

CONTENTS

- 1 Syntactic and Lexical Error Patterns in the Academic Writing: Towards an Instructional Framework for College ESL Students
Mark Kevin Astrero
- 13 Online Tools for Scholarly Communication in Library and Information Science
V. Senthur Velmurugan
- 18 Research on Parental Collaborative Education Strategies in Primary Schools in the Context of the Family Education Promotion Law
Yishan Ma, Yuandong Shang, Peishu Yu, Ziyang Hu
- 30 Strengthening Student Discipline Through Bi-Weekly Moral Counseling Sessions: A Case Study of Kabasanda Technical Institute
Kikomeko Joseph, Muweesi Charles
- 45 Autonomy and Accountability: A Logical Analysis of the Quality Assurance of Institutional Self-Assessment from the Perspective of Audit and Assessment
Zhiyuan Sun

Syntactic and Lexical Error Patterns in the Academic Writing: Towards an Instructional Framework for College ESL Students

Mark Kevin Astrero¹

¹ Northeastern College, Philippines

Correspondence: Mark Kevin Astrero, Northeastern College, Philippines.

doi:10.63593/JARE.2026.03.01

1. Introduction

Academic writing serves as a vital indicator of a student's ability to articulate thought-provoking ideas and express them coherently and logically. The changing nature of academic writing in the Philippines has grown rapidly in recent years, despite many college students continuing to experience difficulties with various syntactic and lexical errors that negatively affect overall writing quality. By thoroughly investigating these syntactic and lexical error patterns, this study will help educators develop effective pedagogical strategies and improve students' writing skills in the Philippines. Furthermore, it highlights the syntactic and lexical error patterns common in students' academic writing in the Philippines and demonstrates how these patterns align with national and local higher education trends.

Writing in an academically correct manner is important for students in higher education. The ability to produce academically correct written material indicates that the student has developed the ability to think critically and understand the content of their discipline. Although many ESL students struggle with grammar and vocabulary, several studies have documented that they also encounter significant issues with syntax and vocabulary choices, leading to a loss of clarity

and coherence when producing academic written materials (Joven et al., 2025).

Given the focus on English as the medium of instruction in the Philippines, educators must examine their learners' writing abilities more closely. Students have many problems with grammar and vocabulary when writing, and therefore, there is a need to place greater emphasis on providing high-quality instructional materials for this purpose. Kies and Lambert (2023) suggest implementing quality instructional practices to provide students with supportive strategies that foster vocabulary and syntax use.

The two primary types of mistakes found in students' writing include errors in syntax (word order) and in vocabulary, such as using the wrong word. Studies show that students frequently struggle with subjects, verbs, and sentence structure—this affects the clarity of their writing (Chiknaverova, 2019). On the other hand, evidence suggests that students make numerous mistakes when using articles and prepositions, indicating a lack of foundation in the basic principles of English grammar and syntax (Nguyễn & Tuấn, 2024).

Lexical errors often occur when students select the wrong word or use only common vocabulary.

This affects how academically rigorous a student's writing appears to the reader (Joven et al., 2025). It is also described in one study that a large number of lexical errors occur because ESL students are not able to develop a strong vocabulary base; this presents an additional difficulty for ESL students when trying to adhere to standard academic writing practices. The aforementioned findings indicate that understanding patterns of grammatical error is important for developing targeted interventions to improve an ESL student's writing skills and academic performance.

This study seeks to provide further evidence for the systematic identification of error types in the academic writing of Filipino college students. By identifying the nature and frequency of these lexical and syntactic errors, educators can develop instructional strategies tailored to their students' particular needs. Another important step toward resolving these errors may involve examining how a student's first language influences his or her writing in English and the cognitive processes involved in writing. In addition, the use of technology and learning support resources may enhance the student's writing potential by adopting a holistic approach to language instruction that addresses both lexical and syntactic knowledge (Joven et al., 2025).

In summary, this study provides valuable insights into identifying syntactic and lexical error types in the academic writing of Filipino college students and highlights the importance of tailored instructional strategies to improve the classroom environment for learning and to inform future research. Thus, this study sought to answer the following questions:

- 1) What are the most frequent lexical errors observed in their academic writing?
- 2) What are the most frequent syntactic errors committed by college students?
- 3) Based on the findings, what instructional intervention framework can be proposed?

2. Research Methodology

In this chapter, procedures for examining syntactic and lexical error patterns in college students' academic writing in the Philippines were described. The study examined the types of syntactic errors present (e.g., run-on sentences, subject-verb agreement, and dangling modifiers) as well as lexical errors (e.g., poor word choice,

incorrect collocations, and informal register). The purpose of this research is to use these findings to propose an intervention that improves students' academic writing abilities.

3. Research Design

Using an error analysis framework as a foundation, the study employed a mixed-methods research design to identify and categorize syntactic and lexical errors in a sample of academic papers. Error analysis research has shown that a careful examination of students' writing samples can lead to greater insight into common academic writing difficulties.

3.1 Research Locale and Local

Research was conducted at a private institution in the Philippines, part of the College of Education. This context allows the collection of a set of academic paper samples representative of the academic writing skills of college students enrolled in education-related degrees, where English is the medium of instruction and learning. A total of 40 academic essay papers written by college students were selected for analysis. The selection criteria included papers from various academic disciplines, thus providing a comprehensive overview of syntactic and lexical error patterns across different fields of study. This number aligns with sample sizes common in qualitative studies, ensuring both depth and manageability in data analysis.

3.2 Data Gathering Procedure

Data was collected through the following steps:

- **Activity Administration:** The researcher, as the proctor, provided the students with questions that aligned with the previous lesson discussed in class. They are given one (1) hour and thirty (30) minutes to do the activity. The researcher did not provide the students with a structure to test their cohesion and coherence in writing.
- **Paper Collection:** The researcher gathered a group of forty (40) students' academic papers completed as a requirement of the preliminary examination. Students and faculty gave permission to use their work.
- **Error Identification:** Analysis was completed using Corder's Error Analysis framework. Errors in the paper included syntactic errors: subject/verb agreement errors, run-on sentences, and dangling participles; also included were lexical errors: poor word choice, incorrect words, and

collocational mistakes.

- **Coding Errors:** Researchers coded errors by setting frequency counts and categorizing them, enabling systematic coding and completing the analysis with ease.

3.3 Data Analysis

The analysis of papers included systematic error analyses. This analysis focused on:

- **Syntactic errors:** The frequency and type of each type of syntactic error (run-on sentences, subject-verb agreement, dangling modifiers) and other syntactic structures that hinder the clarity of writing.
- **Lexical errors:** The frequency of inappropriate word choice, collocations, and use of informal language is not appropriate for academic writing.

- To assess the relative frequencies of the various types of errors identified in this study, statistical measures such as frequencies and percentages were also calculated.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

The research in this study was conducted in accordance with ethical standards and ensured the protection of student participants' identities and confidentiality. All student participants provided explicit consent before being included in the study, and their identities were anonymized in any reports of results to ensure confidentiality. The goal of the research was to inform the future design of instructional methods that would help student writers improve their ability to produce effective academic writing.

4. Results and Discussion

Table 1. Syntactic errors committed by college students

Syntactical Error Category	Frequency	Percentage
Run-on Sentences / Comma Splices	24	37.50
Subject-Verb Agreement	20	31.25
Sentence Fragments	12	18.75
Faulty Predication / Logical Inconsistency	8	12.50
TOTAL	64	100

Table 1 shows that the most frequent syntactical error committed by college students is the use of Run-on Sentences and Comma Splices, which accounts for 37.50% of the total errors, with a frequency of 24. This is followed closely by Subject-Verb Agreement issues, representing 31.25% (n=20) of the identified mistakes. Together, these two categories comprise nearly two-thirds of all syntactical errors, suggesting they are the primary areas of grammatical struggle for students. In contrast, Sentence Fragments and Faulty Predication/Structure occur less frequently, with equal prevalence, each accounting for 18.75% (n=12) of the total 64 errors recorded. Overall, the findings indicate that students struggle most with managing clause boundaries and matching subjects with their corresponding verbs.

4.1 Dominance of Run-on Sentences and Comma Splices

The number of run-on sentences and comma splices observed among many college students indicates that they have difficulty creating clear sentence boundaries. These types of errors provide evidence of a student's inability to correctly create syntactic structures needed for clear communication. Studies indicate that errors of this type are common among English language learners and result from a lack of understanding of sentence-structure rules (Malip, 2022). Additionally, many students may be influenced by their first language (L1) and apply their native-language sentence structures when using English rather than learning to form proper English sentence structures (Malip, 2022). An example of this is the inability of many Filipino students to stop using sentence structures from their native language, despite being required to adhere to English sentence rules.

approached the 4C's. First, on collaboration I would make the group work where they do not divide task but make them each valuable where if one person would not function the others are also affected. For the communication one is that I would eliminate their use of devices but

Additionally, critical thinking is limited maybe because students doesn't understand the question or they have a poor comprehension. That's why before doing an activity teacher must assure that the student grasp the context. Furthermore creativity is not a decoration in choosing fonts. The answers must be

4.2 Subject-Verb Agreement Issues

Subject-verb agreement is the second most common error type, demonstrating common syntactical challenges. Many students mistakenly use singular subjects with singular verbs or plural subjects with plural verbs; these errors indicate an essential area for improvement in students' grammatical proficiency (Dizon & Gatchalian, 2025). This problem can also be worsened by the structural differences between

English grammar and the grammatical systems of the other languages with which Filipino students are familiar. The cognitive demands of learning a second language may lead learners to misconceptions, resulting in errors in subject-verb agreement (Geng, 2025). For these reasons, it is crucial to address subject-verb agreement errors in an academic setting to improve students' writing accuracy and increase their confidence in English.

while they are working their (GROUP ACTIVITY). My suggestion are to improve the activities for the 4C's are the teacher need to be a

in what they doing, the teacher know that they use 4C's but that's not enough and right way to use it.

4.3 Less Frequent Errors: Sentence Fragments and Faulty Predication

The rare occurrence of sentence fragments and faulty predication must be acknowledged. Sentence fragments represent incomplete thoughts that may arise from insufficient teaching habits in creating cohesive sentences that convey an entire concept. Without significant exposure to an academic environment that demands logical sequencing to structure ideas, it may be more difficult for students to integrate their ideas into a single statement (Magsayo et al.,

2024). At the same time, faulty predication occurs when students fail to appropriately connect a subject to its predicate, increasing the likelihood of confusion about sentence function. In contrast to run-on sentences and sentence errors involving agreement between subject and verb (SV), faulty predication and fragments are rare; thus, it is possible that specific areas where additional intervention could clearly provide academic gains by giving students more opportunities to utilize their skills.

4.4 Sentence Fragments

To bridge the gap between my students' technical proficiency and their lack of critical literacy, I, as a teacher needs to

will not in collaboration if they are working in silence. not give out ideas.
no communication at all because they are working in silence. Also in Communication

4.5 Faulty Predictions/Logical Inconsistency

I will teach them on how to properly shared the documents
without conflicts so that they don't have a struggle to do
it and they know what their doing.

IT CAN AFFECT THE COMMUNICATION SO WITHOUT COLLABORATION
THERE IS A BARRIER. INSTEAD OF BANGAYAN YOU'RE RELYING
ON VIA CHAT APP AND THROUGH THAT IT CAN AFFECT
ALSO THE CRITICAL THINKING, COLLABORATION AND

From the findings presented, we can see clear empirical evidence that educators in the Philippines must take urgent action to implement strategies to improve their pedagogy and conduct syntax interventions. Providing targeted instruction and feedback on the most common syntactic errors is necessary to enhance students' writing skills. Research indicates that when instructors provide systematic instruction on common syntactic errors, students' overall writing abilities improve (Geng, 2025). By implementing grammar workshops, explicit instruction on sentence structure, and practical exercises that focus on recognizing and correcting syntactic errors, educators can foster better writing outcomes for students. Another key strategy for improving students' writing ability is to incorporate an analysis of syntactic errors into instructional design. Students will adopt a more engaged approach to writing and

develop a deeper understanding of the reasoning behind their syntactic choices through metacognition.

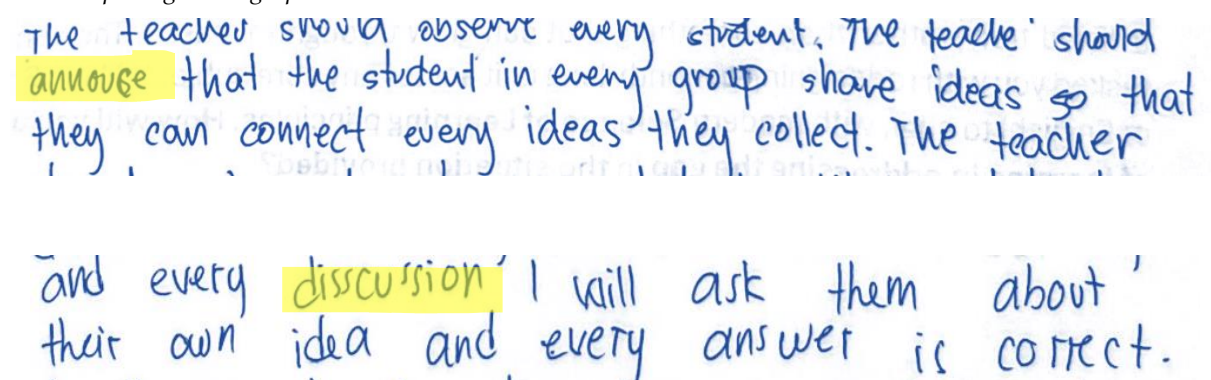
In summary, the patterns of syntactic errors described in this report provide important insights into the areas educators should focus their academic interventions. Educators should focus on supporting students' ability to develop their understanding of how to form clause boundaries and apply proper subject-verb agreement. By providing systematic instruction on both syntactic issues, students will be able to write more coherently and meet their schools' academic writing expectations. In conclusion, educators in the Philippines need to expand their grammar instruction to address the grammatical issues identified in this report and support students struggling with them.

Table 2. Lexical errors observed in college students' academic writing

Lexical Error Category	Frequency	Percentage
Misspelling (Orthographic)	48	57.83
Word Choice / Diction	20	24.10
Native Language Interference (L1)	12	14.46
Malapropisms / Phonetic Slips	3	3.61
TOTAL	83	100

Table 2 shows errors involving misspellings (Orthographic Errors) with 48 (57.83%) instances. The frequency of errors in this category indicates that students' most significant lexical challenge is related to the basic mechanics of spelling (orthography), and their inability to maintain consistency throughout their papers. The next most common category of error was Word Choice/Diction (the ability to select the most appropriate or accurate vocabulary), with 20 instances (24.10% of the data), indicating that students are having trouble finding the most appropriate/accurate words for an academic setting. Finally, there were equal numbers of Native Language [L1] Interference Malapropism/phonetic slips; each occurred 12 times (14.46% of the total). The results indicate that while students continue to experience challenges with various lexical issues, difficulties with orthographic accuracy pose the greatest barrier to the successful completion of their academic writing.

4.6 Misspelling/Orthographic



The teacher should observe every student. The teacher should announce that the student in every group share ideas so that they can connect every ideas they collect. The teacher and every discussion I will ask them about their own idea and every answer is correct.

4.7 Word Choice/Diction Issues

The second biggest type of lexical error students make is related to their choice of words. While choosing the right words for your writing is not the only lexical error students make, it does highlight a key part of academic writing: being able to use accurate terminology to write clearly and support your ideas. There have been numerous studies that show a direct relationship between how many different types of words students have access to (their lexical richness) and what types of words are best suited for academic contexts, including how much they

Spelling mistakes are among many types of writing errors and highlight serious underlying issues, such as poor word formation and inconsistent spelling. The high percentage of misspelling errors in this finding points to the clear need for direct instruction on how to spell correctly. Research has shown that students often struggle with spelling due to weak learning skills and the influence of their native language (Zhang et al., 2024; Slimi et al., 2022). Cognitive overload is another factor that contributes to spelling problems; it occurs when students attempt more complex writing tasks that require them to use the appropriate mood and tone (Karim & Nassaji, 2018). In general, this is also a sign that students have difficulty internalizing English spelling rules, and it will most often persist when students are influenced by the spelling rules of their native languages. Differences in phonetics and syntax between English and other languages will affect a student's ability to recognize and use the mechanics of English spelling.

read and if they are exposed to a variety of different types of writing (Ignacy & Subramaniam, 2024). When students do not read as much or do not expose themselves to a wide range of vocabulary, they typically use limited vocabulary, which continues to create inaccuracies in their written work (Ignacy & Subramaniam, 2024). Additionally, when students translate their thoughts and ideas directly from their native language into English, this can also create problems with word choice because they are prone to making malapropisms, which are words that sound similar but may not have the same meaning (Kozolup et al., 2023).

As a teacher, I will check every tablet the only apps in tablet is the app that they need and if ever there is app that can lose their focusing reading, I'll tell to my student that they can DND or hide the apps. For news or checking news they

Suggestions: ...distract them from reading...

No, because some of the student in 21st is not focusing to their doing, because their being busy to the other things or to their gadget so they are not having a deep competencies to the others. So I

Suggestion: ...educational device...

actual text but not the content. As for my suggestion, I would change on how the teacher approached the 4Cs. First, on collaboration I would make the group work where they do not

Suggestion: ...implement the 4Cs...

4.8 Native Language Interference and Malapropisms

Native-language interference and malapropisms suggest that students are using structures from their first language (L1) when composing English (L2) texts. Developing metalinguistic awareness in students is extremely useful because it helps them understand the complexities of English, including syntax and semantics (Hládek et al.,

2020). By utilizing appropriate pedagogical strategies to deal with the impact of the L1 on student writing, the students may improve in proficiency and accuracy in the English language, especially in a multilingual situation like the Philippines, where a student may be affected by language transfer when they produce written work (Karpathiou & Kambanaros, 2022).

No, because some of the student in 21st is not focusing to their doing, because their being busy to the other things or to their gadget so they are not having a deep competencies to the others. So I

Or shared a digital tools without conflict. We know that some student are didn't know to use technology or digital tools so as teacher we need to explain the different

As this analysis indicates, it is necessary to develop appropriate pedagogies. First, spelling instruction should emphasize the use of frequently misspelled words, along with the rules of orthography, as an integral part of an academic writing course. Researchers agree that

specific remediation strategies, such as spelling drills and contextualized vocabulary instruction, enhance the retention and use of cognitive knowledge and reduce word misspelling (Zhang et al., 2024; Slimi et al., 2022). Second, creating a vocabulary-rich environment through extensive

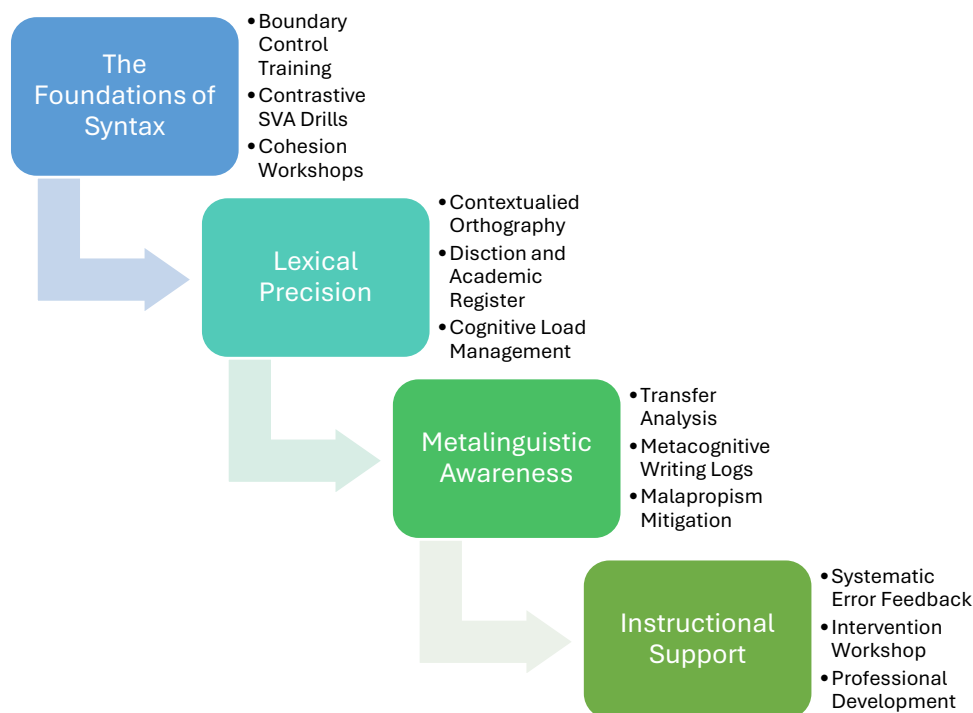
reading and exposure to various academic texts will improve students' accuracy in word choice (Ignacy & Subramaniam, 2024).

Additionally, recognizing the influence of the first language as a barrier to learning English necessitates incorporating techniques that help students transfer skills to improve English literacy and address barriers stemming from their complex language backgrounds. Additionally, a comprehensive professional development program for educators on error analysis, feedback mechanisms, and the need for

written comments on errors can help address these challenges that students face.

The outcomes of this study highlight the frequency of major lexical errors among the academic writing samples from college students in the Philippines. By identifying major issues, including misspelled words, inaccurate word choices, and first-language barriers to learning, educators can tailor their instruction to improve students' writing skills and academic success.

4.9 Academic Writing Enhancement (AWE) Framework



The Academic Writing Enhancement (IAWE) establishes four intervention phases that integrate writing instruction with improved educational outcomes for newly identified at-risk students. Statistical data are used to identify specific error types in the student's academic writing, which are then used to guide intervention strategies that improve the student's writing skills. To provide a comprehensive solution for both the cognitive and technical aspects of developing writing skills, the AWE model employs a multilayered approach.

Phase One—The Basics of Syntax (The Structural Bridge): Focuses on the three most common writing errors that occur in student writing: run-on sentences, comma splices, and subject-verb agreement (SVA).

- Boundary Control Training—The Boundary

Control Training component provides explicit skill development to help the student identify clause boundaries and will be used to reduce the rate of run-on sentences and comma splices found in the student's writing.

- Contrastive Subject-Verb Agreement Drills—These structured drills will help the student understand the structural differences between English and the student's native language, thereby reducing subject-verb agreement errors by improving the student's awareness of how to control for SVA.
- Cohesion Workshops—These activities will provide the author with an opportunity to develop complete, cohesive sentences that are logical by combining previous sentence

elements together to form a complete thought.

Phase Two – Lexical Precision (The Bridge to Correct Spelling): This phase examines spelling (orthography) and word choice, which have been identified as the largest impediments to students' successful completion of their academic work. Examples of lexical precision include:

- **Contextualized Orthography (spelling):** Instead of simply memorizing how to spell words, teachers should provide spelling instruction in the context of the academic writing tasks students must complete.
- **Diction and Academic Register:** An instructional program should assist students with limited vocabulary by encouraging extensive reading of a wide variety of academic texts, thereby increasing their lexical richness.
- **Cognitive Load Management:** An instructional program should help manage cognitive load and thus prevent cognitive overload associated with writing tasks. Thus, by managing the level of complexity students are exposed to and by providing foldable tools to help organize complex writing tasks, the likelihood of students misspelling words will be reduced.

Phase Three – Metalinguistic Awareness (The Cognitive Bridge): Phase 3 involves metalinguistic awareness as a cognitive bridge from addressing or "fixing" errors to understanding them and their connection to a student's native language (L1). In this phase, a teacher's feedback will help the learner become more aware of how their native language structure(s) translate into English.

- **L1-L2 Transfer Analysis:** The student learns to consciously identify instances when they use their native-language sentence structure(s) in English.
- **Metacognitive Writing Logs:** The student develops a more engaged and reasoned approach to their writing by using metacognitive writing logs that encourage them to consider their syntactic choices.
- **Malapropism Mitigation:** Students are specifically trained to recognize and differentiate between words that sound alike but have different meanings.

Phase Four—Instructional Support (The Pedagogical Bridge) is a collaboration between

the teacher and the school district that provides support for development. Instructional support includes:

- **Systematic Error Feedback:** Training teachers to provide systematic error feedback that provides more than just a grade and, instead, gives detailed written comments about the student's errors.
- **Intervention Workshops:** The implementation of intervention workshops to include grammar workshops and practical examples to support recognition and correction in real-world situations.
- **Professional Development:** Professional development for educators to ensure that they have mastered the process of error analysis, as well as allow educators to directly infuse into instructional design processes.

5. Conclusion

The study examining how college students in the Philippines write in English concluded that there are serious obstacles to effective communication, stemming from weak grammar and word-choice skills. Most of these problems stem from confusion about where clauses begin and end, as well as inconsistent spelling (orthography). Syntactically, problems with sentence structure account for about two-thirds of students' writing errors. The errors are mainly due to a lack of understanding of how to construct sentences properly and apply English grammatical rules when writing, rather than relying on the rules of the students' native languages (L1).

The errors found related to the use of words (the lexical component) were primarily due to students not knowing how to spell or use identifying words correctly. Half of all the word errors (orthographic) reported by students fell into the category of misspelled words. Additionally, choosing the right types of academic language for the context is also difficult for students. Cognitive overload during complex writing tasks and limited exposure to reading materials are other major factors contributing to students' lexical problems. Additionally, the continued influence of students' L1 structures prevents them from producing their best writing.

The data of this study suggest that until there is a thorough intervention addressing these patterns of syntactic and lexical errors, students will continue to encounter problems with producing

writing that meets the high standards of academic English composition.

6. Recommendations

Educators can begin tackling the problems identified above by using the Academic Writing Enhancement Framework (AWE). This framework combines the ongoing collection of error feedback on academic writing with a series of pedagogical intervention strategies. One critical part of implementing the AWE framework is changing how we teach academic writing. Rather than focusing exclusively on rote memorization, we must provide students with extensive, context-based training opportunities, such as run-on sentence elimination workshops that help learners identify problematic patterns in their own writing and contrastive drills that help them analyze how the written language structure differs between their first language and English. Additionally, creating extensive, vocabulary-rich environments through reading experiences and using metacognitive writing logs will help learners use better words and develop a reflective awareness of their syntactic choices. Lastly, institutions need to offer ongoing, comprehensive professional development for all educators to help them develop their skill sets in providing detailed error analyses and in fostering the proper use of feedback to support student growth rather than simply using this information as a grading tool.

References

- Agbay, N. and Reyes, Y. (2019). Scrutinizing Interlingual and Intralingual Error: Basis for English Writing Program. *The Educational Review, USA*, 3(10). <https://doi.org/10.26855/er.2019.10.003>
- Awino, M. (2025). Lexical Errors in First-Year Undergraduates' English Compositions: An Error Analysis Approach. *East African Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, 8(3), 20-33. <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajass.8.3.3391>
- Bataineh, A. (2024). The Effect of Using Error Analysis as a Remedial Teaching Strategy on English Major Students' Productive Skills. *International Journal of Linguistics*, 16(5), 35. <https://doi.org/10.5296/ijl.v16i5.22184>
- Cabanda, E., Yeoh, B., Acedera, K., & Walton-Roberts, M. (2024). Neoliberalism in question: The Philippines' nurse education and labour export as liberal neo-statist development agenda. *International Migration*, 63(2). <https://doi.org/10.1111/imig.13339>
- Chiknaverova, K. (2019). Erroneous use of lexical means in academic essays in a foreign language and its remedies. *Vestnik Kostroma State University Series Pedagogy Psychology Sociokinetics*, (4), 210-214. <https://doi.org/10.34216/2073-1426-2019-25-4-210-214>
- Cocjin, A. (2021). Error Analysis in the Written Texts of Pre-Service Teachers. *Asian Journal of Research in Education and Social Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.55057/ajress.2021.3.4.2>
- Contreras, C. (2024). Unveiling Syntactical Errors in SHS Students. *Jetal Journal of English Teaching & Applied Linguistic*, 5(2), 99-103. <https://doi.org/10.36655/jetal.v5i2.1392>
- Davies, S. (2023). COVID-19 in Southeast Asia: Insights for a Post-pandemic World. *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 82(3), 518-520. <https://doi.org/10.1215/00219118-10849862>
- Dizon, R. and Gatchalian, J. (2025). Morphosyntactic analysis of PSAU BS Agriculture first year students' written compositions. *JESCS*, 2(3), 127-146. <https://doi.org/10.71028/jescs.v2i3.129>
- Ganschow, L. (1984). Analysis of written language of a language learning disabled (dyslexic) college student and instructional implications. *Annals of Dyslexia*, 34(1), 271-284. <https://doi.org/10.1007/bf02663625>
- Geng, H. (2025). Grammatical Error Analysis in the Academic Writing of English Language First-Year College Students. *Forum for Linguistic Studies*, 7(10). <https://doi.org/10.30564/fls.v7i10.10209>
- Hládek, D., Staš, J., & Pleva, M. (2020). Survey of Automatic Spelling Correction. *Electronics*, 9(10), 1670. <https://doi.org/10.3390/electronics9101670>
- Ho, T. (2024). Problems with Academic Writing Encountered by EFL Postgraduate Students at a University in the Mekong Delta. *International Journal of Language Instruction*, 3(1), 1-16. <https://doi.org/10.54855/ijli.24311>
- Hoshino, N., Dussias, P., & Kroll, J. (2009). Processing subject-verb agreement in a second language depends on proficiency. *Bilingualism Language and Cognition*, 13(2), 87-98. <https://doi.org/10.1017/s1366728909990034>

- Hou, H. (2016). Learner Corpus and Academic Writing: Identifying the Error Patterns of Taiwanese EFL Students. *Journal for the Study of English Linguistics*, 4(1), 19. <https://doi.org/10.5296/jsel.v4i1.9193>
- Hubbard, P. and Hix, D. (1988). Where Vocabulary Meets Grammar: Verb Subcategorization Errors in ESL Writers. *The CATESOL Journal*, 1(1). <https://doi.org/10.5070/b5.36695>
- Ignacy, R. and Subramaniam, V. (2024). Language Errors in Writing Skills According to Corder's Theory. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 14(2). <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarbss/v14-i2/20308>
- Joven, A., Manulat, K., Monredondo, M., & Bacatan, J. (2025). Grammar Gaps: An Error Analysis of Grammar Difficulties in Academic Writing among Senior High School Students. *International Journal of Social Sciences and English Literature*, 9(8), 9-18. <https://doi.org/10.55220/2576-683x.v9.522>
- Karim, K. and Nassaji, H. (2018). The revision and transfer effects of direct and indirect comprehensive corrective feedback on ESL students' writing. *Language Teaching Research*, 24(4), 519-539. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362168818802469>
- Karpathiou, N. and Kambanaros, M. (2022). Comparing Individuals with PPA to Individuals With AD: Cognitive and Linguistic Profiles. *Frontiers in Communication*, 7. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2022.893471>
- Kies, S. and Lambert, O. (2023). Acquiring a scholar's voice. *Literatura Y Lingüística*, (46), 251-279. <https://doi.org/10.29344/0717621x.46.3145>
- Kozolup, M., PATIYEVYCH, O., Kryzhanivska, H., & Antokhiv-Skolozdra, O. (2023). Challenges for non-English speakers: inter- and intralingual factors shaping the writing of Ukrainian authors in biological sciences. *Studia Biologica*, 17(3), 167-188. <https://doi.org/10.30970/sbi.1703.728>
- Libbie, J., Challay, S., & Dimoh, C. (2023). An Analysis of the Grammatical Errors in the Written English Compositions of JSS 1 Pupils in Five Junior Secondary Schools in Bo City, Southern Sierra Leone. *International Journal of Linguistics*, 15(2), 66. <https://doi.org/10.5296/ijl.v15i2.20910>
- Litam, S. and Oh, S. (2022). Coping strategies as moderators of COVID-19 racial discrimination in Filipino Americans. *Asian American Journal of Psychology*, 13(1), 18-29. <https://doi.org/10.1037/aap0000253>
- Magsayo, C., Pulmones, M., Canton, N., Fiel, C., Kwong, K., Sanchez, F., ... & Bacharo, K. (2024). The scholarly publishing landscape of ethnobotany in the Philippines. *Ethnobotany Research and Applications*, 28. <https://doi.org/10.32859/era.28.48.1-12>
- Malip, N. (2022). The Influence of L1 in ESL Learners' Writing. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 12(7). <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarbss/v12-i7/14120>
- Martínez, A. (2018). Study of accuracy and grammatical complexity in EFL writing. *International Journal of English Studies*, 18(1), 71-89. <https://doi.org/10.6018/ijes/2018/1/258971>
- Matusalem, Y., Jilhanu, J., Langga, P., Doloricon, J., Sala, E., & Pandapatan, S. (2025). English Writing Performance and Syntactic Errors: The Case of Southern Palawan ESL Learners. *International Journal of English Language Studies*, 7(3), 10-24. <https://doi.org/10.32996/ijels.2025.7.3.2>
- Mazgutova, D. and Kormos, J. (2015). Syntactic and lexical development in an intensive English for Academic Purposes programme. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 29, 3-15. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2015.06.004>
- Nguyễn, A. and Tuấn, V. (2024). Typical linguistic errors committed by tertiary students in legal written outputs. *East European Journal of Psycholinguistics*, 11(2). <https://doi.org/10.29038/eejpl.2024.11.2.ngu>
- Pham, Q. and Phạm, V. (2024). Common syntactic errors in the writing skills of the 3rd year students at Van Lang University. *International Journal of Tesol & Education*, 4(2), 118-144. <https://doi.org/10.54855/ijte.24427>
- Serrano, J. and Reyes, M. (2022). Bending not breaking: coping among Filipino University students experiencing psychological distress during the Global Health Crisis. *Current Psychology*, 42(33), 28857-28867. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-022-03823-3>
- Slimi, Z., Alawai, F., Alyani, H., Abri, S., Al-Farsi,

- F., & Balushi, K. (2022). Writing Issues in ESL and their Potential Solutions: Case Study IMCO's Foundation Students. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 12(6), 81. <https://doi.org/10.36941/jesr-2022-0146>
- Wei, X., Chen, B., Liang, L., & Dunlap, S. (2015). Native Language Influence on the Distributive Effect in Producing Second Language Subject-Verb Agreement. *Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 68(12), 2370-2383. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17470218.2015.1014821>
- Wirasa, K., Artawa, K., & Aryani, M. (2021). Grammatical Errors in English Narrative Writing Committed by Class XI Students of SMA Dwijendra Denpasar. *International Journal of Research Publications*, 85. <https://doi.org/10.47119/ijrp100851920212270>
- Zhang, J., Hou, Z., Kharabi-Yamato, L., Winton, S., Iluore, A., Lee, G., ... & Nam, R. (2024). Morphophonemic analysis boosts orthographic and semantic learning of academic words for Spanish-English bilinguals. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 47(4), 454-474. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9817.12455>

Online Tools for Scholarly Communication in Library and Information Science

Dr. V. Senthur Velmurugan¹

¹ Head and Librarian, Kongu Arts and Science College (Autonomous), Erode 638107, Tamilnadu, India

Correspondence: Dr. V. Senthur Velmurugan, Head and Librarian, Kongu Arts and Science College (Autonomous), Erode 638107, Tamilnadu, India.

doi:10.63593/JARE.2026.03.02

Abstract

The rapid growth in digital technologies significantly revolutionizes the dissemination of scholarly communication. Digital tools now facilitate the discovery, creation, management, dissemination, and evaluation of scholarly information. Such tools are found in Library and Information Science for the enhancement of research workflows, collaboration, and visibility of scholarly outputs. Major online tools to be looked at include academic search engines, reference management software, institutional repositories, academic social networking platforms, and tools measuring research impact. This study employed a descriptive research methodology based on secondary data with a literature review. Accordingly, key observations highlight that the roles of libraries and information professionals are considered paramount in providing guidance in research support, managing digital resources, and promoting open access practices. In this regard, the key findings propose that for effective scholarly communication to exist in this digital age, continuous training, strategic adoption of online tools, and awareness of ethical and quality standards become quite indispensable.

Keywords: scholarly communication, online tools, library and information science, open access, institutional repositories, research impact

1. Introduction

Scholarly communication comprises the creation, review, diffusion, and conservation of research findings. Conventional practices involved print journals, books, and conferences; however, the introduction of digital technologies has transformed these very approaches. Online tools now support rapid information access, collaboration between researchers, and increased visibility for the work itself.

Scholarly communication is a central part of

professional practice in the field of information studies. Libraries and professionals in LIS not only provide access to information but also support the use of digital tools, open access resources, and platforms for the evaluation of research output. Indeed, today's researcher increasingly relies on academic search engines, institutional repositories, reference management tools, and altmetrics to manage, disseminate, and measure the impact of their work (Suber, 2012; Lynch, 2003; Tenopir et al., 2016).

2. Objectives of the Study

- (1) Reflect on the development of scholarly communications and their definitions in a digital environment.
- (2) Primary web-based tools used for LIS scientific communication.
- (3) Categorize digital tools according to the role they play within the research process.
- (4) Discussion: Examine the function of the library and the career professional regarding the usage of the tool.
- (5) Analyze the role of online resources in the visibility, collaboration, and sharing of research findings.
- (6) Emphasize the problems faced by adopters of online tools.

3. Scope of the Study

This research paper examines online tools for scholarly communication in the field of LIS for literature search, research management, collaborative authoring, dissemination of

research, and research impact evaluation. This research is a secondary-source-based paper and does not contain any research or user studies. In terms of geography, the research is global in focus.

4. Research Methodology

The research methodology used in this study is descriptive and analytical in nature.

- **Data Collection:** The secondary source of the study will be journals, books, reports, and web-based materials on the topic of LIS and Scholarly Communication.
- **Data Analysis:** The tools were identified in accordance with their usage and point in the Scholarly Communication Life Cycle.
- **Interpretation:** The results were analyzed to recognize the use of an LIS professional and issues in adoption.

5. Classification of Online Tools for Scholarly Communication

5.1 Literature Discovery and Information Retrieval

Table 1.

Category	Tools	Functions	Purpose
Academic Search Engines	Google Scholar, Semantic Scholar	Literature search, citation tracking	1. Enabling scientists to search efficiently for scientific papers and for citations to facilitate the search for relevant literature.
Open Scholarly Databases	OpenAlex, BASE	Open metadata, full-text access	To enable free and comprehensive access to the metadata and full texts of research documents.
Subject Repositories	E-LIS	Discipline-specific research content	To tap and maintain research results and content specific to each discipline, mainly with relation to increasing accessibility and visibility of research work.

5.2 Reference Management and Research Organization

Table 2.

Tool	Type	Features	Purpose
Zotero	Open-source	Citation storage, tagging, sharing	For assisting in the organization and management of references by authors conducting studies for the purpose of citation.
Mendeley	Freemium	Reference management, collaboration	A platform for the management of citations, the annotation of PDFs, and collaboration with other individuals.
EndNote	Commercial	Advanced citation library management	To provide professional-grade citation and library management assistance for supporting research and manuscript preparation for publication.

5.3 Research Creation and Collaboration

Table 3.

Tool	Function	Scholarly Use	Purpose
Authorea	Collaborative writing	Multi-author research papers	To facilitate the ability of multiple researchers to work on writing, editing, and organizing academic papers together.
Google Docs	Cloud collaboration	Real-time editing and commenting	To offer a cloud-based platform that enables joint editing and commenting, hence promoting an efficient collaboration process among researchers regardless of their location.

5.4 Publishing and Dissemination

Table 4.

Category	Examples	Role	Purpose
Institutional Repositories	DSpace, EPrints	Archiving, open access	To store, preserve, and provide long-term access to institutional research outputs at the highest level of visibility while supporting open access initiatives.
Open Access Journals	DOAJ-listed journals	Free scholarly publishing	To provide open access to peer-reviewed research and thereby further dissemination and fair access to knowledge.
Preprint Servers	arXiv, OSF Preprints	Early dissemination	To allow the rapid dissemination of research results before peer review for early feedback and exchange of information, thereby facilitating collaboration.

5.5 Academic Social Networking Tools

Table 5.

Platform	Use	Benefit	Purpose
ResearchGate	Sharing research	Collaboration, visibility	To provide a platform where researchers can share publications, connect with peers, and extend the reach and impact of their work.
Academia.edu	Networking	Profile management	To assist researchers in creating their academic profile, networking with other colleagues, and thereby showcasing their research outputs to a global audience.
ORCID	Researcher ID	Author identification	Provide unique identification of researchers, correctly attribute work by them, and allow linking of publications across platforms to aid in enhancing the credibility of research and its discoverability.

5.6 Research Impact and Evaluation

Table 6.

Tool	Measure	Scope	Purpose
Google Scholar Citations	Citation counts	Academic impact	In the context of citation acquisition for the relevant researcher for the different publications, respectively.
Altmetric	Online attention	Societal and online impact	Attend to the provision of an attention score for research output in relation to social media coverage, news coverage, and policy documents.
PlumX	Usage metrics	Multidimensional impact	It should also provide a more realistic depiction of the research impact by using citations, usage, capture, and mentions, and should include social media metrics that could prove conclusive in determining overall impact.

6. The Role of Libraries and Information Professionals

Libraries are key enablers of effective scholarly communication:

- Access and Discovery: The librarian facilitates databases, repository systems, and discovery systems (ACRL, 2020).
- Repository Management: Institutional repositories for archiving, preservation and open access (Lynch, 2003; Xia, 2010).
- Open-access advocacy: informing researchers about copyright, licensing, and best practices in open science (Suber, 2012).
- Research Support: The services shall support reference management, plagiarism, journal selection, and funder requirements (Tenopir et al., 2016).
- Impact Evaluation: Support the processes of maintaining ORCID and the analysis of citations as well as altmetrics evaluation (Priem et al., 2010).
- Capacity Building: Arranging training sessions for both research professionals and library professionals (Borgman, 2007).

7. Challenges and Limitations

- 1) "Digital divide:" This concept speaks to an imbalance in access to technology and internet connectivity (Borgman, 2007; Suber, 2012).
- 2) Limited Awareness: Digital illiteracy regarding the use of the tools of references and impact (ACRL, 2020).
- 3) Sustainability: The use of commercial services may create concerns about sustainability. For instance, when a person's

(Borgman, 2007).

- 4) Quality Control: Predatory Journals and Low-Rated Open Access Publications (Xia, 2010).
- 5) Study Limitations: The study utilizes secondary sources, in that there are no survey interviews.

8. Conclusion and Suggestions

8.1 Conclusion

The web-based tools have changed the landscape of scholarly communication in the LIS sector by assisting with discovery, management, collaboration, dissemination, and evaluation of research. The libraries and the professionals in the LIS sector play a critical part in enabling the use of the tools, open access, and responsible performance of research. Strategic use of the web-based tools despite the challenges improves research visibility, collaboration, and the quality of scholarly communication (Borgman, 2007; Suber, 2012).

8.2 Suggestions

- 1) Enhance scholarly communication literacy skills in library training (ACRL, 2020).
- 2) Support open-access projects and repositories (Suber, 2012).
- 3) Ongoing capacity building for professionals working in the LIS field (Borgman, 2007).
- 4) Educate authors/researchers on the ethics of publication, copyrights, and predatory publishing (Xia, 2010).
- 5) Research impact measurement metrics should be integrated with library services (Priem et al., 2010).

The future study may include empirical

investigation, like conducting a survey.

References

- Association of College and Research Libraries. (2020). *Scholarly communication toolkit*. American Library Association. <https://acrl.libguides.com/scholcomm>
- Borgman, C. L. (2007). *Scholarship in the digital age: Information, infrastructure, and the Internet*. MIT Press.
- Gilmour, R., & Cobus-Kuo, L. (2011). Reference management software: A comparative analysis of four products. *Issues in Science and Technology Librarianship*, 66.
- Harzing, A. W., & Alakangas, S. (2016). Google Scholar, Scopus and the Web of Science: A longitudinal and cross-disciplinary comparison. *Scientometrics*, 106(2), 787–804.
- Jordan, K. (2014). Academics and their online networks: Exploring the role of academic social networking sites. *First Monday*, 19(11). <https://doi.org/10.5210/fm.v19i11.5293>
- Lynch, C. A. (2003). Institutional repositories: Essential infrastructure for scholarship in the digital age. *Portal: Libraries and the Academy*, 3(2), 327–336. <https://doi.org/10.1353/pla.2003.0039>
- Priem, J., Taraborelli, D., Groth, P., & Neylon, C. (2010). *Altmetrics: A manifesto*. <http://altmetrics.org/manifesto>
- Suber, P. (2012). *Open access*. MIT Press.
- Tenopir, C., Dalton, E. D., Allard, S., Frame, M., Pjesivac, I., & Birch, B. (2016). Changes in data sharing and data reuse practices and perceptions among scientists worldwide. *PLoS ONE*, 10(8), e0134826. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0134826>
- Xia, J. (2010). A longitudinal study of scholars' attitudes and behaviors toward open-access journal publishing. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, 61(3), 615–624. <https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.21283>

Research on Parental Collaborative Education Strategies in Primary Schools in the Context of the Family Education Promotion Law

Yishan Ma¹, Yuandong Shang¹, Peishu Yu² & Ziyang Hu¹

¹ College of Education Science, Mudanjiang Normal University, Mudanjiang, Heilongjiang 157011, China

² Ulanhot Hongyun Hope Primary School, Ulanhot, Inner Mongolia 137400, China

Correspondence: Yishan Ma, College of Education Science, Mudanjiang Normal University, Mudanjiang, Heilongjiang 157011, China.

doi:10.63593/JARE.2026.03.03

Abstract

Under the background of the Family Education Promotion Law, the collaboration between home, school, and society has become the focus of attention. Among the three parties, primary school students' families are at a weak point in the joint efforts. This study administered a questionnaire survey to 325 parents of primary school students in H province to investigate their attitudes towards the competitive nature of education and the advancement of family education quality. The study found that the parents of primary school students in the home-school-community cooperative education system have weak willingness to participate, the cooperation channels are relatively single, the communication frequency is low, and the relationship between the three parties is tense. This study suggests five optimization strategies redefining parental education objectives encouraging the exchange of experiences among various stakeholders establishing a collaborative community involving home, school, and society. The distribution of rights and interests to facilitate equitable cooperation, and ensuring that parents, schools and society share information while clarifying their respective rights and responsibilities. Stimulate the initiative of the three parties in collaborative education and strengthen the correct value orientation of education.

Keywords: family education promotion law, high-quality development of education, collaborative education by families, schools and societies, education governance

1. Research Background

Parental education is the foundation of talent development. As a long-term, continuous form of education, it is deeply involved and supports the entire growth process of students. At present, the rapid development of society has put forward higher and more comprehensive requirements

for the quality of talents, which makes it particularly crucial to consolidate the foundational role of parental education. The criteria for talent selection are constantly rising, and in order to ensure that their children do not fall behind at the starting line, "educational involution" has emerged. Under the high

expectations of parents, the high demands of schools, and the high standards of society, the pressure on students has suddenly increased. Some parents hold the notion of “being a peasant in the morning and stepping into the imperial court in the evening”, which has led some students to develop a resistant attitude towards learning. This phenomenon is not only contrary to the original intention of education, but also poses an obstacle to the collaborative education of families, schools and communities. The uneven educational literacy of parents, the differences in their emotions and approaches towards home-school-community collaborative education, and the lack of connection between home and school, all reflect the diverse and complex characteristics of contemporary Chinese home-school-community collaborative education.

1.1 The Educational Literacy of Parents Varies

The educational literacy of parents is a comprehensive system that encompasses multiple dimensions such as educational emotion, educational ability, educational level, educational background and emotional state, and profoundly influences the growth trajectory and development quality of students. Parents’ cognition and attitude towards home-school-community collaborative education have a direct impact on parents’ educational attainment, educational level, etc. Parents with a higher level of education have strong learning abilities and a solid foundation in educational theory, and tend to adopt modern educational concepts that focus on students’ psychological development and comprehensive quality development. On the contrary, some less educated parents have more traditional educational concepts, overly emphasizing students’ academic performance and neglecting the problems in students’ mental health, emotional state, etc. The diversity of home-school-community collaborative education is formed by the differences in educational concepts and methods. This disparity stems from cognitive differences among parents on the one hand, and on the other hand reflects the changes in social culture, where parents have very different views on educational concepts. Some parents, in the short term, still hold onto the traditional notion that education is merely about imparting knowledge and place too much emphasis on academic performance and obedience. While this educational approach shows some effect in the short term, it may affect students’ autonomy and creativity in the long run.

Another group of parents, on the other hand, adhere to the educational philosophy of “lifelong learning”, focusing on developing students’ ability to think independently while giving them more space to explore.

1.2 Differences in the Emotions and Approaches of Parents Towards Home-School-Community Collaboration in Education

Parents’ attitudes towards home-school-community collaboration directly influence the emotions and ways they exhibit in the process, resulting in significant differences. Some parents who have a positive attitude towards the tripartite collaborative education are able to keenly observe the educational needs of students from the tripartite collaborative education process, actively communicate and guide through the tripartite collaboration, and help students solve educational predicaments. However, parents who are resistant to the tripartite collaborative education not only view it negatively, but also deal with students’ educational predicaments in a simplistic and brutal way. This disparity in emotional attitude and approach has led to an imbalance in collaborative education among families, schools and communities, and has affected the achievement of the overall goal of collaborative education.

1.3 There Are Deviations in the Concept of Home-School Collaboration

The inconsistency between the educational goals and methods of home and school is the core issue leading to the weakening of educational synergy. This is manifested as poor communication between families and schools, a gap in educational concepts and requirements, and students being pulled in both directions; Some parents overly rely on schools, externalize their educational responsibilities completely, and ignore the crucial role of families as the main body of education, making it difficult for collaborative education to form an effective closed loop.

1.4 Technological Innovation Contributes to the Reconstruction of the Educational Ecosystem

In the context of the interweaving of the digital age and consumer culture, family education is facing a double challenge: on the one hand, the prevalence of the Internet and smart terminals makes it easier for students to access the virtual world, and improper use can lead to dependence and affect physical and mental health

development; On the other hand, fast food culture and material-oriented values can lead students into utilitarian pursuits, weakening their endurance and concentration. In this context, there is an urgent need to strengthen the strategic position of family education based on the concept of “all-round education”, and to effectively play the foundational role of family education in the all-round development of students through ways such as enhancing parents’ educational awareness, deepening home-school collaboration, and optimizing the family education environment.

2. Literature Review and Research Hypotheses

The report of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China states: “Deepen comprehensive reform in the field of education, strengthen the construction and management of teaching materials, improve the school management and education evaluation system, and improve the school, family and society education mechanism.” (Xi, 2022) In January 2023, the Ministry of Education and 13 other departments issued “Several Opinions on Improving the School-Family-Society Collaborative Education Mechanism”, which stated: “Improving the mechanism of collaborative education among schools, families and society is related to the all-round development and healthy growth of students, the development of the country and the future of the nation. It is an important decision and deployment made by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and The State Council, an important link in improving collaborative education among schools and society, and an important cornerstone for deepening educational reform and promoting high-quality development of education.” (Ministry of Education, 2023) In recent years, parents’ participation in students’ education has become an important cornerstone for promoting educational development, which is the policy push of “home-school-community collaborative education”. But the emphasis on cooperation and support of parental involvement has gradually become a slogan, with some parents taking scores and rankings as the sole criterion for judging children’s development, promoting organic integration is a major test for current educational development, a top priority for current educational development, a major challenge for current educational reform, and also a major challenge for current educational work. (Wang

Xiande, 2022) In the context of the information age, the continuous development and quality improvement of the education sector depend on the reasonable positioning and effective coordination of various educational forces. However, constrained by traditional concepts, the main role of school education is often overemphasized, resulting in a certain degree of one-way concentration of educational rights and responsibilities in schools, and failing to fully reflect the due value of multiple subjects such as families and society in the education system. The current practice of home-school-community collaborative education in primary schools faces multiple predicaments: family education, school education and social education have not yet formed an effective coupling, there are cross-blind spots in the responsibilities among the subjects, and the regular collaboration mechanism and resource guarantee system are also weak, which restricts the generation of educational synergy. The phenomenon of mutual buck-passing among families, (Run Qing & Tian Daomin, 2023) schools and society is quite obvious, and the results of joint efforts in education have not reached the expected goals. Therefore, in the joint education of families, schools and communities, it is necessary not only to make overall plans but also to clearly define the educational responsibilities of each subject. The mismatch between supply and demand of social educational resources (Ni Minjing, 2021), the issue of safeguarding the rights and interests of schools and teachers, and the issue of defining the boundaries of family, school and social education also need to be addressed. At the same time, we will continue to shift the focus of evaluation from results to processes and increase support for intelligent technologies. Build online platforms to promote home-school-community co-construction and collaborative education among families, schools and communities. This article, set against the backdrop of high-quality education development, aims to analyze effective solutions to these predicaments from the perspective of primary school parents. To meet the requirements of high-quality education development and to help promote the effectiveness of home-school-community cooperation in education.

3. Research Design and Process

A questionnaire survey was used in this study. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. The first part was the collection of basic

information about the participants, such as gender, grade, etc. The second part is the main content and dimension design of the questionnaire, five dimensions, five entry points for each factor, namely parents' willingness to cooperate, home-school social cognition, frequency of home-school communication, channels of home-school social cooperation, home-school relationship. The questionnaire is designed using the 5-point Likert scale, which represents the degree of correspondence between each question in the questionnaire and the actual situation on a scale of 1 to 5. All questions are negative, and the stronger the home-school cooperative relationship that parents hope for, the lower the score they will receive. This questionnaire was tested using a uniform instruction and was conducted anonymously. There may be common methodological biases in

the research using the questionnaire method. Therefore, in order to increase the authenticity and reliability of the questionnaire, reverse questions and anonymous filling methods were set in the questionnaire. The Harman single-factor test was used to detect common method bias, and the results showed that the number of factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 was 4, and the cumulative contribution rate of the first factor was 35.405%. When it is 40% below the critical value, it meets the standard. This indicates that there is no bias in the way the data obtained from this survey is shared. The initial KMO value obtained in this study is 0.863, the Bartlett ball test value is 1879.533, and the concomitant probability is $0.000 < 0.01$, which is significant and suitable for factor analysis, indicating that the validity of the questionnaire data is significant. (See Table 1)

Table 1. Common Method Bias Test

Components	Initial eigenvalues			Extract the sum of squares of the loads		
	Total	Percentage of variance	Cumulative %	Total	Percentage of variance	Cumulative %
1	7.081	35.405	35.405	7.081	35.405	35.405
2	2.523	12.617	48.022	2.523	12.617	48.022
3	1.845	9.223	57.245	1.845	9.223	57.245
4	1.248	6.241	63.486	1.248	6.241	63.486
5	0.878	4.391	67.878			
6	0.818	4.091	71.969			
7	0.790	3.949	75.918			
8	0.634	3.170	79.088			
9	0.562	2.811	81.899			

The questionnaires with better content validity are those guided by experts. After the test was completed and multiple items were analyzed and tested, the questionnaire items showed good discrimination, intrinsic consistency, and homogeneity. In the formal test, the questionnaire also passed the test, examining the exploratory and confirmatory analyses in the test. Good reliability and validity were achieved.

4. Research Results

4.1 Analysis of Parents' Understanding of Home-School Cooperation

This questionnaire uses a negative five-point scoring system, with a scale of 1 to 5. Therefore, theoretically, 3 is considered a moderate intensity

observation. See Table 2. The dimensions above moderate intensity are parental willingness to cooperate, home-school social perception, frequency of home-school communication, channels of home-school social cooperation, and home-school relationship. Among the five measurement dimensions, the highest score for the parental factor was an average score of 1.729 for parental willingness to cooperate, followed by an average score of 1.856 for home-school communication frequency, an average score of 1.879 for home-school cooperative channel, an average score of 1.9 for home-school social cognition, and the lowest was an average score of 2.166 for home-school relationship. Overall, however, the parent factor score above the

moderate intensity value reflects the current and high.
parent factor situation that is between average

Table 2. Parents' Perception of Home-School Collaboration

	Minimum value	Maximum	Average	Standard deviation
Home-school-community collaboration channels	1.00	4.00	1.8794	0.58156
Parents' willingness to cooperate	1.00	3.60	1.7291	0.59911
Frequency of home-school communication	1.00	3.20	1.8567	0.55566
Home-school relationship	1.00	4.20	2.1660	0.86386
Home-school-community cognition	1.00	4.00	1.9078	0.74786

An analysis of the correlation of parents' influence on home-school cooperation reveals that, on the whole, the parent factor is generally above average, with a mean of 1.906, which is at a generally high level. There is a significant positive correlation between home-school cooperation and the parent factor sub-items such as parents' willingness to cooperate, home-school-community cognition, frequency of home-school communication, channels of home-school-community cooperation, and home-school relationship, with Pearson correlation coefficients of 0.502, 0.722, 0.541, 0.342, and 0.48 respectively,

all at significant levels. These data suggest that the willingness of home-school cooperation, the perception of home-school, the frequency of home-school communication, the channels of cooperation, and the relationship between home and school are all factors influencing home-school cooperation. From this, it can be inferred that the better the degree of these parental factors, the higher and more beneficial the level of home-school cooperation will be in terms of students' physical and mental development, academic performance improvement, and comprehensive quality cultivation.

Table 3. Correlation Analysis

	Q1	Channels for cooperation among families, schools and communities	Parents' willingness to cooperate	Frequency of home-school communication	Home-school relationship	Home-school-community cognition
Q1 Pearson correlation	1					
Home-school-community Collaboration Channel Pearson correlation	.502**	1				
Parents' willingness to cooperate and correlation are poor	.722**	.525**	1			
Pilson correlation is frequently seen in home-school communication	.541**	.342**	.730**	1		
Home-school relationship Pearson	.342**	.377**	.627**	.543**	1	

correlation						
Home-school-community cognitive Pearson correlation	.480**	.421**	.741**	.525**	.580**	1

** At the 0.01 level (two-tailed), the correlation is significant.

4.1.1 The Influence of Parental Factors on Home-School Cooperation

To delve deeper into the impact of parental factors on home-school collaboration, this study divides home-school factors into five dimensions, including willingness to collaborate, home-school perception, frequency of home-school communication, channels of collaboration, and home-school relationship. The specific circumstances of home-school cooperation under each of the five dimensions were separately statistically analyzed. Therefore, among the influencing factors examined, parents' attitudes towards home-school cooperation are regarded as the dependent variable, and home-school cooperation willingness, home-school cognition, home-school communication frequency, cooperation channels, and home-school relationship are regarded as independent variables. Given the possible interference of demographic variables in the model, the personal background information of different parents may have some influence on their home-school cooperation to a greater or lesser extent. Therefore, different dimensions include the gender, class, family location, occupation, and whether the child is an only child being tested. And the correlation coefficients and p-values < 0.05 of the importance of home-school cooperation, the diversity of cooperation content, the frequency of home-school communication, the willingness of parents to cooperate, and the boundaries of home-school cooperation have significant positive correlations.

4.1.2 Willingness to Cooperate at Home Is Significantly Positively Correlated with Different Factors Within Parents

The results of the correlation analysis showed that there was a significant weak correlation between parental factors and home-school cooperation willingness in all dimensions, with correlation coefficients ranging from 0.3 to 0.5. Among them, the correlation coefficient between the importance of home-school cooperation and parents' willingness to cooperate was the highest, at 0.34; Excluding the interference of

demographic variables, it was found in the regression model that all dimensions were simultaneously invested, and the overall explanatory power reached 17.0. Home-school cooperation intention, home-school cognition, frequency of home-school communication, cooperation channels, and home-school relationship all played a positive promoting role. From this, it can be inferred that the hypothesis holds true, that is, among them, the effect of parents' willingness to cooperate with the school is the most prominent. From this conclusion, to promote the willingness of home-school cooperation from the perspective of parents, it is necessary to consider the importance of home-school cooperation, the diversity of cooperation content, the frequency of home-school communication, the willingness of parents to cooperate and the boundaries of home-school cooperation, especially the willingness of home-school cooperation.

4.2 The Willingness to Cooperate Between Home and School Is Influenced to Varying Degrees by Different Internal Factors of Parents

The results of the regression analysis indicated that factors such as career, residence, and being an only child all interfered with this outcome. After excluding the influence of these control variables, all five dimensions of parental factors have an impact on parents' willingness to cooperate with the school. Therefore, when it comes to home-school cooperation, demographic factors such as gender, grade, occupation, family location, and being an only child should be fully considered from five aspects: the importance of home-school cooperation, the diversity of cooperation content, the frequency of home-school communication, parents' willingness to cooperate, and the boundaries of home-school cooperation, to promote clear rights and responsibilities between home and school and enhance the professionalism of home-school cooperation.

5. Implications and Limitations of the Study

5.1 Build a Home-School-Community Collaborative Education Community and Define the Educational

Responsibilities of the Three Parties

Traditional home-school-community collaborative education practices often face challenges due to poor communication mechanisms and the absence of interactive platforms. The lack of effective information sharing and collaborative pathways among families, schools and social institutions restricts the maximization of educational synergy and affects the ultimate outcome of collaborative education. From the perspective of families, the phenomenon of parents blindly sending their children for training may also be due to the lack of timely access to relevant information about school education and the misunderstanding of teachers, resulting in ignorance of the latest developments in education. At present, communication between home and school is still dominated by traditional methods, and the advantages of digital platforms have not been fully exploited; Social education institutions, on the other hand, face problems of insufficient public awareness and low trust. To address this, we need to break down barriers and clarify rights and responsibilities through two key measures: information sharing among the three parties and signing cooperation agreements, ultimately creating favorable conditions for home-school-community collaborative education and comprehensively enhancing the level of education.

5.1.1 Break Down the Information Barriers Among Families, Schools and Communities and Pool the Resources of the Three Parties to Form an Educational Synergy

There are two types of information sharing, one is full information sharing and the other is insufficient information sharing. At present, the core challenge of home-school-community collaborative education lies in the incompleteness of information sharing. Such sharing often stops at the transmission of basic information rather than a deep understanding of each other's core demands and strategic Spaces. This information asymmetry can lead to misjudgment and lack of trust, which in turn weakens the willingness to cooperate. Therefore, promoting high-quality information exchange and resource integration and enabling the three parties to make optimal decisions based on a clear understanding of common interests is the key to breaking the current predicament and laying the foundation for cooperation. To achieve this goal, a multi-level and three-dimensional collaborative

support system can be built, that is, an instant information sharing channel can be established to eliminate information barriers, and an official WeChat public account matrix of "home-school-community collaborative education" can be created and embedded in each class WeChat group. With this as the main platform, schools will take the lead in regularly and specifically pushing the latest educational policies, school updates and community educational resources to parents. This move aims to establish a standardized information flow to fundamentally reduce the information gap among the three parties and ensure the synchronization and transparency of basic information. At the same time, build interactive communication and experience sharing platforms to promote deep mutual trust, and establish dedicated online forums or websites whose core functions should include: establishing a case library: systematically collecting and sharing excellent family education practice cases to provide parents with reference models. Set up an interactive area: Encourage parents to share and exchange parenting experiences and concerns to form a supportive community. Set up a Q&A mechanism: Arrange for education experts or senior workers to provide timely and professional answers to typical questions in the forum, offer authoritative support to parents, and give them "confidence" when participating in education. Finally, revitalize social public resources and build an accessible educational network to give full play to the educational functions of social institutions such as museums, science and technology museums, libraries, and patriotic education bases. Urge them to proactively and promptly release information on family-oriented educational activities through various means such as official websites, social media, and brochures. More importantly, it should take the initiative to collaborate with communities and schools to plan theme-based and distinctive practical educational activities, transform the technological, cultural and historical resources contained in the venues into vivid educational content, and ultimately form an inclusive and convenient family education guidance service network, making quality resources truly accessible.

5.1.2 Establish Specialized Institutions for Collaborative Education Among Families, Schools and Communities

The effective implementation of home-school-

community collaboration depends not only on the renewal of educational concepts, but also on the establishment of a strong organizational structure as support. In an organization with a clear structure and well-defined responsibilities, all parties can define their roles and act in a coordinated manner. However, looking back at past practices, most of the collaborative education efforts have remained at the home-school level, lacking a specialized agency that can make overall plans and play a guiding role, which directly leads to the difficulty in the in-depth development of tripartite collaborative activities. Therefore, establishing and improving the organizational structure of home-school-community collaborative education is the fundamental guarantee for integrating the forces of families, schools and society to provide quality educational services for students' development. From a macro perspective, it is necessary to establish specialized institutions and working leading groups for collaborative education at all levels, with the government taking the lead and playing the role of organizational coordination, so as to build a systematic organizational system for collaborative education. At the macro level, it is necessary to establish home-school-community collaborative education institutions at all levels, establish collaborative education work leading groups, and the government should play an organizational and coordinating role to build an organizational system for collaborative education and collaborative education (Dou Yuan & Qiao Dongping, 2023).

5.2 *Integrate Multiple Resources and Broaden Channels for Co-Education*

At present, the three major educational systems of family, school and society, due to the inherent differences in their objective functions and operational logics, and the lack of effective value recognition and interest coordination mechanisms, have failed to form a deeply coupled collaborative network among the three, and their cooperation has mostly remained at the surface level, making it difficult to maximize the educational effect. It is particularly important to integrate various resources, broaden the channels for collaborative education among families, schools and society, and break the illusion of "formal synergy". This is an effective measure to encourage all parties to play their roles and work together to promote quality education development, and to stimulate the active participation of families, schools and society.

5.2.1 *Help Parents Develop a Sense of Responsibility for Nurturing Their Children*

While detailing parents' educational responsibilities, the Family Education Promotion Law also emphasizes in various forms that the government, society and schools should all do a good job in family education and tutoring services. (Ministry of Education, 2021) It is the common responsibility of schools and society to break down the barriers of cooperation among families, schools and society, integrate the advantages of talents and resources, and provide targeted support and services for all families. To this end, it is necessary to firmly establish parents' sense of responsibility for nurturing children and provide guidance services that are both universal and personalized. Schools should go beyond the traditional model of home-school communication and convey advanced educational concepts and provide specific guidance to parents by holding regular parent-teacher meetings and setting up parent open days. This will not only enhance the effectiveness of home-school co-education, but also accurately grasp the actual needs of parents through face-to-face communication. At the same time, community collaboration is carried out to popularize inclusive education. Communities should take on the responsibility of promoting family education policies through various channels such as distributing brochures, online platforms, holding online and offline public welfare lectures, and organizing various experience activities to popularize knowledge about parent-child companionship, child care, and other aspects for parents, and provide high-reference value inclusive education information. Provide precise support to solve the problem of education. For families with relatively scarce educational resources, the form of group assistance can be adopted to encourage parents to participate in diverse learning and community practice activities at school and in society. At the same time, professional personnel from home-school-community collaborative education institutions provide customized and personalized guidance to effectively address the confusion and difficulties parents encounter in the educational process and promote substantive results in collaborative education.

5.2.2 *Strengthen the Leading Role and Service Function of Schools in Home-School-Community Collaborative Education*

The Family Education Promotion Law stipulates

that schools should incorporate family education guidance services into their work plans and carry out family education guidance services and practical activities. (Ministry of Education, 2021) To deepen the effectiveness of home-school-community collaborative education, schools need to take the lead in transforming their roles from traditional one-way managers to organizers and service providers of collaborative education. The key lies in strengthening the “service awareness”, shifting from passive cooperation to active support, and ensuring that educational services reach every family precisely. The first is to innovate the service model, shifting from “uniform supply” to “customization on demand”. Schools should completely change the current situation of formalism and one-way indoctrination in home-school cooperation and establish a service mechanism oriented towards the needs of parents. Before the activity, parents’ opinions can be actively solicited through questionnaires and other means, and “order-based” parent training can be implemented to stimulate their sense of participation. In terms of content, in addition to common concerns such as Internet addiction and adolescent rebellion, more attention should be paid to individualized problems such as students’ psychological vulnerability and resilience, and targeted strategic guidance should be provided to effectively enhance the effectiveness of family education support. Second, improve the communication mechanism and strengthen the direct participation and supervision of the management. To effectively guide and supervise home-school co-education at the head teacher level, a direct dialogue channel between school management and families should be established. Implement “face-to-face” communication systems such as having managers join class WeChat groups and holding regular “principal or director reception days”. This move not only enables immediate responses to parents’ concerns and the role of WeChat groups as information hubs, but also allows school management to go to the front line, directly grasp the real situation of home-school cooperation, and provide a basis for scientific decision-making. Third, open up school resources and promote the extension of “schools” to “community learning centers”. Schools should take the initiative to go beyond the boundaries of their walls and fully utilize their public cultural service functions. On the premise of maintaining normal teaching

order, facilities such as stadiums and libraries should be opened to the community in an orderly manner. This is not only an effective supplement to social educational resources and helps build community culture, but also creates more opportunities for parent-child interaction and community integration for families, thus achieving deep interaction and a virtuous cycle among families, schools and communities through resource sharing.

5.2.3 Give Full Play to the Complementary Role of Social Education and Build a Diverse Platform for Nurturing People

To promote the deep integration of school education and social education and build a learning society, efforts should be made in the following four aspects: First, deepen school-community cooperation, encourage communities and schools to jointly carry out characteristic practical activities, introduce professional talents to develop localized courses, and enhance the ability of cultural inheritance and collaborative education. Second, Revitalize public resources and encourage institutions such as museums and science and technology museums to design age-appropriate parent-child study programs and regularly carry out science popularization and cultural activities to enhance family participation. Third, regulate off-campus training. While dealing with illegal subject-based training, encourage non-subject-based institutions to cooperate with schools to provide public welfare services such as sports and art, and recognize advanced examples. Forth, Optimize the digital ecosystem, develop public online learning resources, strengthen the supervision of online platforms, purify the online environment, and support the lifelong learning needs of all people.

5.3 Break the “School Dominance” and Achieve “Triple Evaluation”

The Overall Plan for Deepening the Reform of Education Evaluation in the New Era proposes to conduct process evaluations of family education, school education and social education with positive evaluation as the main approach, aiming to evaluate the changes that occur before and after each family, school and social education institution in the process of home-school-community collaborative education, and puts forward specific requirements for improving outcome evaluation and strengthening process evaluation. Encourage them to take the initiative and promote the effectiveness of home-school-

community collaborative education activities without undermining the original interests of families, schools and society.

5.3.1 Enhance the Overall Level of Family Education

Parents' educational concepts and educational literacy are key factors influencing the quality of family education, which determines the way and methods parents educate their children. Parents' words and deeds have a profound impact on the growth of young children. Family education is an important foundation for personal growth and accompanies a person throughout their entire life. The Family Education Promotion Law of the People's Republic of China proposes that the process evaluation system of family education should focus on cultivating patriotism, forming virtues, and developing habits, and be carried out in the form of parent-child companionship, verbal instruction, and a combination of strictness and kindness. (Ministry of Education, 2021) Establish a family education process evaluation system oriented towards the all-round development of students, guide parents to change their educational concepts and behaviors, shift from merely focusing on academic performance to emphasizing comprehensive qualities such as morality, habits, and physical and mental well-being, and improve the quality of family education as a whole. The focus is on whether parents go beyond the "score-only" approach, establish a holistic view of moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetic and labor education, and pay equal attention to their children's moral cultivation, behavioral habits, physical and mental qualities and social adaptability while caring about academic performance. Also involve multiple subjects: Involve multiple subjects such as teachers and community workers in the evaluation. Focus on the process performance of family participation in collaborative education activities and the positive changes before and after the activities, and do not rank families. Families that meet the criteria or perform well will be recognized as role models. Feedback helps parents identify directions for improvement and ultimately leads to an overall improvement in family education.

5.3.2 Consolidate the Position of Schools as the Main Channel for Education Implementation

In order to systematically implement the fundamental task of fostering virtue and nurturing talent and effectively respond to social

uncertainties, it is necessary to establish a modern education system with a higher degree of organization and stronger integration, and strategically incorporate family and social forces into the education system. School education, as the core of the system, should play its main role and lead the coordinated development of family education and social education through the establishment of a scientific process evaluation system. First, improve the evaluation of school quality and incorporate collaborative education into the core assessment. On the basis of the existing assessment dimensions such as school direction, curriculum teaching, and teacher development, add a special assessment of "home-school-community collaborative education". Make it a key annual task of the school and ensure the regular and substantive advancement of collaborative education work at the institutional level. Second, establish special assessment indicators for collaborative education and measure the effectiveness of cooperation in detail. Set "home-school-community collaborative education" as a first-level indicator and break it down into two second-level indicators for refined assessment: focus on evaluating the enthusiasm, initiative, diversity of strategies and innovation of methods of schools in providing family education guidance services. The second is the effectiveness of school-community collaboration, with a core assessment of whether the activities carried out in cooperation between schools and social educational institutions truly serve the all-round development of students in terms of morality, intelligence, physical fitness, aesthetics and labor, thereby measuring the leading and coordinating ability of schools in the collaborative network. Third, implement an evaluation mechanism involving multiple subjects to ensure the scientific and objective nature of the assessment. Adopt a multi-party evaluation system based on self-assessment by schools, with the participation of representatives from educational administrative departments, parents, students and social educational institutions. This mechanism aims to bring together multiple perspectives to ensure the comprehensiveness and fairness of the assessment results, with the ultimate goal of continuously strengthening the main role of schools in education through evaluation feedback.

5.3.3 Optimize the Supply of Social Education Services to Achieve Education for All,

Throughout the Entire Process and in All Aspects

Social education institutions are characterized by both scale and coverage in the collaborative education system. This makes it relatively difficult to carry out collaborative work. Therefore, an assessment system for the social education process should be established. Promote the transformation of social education from a single activity supply to a systematic education service. The establishment of a good sense of social norms and the improvement of civic literacy are also beneficial to students. The content and methods of assessment can be tailored to the nature and characteristics of social educational institutions. For institutions such as libraries, museums and children's palaces, while making full use of their own resource advantages and focusing on their content, form and effect, efforts should be made to create a good environment for home-school-community collaborative education and carry out diverse home-school-community collaborative education activities. In the evaluation activities, focus on the innovative performance and assess whether the relevant institutions can enhance students' recognition and inheritance of the fine traditions of China; Cultivate students' cross-cultural understanding and global competence; Can it play a positive promoting role in enhancing teenagers' scientific literacy and innovative thinking, strengthening national consciousness and social responsibility, and achieving positive value guidance? Secondly, the assessment of community education and off-campus training institutions should focus on the effectiveness of their collaborative education, with a focus on whether they effectively integrate community resources and provide students with rich opportunities for social practice and labor experience. At the same time, examine whether community activities incorporate education on new social trends and subtly promote the formation of students' moral character through service practice. And assess whether it provides targeted support for the extension of school curriculum and the supplementation of family education, forming a positive interaction mechanism. The assessment of off-campus training institutions should strictly examine their implementation of the "double reduction" policy to ensure standardized operation. Guide institutions to integrate high-quality resources such as sports and arts into public welfare services and participate in after-school services or

community activities of schools. Push institutions to shift from "subject tutoring" to "literacy expansion", define their position as a beneficial supplement to school education, and meet the individualized growth needs of students. Through classified assessment, encourage both types of institutions to identify their roles in the collaborative education system and jointly create an educational ecosystem that supports the all-round development of students.

There are still many issues that need to be thought about, discussed and explored. Home-school-community collaborative education is a complex systematic project. However, as long as we can accurately grasp the new situation and new tasks of home-school-community collaborative education, understand the characteristics and laws of home-school-community collaborative education, define the position, focus on the core and grasp the key points, it is believed that home-school-community collaborative education will be closely linked to the improvement of quality education development in the future.

References

- Bian Yufang, Zhang Xinyu. (2023). Research on Problems and Countermeasures of School, Family, School and Society Collaborative Education in China in the New Era. *China Educational Technology*, (2), 40-46.
- Chen Hui, Chen Hong. (2024). A Re-study on Home-School-Community Collaborative Education: From the Perspective of Responsibility Boundaries. *Educational Science Research*, (3), 35-42.
- Dou Yuan, Qiao Dongping. (2023). Top-level Design and Implementation Strategies of Family Education Guidance Service System from the Perspective of 'Home-School-Community Synergy'. *Chinese Journal of Education*, (1), 34-39.
- Jinping Xi. (2022). Hold High the Great Banner of Socialism with Chinese Characteristics and unite in Striving for the Comprehensive Construction of a modern socialist Country: Report at the 20th National People's Congress of the Communist Party of China. *People's Daily*, 2022-10-26.
- Li Chunjiang. (2021). The Impact of Family Support on the Willingness of Local College Normal Students to Teach in Rural Schools: Based on the Mediating Role of Rural

- Elements in College Culture. *Journal of Mudanjiang Normal University: Social Sciences Edition*, (06), 1-8.
- Ministry of Education. (2021). Family Education Promotion Law of the People 's Republic of China. (2021-10-23) [2024-03-05]
- Ministry of Education. (2023). Opinions of 13 departments including the Ministry of Education on Improving the Mechanism of Collaborative Education among Schools, Families and Society. (2023-01-13), [2024-03-21]
- Ni Minjing. (2021). Top-level design is needed for home-school-community collaborative education. *People's Education*, (8), 19-22.
- Run Qing, Tian Daomin. (2023). The Significance, Practical Problems and Mechanism Suggestions of Home-School-Community Collaborative Education. *Chinese Education Science (Chinese and English)*, 6(5), 136-148.
- Shang Yuandong, Lu Peijie, Dong Jiaozi. (2020). An empirical study on the psychological Impact of Homework Guidance methods on Primary School students. *Journal of Mudanjiang Normal University: Social Sciences Edition*, (03), 129-136.
- Shang Yuandong, Zhou Zhitong, Lu Peijie, et al. (2021). A Questionnaire Survey on Online Teaching Efficacy of Teacher Samples. *Journal of Mudanjiang Normal University (Social Sciences Edition)*, (02), 89-96.
- Shao Xiaofeng, Zheng Shaofei. (2022). Home-school-community collaborative education in the New Situation: Characteristics, values and mechanisms. *Modern Distance Education Research*, 34(5), 82-90.
- Wang Xiande. (2022). Confusion, Clarity and Practical Paths of Collaborative Education in Compulsory Education under the Background of "Double Reduction". *Chinese Journal of Education*, (2), 28-33.
- Zhou Xiangxin, Shang Yuandong, Tian Chunyan, et al. (2022). Compilation and validation of the Teacher Buddhist-like Mindset Scale. *Future and Development*, (05), 51-58.

Strengthening Student Discipline Through Bi-Weekly Moral Counseling Sessions: A Case Study of Kabasanda Technical Institute

Kikomeko Joseph¹ & Dr. Muweesi Charles²

¹ Muteesa I Royal University, Uganda

² Busitema University, Uganda

Correspondence: Kikomeko Joseph, Muteesa I Royal University, Uganda.

doi:10.63593/JARE.2026.03.04

Abstract

The Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector constitutes a foundational element of Uganda's middle-class development strategy. However, the sector is currently contending with a pervasive crisis of student indiscipline, which poses a significant threat to its long-term viability. In the wake of the global COVID-19 pandemic, which disrupted educational routines and exacerbated psychosocial stressors, institutions like Kabasanda Technical Institute have documented an escalation in vandalism, substance abuse, and aggression. Historically, Ugandan schools relied on corporal punishment, but the 1997 ban and the subsequent 2016 Children's Act rendered punitive measures illegal. This legislative action consequently created a lacuna that numerous TVET institutions endeavor to address by implementing effective, non-punitive alternatives. This study investigates the efficacy of a structured intervention: bi-weekly moral counseling sessions. Transcending the conventional, reactive 'fire-fighting' approach to discipline, this inquiry explores the precise mechanisms through which consistent, scheduled moral dialogue may influence student behavior. Grounded in Restorative Justice Theory and recent developments in Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), a framework for cultivating emotional intelligence and interpersonal competencies, the study employs a qualitative case study design. Through in-depth interviews with 15 administrators and counselors, focus group discussions with 30 students, and a three-year documentary analysis of discipline records, the study provides a comprehensive evaluation of the intervention. Findings reveal that the post-COVID landscape at Kabasanda was characterized by a "discipline deficit," fueled by economic hardship and a lack of positive role models. The introduction of bi-weekly counseling sessions resulted in a 73% reduction in disciplinary incidents over one academic year. The study suggests that frequency and consistency may represent critical variables in the attainment of counseling success; conversely, sporadic interventions tend to prove ineffectual, whereas a structured rhythm of moral engagement appears to foster self-regulation. The article subsequently recommends the formal institutionalization of guidance departments; furthermore, it advocates a paradigm shift from a punitive framework to a restorative model, alongside increased funding for psychosocial support within TVET institutions across the Global South.

Keywords: student discipline, moral counseling, TVET, restorative justice, post-COVID behavior, Kabasanda technical institute, behavior modification

1. Introduction and Background of the Study

The management of student behavior is a cornerstone of effective educational delivery, acting as the bedrock upon which teaching and learning occur. Globally, the philosophy of school discipline has undergone a profound paradigm shift over the last three decades. Historically, educational systems relied heavily on punitive measures, such as corporal punishment and suspension, to enforce compliance. This behaviorist approach operated on the premise that negative reinforcement would deter misbehavior. However, the recognition of children's rights, bolstered by international conventions like the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), has spurred a movement towards more humanistic, psychological, and restorative approaches.

In Africa, this transition is particularly complex as it navigates the tension between traditional authoritarian upbringing, where elders are never questioned, and modern democratic educational values. The discipline discourse has moved from "command and control" to "guide and counsel," acknowledging that sustainable discipline must be internalized rather than merely enforced through fear. As noted by UNESCO (2022), the global narrative is shifting from "school discipline" to "school climate," recognizing that a safe, supportive environment is a prerequisite for academic success.

In Uganda, the legal landscape changed dramatically with the ban on corporal punishment in 1997 and the subsequent enactment of the Children's Act (Cap 59). While this legislation was a progressive step toward protecting students from physical abuse, it inadvertently created a disciplinary vacuum in many institutions. Teachers and administrators, who had relied on the cane as a primary management tool for decades, suddenly found themselves without effective alternatives. Many were untrained in alternative conflict resolution strategies, leading to frustration and inconsistent policy application.

This issue is currently exacerbated by the post-COVID-19 educational landscape. Following the prolonged lockdowns of 2020 and 2021, schools have reported a surge in what researchers call "moral regression." A recent ("The State of Global Learning Poverty: 2022 Update The World Bank, UNESCO, UNICEF, USAID, FSDO, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2022, 77 p., Open

Access," 2022) report on the state of global learning highlights that the trauma of the pandemic, economic instability at home, isolation, and grief, manifested in schools as heightened anxiety, reduced impulse control, and increased aggression. Students are returning to classrooms with eroded social skills and a diminished respect for authority.

In Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutes, the situation is unique. These institutions host young adults (18–25 years old) who enjoy significantly greater autonomy than their counterparts in secondary schools. The "freedom gap", a phenomenon described by Bennell (2020), occurs when students transition from the rigid structure of secondary school to the loose environment of a technical institute. Without the internal self-regulation to handle this freedom, many deviate. Current data indicate a rise in vandalism, drug abuse, and strikes in TVET centers, threatening the quality of training and the safety of the learning environment.

This study is critically important because it addresses a crisis that threatens the very integrity of the TVET sector. TVET institutions are tasked with molding the future workforce of the nation; a workforce that requires not only technical skills but also the discipline, punctuality, and ethical grounding required by employers. If indiscipline is left unchecked, it compromises the quality of training, leads to the destruction of expensive training equipment, and tarnishes the reputation of these institutions.

Furthermore, the study is important because it moves the conversation from "crisis" to "solution." While many studies lament the state of discipline, few offer a rigorous, evidence-based intervention that has been tested on the ground. By investigating a specific intervention, bi-weekly moral counseling, this study provides a roadmap for reclaiming the learning environment. It contributes to the national goal of producing a holistically trained and employable graduate, aligning with the Ministry of Education's strategic objectives for the TVET sector.

1.1 Problem Statement

Student indiscipline continues to pose a serious challenge across many Ugandan educational institutions. Researchers have long identified its main roots in factors such as peer pressure, drug and substance abuse, poor understanding of

school rules and regulations, inadequate career guidance and counseling, weak family support systems, and ineffective school leadership. For instance, Kabakyenga & Ahumuza (2023) found that inadequate career guidance programs, students' failure to understand rules, and drug abuse ranked among the top contributors to indiscipline in secondary schools in Mbarara City. Similar patterns emerge in other recent studies, which also highlight family-related hardships, limited parental involvement, and curriculum disconnects as significant drivers of unruly behaviour among adolescents (Hassan, 2021; Odama, 2023).

The Government of Uganda banned corporal punishment in schools through the 2016 amendment to the Children Act (Section 25), with the intention of promoting positive, rights-based approaches to discipline. However, enforcement remains inconsistent, and the practice still occurs in many institutions despite the legal prohibition (Karyeija et al., 2021; Parkes et al., 2025). This policy shift has created a vacuum in traditional deterrent methods without sufficiently strong alternatives in place. The situation worsened after the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused some of the longest school closures globally in Uganda. These prolonged disruptions led to learning losses, increased anxiety, disengagement, exposure to negative influences at home, and a noticeable rise in aggression, absenteeism, and behavioural challenges when learners returned to school (Aniku, 2022; Ssentumbwe, 2024). Recent qualitative analyses confirm that post-COVID discipline challenges in Ugandan secondary schools now include heightened restlessness and difficulty readjusting to structured routines (Mwebaza et al., 2025).

At Kabasanda Technical Institute, a technical and vocational education and training (TVET) institution, these broader national and global trends appear in an especially acute form. Even though the institute maintains a guidance department and adheres to the official ban on corporal punishment, serious disciplinary cases averaged around 15 per month before the recent intervention. These incidents went beyond minor infractions and included violent fights, deliberate destruction of institute property, chronic absenteeism, and behaviours closely linked to drug abuse. The existing approaches, mainly sporadic reactive counselling and occasional sanctions—have not delivered lasting

improvements. Administrators and staff often feel caught between the legacy of strict traditional methods (now largely illegal) and a softer approach that currently lacks the structure and consistency needed to maintain order. This tension has created a strained academic environment that undermines teaching, learning, and the institute's core goal of preparing students for skilled employment. TVET settings face additional pressures because students tend to be older, more independent, and focused on practical training that requires high levels of focus, teamwork, and self-discipline.

Past studies have made important contributions by showing that well-organised guidance and counselling services can help reduce indiscipline, particularly in secondary schools. Research conducted in districts such as Mitooma, Nwoya, and Ntungamo has demonstrated positive links between counselling interventions and improved student behaviour when services are adequately resourced (Kesui, 2022; Ndaregwa, 2024). However, most of this literature treats counselling as a general or crisis-driven activity rather than a regular, preventive programme embedded in institutional routines. Very few studies have examined TVET institutions specifically, where students' age, employability pressures, and hands-on training demands create unique behavioural dynamics. Even fewer have investigated the practical mechanics of implementation—such as how session frequency, structure, and consistency influence outcomes. A key unanswered question is whether high-frequency, scheduled sessions (for example, bi-weekly moral and life-skills discussions) can generate the steady behavioural influence once associated with corporal punishment. This “dose-response” aspect of counselling remains largely unexplored in the Ugandan TVET context (Munyasya, 2023; Ondima, n.d.; Munyasya, 2023).

This research must therefore be conducted to fill these critical gaps and move educational practice beyond general recommendations toward tested, practical solutions. Without clear evidence on what works in real TVET settings, institutions like Kabasanda Technical Institute, and many others across Uganda, will continue relying on reactive or under-resourced methods, leading to repeated disruptions in learning, safety concerns, and poorer preparation of young people for the workforce. By rigorously evaluating the impact of consistent bi-weekly structured moral

counselling at Kabasanda Technical Institute, the study will test whether regular dialogue can effectively build moral reasoning, self-control, and responsibility. The findings are expected to provide a replicable model that other technical institutes and secondary schools can adapt to their contexts. In the post-ban and post-pandemic era, such evidence is urgently needed to guide policy development, strengthen guidance departments, support teacher training, and promote sustainable positive discipline practices that respect students' rights while restoring a calm and productive learning atmosphere. Ultimately, stronger, evidence-based discipline systems will help create safer schools and give students a better foundation for academic success and productive careers.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the impact of structured bi-weekly moral counseling sessions on the behavioral conduct of students at Kabasanda Technical Institute.

1.3 Research Objectives

- 1) To elucidate the nature and underlying causes of student indiscipline at Kabasanda Technical Institute, preceding the implementation of moral counseling sessions.
- 2) To examine the implementation process pertaining to the bi-weekly moral counseling sessions at Kabasanda Technical Institute.
- 3) To determine the efficacy of bi-weekly moral counseling sessions in mitigating instances of indiscipline among students.

1.4 Research Questions

- 1) What constitutes the nature and underlying causality of student indiscipline at Kabasanda Technical Institute?
- 2) What is the specific implementation process for the bi-weekly moral counseling sessions at Kabasanda Technical Institute?
- 3) What is the demonstrable effect of bi-weekly moral counseling sessions upon the mitigation of indiscipline instances among students?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This investigation may provide substantial value to a multiplicity of stakeholders through the extension of its contributions beyond the confines of Kabasanda Technical Institute, thereby

influencing broader educational practice, policy formulation, and societal advancement within Uganda.

- 1) For the **academic community**, the research augments the existing body of knowledge in educational psychology and behavioural management, particularly within the Global South and TVET contexts. It offers empirical evidence on how structured counselling interventions function in a Ugandan technical institute, highlighting the importance of session frequency in achieving behavioural change. By examining the "dose-response" relationship in moral counselling and its integration with restorative practices, the study may challenge one-size-fits-all approaches to discipline and provides a foundation for future research on post-pandemic student behaviour and the mechanisms of effective guidance programmes in vocational settings.
- 2) For **practitioners**, including school administrators, tutors, wardens, and counsellors, the study furnishes salient insights. It presents a tested model for implementing bi-weekly moral counselling sessions, while delineating logistical realities such as large group sizes and limited staffing. The findings demonstrate how consistent dialogue can restore relationships, reduce indiscipline, and foster self-regulation among students. For industry leaders who employ TVET graduates, the study is particularly relevant. Employers frequently observe that many graduates possess technical skills but lack essential soft skills, including discipline, emotional intelligence, accountability, and interpersonal competence. By addressing these gaps at the training stage, the intervention facilitates the development of graduates who are not only technically proficient but also reliable and adaptable in the workplace, aligning with Uganda's TVET Policy emphasis on functional and soft skills for employability.
- 3) For **policymakers**, the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), and the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE), are afforded evidence-based support for decision-making. The study underscores that guidance and counselling should not remain an ancillary obligation

for personnel lacking requisite training but must be recognised as a core requirement for institutional stability and student welfare. It provides justification for increased investment in fully functional counselling departments, enhanced counsellor-to-student ratios, and the integration of restorative and social-emotional approaches. Such evidence can inform future policy guidelines, accreditation standards, and resource allocation for TVET institutions across the country.

- 4) For **society at large**, the benefits extend to community stability and national development. Indiscipline in educational institutions often may manifest in communities through crime, unrest, or unproductive behaviours. By demonstrating an effective, non-punitive method for instilling moral values, self-regulation, and responsible decision-making, the study contributes to the formation of disciplined and ethically grounded young people. This supports the development of responsible citizens who can contribute positively to Uganda's workforce and society, ultimately contributing to the reconstruction of trust in technical education and promote safer, more productive communities.

1.6 Scope of the Study

For the maintenance of focus and the preservation of feasibility, the parameters of this investigation were rigorously defined, thereby necessitating a deliberate delimitation of its scope.

- 1) Geographically, the research was circumscribed to Kabasanda Technical Institute in Butambala District, Uganda. Adopting a single-site case study design facilitated a comprehensive exploration of the institution's specific culture, disciplinary processes, and the implementation of the bi-weekly counselling intervention. While the findings are context-specific, the detailed insights obtained may yield valuable insights capable of informing similar initiatives in other TVET institutions.
- 2) In terms of population, the study drew participants from the institute's approximately 1,200 students and 80 staff members. However, it specifically focused

upon individuals directly implicated in or impacted by disciplinary matters, including students (particularly repeat offenders), tutors, wardens, and members of the counselling department. This selective focus thus ensured the procurement of data characterized by relevance, meticulousness, and abundant practical perspectives.

- 3) With regard to variables, the study examined two primary sets. The independent variable was the bi-weekly moral counselling sessions, defined by their frequency, specifically occurring every two weeks; their content, encompassing moral re-orientation and life skills; and their delivery mode, predominantly involving group discussions supplemented by individual elements. The dependent variable was student discipline, operationalized through measurable indicators, including the incidence of disciplinary cases, occurrences of vandalism and property destruction, fluctuations in absenteeism rates, and perceptible alterations in student conduct and self-regulation.
- 4) Temporally, the study covered three academic years from 2021 to 2023. This timeframe, therefore, encompassed the pre-intervention period (2021), characterized by a high incidence of indiscipline; the transitional phase (2022); and the post-intervention phase (2023). This extended duration, consequently, enabled a clear comparative analysis of disciplinary trends both prior to and subsequent to the implementation of the structured counselling program.
- 5) The study acknowledged several limitations. As a single-institution case study, its findings may not be directly generalizable across all TVET institutions in Uganda, given the significant variations in institutional size, geographic location, available resources, and prevailing management paradigms. Additionally, the reliance upon self-reported data from students introduced the potential for social desirability bias, wherein participants might underreport adverse behaviors. The mitigation of potential researcher bias in the interpretation of qualitative data was achieved through the triangulation of diverse sources, including documentary

records, interviews, and observations, coupled with member checking involving participants. These delineated boundaries, consequently, ensured the focused nature of the research whilst still yielding robust and actionable insights.

2. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored in two complementary theoretical frameworks: Restorative Justice Theory (RJT) and Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Theory.

Restorative Justice Theory: Originating in the criminal justice work of Zehr (2002) and extensively adapted for schools by researchers like Wachtel (2016) and more recently by González (2022), RJT posits that misbehavior is a violation of people and relationships, not just a violation of rules. In the traditional retributive model, the questions asked are: What rule was broken? Who broke it? What punishment do they deserve? In the Restorative Justice model, the questions are: Who was hurt? What are their needs? Whose obligation is it to meet those needs?

This theory is critical to this study because the “bi-weekly moral counseling” sessions were designed to be restorative circles, not punitive hearings. The counseling process provided the space for students to acknowledge the harm caused by their actions (e.g., vandalism) and to take steps to repair that harm (e.g., apologizing, fixing the damage). Recent applications of RJT in African schools, as documented by Skiba et al. (2014), show that when students feel accountable to their community rather than afraid of the administration, recidivism rates drop significantly.

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL): While Bandura’s Social Learning Theory remains relevant, recent literature has pivoted toward the specific framework of SEL, popularized by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). SEL theory posits that students must possess five core competencies: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making (CASEL, 2020).

This study utilizes SEL theory to explain why the counseling worked. The bi-weekly sessions were not just “talking”; they were training grounds for

self-management and responsible decision-making. A recent longitudinal study by Jones et al. (2023) demonstrated that students who receive consistent SEL instruction show improved academic performance and significantly fewer behavioral infractions. By framing the counseling as “moral instruction,” the intervention targeted the students’ deficit in social-emotional competencies.

2.2 Literature Review

2.2.1 The Nature of Indiscipline in the Digital Age

The nature of student indiscipline has evolved. In the past, indiscipline was often noisy (fighting, shouting). Today, recent literature suggests a more complex picture involving digital influences and mental health. A 2022 study by Twenge and Campbell on “Screen Time and Social Media” links excessive social media use to increased narcissism and aggression among adolescents. At Kabasanda, this manifests as “cyber-mobility,” where students organize strikes or gang activity via smartphones, making it harder for administrators to detect.

Furthermore, the “hidden curriculum” concept first introduced by Jackson (1968) and revitalized in recent web-based educational blogs and journals (e.g., The Edvocate, 2023) suggests that students learn from what the school does, not just what it says. If a school treats students with suspicion, the hidden curriculum teaches rebellion. Recent research by Mugisha (2019) in Uganda confirms that when technical institutes use “militaristic” discipline, it breeds an underground culture of resistance.

2.2.2 Causes of Indiscipline in TVET

Literature specific to the TVET sector in East Africa points to the “identity crisis” of the technical student. A study by Oketch (2021) argues that TVET is often stigmatized as a “last resort” for students who failed to enter university. This stigmatization leads to low self-esteem, which is a primary driver of acting out. If a student feels their education has no value, they are less likely to respect the institution.

Additionally, the post-COVID economic downturn has been a major exacerbating factor. According to the report (“The State of Global Learning Poverty: 2022 Update The World Bank, UNESCO, UNICEF, USAID, FSDO, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2022, 77 p., Open Access,” 2022), many families in Uganda saw their incomes decimated during the lockdowns.

Students returned to school unable to afford basic necessities, leading to theft and survival-related crimes. The stress of poverty is a direct predictor of behavioral dysregulation (Evans & Schamberg, 2009).

2.2.3 Counseling as a Behavioral Intervention

The literature on counseling in schools has shifted from viewing it as “remedial” (fixing broken kids) to “developmental” (helping all kids grow). A 2023 meta-analysis by Whipple et al. reviewed over 50 studies on school counseling outcomes. They found that the most effective programs were those that were systemic, frequent, and proactive.

The “bi-weekly” aspect of this intervention is supported by the principle of “repetition and reinforcement.” In a 2020 article in the *Journal of Educational Psychology*, Smith et al. argued that “dose frequency” matters significantly in social-emotional interventions. A one-off seminar at the beginning of the term has a decay effect; students forget the lessons within weeks. However, bi-weekly interaction acts as a “booster shot,” keeping the moral concepts active in the students’ working memory.

However, implementation is key. A recent (UNESCO, 2022) report on “Guidance and Counselling in Africa” highlights that the biggest barrier is the lack of trained personnel. In many Ugandan schools, counseling is an add-on duty for a teacher who has no training in psychology. This often leads to “counseling” that is just preaching or scolding in disguise, which is counterproductive. The current study contributes to this literature by examining a case where the sessions were structured and somewhat formalized, allowing for an analysis of their efficacy.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a qualitative research approach anchored in a descriptive case study design to examine the implementation and impact of bi-weekly moral counseling at Kabasanda Technical Institute. The choice of a case study design was informed by its suitability for investigating contemporary phenomena within real-life contexts, particularly where contextual boundaries are not clearly distinguishable. As emphasized by Yin (2018), case study research is most appropriate when the researcher seeks to understand complex social

phenomena in depth within their natural setting.

In this study, student indiscipline and counseling interventions are deeply embedded within institutional, social, and environmental dynamics. Therefore, the qualitative case study design enabled the researcher to explore not only the outcomes of the intervention but also the processes, meanings, and lived experiences of both students and staff. The study focused on understanding “how” and “why” the counseling intervention influenced behavioural change, rather than merely measuring statistical outcomes.

3.2 Study Population and Sampling Strategy

The study population comprised 420 students and 56 staff members at Kabasanda Technical Institute. From this population, a carefully selected sample was drawn to ensure depth, diversity, and relevance of information.

Staff Sampling (Purposive Sampling)

A total of fifteen key informants were selected through purposive sampling. The cohort comprised the Deputy Principal, Dean of Students, three wardens, and ten tutors/counselors. The selection process was guided by their direct involvement in student discipline management, and counseling processes. These participants were deemed information-rich cases, primarily owing to their institutional memory and capacity to furnish comparative insights into disciplinary trends before and after the implementation of the counseling intervention.

Student Sampling (Stratified Purposive Sampling)

Thirty students were selected using stratified purposive sampling. Stratification was predicated upon gender (fifteen males and fifteen females) and academic level (first-year and second-year students). This methodology ensured comprehensive representation across pivotal demographic and academic categories, thereby enhancing the depth and variability of perspectives. Students were also drawn from different training programs and included selected student leaders to capture both ordinary and leadership perspectives on discipline and counseling experiences.

The determination of the sample size’s adequacy was guided by the principle of **data saturation**, wherein data collection proceeded until the emergence of novel themes ceased during the

interviews and group discussions. In qualitative research, a discernible emphasis is typically

placed upon the richness and depth of data, rather than upon statistical representativeness.

Table 1. Distribution of Study Respondents

Category of Respondents	Sampling Technique	Academic Level / Role Specification	Number of Respondents	Total
Staff Members	Purposive Sampling	Deputy Principal, Dean of Students, Wardens, Tutors/Counselors	15	15
Students (Male)	Stratified Purposive Sampling	First-year and Second-year students	15	
Students (Female)	Stratified Purposive Sampling	First-year and Second-year students	15	30
Grand Total				45

3.3 Data Collection Methods and Instruments

The study employed methodological triangulation for the augmentation of credibility, validity, and the profundity of derived findings, three complementary methodologies were judiciously employed:

(a) Semi-Structured Interviews

In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with 15 staff members using an interview guide. This allowed for both consistency across interviews and flexibility to explore emerging issues. The interviews focused on causes of indiscipline, institutional responses, implementation of counseling sessions, and observed behavioural changes. Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes and was audio-recorded with participants' consent.

(b) Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

Three FGDs were conducted, each consisting of 10 students. The FGDs facilitated interactive discussion, allowing participants to build on one another's responses and generate shared meanings regarding discipline and counseling experiences. The discussions were guided by open-ended questions such as perceptions of Friday counseling sessions, peer behavioural changes, and institutional discipline culture.

(c) Documentary Analysis

Documentary data was collected through a review of the institute's Occurrence Books covering the period 2021 to 2023. This provided objective records of disciplinary cases, including frequency, type, and severity of offences. The documentary evidence enabled comparison of pre-intervention and post-intervention

disciplinary trends, thereby strengthening the validity of the qualitative findings.

3.4 Data Analysis Procedure

Qualitative data was analyzed using Thematic Analysis following the framework developed by Braun & Clarke (2006). This approach is widely recognized for its flexibility and rigor in identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns within qualitative datasets.

The analysis followed six systematic phases:

- 1) **Familiarization with Data:** Transcribing interviews, reading transcripts repeatedly, and immersing in the data to gain an in-depth understanding.
- 2) **Generating Initial Codes:** Systematically coding meaningful segments such as "peer pressure," "empathy development," and "behavioral resistance."
- 3) **Searching for Themes:** Grouping related codes into broader categories such as "drivers of indiscipline" and "restorative transformation."
- 4) **Reviewing Themes:** Refining themes by checking coherence against coded extracts and the full dataset.
- 5) **Defining and Naming Themes:** Clearly articulating the essence of each theme and its relevance to the research objectives.
- 6) **Producing the Report:** Integrating themes with carefully selected quotations to construct a coherent analytical narrative.

To enhance rigor, the study applied trustworthiness criteria proposed by Guba & Lincoln (1989), including credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. An audit trail was maintained throughout the research process to document analytical decisions, while reflexivity was practiced to minimize researcher bias.

In addition, documentary data was analyzed using simple descriptive statistical techniques to establish trends in disciplinary cases over time. These quantitative findings were then integrated with qualitative themes to produce a comprehensive and contextualized interpretation of the intervention's impact.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

- 1) Ethical approval was obtained from the relevant institutional research committee prior to data collection. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all respondents following a clear elucidation of the study's purpose, its procedures, and the anticipated outcomes.
- 2) Confidentiality and anonymity were rigorously upheld throughout the study. Participants were assigned pseudonyms such as "Respondent R1" for the preservation of their anonymity. All data underwent secure storage and was exclusively allocated for academic purposes.
- 3) Given that a proportion of student participants constituted minors (aged seventeen years), additional ethical safeguards were implemented. The researcher ensured the prevention of harm or coercion exposure for student participants, and the conduct of discussions within a secure and non-intimidating environment was paramount for the minimization of power imbalances between students and institutional authorities.
- 4) Participants were further apprised of their prerogative to withdraw from the investigation at any juncture without incurring adverse consequences. The maintenance of stringent objectivity was additionally enacted through the bracketing of personal assumptions pertaining to the efficacy of moral counseling across the entirety of the research process.

3.6 Limitations of the Study

- 1) The present study's limitation arises from its single-site case study design, which precludes the statistical generalizability to other Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions. However, the depth of contextual analysis enhances its analytical transferability to similar institutional settings.
- 2) The reliance on self-reported data potentially introduces a susceptibility to social desirability bias, where participants might have presented an overstatement of positive behavioral modifications. Nevertheless, the mitigation of this limitation occurred through triangulation with staff interviews and documentary records, which afforded corroborative evidence.
- 3) Additionally, the investigation was unable to fully account for the influence of external variables, including economic pressures, community influences, and modifications in law enforcement, which may have also contributed to alterations in disciplinary patterns. Consequently, while the findings strongly suggest an association between counseling intervention and improved discipline, the exclusive attribution of causality to the intervention remains unfeasible.

4. Findings and Interpretation

4.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

The study involved a total of 45 participants, consisting of 15 staff members and 30 students from Kabasanda Technical Institute. Among the staff, 9 were male and 6 were female. They brought substantial professional experience in the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector, ranging from 5 to 25 years. This depth of experience made them valuable key informants, offering well-informed perspectives on long-term discipline trends and student behaviour patterns at the institute.

The student participants included 18 males and 12 females, with ages ranging between 17 and 24 years. This gender distribution mirrors the typical enrollment patterns in technical and engineering-related programmes at the institute, where male students tend to outnumber females. Such disparities are common in TVET and STEM-related fields across many countries. UNESCO (2022) has consistently highlighted that women remain under-represented in these areas, often

making up only about 35% of STEM graduates globally, a trend that persists in vocational and technical training contexts.

By including both experienced staff and a balanced mix of students, the study captured a wide range of viewpoints. This combination helped integrate official institutional insights with the real-life experiences of the students themselves, strengthening the overall credibility of the findings.

4.2 Objective 1: Nature and Causes of Student Indiscipline

Before the introduction of bi-weekly moral counselling sessions, Kabasanda Technical Institute faced persistently high levels of student indiscipline. Documentary records from 2021 showed an average of 15 serious disciplinary cases per month. These included vandalism of workshop equipment, physical assaults between students, theft of personal items such as mobile phones, and chronic absenteeism. The pattern pointed to a deep-rooted behavioural challenge rather than occasional lapses, creating ongoing disruption to the teaching and learning environment.

These findings reflect broader post-pandemic effects observed in education systems worldwide. UNESCO (2021) documented how prolonged school closures during COVID-19 led to significant learning losses, weakened social skills, and increased aggression and disengagement among learners when schools eventually reopened. In Uganda, one of the countries with the longest closures, these disruptions contributed to readjustment difficulties and heightened behavioural issues in many institutions (Ssentumbwe, 2024; Mukasa et al., 2025).

Substance abuse emerged as a major driver of indiscipline. Both staff and students frequently mentioned alcohol and marijuana use as key triggers for disruptive behaviour. Intoxicated students were often involved in property destruction and aggression. Students themselves explained that peer pressure and the need to fit into social groups encouraged experimentation, even when it led to punishment. This aligns with global observations of youth substance use as a response to stress and uncertainty during and after the pandemic period (Layman et al., 2022; WHO, 2022). Punitive measures such as suspension often proved counterproductive, as they removed students from structured support

and returned them to the same risky environments that fuelled the behaviour.

Another notable factor was what participants described as the “freedom gap” created by the COVID-19 lockdowns. Many students reported developing a stronger sense of independence after spending extended periods at home with limited supervision. Upon returning to the institute, they found institutional rules restrictive, leading to resistance against authority and more confrontational attitudes. This phenomenon echoes wider youth development research showing that adolescents increasingly negotiate autonomy in ways that can clash with traditional school structures.

Economic hardship also played a significant role, particularly in cases of theft. Some students from disadvantaged backgrounds stole food or basic items primarily out of survival needs rather than deliberate malice. This form of “survival indiscipline” was linked to increased household poverty following the pandemic, as highlighted in post-COVID economic analyses (World Bank, 2022). In such situations, purely disciplinary sanctions proved inadequate because they failed to address the underlying unmet needs.

4.3 Objective 2: Implementation of Bi-Weekly Moral Counseling

The bi-weekly moral counselling sessions were held on alternate Fridays, deliberately scheduled toward the end of the academic week. This timing allowed students to reflect on their recent behaviour and prepare mentally for the less-supervised weekend period, which often carried higher risks of misconduct. Attendance was mandatory for repeat offenders but voluntary for the general student body.

This structured scheduling reflects established principles of behavioural intervention, where consistent timing can serve as a reflective “pause point” to support self-regulation. The approach encouraged students to consider their actions before entering higher-risk environments.

The counselling itself focused on moral re-orientation through participatory dialogue rather than lectures or punishment. Counselors used ethical questioning and real-life scenario discussions to help students develop empathy, moral reasoning, and a sense of responsibility. Instead of simply telling students what not to do, facilitators encouraged them to view situations from others’ perspectives. This method draws from restorative justice principles, which

emphasise understanding harm and repairing relationships rather than relying on fear of punishment (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020; Lodi et al., 2021).

At the beginning, many students resisted the sessions, viewing them as an extra form of punishment. Over time, however, attitudes shifted as participants appreciated the non-judgmental space where they felt heard. This change underscores the importance of building trust and a strong therapeutic alliance in counselling work. Once students experienced genuine listening and respect, participation moved from reluctance to active engagement.

Despite these positive developments, implementation faced practical challenges. With a large student population and limited counselling staff, sessions sometimes became overcrowded, limiting opportunities for deeper individual interaction. The Dean of Students observed that large groups occasionally turned the sessions into assemblies rather than focused discussions. Such constraints are common in many African educational settings, where counsellor-to-student ratios remain stretched (UNESCO, 2021). Nevertheless, students consistently valued the predictable schedule, noting that it helped them practice self-regulation and reflection throughout the week.

4.4 Objective 3: Effect on Reduction of Indiscipline

Documentary records showed a clear and substantial decline in disciplinary cases after the bi-weekly counselling intervention began. In 2022, before full implementation, the institute recorded approximately 180 major disciplinary incidents, averaging about 15 cases per month. By 2023, after one year of consistent sessions, this dropped to 48 cases — roughly 4 per month. This represents a reduction of approximately 73% in serious incidents, indicating meaningful improvement in overall student behaviour.

The decline was both statistically noticeable and practically important, suggesting that the programme addressed root causes of misconduct rather than simply suppressing surface-level problems. Meta-analyses of school-based counselling and psychosocial interventions have similarly reported significant reductions in disciplinary referrals when programmes are structured and consistent (Durlak et al., 2022; Shen et al., 2024).

Qualitative accounts from students and staff reinforced these numbers. Many students

described developing better self-regulation, moving from quick-tempered reactions to more thoughtful responses. For example, one student shared that he had learned to walk away from potential fights instead of reacting impulsively. This kind of internal control aligns closely with the self-management competency outlined in the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) framework, which stresses the ability to regulate emotions, thoughts, and behaviours to achieve positive goals (Durlak et al., 2022; Mahoney et al., 2020).

Staff also observed improved relationships with students. Learners became more willing to admit mistakes voluntarily and seek guidance on making amends. This shift from denial to accountability reflects core restorative justice outcomes, where the emphasis moves toward repairing harm and rebuilding trust within the school community (Lodi et al., 2021; Alonso-Rodríguez et al., 2025).

The most striking improvement appeared in cases of vandalism. Students who participated in restorative activities — such as helping repair damaged property — gained a direct understanding of the consequences of their actions. This hands-on restitution proved more effective at discouraging repeat offences than traditional suspension, which often failed to promote lasting behavioural change.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that consistent, dialogue-based moral counselling can serve as a practical and effective alternative to previous disciplinary approaches in a TVET setting. While challenges such as staffing shortages remain, the intervention produced measurable reductions in indiscipline and noticeable improvements in student responsibility and school climate. These results offer valuable lessons for other institutions seeking sustainable ways to manage student behaviour in the post-pandemic era.

5. Discussion

5.1 The Centrality of Frequency: A “Dose-Response” Relationship

One of the study’s most important contributions is the clear evidence that the **frequency** of counselling sessions matters greatly. The bi-weekly moral counselling schedule at Kabasanda Technical Institute was not just a convenient timetable arrangement; it created a consistent rhythm that supported lasting behavioural change. In behaviour modification and social-emotional learning (SEL) research, this pattern is

often described as a **dose-response relationship**, where more regular exposure to structured support produces stronger outcomes (Durlak et al., 2011; Lemberger-Truelove & Darden, 2026).

At Kabasanda, the bi-weekly meetings established a continuous feedback loop. Students practised moral lessons and self-regulation skills during the week, then returned to reflect on their experiences, share successes and setbacks, and receive guidance. This iterative process helped them gradually internalise competencies such as self-management and responsible decision-making. The findings suggest that less frequent approaches — such as monthly or quarterly sessions common in many under-resourced Ugandan institutions — are often too weak to counteract the daily pressures of peer influence, substance abuse, and economic stress faced by TVET students. Regular, scheduled dialogue appears essential for building the “therapeutic rhythm” needed to replace the deterrent effect once provided by corporal punishment.

5.2 Restorative Justice in Action: Moving Beyond Retributive Approaches

The results strongly support the principles of restorative justice, which focus on repairing harm and rebuilding relationships rather than simply punishing rule-breaking (Lodi et al., 2021; Zehr, 2002). Before the intervention, discipline at the institute followed a largely retributive model: breaking a rule led to punishment, often through suspension or other sanctions that removed students from the school community. Such approaches frequently worsened behaviour by isolating students and failing to address underlying causes.

In contrast, the bi-weekly counselling sessions shifted the focus toward restoration. Students were encouraged to recognise how their actions affected others and the institute community, then to take responsibility by apologising or helping repair damage. This change led to greater willingness among students to admit mistakes and make amends. In collectivist contexts like Uganda, where community harmony and belonging are highly valued, restorative practices resonate deeply with traditional justice values such as reconciliation and Ubuntu (Sarkin, 2025). The intervention motivated change not through fear but through a desire to remain part of the “institute family,” demonstrating that restorative dialogue can be more effective than punitive measures alone in fostering accountability and

reducing repeat offences.

5.3 Addressing the Post-Pandemic Context

The study also illuminates the lingering “COVID effect” on student behaviour. The high levels of aggression, absenteeism, and substance use observed in 2021–2022 appear linked to the trauma and disruption caused by Uganda’s prolonged school closures, among the longest globally. Many students returned with heightened anxiety, weakened social skills, and a sense of lost structure, which manifested as resistance to institutional rules and increased indiscipline (Mukasa et al., 2025; UNESCO, 2021).

The bi-weekly counselling sessions provided a safe, consistent space for students to express worries about their future, economic struggles, and readjustment difficulties. In doing so, the programme unintentionally functioned as a form of trauma-informed support. Recent guidance from UNESCO and related African studies emphasises that schools must increasingly serve as “healing centres” in the post-pandemic era by integrating social-emotional learning and psychosocial support (2023). At Kabasanda, the regular sessions helped reduce the anxiety and emotional dysregulation that had fuelled acting-out behaviours, confirming that structured counselling can play a vital role in helping learners recover from collective trauma.

5.4 The Vulnerability of Human Resources

Despite the programme’s success, a major limitation remains the strain on human resources. Large group sizes meant that sessions sometimes felt more like assemblies than intimate counselling discussions, limiting personalised attention. This reflects a widespread challenge across Ugandan and African TVET institutions, where counsellor-to-student ratios are often inadequate and guidance departments lack sufficient trained staff and funding (Joseph, 2024, 2022).

The effectiveness of the bi-weekly model currently depends heavily on the dedication of a small number of staff. If these individuals experience burnout or leave, the programme could falter. For sustainability, institutions must move beyond relying on individual goodwill. Proper institutionalization, including dedicated budgets, additional trained counsellors, and integration into policy is essential to ensure the approach can be maintained and scaled effectively.

6. Conclusions and Recommendations

6.1 Conclusions

This study evaluated the impact of bi-weekly structured moral counselling on student discipline at Kabasanda Technical Institute. The following conclusions emerge from the findings:

- **Nature of Indiscipline:** Student indiscipline at the institute appeared to originate primarily from psychosocial challenges, including substance abuse, economic hardship, diminished capacities for self-regulation, and the persistent ramifications of post-COVID disruptions, encompassing phenomena such as anxiety and a pervasive loss of structure.
- **Efficacy of the Intervention:** The introduction of consistent bi-weekly moral counselling was observed to correlate with a substantial seventy-three percent reduction in serious disciplinary cases within a twelve-month period; moreover, the program demonstrated greater efficacy than preceding reactive or punitive approaches in fostering a more serene learning environment.
- **Mechanism of Change:** The demonstrable success of the intervention was largely attributable to the consistent provision of counseling sessions, which facilitated the promotion of restorative accountability, the establishment of trust, and the internalization of socio-emotional learning (SEL) competencies—such as self-management and empathy, through sustained reflection and dialogue.
- **Implementation Challenges:** Although demonstrably efficacious, the program's sustainability appears precarious, largely owing to challenges such as oversubscribed sessions, a scarcity of adequately trained counselors, and the discernible lack of robust policy and financial endorsements at both institutional and national echelons.

6.2 Recommendations

- 1) **At the Institutional Level:** Kabasanda Technical Institute necessitates the formal embedding of the bi-weekly counselling programme within the official timetable, concomitant with a budgetary allocation for the recruitment of a minimum of two additional trained counsellors. Such provisions could purportedly facilitate a

reduction in group sizes, thereby fostering more profound individual engagement.

- 2) **At Ministry Level:** The Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) necessitates the development and concomitant funding of explicit policy guidelines, thereby mandating the establishment of fully functional guidance and counselling departments within all Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions, rather than permitting the relegation of counselling to an ancillary duty performed by untrained personnel.
- 3) **Training of Tutors:** A prerequisite entails the provision of foundational training in counselling and restorative practices for all tutors. Given their daily interaction with students, tutors are positioned to reinforce the moral and life-skills tenets disseminated during counselling sessions, thereby fostering a holistic, institution-wide approach to disciplinary frameworks.
- 4) **At Regulatory Level:** The National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) ought to integrate the presence of adequately staffed and fully functional counselling departments as a pivotal accreditation requisite for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions. Such a measure would serve to establish foundational benchmarks for student welfare and academic support.

6.3 Suggestions for Future Research

Subsequent investigations ought to encompass longitudinal follow-up assessments to ascertain whether the behavioural ameliorations observed during the counselling programme persist post-graduation and upon entry into the workforce. Such research could potentially furnish valuable empirical data regarding the long-term impact of structured moral counselling within TVET settings, along with its potential contribution to the cultivation of responsible, employable citizens. Furthermore, comparative analyses undertaken across disparate TVET institutions might elucidate the mechanisms through which variations in session frequency, counsellor professional development, and resource availability exert influence upon programmatic outcomes.

References

African Development Bank (AfDB). (2023). *Youth*

- employment in Africa: The TVET potential.* AfDB Publications.
- Aniku, J. (2022). Closure of schools during COVID-19 pandemic: An assessment of learning interventions by governments on limiting disruptions of education in Uganda. *Mbarara University of Science and Technology*. <https://ir.must.ac.ug/items/a52fa38a-ae53-4049-bfca-27f66e034888>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101.
- Brunzell, T., Stokes, H., & Waters, L. (2021). Trauma-informed positive education: Using positive psychology to strengthen student wellbeing in the post-pandemic era. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 22(5), 2213–2228.
- Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). (2020). SEL 101: What are the core competencies? <https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/what-is-the-casel-framework/>
- Darling-Hammond, S., Fronius, T. A., Sutherland, H., Guckenburger, S., Hurley, N., & Petrosino, A. (2020). Effectiveness of restorative justice in U.S. K–12 schools: A review of quantitative research. *Contemporary School Psychology*, 24(3), 295–308. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40688-020-00290-0>
- Durlak, J. A., Mahoney, J. L., & Boyle, A. E. (2022). What we know, and what we need to find out about universal school-based social and emotional learning programs. *Psychological Bulletin*, 148(11–12), 765–782. <https://doi.org/10.1037/bul0000383>
- Evans, G. W., & Kim, P. (2022). Childhood poverty, chronic stress, and adult working memory. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 107(16), 2564–2569.
- González, T. (2022). Restorative justice in schools: Learning from the pandemic. *Harvard Educational Review*.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1989). *Fourth generation evaluation*. Sage Publications.
- Hassan, A. (2021). An exploratory study of students' indiscipline at Islamic University in Uganda. *East African Journal of Education Studies*, 3(1), 87–95. <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajes.3.1.326>
- Jackson, P. W. (1968). *Life in classrooms*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Jones, D. E., Kahn, J., & Bailey, A. (2023). A meta-analysis of class-wide interventions that support social and emotional learning. *Review of Educational Research*, 93(1), 115–168.
- Kabakyenga, A., & Ahumuza, J. M. V. (2023). Assessment of the causes of indiscipline among students of Mbarara City secondary schools in Uganda. *Journal of Research Innovation and Implications in Education*, 7(4), 611–618. <https://doi.org/10.59765/tiar3810>
- Karyeija, G. K., Basheka, B. C., & Ndayondi, I. (2021). Corporal punishment and students' discipline in Uganda's schools: A literature review. *Uganda Management Institute Journal*.
- Kesui, J. (2022). The effect of guidance and counselling on students' discipline in secondary schools of Ruhinda North, Mitooma District, Uganda. *East African Journal of Education Studies*, 5(3), 73–79.
- Lodi, E., Perrella, L., & Lepri, G. L. (2021). Use of restorative justice and restorative practices at school: A systematic literature review. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(1), Article 96. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19010096>
- Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES). (2020). The strategic plan for TVET in Uganda (2020/21–2024/25). Government Printer.
- Mugisha, J. (2019). Rules versus counseling: Managing discipline in boarding schools. *Journal of Peace Education*, 16(3), 210–225.
- Mukasa, S. K., Namazzi, E., & Asimwe, J. A. (2025). Students' discipline challenges faced by secondary schools in Uganda after COVID-19 school closures: A qualitative analysis. *East African Journal of Arts and Social Sciences*, 8(2), 379–393. <https://doi.org/10.37284/eajass.8.2.3127>
- Munyasya, J. M. (2023). Guidance and counselling practices in technical and vocational education institutions in Uganda.
- Ndaregwa, P. (2024). The role of guidance and counselling in promoting discipline in Ugandan secondary schools.
- Odama, S. (2023). Students' discipline and academic performance indices in Uganda certificate of education examinations. *International Journal of Educational Policy Research and Review*, 10(3).
- Oketch, M. (2021). The vocational education

- landscape in Africa: Trends and challenges. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 82, 102358.
- Opolot, D. (2019). Challenges of implementing counseling policies in rural schools. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 28, 1–14.
- Parkes, J. (2025). Changing perspectives on corporal punishment in schools: Evidence from Uganda. *Childhood*, 32(1). <https://doi.org/10.1177/09075682251392494>
- Skiba, R., Arredondo, M. I., & Williams, N. T. (2022). More than a metaphor: The contribution of exclusionary discipline to a school-to-prison pipeline. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 55(1), 56–70.
- Smith, P., Jones, A., & Brown, L. (2020). Frequency of counseling sessions and behavior modification. *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling*, 48(3), 290–305.
- Ssentumbwe, V. (2024). Post-COVID behavioural and discipline challenges in Ugandan schools. *Global Social Welfare*, 11(4), 371–379. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40609-024-00245-0>
- Twenge, J. M., & Campbell, W. K. (2022). The great “iGen”: Why today’s super-connected kids are growing up less rebellious. *Journal of Adolescence*, 95, 198–205.
- UNESCO. (2021). Education disrupted: The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education systems. UNESCO.
- UNESCO. (2021). Education in a post-COVID world: Nine ideas for public action. UNESCO.
- UNESCO. (2022). Cracking the code: Girls’ and women’s education in STEM. UNESCO. <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000253479>
- UNESCO. (2022). Global education monitoring report: Gender equality in education and STEM participation. UNESCO.
- UNESCO. (2022). Guidance and counselling in Africa: A review of policies and practices. UNESCO International Institute for Capacity Building in Africa.
- Wachtel, J. (2016). Restorative justice in schools: The theory and practice. *Theory into Practice*, 55(2), 132–139.
- Whipple, J., Fletcher, K., & Hargreaves, A. (2023). A meta-analysis of school counseling outcome research. *School Counseling Research*, 10(2), 150–165.
- World Bank. (2022). The state of global learning: Learning poverty updates. World Bank Group.
- World Bank. (2022). Uganda economic update: From crisis to inclusive recovery. World Bank Group.
- World Bank. (2022). Uganda poverty assessment 2022: Strengthening resilience to accelerate poverty reduction in Uganda. <https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/099050423103012821>
- World Health Organization (WHO). (2022). Alcohol, e-cigarettes, cannabis: Concerning trends in adolescent substance use. WHO Regional Office for Europe.
- World Health Organization (WHO). (2022). World mental health report: Transforming mental health for all. WHO.
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6th ed.). Sage Publications.
- Zehr, H. (2002). *The little book of restorative justice*. Good Books.

Autonomy and Accountability: A Logical Analysis of the Quality Assurance of Institutional Self-Assessment from the Perspective of Audit and Assessment

Zhiyuan Sun¹

¹ Lingnan Normal University, Zhanjiang 524048, China

Correspondence: Zhiyuan Sun, Lingnan Normal University, Zhanjiang 524048, China.

doi:10.63593/JARE.2026.03.05

Abstract

The “Audit and Assessment” model establishes institutional self-assessment as the foundation for external evaluation, thereby reinforcing the principal responsibility of universities within the quality assurance system. The effectiveness of institutional self-assessment is closely related to the extent to which universities recognize and internalize their self-assessment responsibilities. Furthermore, universities’ identification with this principal responsibility and agency is inseparable from their understanding and grasp of “university autonomy” and “higher education accountability.” University autonomy provides a profound theoretical foundation for institutional self-assessment, while higher education accountability serves as its quality assurance. Striking a balance between “autonomy” and “accountability,” while achieving a profound grasp of their underlying philosophies, can provide a logical pathway for ensuring the quality of institutional self-assessment.

Keywords: audit and assessment, institutional self-assessment, university autonomy, higher education accountability, quality assurance

1. Introduction

In 2013, the Ministry of Education issued the Notice on Launching the Audit and Assessment of Undergraduate Teaching in Regular Higher Education Institutions (hereinafter referred to as the “Notice”), formally initiating a new round of undergraduate teaching assessment in China. This initiative represents a continuation of the Quality Engineering Project in higher education. It not only draws upon the accumulated experience from four previous assessment phases—namely, the Qualified Assessment,

Excellent Assessment, Random Assessment, and Level Assessment—but also introduces a multitude of innovations.

Compared with previous rounds, the new assessment framework places greater emphasis on the principal status of the institutions. The Notice underscores the need to “respect the institutional autonomy of universities and reflect their principal role in the quality of talent cultivation,” establishing “self-assessment, self-examination, and self-improvement” as one of the overarching principles of this audit and

assessment. Consequently, this round aims to decouple the functions of “auditing” and “assessing.” It shifts from a previously government-dominated, integrated model to a bifurcated process: institutions first conduct self-assessments, after which the government audits the results (primarily the Self-Assessment Reports compiled by each university) and provides feedback. This approach is designed to achieve the objectives of “promoting construction, reform, and management through assessment, combining assessment with construction, and placing emphasis on construction.”

The devolution of the “assessment” function to the institutional level signifies that university self-assessment has become the cornerstone of this new round. The quality of these self-assessments directly impacts the overall quality of the teaching audit. Factors such as the adequacy of self-assessment awareness, the clarity of self-assessment functions, and the soundness of self-assessment monitoring systems are all critical determinants of the success of this audit and assessment. In practice, the effectiveness of institutional self-assessment is closely intertwined with university autonomy. Therefore, ensuring the quality of self-assessment requires first clarifying the logical relationship between “university autonomy” and “higher education accountability.” Only by deeply grasping the concepts of “autonomy” and “accountability” can we explore pathways to reshape the quality assurance system for institutional self-assessment.

2. Autonomy and Accountability: A Logical Relationship that Must Be Clarified in Institutional Self-Assessment

2.1 University Autonomy and Higher Education Accountability

As John S. Brubacher emphasized in *On the Philosophy of Higher Education*, “autonomy is one of the most ancient traditions of higher learning” (Brubacher, J. S., 2002). University autonomy is regarded as the secret to universities being among the longest-lived institutions in human history, having been inseparable from them since their inception. Since the Middle Ages, the tradition of guild autonomy upheld by European universities secured them valuable developmental space between ecclesiastical and secular powers. The principle of autonomy has consistently accompanied the continuous

evolution of university functions, becoming one of their essential characteristics.

However, following World War II, and particularly as global higher education transitioned from an elite stage to a mass stage, public concern regarding the quality of higher education gradually intensified. Universities can no longer remain the “ivory towers” that Cardinal Newman described merely as “an institution for the training and cultivation of the intellect” (Dressel, P. L. (Ed.), 1980). Instead, as Clark Kerr stated, “higher education has become too important to too many parts and too many people of society for the state to remain completely uninvolved” (Li, Y., 2015). Higher education has moved from the margins to the center of society, and consequently, the concept of university autonomy has faced increasing challenges. On one hand, the state intervenes in university teaching and research through financial appropriations and legal instruments; on the other hand, the public pays close attention to issues such as expenditures, admission standards, and teaching quality, which are closely tied to personal interests. The development and sustainability of higher education cannot focus solely on traditional “university autonomy” while remaining indifferent to society at large. Therefore, effective social supervision and management of higher education is an issue universities cannot avoid. It is foreseeable that due to rapid technological development and extensive social impacts, accountability will become a focal point (Li, Y., 2015). Since the 1970s, when the relationship between autonomy and accountability sparked intense discussion among American higher education scholars, accountability has gained increasing attention as a crucial policy measure for managing higher education. How to properly handle the relationship between autonomy and accountability has become an imperative issue in the development of higher education quality management.

University autonomy and higher education accountability are inextricably linked; only through their mutual coordination can the quality of higher education be ensured. First, the boundaries of university autonomy provide the foundation for higher education accountability. The boundaries of autonomy are essentially the boundaries of rights. Rights are accompanied by obligations, just as autonomy is commensurate with responsibility, and accountability is based

on the responsibilities borne by the accountable entity. As a relatively independent subsystem within the complex macro-system of society, the development of higher education cannot be separated from the support of socioeconomic, political, and cultural factors. While exchanging and transferring resources with other subsystems, higher education establishes a relationship of "resource interdependence" with the external environment. Society provides "resources" to the higher education subsystem, which in turn utilizes its "autonomous" capacity to fulfill its corresponding responsibility of giving back to society. In other words, society supplies "resources" based on the university's autonomous capacity (i.e., its capacity to bear responsibility) and uses this as the basis for holding it "accountable."

Second, higher education accountability is an inevitable requirement of university autonomy. American scholar Paul L. Dressel once elucidated the essence of accountability as follows: "Accountability means responsible performance, including the proper use of organizational resources through legitimate and reasonable means to achieve predetermined goals" (Lin, J., 2018). This statement reveals the core meaning of accountability: it requires a comprehensive consideration of the conversion efficiency between outputs and inputs. The tradition of university autonomy is key to the exertion of its function and efficacy. However, universities are not ivory towers after all; they cannot survive independently of the external environment. Focusing solely on the efficacy of universities while neglecting their efficiency is of no benefit to society as a whole. Therefore, higher education accountability must examine both outputs and inputs; universities must be held responsible for both their efficacy and their efficiency.

Finally, the equilibrium between university autonomy and higher education accountability represents the pathway to assuring higher education quality. University autonomy is not unrestricted, nor is accountability a form of disorderly management. A balance between the two must be struck to optimize both efficacy and efficiency. Evidence has demonstrated that university autonomy and higher education accountability are inseparable and mutually complementary. Universities must conduct their activities within an accountability framework, treating higher education endeavors as "accountable" actions to maximize the utility of

"resources." Conversely, society must establish scientific and rational "accountability" mechanisms to fully safeguard the vitality of universities under the principle of autonomy, thereby using reasonable accountability mechanisms to promote the optimization of university efficiency. In short, the objective should be to strive for mutually acceptable intermediate standards regarding the balance between accountability and university autonomy (Liu, S., 2016), as well as how to maintain reasonable administrative flexibility within universities in the face of legitimate accountability, thereby ensuring the quality of higher education.

2.2 University Autonomy, Higher Education Accountability, and Institutional Self-Assessment

The institutional self-assessment method adopted in the new round of teaching audit and assessment represents a further deepening of the reform to separate the government's administrative functions from university management (i.e., the separation of supervision and operation). This approach effectively expands the institutional autonomy of universities and aligns with the spirit of university autonomy. To ensure the high quality of institutional self-assessment, universities must not only grasp and comprehend the spirit of university autonomy but also utilize "accountability" measures to conduct both internal and external inspections of various self-assessment tasks.

2.2.1 University Autonomy Is the Theoretical Foundation of Institutional Self-Assessment

Since the reform and opening-up, expanding the institutional autonomy of universities has consistently been a focal point of China's higher education reform. The curtain on the reform of university autonomy was gradually raised in 1979, when several university administrators published an article in the People's Daily appealing to "grant higher education institutions a degree of autonomy." Since then, the concept of "university autonomy," introduced through the lens of institutional autonomy, has officially entered the public sphere (Newman, J. H., 2001). Furthermore, a series of documents have been successively issued across different periods following the reform and opening-up to advance the expansion of university autonomy.

Alongside the deepening reform of the higher education management system, corresponding

transformations have also taken place in the field of higher education assessment. In accordance with the characteristics and requirements of the new “audit and assessment” model, the internal quality assurance system of universities is expected to transition from an “exogenous” to an “endogenous” type across four dimensions: construction basis, assessment criteria, assessment focus, and assessment subjects (Wang, L., & Che, J., 2011). This requires universities to base the construction of their quality assurance systems on their own talent cultivation objectives, use internally developed quality assessment standards as the frame of reference, focus the assessment on the university’s own connotative construction and sustainable development capacity, and regard all internal stakeholders as the subjects of the assessment. Institutional self-management, self-construction, and self-assessment should serve as the cornerstone of this “audit and assessment” initiative. This approach not only represents a further expansion of institutional autonomy but also embodies the spirit of university autonomy under the guiding philosophy of “self-assessment.”

2.2.2 Higher Education Accountability Is the Quality Assurance of Institutional Self-Assessment

As discussed above, the distinguishing feature of the “audit and assessment” lies in the separation of the functions of “auditing” and “assessing.” The majority of external assessment tasks are devolved to universities as internal assessments, while the “auditing” function—which embodies the supervisory spirit of “accountability”—remains external to the universities. If institutional self-assessment aligns with the spirit of university autonomy, then external auditing corresponds closely with the concept of higher education accountability.

The “audit and assessment” model highlights the status of universities as the primary subjects of assessment, granting them substantial autonomy and initiative in the evaluation process. This places two key demands on universities: First, universities must possess clear self-assessment awareness and a high level of self-assessment capability. Universities must shift away from outdated mindsets and achieve an accurate understanding, at the ideological level, of the assessment philosophy proposed by the “audit and assessment”—namely, “promoting construction, reform, and management through

assessment, combining assessment with construction, and placing emphasis on construction.” Simultaneously, they must strengthen their practical capacity to advance assessment operations. Based on the frameworks of “one adherence, two highlights, three reinforcements” and the “five degrees,” universities must guarantee essential elements such as personnel, funding, and material resources to carry out self-assessment in an orderly manner, thereby effectively enhancing their self-assessment capabilities. Second, universities must establish an internal quality assurance system for self-assessment, strictly controlling every stage of the process to ensure the validity and reliability of the self-assessment work.

In fact, just as “autonomy” cannot exist without “accountability,” a complete quality assurance system comprises not only the university’s internal quality assurance system but also an external quality monitoring system. The internal system serves as the foundation, while the external assurance and assessment act as the means; the ultimate goal of external assurance and assessment is to foster the formation and improvement of the university’s internal quality assurance systems and mechanisms. Without the “accountability” provided by an external quality assurance system, the internal quality monitoring system would lose its due effectiveness. Consequently, the audit and assessment would become a mere formality, failing entirely to achieve the objectives of enhancing the university’s awareness as a quality subject and improving its self-assessment capabilities. Therefore, institutional self-assessment must be subject to the accountability of external “auditing”; only in this way can the quality of self-assessment be guaranteed.

3. The Imbalance Between “Autonomy” and “Accountability”: Problems in Institutional Self-Assessment

3.1 Lack of Autonomy Tradition Leads to Weak Self-Assessment Awareness and Insufficient Self-Assessment Capability

The core philosophy emphasized by the “audit and assessment” is to empower universities, making them the primary subjects of evaluation. By exercising this devolved evaluative power, universities are expected to promote their own capabilities in teaching, research, and social service. Thus, the purpose of institutional self-

assessment is twofold: on one hand, it provides a foundation and basis for external evaluation; on the other hand, and more importantly, it serves the improvement and development of the university itself. Institutional self-assessment should be integrated into the university's management process to form a sustainable and virtuous development mechanism (Wilson, D. A., 1985). It is evident that the implementation of this new assessment philosophy is closely tied to whether universities can cultivate the awareness and capability of "autonomy." However, influenced by the historical models of university establishment and management, Chinese universities still exhibit relatively weak autonomy awareness and insufficient autonomy capabilities, which hinders the transformation of self-assessment awareness and the enhancement of related capabilities.

The absence of a spirit of university "autonomy" in China is jointly influenced by its "late-developing and exogenously generated" model of university establishment and its "top-down" management model. From the historical background of modern Chinese universities, they were founded under the leadership and control of the government, based on learning from, imitating, and borrowing Western university models. Therefore, in terms of their establishment model, Chinese universities are typically "late-developing and exogenously generated." After the founding of the People's Republic of China, a centralized management system became the fundamental model for higher education administration, with the government directly managing universities. Although since the reform and opening-up, the relationship between the government and universities has been adjusted multiple times—striving to shift the government's role from direct operation to macro-level guidance and supervision, decentralizing power, and expanding institutional autonomy—the road ahead remains long. While the direction of reform is scientifically sound, it will take considerable time to substantially reverse the "dependency" mentality towards the government formed by the "late-developing and exogenously generated" establishment model and the "top-down" management model, and to further remedy the common ailments of weak autonomy awareness and low autonomy capability.

The lack of autonomy awareness and capability under the "audit and assessment" model has

severe implications for institutional self-assessment, specifically triggering problems in the following four aspects:

3.1.1 Deviation in the Status of Institutional Self-Assessment

Institutional self-assessment is marginalized in university management, regarded as insignificant or merely an additional burden. First, Chinese universities have long harbored a "dependency" mentality towards the government. It is difficult for universities to quickly abandon the habitual assessment pattern of "the government setting standards and issuing orders, while universities benchmarking against the standards and executing the orders." Lacking autonomy awareness, universities are unable to clearly define their own talent cultivation objectives, styles, and characteristics, nor do they possess the capability for self-evaluation and monitoring. Consequently, self-assessment inevitably becomes a mere formality, and its status continues to decline. Second, administrative evaluations have exerted adverse interference on institutional self-assessment. Since this type of exogenously generated administrative evaluation contradicts the "endogenous" spirit upheld by institutional self-assessment, university leaders often transfer administrative evaluation indicators onto self-assessment while coping with administrative demands. This leads to a lack of endogenous motivation for self-assessment, marginalizing it from the core of management into a tool for "image projects." Meanwhile, university leaders often fail to analyze the university's current status, challenges, and future development with the mindset of a "principal responsible person," resulting in self-assessment reports that often become stereotypical bureaucratic documents where "a thousand universities look the same."

3.1.2 Dislocation of the Objectives of Institutional Self-Assessment

According to the principles of audit and assessment, institutional self-assessment should focus on several key areas: first, the talent cultivation support system; second, the "student-centered" learning support system; and third, the developmental status of students (including alumni). Self-assessment should pay attention to both the quality generation process and quality outcomes, employing a combination of qualitative and quantitative evaluation methods. In practice, however, due to a lack of sufficient

responsibility and capability in self-assessment, universities often focus excessively on outcomes and simple quantifiable data. When universities shift the objective of self-assessment from “connotative construction” to the pursuit of external quantifiable indicators, the goal of self-assessment becomes fundamentally misplaced. “While digital description and evaluation methods objectively provide a more direct perspective for examining higher education and its value embodiment, instrumental rationality itself carries the drawback of disregarding human emotions and spiritual values. It also fragments and superficializes the core mission of higher education, bringing certain negative impacts on people’s comprehensive understanding and evaluation of higher education” (Yao, Y., 2016).

3.1.3 Absence of Value in Institutional Self-Assessment

The value of institutional self-assessment is reflected in three dimensions: first, as the basis and foundation for supervision, it meets the procedural needs of “audit and assessment”; second, as a means for universities to improve their own educational quality, it satisfies the university’s need for self-generation and development; third, being closely related to the interests of stakeholders such as students, teachers, and parents, it meets the needs of these stakeholder groups. The lack of self-assessment awareness and capability often leads to attending to one thing while losing another. Even if the needs of supervision are met, the interests of the university itself and its stakeholders are cast aside. After the superior supervision is completed, the results of self-assessment are shelved, having no impact on the university’s daily teaching and management. This lack of principal responsibility not only harms the university’s long-term development but also constitutes irresponsibility towards stakeholders.

3.1.4 Backwardness in the Operation of Institutional Self-Assessment

Weak self-assessment awareness and capability are manifested in the oversimplification of self-assessment operations in practice. First, universities treat institutional self-assessment as a temporary, short-term behavior without long-term planning. This creates a decoupling between daily teaching and management work, and between management and evaluation work. Ultimately, institutional self-assessment becomes

the task of a specific department or a report writer, deteriorating into “paperwork.” Second, the management mechanism for institutional self-assessment is unreasonable and lacks corresponding supervisory mechanisms. In specific self-assessment work, universities often “assign tasks layer by layer” to subordinate units: the university top-level administration assigns tasks to various colleges and departments, which then allocate them to frontline teachers or staff. This mandatory task-assignment mechanism makes it difficult for grassroots recipients to perform their work willingly and convincingly. Coupled with a lack of supervisory mechanisms, the authenticity and reliability of the collected materials and data are also open to doubt.

3.2 Imperfect Accountability Systems Lead to the Distortion of Institutional Self-Assessment Results

The quality of “audit and assessment” relies on both external teaching quality assurance from outside the university and internal teaching quality assurance from within. The external teaching quality assurance system is also known as “external (mandatory) accountability,” while the internal teaching quality assurance system of universities is referred to as “internal (voluntary) accountability.” The purpose of an accountability mechanism is to form effective constraints on power subjects. When a power subject exercises power improperly or abuses it, the supervisory subject can hold the power subject accountable “according to the law” by adopting appropriate accountability measures based on the accountability system. Regarding external accountability, whether in the administrative field or the field of higher education, “legislation”—that is, the establishment of an accountability system—has always been the top priority of external accountability mechanisms. Since the 1980s, China’s undergraduate teaching assessment system has gone through four stages: initial pilot programs, gradual promotion in the middle period, comprehensive promotion in the later period, and the current stage of reform and improvement (Yao, Y., Chen, X., & Huang, B., 2018). During these four stages, relevant educational departments issued several documents regarding teaching assessment, but there were no specific documents on the accountability system for teaching assessment, resulting in the failure to truly establish an external accountability mechanism. Regarding internal accountability, since voluntary accountability follows the ethical contract of

“commitment-fulfillment” in terms of values, is based on the principles of university autonomy and willingness regarding the accountability subject, and allows universities to freely grasp the scale and methods of accountability according to their own situations, the effective implementation of voluntary accountability essentially presupposes that universities have a profound understanding and grasp of the concept of “autonomy,” along with strong voluntary accountability awareness and high voluntary accountability capability (Bie, D., Yi, M., Li, Z., et al., 2018). Unfortunately, under the current circumstances of weak principal awareness and low autonomous capability in universities, the ideal vision of voluntary accountability can only remain a castle in the air. It is evident that the problems existing in the current “audit and assessment” accountability mechanism are mainly manifested in the absence of an internal accountability mechanism and the unsoundness of the external accountability mechanism. Consequently, due to the imperfect accountability mechanism, the distortion of institutional self-assessment results is inevitable.

4. Balancing “Autonomy” and “Accountability”: Reshaping the Logic of Quality Assurance for Institutional Self-Assessment

“Autonomy” and “accountability” constitute a logical pair that universities must clarify for their development, as well as a relationship that must be balanced to safeguard the quality of China’s higher education. To achieve sound university development, on one hand, the government must provide space for university self-governance through the cession and decentralization of power; universities must enhance their principal awareness and capability for self-governance on the basis of internalizing and absorbing the spirit of university autonomy. On the other hand, universities must, under the constraints of internal and external accountability mechanisms, foster high-quality university development with a highly self-disciplined sense of principal responsibility. Only under the safeguards of “autonomy” and “accountability” can self-assessment work ensure high validity, reliability, and efficiency.

4.1 Internalize the Spirit of University Autonomy, Enhance Self-Assessment Awareness and Capability, and Improve the Validity of Self-Assessment

The degree to which the spirit of university autonomy is grasped profoundly affects the

transformation of universities’ self-assessment awareness and the cultivation of self-assessment capability. The university’s self-assessment awareness and capability, in turn, relate to the depth of the self-assessment work, which is the key to whether the self-assessment possesses validity. Specifically, universities must “diligently” improve the effectiveness of self-assessment in the following four aspects to align self-evaluation with the conceptual requirements of the “audit and assessment.”

4.1.1 Rationally Establish the University’s Positioning and Objectives

For universities, designing top-level institutional positioning and development goals in accordance with national and local or regional economic and social development requirements is generally relatively easy. However, due to a frequent lack of sufficient “autonomy” spirit, universities often fail to rationally design supporting systems at the meso and micro levels. Strategies, pathways, tactics, and measures closely related to institutional positioning are often not clearly defined, thereby affecting the effectiveness of self-assessment. Universities should translate “audit points” into scientific and reasonable objectives, with each objective having corresponding implementation plans and schemes. The 111 guiding questions listed by the National Center for Education Accreditation and Quality Development of the Ministry of Education can help universities better understand the scope of the audit and assessment, providing a useful reference for further refining “audit points” into reasonable and actionable detailed rules.

4.1.2 Focus on the Principal Teachers and Students in Classroom Teaching

Focusing on teachers and students requires, on one hand, the university’s self-assessment team to go deep into frontline classrooms to listen, observe, and experience; on the other hand, it requires engaging teachers and students to collaboratively participate in the self-assessment work. The self-assessment team can collect feedback from teachers and students through information feedback methods such as interviews and questionnaires, and should also point out objective existing problems regarding teaching content, teaching methods, teaching means, teaching effectiveness, learning attitudes, and learning outcomes.

4.1.3 Construct a Closed-Loop System for

Teaching Quality Assurance

As a systematic and holistic task of the university, self-assessment involves various functional departments and units at all levels. The self-assessment team must integrate the quality assurance organizations and related systems scattered across various departments and links to form a rigorous closed-loop system for teaching quality assurance. It is common for the Academic Affairs Office to act as both the athlete and the referee, where quality monitoring, information feedback, and continuous improvement fail to form a sound closed loop. Teaching management documents are often treated as teaching quality standards, and such standards are frequently too generalized. Teaching quality evaluation is overly concentrated on teaching, test papers, and graduation projects, without in-depth consideration and design for establishing a four-in-one (i.e., teaching, learning, management, and evaluation) interactive teaching mechanism. All these phenomena are closely related to the failure to form a closed loop in teaching quality assurance, which is a practical problem that university self-assessment work must face and solve.

4.1.4 Accurately Understand Talent Cultivation Characteristics and Institutional Features

The “audit and assessment” conducts a “6 + 1” project evaluation for each university, where the “1” refers to a self-selected feature project that the university can set according to its own situation. As an important measure to avoid “a thousand universities looking the same,” the self-selected feature project provides universities with an opportunity to focus on constructing a unique or exemplary feature project. However, it also tests each university’s level of self-awareness. Universities must have a profound understanding of their own institutional features and further reflect these features in their talent cultivation characteristics. They should take the opportunity of self-assessment to conduct a comprehensive review of the feature project, demonstrating whether this model constitutes a unique advantage for the university and whether there is obvious innovation in its practical implementation.

4.2 Establish Internal and External “Accountability” to Strengthen Universities’ Principal Responsibility and Improve the Reliability, Validity, and Efficiency of Self-Assessment

The authenticity, effectiveness, and efficiency of

self-assessment work must be safeguarded through internal and external “accountability” systems. Under the “accountability” of the external quality assurance system, constructing a self-constraining internal quality assurance system for universities is a task heavily emphasized in this “audit and assessment.”

4.2.1 Build a Stereoscopic Network for External Quality Assurance

First, in addition to establishing a stereoscopic supervisory network involving government inspection (online “Teaching Basic Status Database” and offline assessment expert groups), third-party social assessment agencies, and broad participation from the media and various sectors of society, external “accountability” should also focus on perfecting “accountability” legislation and the institutional system, ensuring that supervisory actions have a legal basis. Legislation for external quality assurance is the cornerstone of the external “accountability” mechanism. Only by strengthening legislation for higher education quality assurance can the “audit and assessment” based on institutional self-assessment have a jurisprudential foundation. Currently, neither the National Medium- and Long-Term Education Reform and Development Plan Outline (2010–2020) nor the Implementation Measures for the Audit and Assessment of Undergraduate Teaching in Regular Higher Education Institutions stipulates the power of higher education quality audit and assessment. Therefore, clarifying the rights and responsibilities of the government, universities, and third-party quality assurance agencies through legal means is an urgent task for higher education quality assurance legislation (Chang, Q., 2013).

4.2.2 Construct an Internal Quality Assurance System

In accordance with the quality assurance requirements in the “audit and assessment,” universities should establish an internal “accountability” mechanism covering four aspects: the teaching quality assurance system, quality monitoring, quality information and utilization, and quality improvement, achieving continuous improvement in the construction of the quality assurance system. First, improve the quality assurance organizational structure. The university leadership must attach great importance to the construction of the quality assurance organization, establishing a vertical

three-level quality assurance organizational system covering the university, colleges, and departments (faculties), emphasizing the staffing of quality assurance personnel, and setting up dedicated personnel and positions. The university should strictly control the quality standards for various teaching links, strengthen the sense of principal responsibility, coordinate the cooperation of various departments, and form a horizontal synergy with the quality assurance department. Second, establish and improve teaching management rules and regulations, and strengthen the teaching quality monitoring mechanism. Continuously improve various teaching links and feedback channels for teaching evaluation and opinions; conduct routine inspections at the beginning, middle, and end of the semester; and collect opinions through listening, observing, interviews, and surveys conducted by self-assessment staff before, during, and after classes. Strengthen student-centered evaluation and teaching assessment, and regularly carry out evaluations of courses, majors, and disciplines. Finally, continuously improve the quality assurance system. The university self-assessment working group should promptly revise the objectives, standards, and processes of the quality assurance system based on changes in the internal and external environment. The basis for revision can be opinions from external experts and third-party assessment agencies, excellent experiences from similar universities, or the university's own strategic adjustment needs. In short, the teaching quality monitoring and assurance system must essentially achieve a logical closed loop, becoming a step-by-step improvement process.

5. Conclusion

China's new round of university "audit and assessment" is very close in its assessment philosophy to that of world-leading higher education powers. Documents such as the UK's A New Relationship with Schools: Improving School Effectiveness through School Self-Evaluation (2009) issued by Ofsted, Germany's State Study Accreditation Treaty (2018), and the International Principles on Quality Assurance in Education: Towards a Global Quality Consensus (2015) released by the US Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), all elucidate two consensuses: emphasizing the principal responsibility of universities in quality assurance, and respecting the principal status of universities in the setting of assessment content and

standards. In fact, universities' identification with principal responsibility and principal status is inseparable from their understanding and grasp of the spirit of "university autonomy." Unlike Western countries, Chinese universities, influenced by the "late-developing and exogenously generated" establishment model and the centralized management model, have not yet fully understood "university autonomy." This has also resulted in the school self-assessment philosophy emphasized by the "audit and assessment" not being truly implemented. In the new historical period, to promote the improvement of China's higher education quality assurance system, clarifying the logical relationship between "autonomy" and "accountability" is the foundation and prerequisite for all work. On the basis of profoundly grasping the concepts of "autonomy" and "accountability," constructing a quality assurance system for institutional self-assessment is an important issue that the current "audit and assessment" work must face and should receive sufficient attention.

References

- Bie, D., Yi, M., Li, Z., et al. (2018). The development trend and enlightenment of international higher education quality assurance and assessment: Based on the investigation of higher education quality assurance systems in 11 countries (regions). *China Higher Education Research (Zhongguo Gaojiao Yanjiu)*, (11), 35–44.
- Brubacher, J. S. (2002). *On the philosophy of higher education* (C. Wang et al., Trans.). Zhejiang Education Press. (Original work published 1982)
- Chang, Q. (2013). Audit assessment and the four transformations of the construction of university internal quality assurance system. *China University Teaching (Zhongguo Daxue Jiaoxue)*, (7), 75–78.
- Dressel, P. L. (Ed.). (1980). The autonomy of public colleges. Jossey-Bass.
- Li, Y. (2015). University autonomy and higher education accountability: The way to balance them. *Journal of Bingtuan Education Institute (Bingtuan Jiaoyu Xueyuan Xuebao)*, (4), 38–42.
- Lin, J. (2018). On the basic characteristics of university autonomous operation. *Heilongjiang Researches on Higher Education (Heilongjiang Gaojiao Yanjiu)*, (4), 37–40.

- Liu, S. (2016). The “digital trap” in higher education evaluation. *Journal of Suzhou University (Education Science Edition) (Suzhou Daxue Xuebao (Jiaoyu Kexue Ban))*, (1), 28–35.
- Newman, J. H. (2001). *The idea of a university* (H. Xu et al., Trans.). Zhejiang Education Press.
- Wang, L., & Che, J. (2011). Strengthening school self-evaluation and improving the effectiveness of supervision: The latest development trend of school supervision and evaluation in the UK. *Comparative Education Review (Bijiao Jiaoyu Yanjiu)*, (10), 71–76.
- Wilson, D. A. (1985). Accountability and autonomy. In L. W. Koepplin & D. A. Wilson (Eds.), *The future of state universities: Issues in teaching, research, and public service*. Rutgers University Press.
- Yao, Y. (2016). Reflection on the history of undergraduate teaching assessment system in China: From the perspective of social accountability. *Modern Education Science (Xiandai Jiaoyu Kexue)*, (8), 106–111.
- Yao, Y., Chen, X., & Huang, B. (2018). From mandatory accountability to voluntary accountability: The dilemma and breakthrough of university teaching quality assurance system. *Journal of Changshu Institute of Technology (Philosophy and Social Sciences) (Changshu Ligong Xueyuan Xuebao (Zhhexue Shehui Kexue Ban))*, (6), 82–88.