
Newsletter

The Impact of Flexible Working Hours on Work Pressure of Compulsory Education Teachers in China

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BASED on data from a survey of 3,106 compulsory education teachers across 10 provincial administrative regions in eastern, central, and western China, the study explores the effects of the flexible work schedule on work pressure of this category of teachers, employing the propensity score matching method for data analysis.

Research Findings:

- Overall, work pressure among compulsory education teachers was moderate, with their workload being the primary source of pressure. Nevertheless, there were significant differences in work pressure among teachers with different characteristics. Teachers at schools implementing the traditional workweek experienced greater work pressure than their counterparts at schools adopting the flexible work schedule; teachers working more than eight hours per day suffered significantly higher work pressure than those working eight hours or less; teachers aged 31–50 experienced significantly higher work pressure than those in other age groups; junior secondary teachers perceived significantly higher work pressure than primary teachers; homeroom teachers experienced significantly higher work pressure than non-homeroom teachers; and teachers who provided after-school services was subject to significantly higher work pressure than those who did not.
- The flexible work schedule had a negative effect on teacher work pressure. In other words, implementing a flexible work schedule could significantly alleviate teachers' work pressure.
- The mitigating effect of the flexible work schedule on teacher work pressure varies across different teacher groups. Female teachers, junior secondary teachers, homeroom teachers, young teachers aged 30 and below, and teachers in the western region benefited more from flexible working hours.

The study recommends: (i) improving the top-level design of the practice of flexible working hours to institutionalize its implementation; (ii) innovating the patterns of the flexible work schedule to ensure teachers' rights to rest; and (iii) engaging outside personnel as additional providers of after-class services to alleviate teachers' workload.

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