

A Survey on the Current Situation of English Schoolwork Burden of Rural Junior High School Students under the Background of the “Double Reduction” Policy

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Abstract:

The problem of excessive schoolwork burden on primary and secondary school students hinders the further implementation of quality-oriented education and has gradually attracted wide attention from all sectors. Given this, based on the cognitive load theory, this paper adopts a research method that combines qualitative and quantitative methods. With two research tools, namely questionnaires and interviews, and with the help of SPSS 29.0, a survey was conducted on 278 students from a rural junior high school in Guang'an City regarding the issue of English schoolwork burden. The research findings are as follows. There are differences in English schoolwork burden among junior high school students in different grades. Specifically, the English schoolwork burden of ninth-grade students is higher than that of seventh-grade students. There are also differences in English schoolwork burden between junior high school students of different genders. Boys' perception of the difficulty of English courses and English exams is higher than that of girls. However, boys have a lower level of the negative English academic emotion of “shame” than girls.

Keywords:

Double Reduction, Rural Junior High School Students, English Schoolwork Burden, Current Situation

1. Introduction

To alleviate the excessive academic burden on students in compulsory education, the state has issued multiple policies to reduce the burden. In 1955, in the first report on burden reduction issued by the Ministry of Education - “Instructions on Reducing the Excessive Burden on Primary and Secondary School Students”, it was mentioned that “students' burden is too heavy, especially the excessive amount of homework.” In 2000, the state issued the “Urgent Notice on Reducing the Excessive Burden on

Junior High School Students”. The “National Medium - and Long-Term Education Reform and Development Plan Outline (2010 - 2020)” issued in 2010 directly pointed out the need to reduce the excessive academic burden on students. In 2021, the General Office of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and the General Office of the State Council issued the “Opinions on Further Reducing the Homework Burden and Off-campus Training Burden of Students in Compulsory Education” (hereinafter referred to as the “Double Reduction” policy). This policy clearly states that it is necessary to comprehensively reduce the total amount and duration of homework, and alleviate the excessive homework burden and off-campus training burden on students in compulsory education [1].

Although the introduction of this series of burden-reduction policies has alleviated the excessive schoolwork burden of junior high school students to a certain extent, under the guidance of the high-school entrance examination, there are still many junior high school students with excessive schoolwork burdens. In addition, rural education has long been a weak area in national education. Although the state has implemented measures such as the “Excellent Teachers Program”, the “Special Post Program”, and the “Free Normal Students Program” to develop rural education, few young teachers are willing to stay and teach in rural areas. Most English teachers have outdated teaching concepts, a weak awareness of improving teaching quality, and a relatively large proportion of mechanical tasks in assignments, which results in an excessive English schoolwork burden on students. Due to this, this paper takes rural junior high school students as the research subjects to explore the current situation of their English schoolwork burden and the influencing factors, to provide practical paths for reducing the English schoolwork burden of rural junior high school students under the background of the “Double Reduction” policy.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Concept Definition

The academic burden includes two aspects: objective load and subjective perception. Among them, the objective load means the objective academic tasks that students undertake concerning school curriculum learning, and is often measured by time, content, difficulty, etc [2]. Subjective perception indicates students’ perception of the difficulty of academic tasks and their subjective emotional experiences after bearing the corresponding objective load. Specifically, the perception of academic difficulty implies students’ perception of the difficulty of classroom teaching, homework, and exams in different learning situations; subjective emotional experience suggests students’ relatively stable and long-lasting emotional experiences, including happiness, pride, anxiety, anger, and shame.

2.2. Related Research at Home and Abroad on the English Schoolwork Burden

Foreign scholars began researching students’ academic burden relatively earlier, around the 1930s, and their research mainly focused on education policies and extracurricular tutoring. In 1956, France explicitly prohibited assigning homework to primary school students. South Korea started implementing the “Educational Equalization” policy in 1974, aiming to reduce students’ academic burden. Subsequently, countries such as Spain, Finland, Japan, and the United States also successively issued a series of policies to reduce the burden. Chinese scholars started researching students’ academic burden in 1954. In 2021, with the release of the

“Double Reduction” policy, the research on academic burden reached a climax. Li Jinzhao summarized three criteria for evaluating academic burden: subjective criteria, objective criteria, and comprehensive criteria. The subjective criteria measure learners’ comprehensive feelings about the length of study time, the quantity of learning tasks, and the difficulty of learning assignments [3]. The objective criteria measure the actual length of study time. The comprehensive criteria combine the subjective and objective criteria for measuring academic burden. Wang Xianwen and Zhou Xianfeng conducted a review of the literature on academic burden and found that current researchers generally recognize the roles of the government, schools, and society in reducing students’ academic burden [4]. Xue Haiping and Sun Huimin used the China Education Panel Survey (CEPS) to study the impact of academic burden on the physical health of junior high school students [5]. They found that among different subjects, junior high school students have the heaviest English academic burden.

Through literature review and analysis, it is found that the research on schoolwork burden by scholars at home and abroad has been relatively mature. They mainly conduct research on schoolwork burden from two aspects: objective load and subjective perception, which also provides a reference for this study. However, most scholars at home and abroad conduct research on schoolwork burden as a whole, and there are few studies on the schoolwork burden of English, a specific subject [6]. Moreover, most studies focus on urban schools. Therefore, it is of certain research value to focus the research perspective on the English schoolwork burden of junior high school students in rural areas.

3. Theoretical Basis

Cognitive Load Theory was proposed by Australian psychologist John Sweller in the 1980s. He believes that when the total amount of mental resources consumed by learners in completing a specific learning task exceeds the range that learners can bear, this state of load is called cognitive load [7]. Cognitive load includes three types: intrinsic cognitive load, extraneous cognitive load, and germane cognitive load. Intrinsic cognitive load refers to the cognitive load under the interaction between the content of learning materials and learners’ schema. The simpler the content of learning materials, the smaller the intrinsic cognitive load. Extraneous cognitive load is caused by activities unrelated to the learning process. Improper design or presentation of learning materials is likely to bring a higher extraneous load to learners. Germane cognitive load is the use of the remaining cognitive resources by learners for processing directly related to learning in the process of completing a learning task. When the three different cognitive loads are accumulated, if their sum exceeds the overall carrying capacity of working memory, learning will be in trouble.

Against the backdrop of the “Double Reduction” policy, the academic burden on students has become a focal issue of social concern. In essence, an excessive academic burden means that students are under excessive learning pressure, exceeding their tolerance, which leads to the generation of cognitive load. Conducting research by combining cognitive load with the English academic burden of junior high school students provides a theoretical basis for the formation of students’ English academic burden, facilitates to reveal the internal reasons for the excessive English academic burden of junior high school students in rural areas, guides teachers to reasonably control intrinsic cognitive load, reduce extraneous cognitive load, strengthen relevant cognitive load, and ensure that the total load does not exceed the students’ total cognitive capacity.

4. Research Design

4.1. Research Question

This study mainly aims to investigate the differences in English schoolwork burden among junior high school students of different grades and genders in rural areas.

4.2. Research Subject

In this study, 278 students from Junior High School L in Guang'an City were selected as the research subjects (see Table 1). To make the survey results more scientific, the cluster sampling method was used to randomly select two classes from each of the three grades for the questionnaire survey. After the questionnaire survey, the random sampling method was used to select two students and two English teachers from each of the three grades for semi-structured interviews.

Table 1. Basic Information of the Research Subjects.

Variable	Category	Number	Percentage
Grade	7	91	32.7%
	8	99	35.6%
	9	88	31.7%
Gender	Man	140	50.3%
	Woman	138	49.7%

4.3. Data Collection

The study collected 303 questionnaires, among which 278 were valid, with a valid response rate of 91.7%. The specific research procedures are as follows: (1) Select 63 junior high school students for a pre-survey of the questionnaire. Analyze the questionnaire data using SPSS 29.0. It is found that the two dimensions of KMO are 0.826 and 0.820, respectively, both higher than 0.7, indicating good validity. In addition, the Cronbach's α of the questionnaire is 0.813, indicating good reliability, so it can be used for further investigation. (2) Distribute the questionnaires to 278 students, enter the collected data into the SPSS 29.0 software, and compare the differences in English academic burden among junior high school students of different grades and genders through descriptive statistical analysis, one - way ANOVA, and independent - samples t - test. (3) Based on the results of data analysis, design interview questions, and conduct semi-structured interviews with 6 randomly selected students and 6 English teachers.

In designing the questionnaire survey, based on the definition of schoolwork burden, the author combined the content related to academic burden in the "Framework of Comprehensive Evaluation Indicators for the Educational Quality of Primary and Secondary School Students (Trial)" issued by the Ministry of Education in 2013. Additionally, referring to the "Research on the Monitoring of Schoolwork Burden of Compulsory Education Students" compiled by Hu Huimin, Ke Zheng, and others, the questionnaire survey was divided into three dimensions (see Table 2) [8]. In designing the interview content, according to the results of the questionnaire survey, the author designed three interview questions for teachers and students, respectively (see Table 3).

Table 2. *Questionnaire Survey on English Schoolwork Burden.*

Dimension	Content	Question number
English learning content and time	English class time	1
	English homework time	2
	Types of English homework	3
	English exam frequency	4
	Sleep time	5
	English tutoring time	6
Feelings about the burden of English schoolwork	The difficulty of English courses	7
	The difficulty of English homework	8
	The difficulty of English exams	9
The emotions related to the English schoolwork burden	Happy	10, 15, 20
	Pride	11, 16, 21
	Anxiety	12, 17, 22
	Anger	13, 18, 23
	Shame	14, 19, 24

Table 3. *Interview Content on English Schoolwork Burden*

Interviewee	Interview questions
Students	Q1: Do you think there are too many English classes every week? Why? Q2: Do you like the English teacher's teaching method? Why? Q3: Do you participate in off-campus English tutoring? Why?
Teachers	Q1: What types of homework do you usually assign? Q2: Do you think the existing class hours are enough to complete the teaching tasks? If not, how will you handle it? Q3: Do you think the English homework burden on students is heavy? If so, what measures have you taken to reduce the English homework burden on students?

4.4. Data Analysis

In this study, the data analysis mainly uses SPSS 29.0 as the main tool. Combining one-way analysis of variance and independent samples t-test, it explores the differences in English schoolwork burden among junior high school students of different grades and genders. The data analysis is divided into three main parts: the first is the analysis of students' English learning content and time; the second is the analysis of students' perception of English schoolwork burden; the third is the analysis of students' emotions towards English schoolwork burden.

5. Research Results

5.1. English Learning Content and Time

5.1.1. The Situation of the Actual Number of English Class Hours Per Week

The "Compulsory Education Curriculum Scheme" clearly stipulates that the number of English class hours for junior high school students is 4 classes per week [9]. However, the survey found (see Table 4) that the actual number of English class hours per week in School L seriously exceeded the stipulated number. In Grades 7 and 8, there are 6 English classes per week, exceeding the regulation by 50%. In Grade 9, there are 5 English classes per week, exceeding the regulation by 25%. Generally speaking, in terms of the number of English class hours, junior high school students have a relatively heavy English academic burden.

Table 4. Comparison between the Stipulated and Actual Weekly English Class Hours for Junior High School Students.

Grade		Number of class hours
7	Regulation	4
	Actual	6
	Exceed the specified %	50%
8	Regulation	4
	Actual	6
	Exceed the specified %	50%
9	Regulation	4
	Actual	5
	Exceed the specified %	25%

5.1.2. English Extracurricular Homework Time

In 2008, the Notice of the Ministry of Education on the “Work Plan for the Prevention and Control of Myopia among Primary and Secondary School Students” stipulated that schools should coordinate students’ homework time at home. The homework time for junior high school students in each grade should not exceed 90 minutes [10]. Through a questionnaire survey (see Table 5), it was found that 96.7% of the students in L Junior High School could finish their homework within 90 minutes. Generally speaking, most students in L Junior High School have no problem with English homework.

Table 5. General Situation of English Extracurricular Homework Time.

English homework time	Frequency	Percentage
≤30 minutes	136	48.9%
31-60 minutes	123	44.2%
61-90 minutes	10	3.6%
>90 minutes	9	3.3%

Further analysis of the time spent by junior high school students of different grades and genders on completing English homework shows that: The average daily time spent on English homework by both seventh-grade and eighth-grade students is 49.1 minutes, and that of ninth-grade students is 48.8 minutes. There is not much difference among the different grades. The average daily time spent on English homework by boys is 50.1 minutes, and that of girls is 47.8 minutes. There is also not much difference in the time spent on English homework between boys and girls.

5.1.3. Types of English Homework

To further explore the reasons for the time students spend on English homework and whether teachers have a thorough understanding of the concepts related to homework in the “Double Reduction” policy, this question is specifically designed. As shown in Table 6, it can be found that the vast majority of English homework assigned by teachers consists of mechanical and repetitive tasks and textbook exercises, and very little interesting and tiered English homework is assigned.

Table 6. Types of English Homework Assigned by Teachers (Multiple Choice Allowed).

	Copy or recite English words and texts.	Exercises in textbooks or workbooks	Read English books or newspapers other than textbooks.	Watch or listen to English programs.	Perform an English show or presentation.
Percentage	100%	100%	6.1%	2.5%	2.8%

5.1.4. English Exam Frequency

In 2021, the General Office of the Ministry of Education issued the “Notice on Strengthening the Examination Management of Compulsory Education Schools”, which stated that schools should organize one final exam per semester for other grades in compulsory education. For junior high school grades, considering the actual situation of different subjects, one midterm exam can be appropriately arranged [11]. As can be seen from Table 7, the frequency of English exams in School L is too high, seriously exceeding the specified number.

Table 7. Overview of the Frequency of English Exams.

Examination frequency	Frequency	Percentage
1-2 times a week	102	36.7%
1 - 2 times a month	131	47.1%
1 - 2 times per semester	45	16.2%

Further analyze the frequency of English exams for different grades. The frequency of English exams for Grade 7 and Grade 9 is mainly 1 - 2 times a month, while the exam frequency for Grade 8 is higher than that of the other two grades, being 1 - 2 times a week.

5.1.5. Sleep Time

On March 30, 2021, the General Office of the Ministry of Education issued the “Notice on Further Strengthening the Sleep Management of Primary and Secondary School Students”, which clearly stated that junior high school students should sleep 9 hours a day. However, through the survey (see Table 8), it was found that only 8.3% of the students in L Junior High School could guarantee 9 hours or more of sleep time. The students with a sleep time of 8 - 9 hours accounted for 34.9%, those with 7 - 8 hours accounted for 46.8%, and 10.1% of the students slept less than 7 hours. Generally speaking, most students in L Junior High School have insufficient sleep.

Table 8. General Situation of Sleep Time.

Sleep time	Frequency	Percentage
<7 hours	28	10.1%
7 - 8 hours (including 7 hours)	130	46.8%
8 - 9 hours (including 8 hours)	97	34.9%
≥ 9 hours	23	8.3%

The sleep time of junior high school students in different grades and genders is further analyzed. The results show that the average sleep time of students in grades seven, eight, and nine is 8.6 hours, 8.4 hours, and 8.3 hours, respectively. It can be seen that as the grade increases, the sleep time of junior high school students decreases day by day. The average daily sleep time of boys is 8.5 hours, and that of girls is 8.3 hours. Moreover, the daily sleep time of both boys and girls is concentrated between 7 and 8 hours.

5.1.6. English Tutoring Time Outside School

“The Interim Measures for Administrative Penalties for Off-campus Training” stipulate that any form of off-campus subject training is an illegal act. Through investigation, it is found that 92.1% of the students in School L did not participate in off-campus tutoring classes. Only 19 students, accounting for 6.8% of the total number, had tutoring time between 0.1 - 2 hours, and only 3 students, accounting for

1.1% of the total number, had tutoring time over 4 hours (see Table 9). Generally speaking, the students in Junior High School L hardly have any burden in off-campus English tutoring.

Table 9. *General Situation of off-campus English Tutoring Time.*

Make-up class time	Frequency	Percentage
Not participate	256	92.1%
0.1-2 hours	19	6.8%
2.1-4 hours	0	0%
>4 hours	3	1.1%

Further analyze the off-campus English tutoring time of junior high school students in different grades and genders. The results show that the average tutoring time for students in the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades is 0.2 hours, 0.2 hours, and 0.1 hours, respectively, which is within an acceptable range. The average off-campus English tutoring time for boys is 0.3 hours, while that for girls is even lower, at 0.1 hours.

5.2. Perception of the Difficulty Level of English Coursework

5.2.1. The Difficulty of English Courses

To understand the students' perception of the difficulty of English courses in L Junior High School, the Likert 5-point scoring method was adopted. Scores were assigned according to the perceived difficulty of English schoolwork represented by each item (from light to heavy). The higher the score, the higher the difficulty of English schoolwork. Additionally, Oxford (1990) proposed that when the average score is below 2.4, it is at a low level. When the average score is between 2.4 and 3.5, it is at a medium level. If the average score exceeds 3.5, it is at a high level.

Table 10. *Grade Differences in the Difficulty of English Courses.*

Grade	M	SD	F	P
7	3.57	1.002	.212	.809
8	3.65	.644		
9	3.64	.988		

As can be seen from Table 10, the average scores of the three grades are all above 3.5, indicating that students in all three grades of Junior High School L believe that the English course is highly difficult. Taking "English course difficulty" as the dependent variable and "grade" as the independent variable, a one-way ANOVA was conducted. The results show that $P = 0.809 > 0.05$, indicating that there is no significant difference among the three grades.

Table 11. *Gender Differences in the Difficulty of English Courses.*

Gender	M	SD	t	P
Man	3.78	.093	.916	.003
Women	3.46	.805		

In addition, as can be seen from Table 11, the average scores of male and female students are 3.78 and 3.46, respectively, indicating that male students in School L consider the English course to be highly difficult, while female students consider it to be of medium difficulty. Taking "English course difficulty" as the dependent variable and "gender" as the independent variable, an independent samples t-test was conducted. The results showed that $p = 0.003 < 0.05$, indicating that there is a significant difference between males and females in their perception of English course

difficulty. Since the mean score of male students is higher than that of female students, male students perceive the English course to be more difficult than female students.

5.2.2. Difficulty of English Homework

As can be seen from Table 12, students in Grade 7 and Grade 8 think that the difficulty of English homework is at a medium level, while students in Grade 9 think that the English homework is difficult. Taking “English course difficulty” as the dependent variable and “grade” as the independent variable, a one-way ANOVA was conducted. The results showed that $P = 0.000 < 0.05$, indicating that there were significant differences among different grades. Through the LSD post hoc comparison (see Table 13), it was found that when comparing Grade 9 with Grade 7, $P = 0.000 < 0.05$, and when comparing Grade 9 with Grade 8, $P = 0.005 < 0.05$. Since the mean value of Grade 9 is higher than those of Grade 7 and Grade 8, it shows that the perception of homework difficulty of students in Grade 9 is higher than that of students in Grade 7 and Grade 8.

Table 12. Grade Differences in the Difficulty of English Homework.

Grade	M	SD	F	P
7	3.14	1.028	9.177	.000
8	3.33	.795		
9	3.71	.875		

Table 13. Analysis of Variance for the Difficulty of English Assignments.

Multiple comparisons							
Dependent variable: Task difficulty							
	(I)grade	(J)grade	Average difference value (I-J)	Standard error	Significance	95% confidence interval	
						lower limit	upper limit
LSD	1	2	-.190	.131	.147	-.45	.07
		3	-.570	.135	.000	-.84	-.30
	2	1	.190	.131	.147	-.07	.45
		3	-.379	.133	.005	-.64	-.12
	3	1	.570	.135	.000	.30	.84
		2	.379	.133	.005	.12	.64

In addition, as can be seen from Table 14, the average scores of male and female students are 3.46 and 3.41, respectively, indicating that they both consider the difficulty of English homework to be at a medium level. Taking “English homework difficulty” as the dependent variable and “gender” as the independent variable, an independent samples t-test was conducted (see Table 14). The results show that $p = 0.178 > 0.05$, indicating that there is no significant difference in the perception of English homework difficulty between male and female students.

Table 14. Gender Differences in the Difficulty of English Homework.

Gender	M	SD	t	P
Man	3.46	1.042	12.922	.178
Women	3.31	.793		

5.2.3. Difficulty of the English Exam

As can be seen from Table 15, the average values of the three grades are all above 3.5, indicating that students in all three grades consider the English exam to be of high difficulty. Taking “English exam difficulty” as the dependent variable and “grade” as

the independent variable, a one-way ANOVA was conducted (see Table 15). The results show that $P = 0.153 > 0.05$, indicating that there is no significant difference among the three grades in their perception of the English exam difficulty.

Table 15. *Grade Differences in the Difficulty of English Exams.*

Grade	M	SD	F	P
7	3.68	.828	1.899	.153
8	3.66	.609		
9	3.86	.777		

In addition, the average values of the perceived difficulty of the English exam for both males and females are above 3.5, indicating that both boys and girls consider the English exam to be highly difficult. Taking “the perceived difficulty of the English exam by candidates” as the dependent variable and “gender” as the independent variable, an independent - samples t - test was conducted (see Table 16). The results show that $p = 0.005 < 0.05$, indicating that there is a significant difference between males and females in their perception of the English exam difficulty. Since the average value of males is higher than that of females, it means that males perceive the English exam to be more difficult than females.

Table 16. *Gender Differences in the Difficulty of English Exams.*

Gender	M	SD	t	P
Man	3.86	.836	.106	.005
Women	3.73	.691		

5.3. Emotional Experiences of the English Schoolwork Burden

As shown in Table 17, the five types of English academic emotions of junior high school students are all at a medium level. Eighth-grade students have the highest scores in the two positive English academic emotions of happiness and pride, while ninth-grade students have the lowest scores. In the three negative English academic emotions of anxiety, anger, and shame, ninth-grade students have the highest scores, while seventh-grade students have the lowest scores. A one-way analysis of variance was conducted with the English academic emotions of “happiness, pride, anxiety, anger, and shame” as the dependent variables and “grade” as the independent variable. The results show that only the two emotions of “happiness” and “anger” have significant differences among different grades.

Table 17. *Grade Differences in English Academic Emotions.*

English academic emotions	Grade	N	M	SD	F	P
Happy	7	91	3.10	.838	3.232	.041
	8	99	2.95	.790		
	9	88	2.79	.812		
Pride	7	91	3.12	.740	2.275	.067
	8	99	3.26	.700		
	9	88	3.00	.807		
Anxiety	7	91	2.89	.644	2.855	.059
	8	99	2.89	.669		
	9	88	3.10	.722		
Anger	7	91	1.97	.077	4.724	.010
	8	99	2.18	.073		
	9	88	2.31	.083		
Shame	7	91	2.79	.811	1.082	.340
	8	99	2.88	.804		
	9	88	2.98	.913		

After the LSD post-hoc test (see Table 18), for the academic emotion of “happiness”, only between Grade 7 and Grade 9, $P = 0.012 < 0.05$. For the pairwise comparisons of the remaining grades, the P-values are all greater than 0.05, indicating that there is a significant difference only between Grade 7 and Grade 9. Since the mean value of Grade 7 is higher than that of Grade 9, the number of students with the English academic emotion of “happiness” in Grade 7 is higher than that in Grade 9.

Similarly, after the LSD post-hoc test (see Table 19), for the negative academic emotion of “anger”, only between Grade 7 and Grade 9, $P = 0.03 < 0.05$. For the rest of the pairwise comparisons between grades, the P-values are all greater than 0.05, indicating that there is a significant difference only between Grade 7 and Grade 9. Since the mean value of Grade 7 is less than that of Grade 9, the number of students in Grade 9 with the English academic emotion of “anger” is higher than that in Grade 7.

Table 18. Comparison of Grade Differences in “Happiness”.

Multiple comparisons							
LSD							
Dependent variable	(I)grade	(J)grade	Average difference value (I-J)	Standard error	significance	95% confidence interval	
						lower limit	upper limit
Happiness	1	2	.14574	.11804	.218	-.0866	.3781
		3	.30980	.12188	.012	.0699	.5497
	2	1	-.14574	.11804	.218	-.3781	.0866
		3	.16405	.11945	.171	-.0711	.3992
	3	1	-.30980	.12188	.012	-.5497	-.0699
		2	-.16405	.11945	.171	-.3992	.0711

Table 19. Comparison of Grade Differences in “Anger”.

Dependent variable	(I)grade	(J)grade	Average difference value (I-J)	Standard error	significance	95% confidence interval	
						lower limit	upper limit
Anger	1	2	-.20805	.10813	.055	-.4209	.0048
		3	-.33948	.11165	.003	-.5593	-.1197
	2	1	.20805	.10813	.055	-.0048	.4209
		3	-.13143	.10942	.231	-.3468	.0840
	3	1	.33948	.11165	.003	.1197	.5593
		2	.13143	.10942	.231	-.0840	.3468

A further analysis of the English academic emotions of junior high school students of different genders is as follows. As shown in Table 4 - 20, girls scored higher than boys in five English academic emotions: happiness, pride, anger, anxiety, and shame. Taking “happiness, pride, anxiety, anger, and shame” in English academic emotions as dependent variables and “gender” as the independent variable, an independent - samples t - test was conducted (see Table 20). The results showed that in the academic emotion of “shame”, $P = 0.011 < 0.05$. Since the mean value of boys was less than that of girls, boys had lower levels of the negative academic emotion of “shame” than girls. There were no significant differences in the other four emotions between genders.

Table 20. *Gender Differences in English Academic Emotions.*

English academic emotions	Gender	N	M	SD	t	P
Happy	Man	140	2.88	.903	-1.433	.153
	Women	138	3.02	.720		
Pride	Man	140	3.08	.822	-1.231	.220
	Women	138	3.19	.673		
Anxiety	Man	140	2.89	.670	-1.516	.131
	Women	138	3.01	.693		
Anger	Man	140	2.16	.746	.203	.839
	Women	138	2.14	.766		
Shame	Man	140	2.75	.861	-2.555	.011
	Women	138	3.01	.806		

6. Conclusions

Through empirical analysis, this study reveals the differences in English schoolwork burden among rural junior high school students of different grades and genders. First, through one-way analysis of variance and LSD post hoc comparison, it was found that there were grade differences in the English homework burden of junior high school students in School L. Specifically, the English homework burden of ninth-grade students was higher than that of seventh-grade students. On the one hand, ninth-grade students felt that the difficulty of English homework was higher than that of seventh-grade students. On the other hand, ninth-grade students had lower levels of the positive English academic emotion of “happiness” than seventh-grade students, and higher levels of the negative English emotional experience of “anger”.

Through an independent samples t-test, it was found that there were significant differences in English academic burden between male and female students at School L. Male students’ perceptions of the difficulty of English courses and English exams were both higher than those of female students; however, male students scored lower than female students in the negative English academic emotion of “shame”.

Limited by the sample size, the conclusions drawn in this study are inevitably incomplete. It is expected that future studies can expand the sample size to present more comprehensive research results.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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