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EXPLORING TEACHERS' PEDAGOGICAL
ADAPTATION IN RESPONSE TO CHINA'S
DOUBLE REDUCTION POLICY: A STUDY OF
CHALLENGES AND INNOVATIONS
ACROSS SCHOOL CONTEXTS



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WANG YANDAN

SULTAN IDRIS EDUCATION UNIVERSITY

2026



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CHINA'S DOUBLE REDUCTION POLICY: A STUDY OF CHALLENGES AND
INNOVATIONS ACROSS SCHOOL CONTEXTS

WANG YANDAN

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FACULTY OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
SULTAN IDRIS EDUCATION UNIVERSITY

2026



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ABSTRACT

This study examines how teachers in China's compulsory education system adjust their teaching under the Double Reduction policy, which seeks to reduce homework and off-campus tutoring while safeguarding learning quality. The study aimed to (1) describe teachers' perceptions of policy legitimacy and feasibility, (2) test whether teacher agency predicts instructional adaptation and instructional innovation, and (3) explore how these practices relate to teaching effectiveness, student engagement, and professional well-being. A quantitative cross-sectional survey was conducted, and data were collected online from in-service teachers. The instrument demonstrated acceptable reliability and construct validity for subsequent analyses. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, regression analysis, and bootstrap-based indirect effect tests. Results indicated that teachers' views of the policy's educational value did not fully align with their feasibility judgments, with feasibility perceptions being more dependent on school-level enabling conditions. Teacher agency positively predicted both instructional adaptation and instructional innovation. Regarding outcomes, both adaptation and innovation were positively associated with teaching effectiveness, student engagement, and professional well-being; adaptation was more closely linked to teaching effectiveness, whereas innovation was more closely linked to student engagement. In addition, instructional adaptation played a central indirect role in linking teacher agency with student engagement and professional well-being. The study concludes that teacher agency and perceived policy feasibility particularly leadership support and school resources are key to translating policy goals into sustainable classroom practices. These findings contribute to understanding how national policy is enacted through teachers' professional judgement and context-responsive teaching in real school settings.



MENELITI PENYESUAIAN PEDAGOGIK GURU SEBAGAI TANGGAPAN TERHADAP KEBIJAKAN PENGURANGAN BEBAN BERLIPAT GANDA DI CHINA: SATU KAJIAN MENGENAI CABARAN DAN INOVASI DI LINGKUNGAN SEKOLAH YANG BERBEZA

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini meneliti bagaimana guru dalam sistem pendidikan wajib di China menyesuaikan dan memperbaharui pengajaran mereka di bawah dasar “Double Reduction”, yang bertujuan mengurangkan kerja rumah dan tuisyen luar sekolah sambil mengekalkan kualiti pembelajaran. Objektif kajian ialah: (1) menghuraikan persepsi guru terhadap legitimasi dan kebolehlaksanaan dasar, (2) menguji sama ada agensi guru meramalkan penyesuaian pengajaran dan inovasi pengajaran, serta (3) meneroka hubungan amalan tersebut dengan keberkesanan pengajaran, penglibatan murid, dan kesejahteraan profesional guru. Kajian ini menggunakan reka bentuk soal selidik kuantitatif keratan rentas, dengan pengumpulan data secara dalam talian daripada guru berkhidmat. Instrumen menunjukkan kebolehpercayaan dan kesahan konstruk yang memadai untuk analisis. Data dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif, regresi, dan ujian kesan tidak langsung berasaskan bootstrap. Dapatan menunjukkan bahawa penilaian guru terhadap nilai pendidikan dasar tidak sepenuhnya sejajar dengan penilaian kebolehlaksanaan, dan persepsi kebolehlaksanaan lebih dipengaruhi oleh syarat sokongan di peringkat sekolah. Agensi guru meramalkan tahap penyesuaian dan inovasi pengajaran yang lebih tinggi. Bagi pemboleh ubah hasil, kedua-dua penyesuaian dan inovasi berkait secara positif dengan keberkesanan pengajaran, penglibatan murid dan kesejahteraan profesional; penyesuaian lebih rapat dengan keberkesanan pengajaran, manakala inovasi lebih rapat dengan penglibatan murid. Selain itu, penyesuaian pengajaran memainkan peranan tidak langsung yang penting dalam menghubungkan agensi guru dengan penglibatan murid dan kesejahteraan profesional. Kesimpulannya, agensi guru dan persepsi kebolehlaksanaan dasar terutamanya sokongan kepimpinan dan sumber sekolah penting untuk menterjemah matlamat dasar kepada amalan bilik darjah yang mampan.



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CVI	Content Validity Index
KMO	Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
SPSS	Statistical Packages for The Social Science



LIST OF APPENDICES

- A Questionnaire on Teachers' Instructional adaptation and Innovation under the Implementation of the "Double Reduction" Policy (English Version)
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This study focuses on the classroom implementation mechanisms of the "Double Reduction" policy across multiple school settings, examining how teachers perceive the policy's legitimacy and feasibility, how they exercise professional judgement under practical constraints to translate this into changes in teaching practice, and the statistical correlations between these practical changes and classroom outcome indicators .To achieve these objectives, this chapter sequentially presents the research background and policy context, reviews existing research and identifies gaps to formulate the research question, clarifies the research purpose, research questions, and hypotheses, explains the relationships between variables within the theoretical framework, and provides operational definitions and scoring methods for key variables. This establishes consistent conceptual boundaries and a path structure for subsequent research design, measurement, and data analysis.



1.2 Research Background

In July 2021, the Chinese government launched the Opinions on Further Reducing the Burden of Homework and Extracurricular Training for Students in Compulsory Education, commonly known as the “Double Reduction” policy. The initiative was designed to reduce students’ excessive academic burden and family expenditure on private tutoring by regulating off-campus training, controlling homework load, and strengthening after-school services provided within schools. At the same time, it sought to maintain and enhance educational quality by placing greater responsibility on schools and teachers to improve classroom instruction and learning support systems (Chen & Lin, 2024; Teng, Yang, Yu, Crowley, & Jing, 2024).



The policy’s core philosophy of “burden reduction without compromising quality” has fundamentally reshaped school governance and teachers’ daily professional work. At the school level, administrators are required to establish functional systems for homework management, in-school tutoring, and teaching research collaboration. These systems depend on the reallocation of time, personnel, and resources to ensure the consistent delivery of tiered homework, formative assessment, and individualised learning support (Ball, Maguire, & Braun, 2011). However, variations in school resources, governance capacity, and parental expectations create uneven policy implementation, producing both inter-school and intra-school disparities.

At the teacher level, the Double Reduction policy requires educators to redesign classroom practices, assessment methods, and after-school support within the





boundaries of curriculum standards and institutional expectations. Teachers must therefore balance policy compliance with instructional quality improvement under limited time and resources (Teng et al., 2024). How teachers perceive the legitimacy and feasibility of the policy, and how their professional agency is enacted through adaptive and innovative pedagogical practices, have become central questions for understanding the success of school-based policy implementation (Biesta, Priestley, & Robinson, 2015; Eteläpelto, Vähäsantanen, Hökkä, & Paloniemi, 2013).

While the policy has been widely studied, existing research remains predominantly macro-level. Many studies focus on general policy outcomes—such as the reduction in off-campus tutoring, expansion of after-school programmes, and shifts in student stress indicators—without explaining the mechanisms underlying school- and teacher-level variations (Lu et al., 2023; Zeng, 2025). Empirical evidence at the micro level shows that teachers' workload has increased due to their extended involvement in after-school services and home-school communication, accompanied by a rise in formative assessment and differentiated instruction (Lai & Qin, 2022). However, these findings often remain descriptive, failing to reveal the dynamic processes through which teachers interpret and enact policy requirements.

Furthermore, methodological limitations constrain the explanatory power of prior studies. Most research does not systematically connect the chain linking policy perception → teacher agency → instructional adaptation and innovation → classroom outcomes. There is also a lack of unified operational definitions and validated instruments for measuring these constructs, limiting comparability and replication across contexts. The heavy reliance on single-source self-reported data introduces



potential common method bias (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). In addition, many studies are confined to a small number of schools or specific regions, reducing generalisability and contextual representativeness (Zeng, 2025).

Addressing these gaps, the present study adopts a multi-school, cross-sectional quantitative design using a standardised questionnaire to simultaneously measure teachers' policy perception, professional agency, instructional adaptation, pedagogical innovation, and related outcomes. By analysing statistical relationships among these variables, the study aims to uncover the mechanism-based associations that explain how teachers' understanding of the Double Reduction policy translates into classroom practices and perceived teaching outcomes. This research thereby contributes to bridging the gap between macro policy intentions and micro-level enactment mechanisms within China's ongoing education reform.

1.3 Problem Statement

The Double Reduction policy aims to reduce students' learning burden and improve the quality of basic education. Turning this policy into real school and classroom practices is a major challenge. Schools and teachers must balance policy requirements, classroom quality, and limited resources. Teachers face pressure from school leaders, parents, and students while managing new teaching and after-school tasks. Their understanding and daily actions decide how well the policy works at the classroom level (Ball, Maguire, & Braun, 2011; Teng, Yang, Yu, Crowley, & Jing, 2024).



Teachers' views of the policy's legitimacy and feasibility affect how they act in practice. When teachers believe the policy is reasonable and can be achieved, they are more willing to make professional judgments and adjust their teaching methods. Teacher agency describes this ability to act purposefully within limits. Through agency, teachers adapt existing methods and try new ideas that fit the policy's goals. When support and time are insufficient, teachers may only follow basic instructions without deeper changes (Biesta, Priestley, & Robinson, 2015; Eteläpelto, Vähäsantanen, Hökkä, & Paloniemi, 2013).

Most studies on the Double Reduction policy describe large-scale effects, such as less private tutoring or more after-school services. These studies do not explain how teachers interpret the policy or how their actions change in daily teaching (Lu et al., 2023; Chen & Lin, 2024). Research at the teacher level often reports heavier workloads or more formative assessment, but these results are mainly descriptive. Few studies connect the full process from policy perception to teacher agency, instructional adaptation, innovation, and classroom outcomes (Lai & Qin, 2022; Zeng, 2025).

It is still unclear how teachers' understanding of the policy becomes real classroom actions and outcomes. Without knowing this process, it is difficult to evaluate whether the policy truly reduces burdens while keeping quality high. Existing evidence gives partial views but not the complete picture of how perception, agency, and outcomes are linked. This limits both academic understanding and policy improvement (Maxwell & Cole, 2007).





This study addresses the problem using a multi-school quantitative survey. It measures teachers' views of policy legitimacy and feasibility, their sense of agency, and their teaching practices under the Double Reduction policy. The study analyses how teacher agency predicts instructional adaptation and innovation, and how these practices relate to teaching effectiveness, student engagement, and teacher well-being. The data come from several schools, allowing comparisons across different contexts while focusing on statistical relationships (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003).

This research builds a clear framework that connects policy perception, teacher agency, and teaching outcomes. It adds to the understanding of how teachers act as key agents in education reform. The study offers useful evidence for school leaders and policymakers. It shows how stronger teacher agency and better school support can make policy implementation more effective. The results can help schools design support systems that protect teachers' time, encourage collaboration, and improve professional well-being.

1.4 Research Objectives

To address the core chain of policy perception, teacher agency, instructional practice changes, and outcomes, this study aims:

1. To describe teachers' perceived levels of legitimacy and feasibility of the Double Reduction policy within their school contexts.



2. To examine the extent to which teacher agency predicts instructional adaptation and pedagogical innovation.

3. To investigate the relationships between instructional adaptation, pedagogical innovation, teaching effectiveness, student classroom engagement, and teacher professional well-being.

1.5 Research Questions

To achieve these objectives, the following three research questions are proposed:

RQ1: How do teachers evaluate the educational value, rationality, and practical feasibility of the Double Reduction policy within their school contexts?

RQ2: To what extent does teacher agency predict teachers' instructional adaptation and instructional innovation?

RQ3: How do instructional adaptation and instructional innovation relate to instructional effectiveness, student engagement, and teachers' professional well-being?



1.6 Research Hypotheses

Research Question one is descriptive in nature and does not require statistical hypotheses.

Testable hypotheses are proposed for Research Questions two and three.

Hypotheses Related to Teacher Agency

H1a: Teacher agency significantly and positively predicts instructional adaptation.

H1b: Teacher agency significantly and positively predicts instructional innovation.

Hypotheses Related to Instructional Adaptation:

H2a: Instructional adaptation is significantly and positively correlated with instructional effectiveness.

H2b: Instructional adaptation is significantly and positively correlated with student classroom engagement.

H2c: Instructional adaptation is significantly and positively correlated with teachers' professional well-being.





Hypotheses Related to Instructional Innovation:

H3a: Instructional innovation is significantly and positively correlated with instructional effectiveness.

H3b: Instructional innovation is significantly and positively correlated with student classroom engagement.

H3c: Instructional innovation is significantly and positively correlated with teachers' professional well-being.



1.7 Conceptual Framework

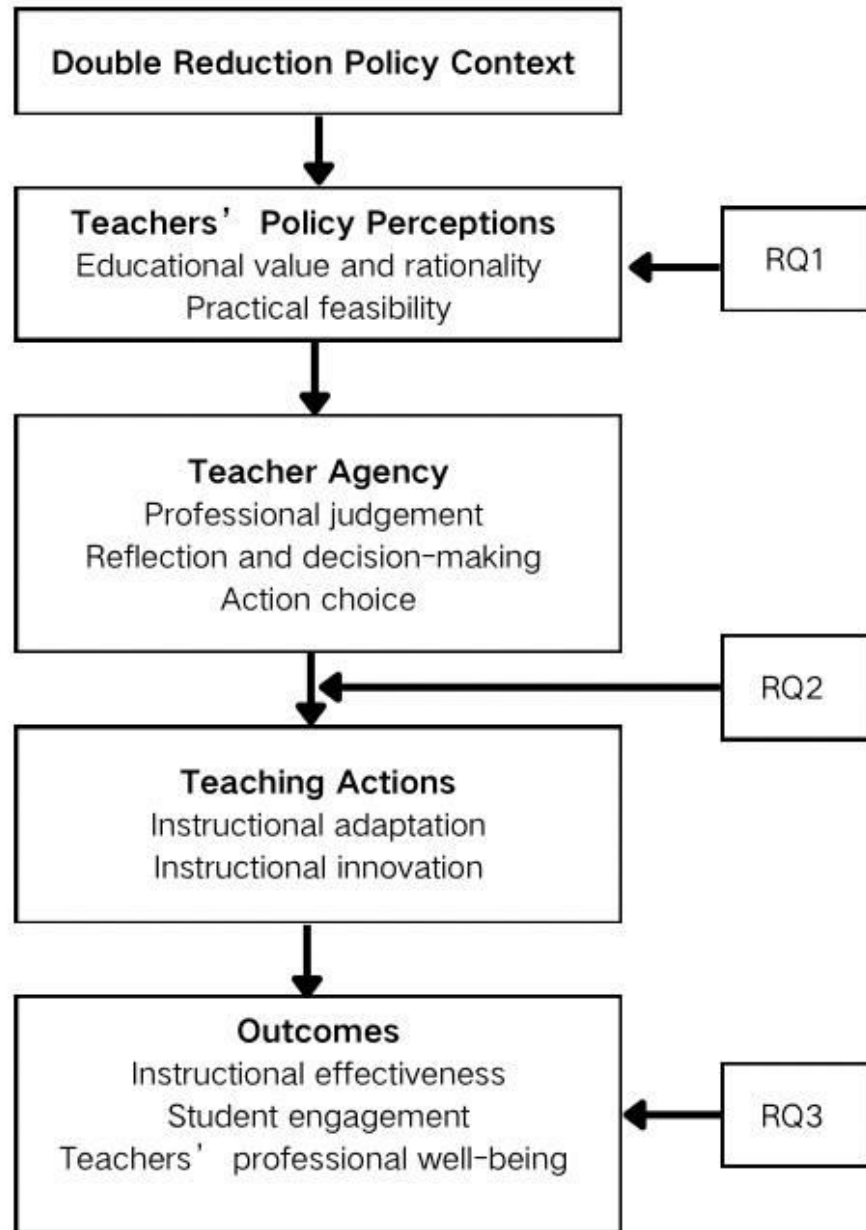
Figure 1.1 presents the conceptual framework of this study. The figure should be read from top to bottom as a policy enactment chain in which policy meaning and classroom practice are produced through teachers' situated work rather than through mechanical implementation. The framework is grounded in the policy enactment perspective, which argues that policies are interpreted, translated, and reconstructed in schools under local material conditions, organisational arrangements, and professional cultures (Ball, Maguire, & Braun, 2011). It is also grounded in the ecological view of teacher agency, which conceptualises agency as an achieved capacity for purposeful professional action that emerges through the interaction of individual resources, relational conditions, and structural constraints (Priestley, Biesta, & Robinson, 2015; Biesta, Priestley, & Robinson, 2015; Eteläpelto, Vähäsantanen, Hökkä, & Paloniemi,





2013). In the figure, the arrows indicate directional relationships proposed by the theory and tested through the study hypotheses where applicable, while the “contextual challenges” component highlights constraints that shape enactment conditions rather than representing an outcome variable.



Figure 1.1*Conceptual Framework*

At the macro level, the Double Reduction policy constitutes the external policy context that sets expectations for homework control, after-school services, and



teaching quality improvement. Within this context, teachers develop policy perception, which in this study refers to teachers' evaluations of the policy's educational value and rationality, as well as its practical feasibility in their schools. Such evaluations are central to enactment because teachers' interpretations and judgments influence whether policy goals are treated as professionally meaningful and realistically actionable under real working conditions (Ball et al., 2012). Practical feasibility judgments are closely tied to schools' capacity and working conditions, because implementation depends on time allocation, resource availability, leadership support, and manageable workload boundaries (Spillane, Reiser, & Reimer, 2002). Consistent with your RQ one, the framework positions teachers' policy perception as a descriptive component that captures how teachers evaluate the policy within their school contexts rather than as a relationship requiring statistical hypotheses.



At the meso level, teacher agency functions as the key mechanism translating teachers' policy perception into instructional decision-making and practice change. In ecological accounts, agency is not defined as a stable personality trait, but as teachers' capacity to make professional judgments, to reflect and prioritise, and to act purposefully within contextual constraints (Priestley et al., 2015; Biesta et al., 2015; Eteläpelto et al., 2013). The framework therefore treats teacher agency as a proximal predictor of teaching actions under policy conditions. This theoretical positioning corresponds to the study's testable hypotheses for RQ two. Specifically, because agency entails deliberate professional action and choice under constraints, higher teacher agency is expected to predict higher levels of instructional adaptation (H1a) and instructional innovation (H1b), as teachers with stronger agency are more likely





to mobilise available resources, justify pedagogical decisions, and sustain change efforts when navigating policy demands (Priestley et al., 2015; Biesta et al., 2015).

At the micro level, the framework differentiates two forms of classroom practice change, namely instructional adaptation and instructional innovation. Instructional adaptation refers to responsive adjustments made within existing curriculum and lesson structures, including differentiated tasks, formative assessment, feedback, and individualised learning support. This definition aligns with research showing that formative assessment cycles and feedback processes support instructional responsiveness by helping teachers adjust instruction based on evidence of learning (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Hattie & Timperley, 2007). It also aligns with differentiation-oriented views that emphasise adjusting tasks and support to meet learner needs while maintaining curricular goals (Tomlinson, 2014). Instructional innovation refers to the introduction of new or creative approaches that go beyond established routines. Innovation in teaching can include project-based learning, inquiry-oriented learning, collaborative and interdisciplinary approaches, and the use of digital tools to support interaction and feedback. These innovation forms are consistent with education change perspectives that describe innovation as adoption or creation of new practices in response to reform pressures and professional problem-solving (Rogers, 2003; Fullan, 2007), and they are commonly represented in the instructional literature as pedagogies that restructure learning activity, student roles, and classroom interaction patterns (Thomas, 2000; Hmelo-Silver, 2004; Johnson & Johnson, 2009; Means, Toyama, Murphy, Bakia, & Jones, 2010).





Following RQ three, the framework links instructional adaptation and instructional innovation to three outcome domains, namely instructional effectiveness, student classroom engagement, and teachers' professional well-being. First, instructional effectiveness is conceptualised as teachers' perceived quality and success of classroom instruction, consistent with teacher effectiveness literature that treats instructional quality as the core pathway through which teaching influences learning (Coe, Aloisi, Higgins, & Major, 2014; Hattie, 2009). Because instructional adaptation includes evidence-informed adjustment through formative assessment and feedback, it is expected to be positively associated with instructional effectiveness (H2a), as well as with student engagement (H2b), since engagement is supported when instruction is responsive, appropriately challenging, and provides clear feedback loops (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004; Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Instructional adaptation is also expected to be positively associated with teachers' professional well-being (H2c), because responsive practices can strengthen teachers' sense of instructional competence and efficacy, which is consistently associated with lower stress and higher job satisfaction (Klassen & Chiu, 2010).

Similarly, instructional innovation is expected to be positively associated with instructional effectiveness (H3a) and student engagement (H3b) because project-based and inquiry-oriented approaches often promote deeper cognitive processing and active participation when implemented with appropriate structure, while cooperative learning structures can support participation and interaction quality (Thomas, 2000; Hmelo-Silver, 2004; Johnson & Johnson, 2009; Fredricks et al., 2004). Instructional innovation is also expected to be positively associated with teachers' professional





well-being (H3c) because innovation can enhance professional autonomy and meaning, which are central resources for well-being in motivational perspectives, and can buffer job strain when teachers experience supportive conditions for change (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Collie, Shapka, & Perry, 2012). From a job demands–resources viewpoint, professional well-being is shaped by the balance between demands and available resources, and agency-driven practice change is more sustainable when contextual conditions provide adequate resources, time, and support (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Therefore, the “contextual challenges” element in Figure 1.1 is conceptually positioned as a set of constraints that condition the enactment process and shape the intensity and form of adaptation and innovation, rather than as a direct outcome.



1.8 Operational Definitions

Prior research commonly treats policy perception as a teacher level meaning making process in which teachers interpret a policy’s purpose and legitimacy and judge its feasibility under real school conditions, especially when implementation depends on school resources, time arrangements, and organisational support (Zhong & Park, 2023). The ecological approach to teacher agency defines agency as teachers’ capacity to make professional judgments and take purposeful action within structural and contextual conditions rather than as a purely individual trait (Priestley et al., 2015). Instructional adaptation is typically defined as responsive adjustment of teaching within existing curricular and instructional frameworks, including changes in pacing, task difficulty, scaffolding, and formative feedback (Corno, 2008). In contrast,





instructional innovation refers to moving beyond routine approaches by redesigning learning activities or adopting new methods and technologies to explore alternative instructional possibilities (Liu et al., 2023). Instructional effectiveness is usually framed as an overall evaluation of how well teaching supports learning goals and student progress. Teacher professional well being is commonly defined as teachers' subjective evaluation of occupational sustainability, including work satisfaction, emotional balance, and perceived manageability of demands (Nwoko et al., 2023).

In this study, Double Reduction Policy Perception is operationalised as teachers' subjective understanding and evaluation of the Double Reduction policy within their school contexts and is measured with a teacher self report questionnaire using a five point Likert scale. The construct is represented by two dimensions, perceived policy legitimacy and perceived policy feasibility, with each dimension score computed as the mean of its items and higher scores indicating more positive perceptions. Teacher Agency is operationalised as teachers' perceived capacity and tendency to exercise professional judgment and take purposeful action under policy and institutional constraints and is measured by multiple five point Likert items, with a composite score calculated as the mean of the relevant items (Leijen et al., 2024). Instructional Adaptation is operationalised as responsive adjustments within existing teaching structures, such as adjusting task difficulty, modifying pacing, providing differentiated support, and strengthening formative feedback, and is measured by a multi item five point Likert scale scored by the mean of the items (van de Pol et al., 2023). Instructional Innovation is operationalised as engagement in novel or redesigned teaching practices beyond routine approaches, such as introducing new teaching methods, redesigning learning activities, adopting technology enhanced





instruction, or implementing collaborative and project based learning, and is measured by a multi item five point Likert scale scored by the mean of the items (Liu et al., 2023). Instructional Effectiveness is measured as a global self evaluation using a single five point Likert item, consistent with evidence on the usefulness of single item global measures for overall judgments (Wanous et al., 1997). Teacher Professional Well being is measured by multiple five point Likert items focusing on work related satisfaction, perceived manageability of workload, and perceived sustainability of the professional role, with the construct score computed as the mean of the items. Data are collected from in service teachers in compulsory education schools, and the unit of analysis is the individual teacher.

1.9 Research Limitations



The first limitation of this study lies in its design. The research employs a multi-school cross-sectional questionnaire survey, which allows the identification of statistical relationships among variables but does not permit causal inference. The study focuses on understanding associative patterns and mechanism-related pathways rather than establishing causal effects of the Double Reduction policy. To mitigate this limitation, the analysis interprets results cautiously and highlights associative rather than causal implications, consistent with recommendations from Maxwell and Cole (2007).

The second limitation concerns the data source. All data are derived from teacher self-reports, and student classroom engagement is assessed through teacher





perceptions. This reliance on a single data source may introduce common method bias and social desirability bias, which could inflate correlations among variables. To address this issue, the study conducts statistical diagnostics to detect potential bias, applies procedural controls during data collection, and explicitly discusses interpretative boundaries in the discussion chapter, following the methodological guidelines of Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, and Podsakoff (2003).

The third limitation involves the measurement of outcome variables. Teaching effectiveness and student classroom engagement are measured using single-item indicators, which restrict their capacity to capture the full dimensionality of these constructs. While this design allows for survey brevity and reduced respondent burden, it limits reliability and the depth of information. The study acknowledges this constraint and treats findings related to these constructs with caution. Future research should develop multi-item scales or include complementary data sources such as student surveys or classroom observations to enhance measurement validity and robustness.

The fourth limitation relates to the nested structure of the data. Teachers are nested within schools, meaning that individual responses may be influenced by school-level contexts such as administrative leadership, policy emphasis, and resource allocation. This hierarchical structure may introduce dependency among responses and bias standard errors. To manage this issue, the study uses appropriate statistical strategies that account for school-level variation and tests robustness where possible, as recommended by Raudenbush and Bryk (2002) and Snijders and Bosker (2011).





Overall, while these limitations affect the scope of generalisation and causal interpretation, the study takes methodological steps to manage their impact and provides clear boundaries for interpretation. The findings should be viewed as indicative of relationships and tendencies within the sampled schools, offering valuable empirical insight into teacher agency and classroom implementation under the Double Reduction policy.

1.10 Research Significance

This study contributes to the theoretical understanding of the Double Reduction policy by extending research from macro-level evaluations of policy effects to teacher-level mechanisms. It establishes a conceptual chain linking policy perception, teacher agency, instructional practice change, and teaching outcomes. Through this framework, the study explains how teachers interpret and enact the same national policy differently within varying school contexts. The findings contribute to the literature on policy enactment and teacher agency by clarifying the mechanisms that connect policy implementation with classroom practice. This deepens theoretical understanding of how institutional reforms interact with individual professional judgment and contextual constraints (Ball, Maguire, & Braun, 2011; Priestley, Biesta, & Robinson, 2015).

Methodologically, this study develops a replicable framework for operationalising and measuring key constructs related to policy perception, teacher agency, instructional adaptation, instructional innovation, and outcomes. The use of





standardised instruments allows consistent assessment across multiple schools and provides a foundation for quantitative analysis of interrelated variables. This measurement structure can be used in future studies that apply multi-level modelling, longitudinal tracking, or regional comparisons. By establishing valid and reliable scales, the study contributes methodological tools for examining the dynamic process of policy implementation at the teacher level.

At the practical level, the study offers evidence-based insights that can support teaching improvement and professional development in schools. The results highlight how teacher agency influences classroom adaptation and innovation, and how these practices are associated with teaching effectiveness, student engagement, and professional well-being. These findings can guide school leaders and policymakers in designing supportive environments that protect teachers' instructional time, improve homework and assessment systems, and promote collaborative learning cultures. By connecting research evidence with daily teaching practice, the study provides a useful reference for implementing the Double Reduction policy more effectively at the school level.

1.11 Summary

This chapter proposes a teacher-centred research perspective within the context of the "Double Reduction" policy, focusing on school-based implementation across multiple institutions. It describes teachers' perceptions of policy legitimacy and feasibility, examines the predictive role of teacher agency in instructional adaptation and





innovation, and investigates the relationships between instructional adaptation/innovation and teaching effectiveness, student classroom engagement, and teacher professional wellbeing. Employing a multi-school cross-sectional questionnaire design, this study utilises a five-point Likert scale to measure policy perceptions, teacher agency, instructional adaptation, instructional innovation, and outcome dimensions. This forms an analytical chain linking "policy perceptions, agency, teaching practices, and outcomes". Guided by the Research Conceptual Framework, research hypotheses and operational definitions are proposed, laying the groundwork for subsequent research design and data analysis.

