



**Literature Review**

**A Literature Review on New Basic Education Research in China over the Past Three Decades—Analysis Based on CNKI Data**

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**Abstract:** This study systematically reviews research literature on New Basic Education (NBE) over the past three decades based on data from the China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI). The review shows that while NBE has achieved remarkable results in concept renewal, curriculum and teaching reforms, it still has shortcomings in implementation in ethnic minority areas, subject-specific strategies, and research methods. The article also proposes future research directions and issues to facilitate the in-depth development of NBE.

**Keywords:** New Basic Education; Research review; Future research directions

## **1. Introduction**

Since 1994, New Basic Education has undergone three decades of exploration, becoming a vital force in China's basic education reform. Numerous scholars have produced fruitful achievements around its concepts and practices. Using "New Basic Education" as the keyword in the title, 197 academic journals were retrieved from CNKI. After screening out invalid literature, 98 articles were selected as the research objects, providing a basis for analyzing the research status and trends in this field.

## **2. Definition of Core Concepts**

New Basic Education(NBE) is an educational reform concept rooted in the “Life-Practice” pedagogy theory. Through holistic and structural transformation practices, it comprehensively reforms traditional education. Centered on students, it emphasizes both their all-round development and personality cultivation, as well as teacher-student interaction and emotional communication, forming a mutually beneficial relationship with the “Life-Practice” school of education [1], which has attracted extensive academic research.

## **3. Categorization of Existing Research**

### **3.1 Theoretical Research**

#### **3.1.1 Proposal of the Theory**

Since the 1990s, Professor Ye Lan [2] has proposed the concept of NBE, aiming to deeply reform traditional basic education to meet the educational needs of the new era. She emphasizes that NBE should focus on students’ active development, reconstruct the concept of classroom teaching processes, and rebuild school daily life, making education closer to students’ life growth and practical activities.

#### **3.1.2 Development of the Theory**

The concept was later continuously developed and innovated. Li Zhengtao [3] further interpreted the idea from the perspective of life-practice, emphasizing that education should pay attention to the growth of human life and practical activities. Li Jiacheng [4], on the other hand, from the goal of NBE, emphasized the educational concept of human-centered and comprehensive development, and advocated paying attention to the individual differences and needs of students to promote the personalized and differentiated development of education.

In addition, Pang Qingju [5] conducted an in-depth study on the connotation and characteristics of NBE, which focus on the importance of the new basic education on students’ subjectivity, individual differences and life experience, and advocate the construction of a life-affirming educational environment, further enriching the

theoretical system. Li Jiacheng [6] also started from the reconstruction of the value orientation, explored the issues of education fairness, education quality, and education innovation, and put forward the value orientation based on students' development, emphasizing the unity of the social function and individual function of education.

It is worth noting that the theoretical development of NBE is always accompanied by the innovation of research methods. Bu Yuhua and Wu Honglin [7] pointed out that their research had a distinctive "thought experiment" trait, adheres to the disciplinary position of pedagogy, the scientific and normative nature of educational experimentation. Li Zhenglin and Li Zhengtao [8], on the other hand, proposed from the perspective of pedagogical change, whose "life-practice" traits are reflected in the following: reconfiguring the concept of teaching based on the concept of "concrete individual", reconfiguring the teaching process based on the "subjective interaction" theory to reconstruct the teaching process, based on the "power internalization" goal to put forward propulsive evaluation and teacher thinking transformation claims, forming a multi-level interactive generation of theoretical logic.

## **3.2 Practical Research**

### **3.2.1 Teaching Level**

#### **(1) Curriculum**

Researchers have conducted practical research from various perspectives, including curriculum development, teaching materials construction and curriculum implementation. From the perspective of curriculum development, Fu Songtao and Che Yuping [9] analyzed the problem of curriculum innovation in the context of NBE and put forward the concept of student-centered curriculum design and implementation.

Of particular interest is the development of "integrated activities": Yuan Derun's study [10] shows that, as a basic component as important as an irreplaceable as subject teaching, it starts from the structured exploration of the reform of elementary school's ideology and moral character class, advances through the thematic promotion of the class construction stage, and in the school's "student work" towards maturity. Pang Qingju [11] further pointed out that its direct goal, constituent elements, content and process are unique, emphasizing theory-based practice creation, problem-oriented self-transcendence, and is of great value to the reconstruction of the parenting system.

## (2) Classroom Teaching

Classroom teaching is an important place for practicing the concept of NBE. Zhang Xiangzhong [12] explored the reform of classroom evaluation under the vision of NBE from the perspective of the new theory of propulsive evaluation function. Meanwhile, Wu Yaping [13] focused on the classroom teaching reform under the concept of NBE and explored how to rebuild the view of classroom teaching process, emphasizing the vitality and interactivity of the classroom.

In depth, Bu Yuhua and Gai Pingyun [14] proposed that classroom teaching practice follows three basic principles: the principle of value advocates the realization of the dual value of knowledge and nurturing; the principle of elements clarifies the relationship among the three elements of teachers, students, and content; the principle of process focuses on the vertical logic of teaching task decomposition and the horizontal logic of teaching-learning interaction. Zhang Xiangzhong and Li Zhengfu [15] found that classroom change is also an innovative methodology, with “teaching” as the overall unit of analysis, through the mechanism of “directional openness — interactive feedback — agglomerated generation”, forming three stages of resource generation, process generation and expansion generation.

## (3) Curriculum and Teaching Reform

Rong Zhongkui [16] conducted an in-depth discussion on NBE from the perspective of curriculum and teaching, analyzed the goals, content, implementation and evaluation of NBE curriculum reform, and put forward corresponding reform strategies and recommendations.

### **3.2.2. Teachers and Students**

#### (1) Teacher Development

Shan Yunde [17] discussed in depth the driving effect of NBE experiment on teacher development. At the same time, NBE also emphasizes the change of teachers’ roles from mere knowledge transmitters to guides, supporters and collaborators of students’ learning. This change in role orientation helps to establish a more harmonious teacher-student relationship and promote the overall development of students.

Liu Shuren [18] explored the change of teacher’s role from the requirements of NBE for teachers, and advocated that teachers should change from knowledge transmitters to guides, collaborators and partners of students. Wu Deshu [19], on the other hand, pays more attention to the issue of teachers’ professional growth and puts

forward the paths and strategies of teachers' professional development based on NBE, which provides strong support and guarantee for teachers' professional growth. Li Jiacheng and Cheng Hao's [20] study showed that through the educationalization of classroom daily life, the new basic education further realized the goal of cultivating "life-affirming people". In classroom construction, teachers (especially headteachers) realize professional development through "research-based change practice", which further expands the boundaries of teacher research.

### (2) Student Development

Through empirical research, Xu Yanna [21] found that NBE practice helps to enhance students' cognitive level and develop their creativity. At the same time, NBE also pays attention to students' emotional development and students' social development, helps students establish positive emotional attitudes and values, and develops students' teamwork and interpersonal skills in order to adapt to the needs of society.

Li Jiacheng [22] discussed in depth how to promote the overall development of students in teaching and learning, including the cultivation of emotional attitudes, values, and creative abilities. Zhang Xiangzhong [23], on the other hand, is committed to updating evaluation concepts, formulating scientific evaluation standards as well as innovating evaluation methods in order to better meet the requirements of NBE for students' development.

### 3.2.3 Other Dimensions

#### (1) Ecological Dimension

Through case studies, Cheng Lifang [24] deeply discussed the role of NBE in optimizing the basic education ecology, emphasizing the positive role of promoting NBE theory in driving the connotative development of basic education. Wang Yeting [25] focused on how to build a good educational ecology through NBE to achieve sustainable education development.

Wu Honglin's study [26] showed that the construction of "school symbiosis cluster" has become an important practice of ecological optimization: through the in-depth intervention of theoretical researchers and the transformation of regional governance, the symbiosis environment is created by propulsive evaluation to break down the inter-school hierarchical differences, promote the in-depth inter-school cooperation, and form a "mutually beneficial symbiosis" pattern to improve the quality of regional education.

## (2) Regional Dimension

Pang Qingju and Li Zhengtao [27] discussed in depth the exploration and experience of NBE in regional practice, providing useful references for education reforms in other regions. He Xuefeng [28] focused on the promotion and sharing of NBE experience, proposing effective promotion strategies and paths to facilitate the widespread dissemination and application of NBE concepts and practices. Rong Zhongkui [29] interpreted and analyzed policy documents, discussing policy support and guidance for NBE practices while pointing out potential problems in policy implementation.

Pang Qingju and Li Zhengtao's study [30] showed that cooperation between universities, middle schools and elementary school is an important path for regional practice, and through 27 years of exploration, a comprehensive generative model has been formed in which school reform and teacher development, theory and practice are transformed interactively with each other, with clear goals at each stage, focusing on accumulative adjustments and realizing multiple effects.

## (3) School Dimension

Wu Huqiang [31] focused on the practical application of NBE in schools. Through in-depth observation and data analysis, they demonstrated how NBE has changed teachers' teaching concepts and behaviors to promote students' all-round development. Huang Qilin [32] summarized practical experiences and analyzed achievements and challenges in practice through participation or observation of NBE in experimental schools or regions.

## (4) Family Dimension

Yuan Derun [33] pointed out that current research on the relationship between family and school education in China has issues of "applying foreign theories" and "top-down" orientation, being divorced from reality. He advocates to take the matter-of-fact research of new basic education as the direction, based on Chinese realities, focusing on educational sites, exploring Chinese solutions to problems, and giving research a Chinese character and ethos.

# 3.3 Comprehensive Research

## 3.3.1 Evaluation Research

Evaluation research on NBE mainly focuses on two aspects: the actual effectiveness after implementation and the characteristics of NBE itself. Zhang



Honggao's [34] evaluation from the humanistic orientation of NBE curriculum reform, as well as Yue Zengxue and Zhu Chengguang's [35] discussion on the dilemmas and reflections of NBE curriculum reform all fall under the category of evaluation research. These studies not only highlight NBE's positive achievements but also point out existing problems and challenges, providing valuable references for education reform.

### **3.3.2 Comparative Research**

Researchers compare NBE with traditional basic education, analyzing differences in curriculum design, teaching methods, evaluation systems, etc., and assessing their impacts on student development and social progress to reveal NBE's uniqueness and advantages. Additionally, cross-national or cross-regional comparisons are conducted to explore similarities, differences, and trends in basic education across different countries or regions, revealing commonalities and differences in education reforms under different cultural and social backgrounds, and providing references for NBE's international development.

Rong Zhongkui's comparative research on NBE curriculum reform and other education reforms, as well as the comparative study of several scholars such as Zhusha [36] through the development strategies of basic education informatization in China, the United States, and Singapore, such studies not only reveal the similarities and differences between NBE and other education reforms or models but also provide references and inspiration for NBE's future development.

## **4. Review of Current Research**

### **4.1 Limitations of Existing Research**

Over the past three decades, NBE research has achieved significant results but still has limitations. Geographically, there is a lack of research on its implementation in ethnic minority areas, failing to meet their special educational needs. Research designs tend to focus on macro-level issues, with insufficient attention to micro-level teaching practices and subject-specific strategies. Qualitative methods dominate data analysis, while quantitative research is lacking, affecting the objectivity of evaluations. Research perspectives are limited within the field of education, with few interdisciplinary studies. Arguments overly emphasize differences and advantages

compared to traditional education, ignoring their connections and paying insufficient attention to practical challenges, which may lead to one-sided approaches in promotion.

## 4.2 Future Research Prospects

To address these issues, future NBE research can break through in five aspects: first, deepening research in ethnic minority areas to explore suitable reform strategies; second, focusing on specific subject teaching to analyze micro-level practice mechanisms; third, integrating qualitative and quantitative research to improve evaluation scientific; fourth, promoting interdisciplinary collaboration to expand research boundaries; fifth, balancing the relationship between new and old education, deeply analyzing practical challenges, and proposing coping strategies.

## 5. Conclusion

NBE research has achieved fruitful results in theory, curriculum teaching, school management, and regional practices, deepening the understanding of education reform and guiding practices. In the future, continuous improvements are needed in research design, data analysis, and argumentation perspectives to enable more schools and teachers to benefit from research outcomes.

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