Teachers are no longer traditional imparters of knowledge, but guides and organizers of student learning. Teachers should pay attention to students' learning



interests and needs, design personalized teaching plans according to students' characteristics and potential, and stimulate students' learning motivation and creativity; Finally, the framework also focuses on the cooperation among families, schools and society. Schools should maintain close contact with parents, appropriately grasp the situation and needs of students at home, and seek cooperation with social resources to provide students with broader learning opportunities and resource support.

1.8 Terms of definitions

Basic education, basic education reform and quality education are the basic concepts throughout the study, and the following are the explanations of their respective operational definitions.

I. Basic Education

MOE answered the definition, scope and stage of basic education in this way:

Basic education is a national quality education for all students. Its fundamental purpose is to lay a solid foundation for improving the quality of the whole nation and for all school-age children and adolescents to learn for life and participate in social life.

The second edition of Encyclopaedia of China defines basic education as:

Education that enables citizens to master basic general cultural knowledge, cultivate basic qualities of citizens, and lay the foundation for personal further education, vocational training, and even lifelong learning. It is also called national basic education. Basic education is a universal rather than selective education for all students, generally including primary education, junior high school education and general high school education, sometimes including secondary vocational education. (General Editorial Board,2009).

At present, the years of primary education in China's education system is six years, and the years of junior high school and senior high school education is three years, which totals twelve years. Table 1.1 below shows some basic data on primary, junior and senior high school education published according to the 2021 MOE Statistical Bulletin on the Development of National Education in 2020.

Table 1.1

Basic Data of Primary, Junior and Senior High School Education

Education phase	Primary Education	Junior high school education	General High School Education
Project			
Number of schools (10,000)	15.80	5.28	1.42
Students in school (10,000)	10725.35	4914.09	2494.45
Number of full-time teachers (10,000)	643.42	386.07	193.32
Teacher-student ratio	16.67:1	12.73:1	12.90:1

II. Basic Education Reform

Decision of the State Council on the Reform and Development of Basic Education in 2001 made the following decisions to promote the reform of basic education:

- i. Establish the strategic position of basic education in the socialist modernization drive and give priority to the development of basic education;
- ii. Improve the management system, guarantee the input of funds, and promote the sustainable and healthy development of rural compulsory education;
- iii. Deepening the reform of education and teaching and promoting quality education;
- iv. Promoting the reform of school-running system and promoting the healthy development of school-running by social forces;
- v. Strengthen leadership, mobilize the whole society to care and support, and ensure the smooth progress of the reform and development of basic education (The State Council, 2001).

MOE Basic Education Department (2022) put forward the following requirements for basic education reform in the key work of basic education: “continuously deepen the comprehensive reform of basic education, accelerate the construction of a high-quality basic education system, and train socialist builders and successors with all-round development of morality, intelligence, physical fitness, beauty and labour”. (p.1).

To sum up, the goal of basic education reform is to cultivate people with all-round development. It is a major strategic decision made by the CPC Central Committee for national rejuvenation, coping with international competition, improving national quality in an all-round way and enhancing comprehensive national strength.

III. Quality Education

The clearest explanation of the concept of quality education at present is in an article “What is Quality Education” published by the National Quality Education Network (2011):

Quality education is based on the actual needs of human development and social development, with the fundamental purpose of comprehensively improving the basic quality of all students, respecting students’ subjectivity and initiative, focusing on developing people’s intellectual potential, and paying attention to the formation of human sound personality as the fundamental characteristic.(National Quality Education Network, 2011)

The CPC Central Committee and the State Council’s Decision on Deepening Educational Reform and Comprehensively Promoting Quality Education in 2001 made the expression of the meaning of quality education as follows:

The implementation of quality education is to fully implement the party’s education policy, with the fundamental purpose of improving the quality of the people, with the



focus on cultivating students' innovative spirit and practical ability, and to make the builders and successors of socialist development with ideals, ethics, culture, and all-round development of morality, intelligence, body, beauty and so on.(MOE, 2001).

It is completely consistent with the provisions of our country's Constitution on "The state fostering the all-round development of youth, teenagers, and children in terms of moral character, intelligence, and physical fitness."

In fact, there are tens of thousands of definitions of quality education, which itself is a controversial term. The meaning is different in each stage of education, and it is also different in each subject area and philosophical basis. The first time that the concept of "quality education" was used in a public document at the national level was in the Several Opinions of the CPC Central Committee on Further Strengthening and Improving Moral Education in Schools issued by MOE: In order to adapt to the current deepening reform, expand opening up and accelerate socialist modernization The requirements of the new situation of the pace of construction, the further strengthening and improvement of school moral education, the new requirements of the establishment of a socialist market economic system and the urgent need for quality education". (MOE, 1994).

State Education Commission of the PRC (hereinafter referred to as SEC) promulgated Several Opinions on Actively Promoting the Implementation of Quality Education in Primary and Secondary Schools in 1997 mentioned that "Quality education is education aimed at improving the quality of the nation" (SEC,1997). It is



the national education policy stipulated in the Education Law of the People's Republic of China (hereinafter referred to as the Education Law). It focuses on the requirements of the educated and the long-term development of society, and aims to face all students and comprehensively improve the basic quality of students. At the same time, focuses on cultivating the attitudes and abilities of the educated, and promoting their vivid, active, and active development in moral, intellectual, and physical aspects.

The second edition of Encyclopaedia of China defines quality education as: kind of educational thought, which emphasizes the comprehensive utilization of the positive effects of heredity and environment to form an ideal educational resultant force and promote the active and harmonious development of students' physiological and psychological, intellectual and non-intellectual, cognitive and personality factors. Promote the internalization of human culture to students' individual physical and mental qualities and the improvement of individual spiritual realm, and lay a good foundation for students' further development. (Encyclopaedia of China Press, 2009, Volume.21- p.293)

According to the Encyclopaedia, quality education is a concept opposite to "exam-oriented education" put forward in China's education reform in the 1980s, aiming to get rid of the fetters of "examination-oriented education". "Quality" refers to the sum of various internal elements that meet the requirements of the times, are conducive to the formation of talents and must be possessed. These "elements" are basic, hierarchical, plastic, epochal, national, social and strategic. It mainly includes: ideological and moral quality, scientific and cultural quality, comprehensive ability

quality, physical and psychological quality (Encyclopaedia of China Press, 2009, Volume.21- p.293).

1.9 Importance of research

There is an old saying in China: “An idle youth, a needy age.” It means that if you don’t work hard when you are young, you will accomplish nothing when you get old, and you will only be sad in vain. Adolescence is the golden period of comprehensive quality development. Children of this age have strong plasticity and fast acceptance of things. According to the results of the seventh national census released by the National Bureau of Statistics in May 2021, more than 1 billion people have received basic education. Taking the integer 1.4 billion as the population of China, 71% of the people in China have received basic education. If basic education in the future can truly provide students with excellent quality development, then the basic quality of the Chinese people will be guaranteed to a greater extent.

In 1985, Deng Xiaoping mentioned at the National Conference on Education that the country’s national strength and economic development increasingly depend on the quality of workers. China began to explore the implementation of quality education in the 1980s, and has indeed made some achievements. However, the effect of quality education is still not ideal, quality education mostly stays in the form, and the progress in essence is limited. The research goes deep into the front line of teaching to listen to the voice of the most direct educational stakeholders, and

integrates the ideas of direct educators into the research and analysis, highlighting the practical significance of the research.

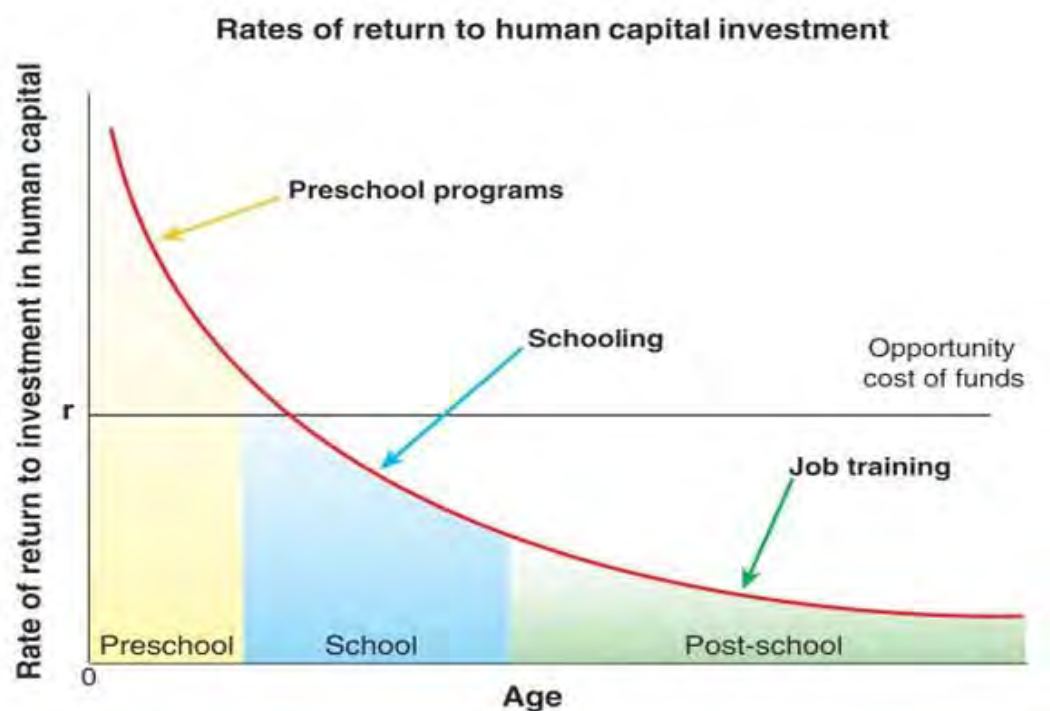
When developed countries make moves to occupy the Chinese market, China must speed up its efforts to enhance its own strength. The development of education is a means to improve the comprehensive strength of the country at a relatively small cost and in less time. Sun (2019) believes that the competition of national strength can also be said to be the competition of national quality, which cannot be separated from education, and the starting point of education is basic education. Basic education is a basic project related to millions of households, improving the quality of the people and achieving national prosperity and strength (Sun,2019). It is an important decision for China's educational development in the 21st century to promote educational reform in an all-round way. This research breaks through the limitation that most of the existing studies analyse quality education from the perspective of basic education curriculum reform rather than the environment of basic education reform itself. Reform is uncertain, and exploring the connection between quality education and basic education reform can give quality education more foresight.

James J. Heckman, who won the Nobel Prize in Economics in 2000, developed the "Heckman Curve" shown in Figure 1.3. It can be intuitively seen from the curve that the more advanced the investment in education, the higher the rate of return. The curve is essentially correct that early childhood development is a critical stage in the development of a complete person. In theory, high-quality education that children receive early in life can help them learn better in a variety of contexts later in

life. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary for children's quality education in primary school.

Figure 1.3

Rates of Return to Human Capital Investment from James J. Heckman



1.10 Summary

Based on the above research ideas, this article will actually be divided into two main lines for research. One main line is quality education itself, that is, the demand for quality education. The other main line is the research on the quality education framework, which mainly explores the specific content of the framework. The two

main lines are integrated and developed at the same time. The research analyzes the problems existing and derived from quality education itself in reality in the context of basic education reform, focusing on exploring the operability of quality education under the dynamic changes of basic education reform, with the aim of constructing a dynamic and flexible quality education cognition framework. When the framework is created, the order in the framework can accept changes in an ideal state, that is, quality education can keep up with the pace of basic education development, and can accept and make directional adjustments at any time.

All the above thinking lays the tone for the research, helping the research to continue logically and purposefully, without making deviating discussions or inappropriate conclusions in the research.