

DOI 10.36074/logos-24.11.2023.59

“REASONABLE MINIMUM” PRINCIPLE IN ELEMENTARY EDUCATION OF CHINA

ORCID-ID: 0000-0002-3757-947X

Lina HE

PhD program student

H.S.Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University

PR CHINA

China's educational aims on providing a solid foundation of education for all students. The Chinese education system places a strong emphasis on equity and ensuring that every child receives a basic level of education that is considered essential. The concept of the "reasonable minimum" as it is emphasises that the country's education system ensures every student to receive a minimum adequate level of education that meets his/her individual needs, abilities and interests in accordance with the national standard of the country. This principle in the Chinese view recognises that not only students have different learning styles, paces and preferences, but also schools have different levels of staffing, different material bases and peculiarities of the educational process organisation due to the presence / absence on this territory of "factors that affect the organisation of education and the regulation of which is under the management of local authorities" [2] (mostly this means a compact residence of representatives of certain national and religious minority).

Here are some key aspects of elementary education in China that align with the concept of providing a reasonable minimum:

1. **Universal Access:** China has made significant efforts to ensure that all children have access to elementary education. It is mandatory for children to receive nine years of compulsory education, which includes six years of primary education.

2. **Standardized Curriculum:** The Chinese curriculum for elementary education is relatively standardized across the country, ensuring that all students receive a basic level of knowledge and skills in subjects like Chinese language, mathematics, science, and social studies.

3. **National Assessments:** China conducts national assessments, such as the "gaokao" (national college entrance examination), which serves as a means to evaluate students' knowledge and skills. While this assessment is more relevant to high school students, it reflects a broader commitment to maintaining educational standards.

4. **Supplementary Education:** In addition to formal schooling, many Chinese students participate in supplementary education programs, such as tutoring or extracurricular classes, to bolster their learning.

5. **Teacher Training and Professional Development:** China invests in training and professional development for teachers to ensure they are equipped with the necessary skills to deliver quality education to all students.

6. **Parental Emphasis on Education:** Chinese parents often place a strong emphasis on the importance of education and may provide additional support and resources to ensure their child's academic success.

7. **Government Initiatives:** The Chinese government regularly introduces policies and initiatives aimed at improving the quality of education at all levels, including elementary education [1; 3].

It should be noted that China's educational theory does not explicitly use the term "reasonable minimum" as a principle⁶ presenting all the activities in this field as a part of "flexible education" concept [2]. Also modern Chinese and foreign (mostly, European and American pedagogical sciences and practice) have different interpretations of the principle of "reasonable minimum" as to elementary school in particular and education in general. According to abroad research, applying the principle of the "reasonable minimum", elementary education aims to create an inclusive and adapted learning environment that provides students with the knowledge, skills and values they need to thrive on their unique life path based on the capabilities and needs of the child (or a children team). He recognises that education should be a dynamic process that corresponds to the individuality of each student [4]. As for the People's Republic of China, the main task of implementing the "reasonable minimum" principle is to combine the opportunities available in a particular educational institution to organise the educational process with the norms of the unified programs for primary education approved by the country's government. This term is mostly used for small rural schools, schools in remote and economically underdeveloped regions, and educational institutions in areas of compact residence of national minorities [2]. China places a high value on providing a solid foundation of education for all students, including the elementary schools` ones, and that's why there are many discussions and reforms within the education system that can potentially incorporate the concept of a "reasonable minimum" more explicitly.

References:

- [1] An Opinion on Strengthening Primary and Secondary School Teacher Training (2021). *Website of Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China*. URL: <http://www.moe.edu.cn/publicfiles/business/htmlfiles/moe/s4559/201101/114220.html> (in Chinese)
- [2] Huang, R.H., Liu, D.J., Tlili, A., Yang, J.F., Wang, H.H., et al. (2020). Handbook on Facilitating Flexible Learning During Educational Disruption: The Chinese Experience in Maintaining Undisrupted Learning in COVID-19 Outbreak. Beijing: Smart Learning Institute of Beijing Normal University. URL: <https://iite.unesco.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Handbook-on-Facilitating-Flexible-Learning-in-COVID-19-Outbreak-SLIBNU-V1.2-20200315.pdf>
- [3] Notification on the implementation of the National Primary and Secondary School Teacher Training Program (2022). *Website of The State Council of the People's Republic of China*. URL: http://www.gov.cn/zwggk/2010-06/30/con-tent_1642031.htm (in Chinese)
- [4] Wallace P. (2017). Knowledge management: Historical and cross-disciplinary themes. Westport, Connecticut: Libraries Unlimited, URL: [https://books.google.com.ua/books?id=printsec=frontcover&q=&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=cultivating%20communities%20of%](https://books.google.com.ua/books?id=printsec=frontcover&q=&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=cultivating%20communities%20of%20)