

CONSTRUCTION OF ASSESSING INDICATORS OF EVALUATION BENEFITS FOR VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOLS

Tsai-Feng Cheng¹, Shu-Fen Tseng¹, Shi-Jer Lou, *Ru-Chu Shih,

¹ National Kaohsiung Normal University, Taiwan

²National Pingtung University of Science and Technology, Taiwan

*vincent@npust.edu.tw

Abstract—It has been 10 years since the Ministry of Education (MOE) in Taiwan initiated the vocational school accreditation in 2004. The MOE, evaluation units, and evaluated units have invested in a large amount of resources and manpower but after evaluation have the schools really changed? And what benefits the schools have obtained from the evaluation? This is a question which touches both education policies and administrative issues, and it is worth exploring. The purpose of this study aimed to analyze and explore the theoretical basis and related research in vocational school evaluation in order to construct the evaluation benefit assessing indicators for future vocational high school evaluation. To achieve this goal, document analysis and focus group interviews are conducted to analyze relevant evaluation data of vocational schools in the past 10 years for compiling “The Draft of Evaluation Benefit Assessing Indicators for Vocational Schools.” Afterwards, experts and scholars who participated in the school evaluation in the past and administrators who involved in the evaluations are invited to take part in the focus group interviews to form the indicators. The focus group interviews were conducted twice with 10 experts each time. The results of this study can provide assessing indicators of evaluation to education authorities and school administrative units as references.

Index Terms—assessing indicators, evaluation benefit, vocational high school, school evaluation,

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, many well-developed countries have put forward all kinds of educational reform programs to review the current status of education. Faubert pointed out that the majority of OECD countries place importance on accountability and improvement of education [4]. Stukalina mentioned that the educational environment and quality can be monitored at any time through the evaluation mechanism, and further to inspire students to achieve better academic performance [10]. Muraski brought up three keys for the evaluation, including process, outcomes, and impact [6]. Impact is done for assessing the benefits of after-evaluation. Meta-evaluation is the most conducted approach by many academic researchers. Whether the evaluated school can produce sustained growth, professional diligence, or other benefits after evaluation is the greatest concern and value of school evaluation. However, current educational evaluation in Taiwan is mostly concerned about the evaluation process, ignoring tracking on the results of evaluation. Therefore, it is important to establish the benefit indicators of valuation for high schools to follow and to establish their own self-check plan and implement it effectively. Thus, this study aimed to explore the theoretical foundation of school evaluation and benefits of evaluation as well as its related studies; to analyze the current domestic and international evaluation of vocational schools; and to construct school evaluation indicators for vocational schools through focus group approach.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Reeve and Peerbhoy employed evaluation to promote organizational development and transformation, which is well-developed in the United States and has established several models that criticize the traditional participatory and empowerment evaluation [9]. These evaluations emphasize on learning and development process between the interested parties, citing Kolb's learning loop concept to bring benefits in evaluation by the assessed participants. Evaluation enables participants (interested parties) to gain what they need from each other as well as to support each other in this process. A fine evaluation benefit allows interested parties to hear each other's voices. Reeve and Peerbhoy also suggest that the evaluation participant's anxiety and depression occurred in the beginning of evaluation should be gradually eliminated after the evaluation [9]. Instead, evaluation participants may have established their own learning pattern, for example, the evaluation participants may generate different thinking while completing the evaluation questionnaire and continue to examine ourselves during the evaluation process.

Scholars such as Patton [8], Johnson [5], Torres, and Preskill [11] and Owen [7] pointed out the meaning of educational evaluation be can be defined as the results and the process of educational evaluation can be beneficial for the assessed participants and its organization. Estyn stated that the benefits of evaluation occurred after ongoing tracking of evaluation [3]. Evaluation should not be regarded as a one-time event. Otherwise, evaluation will lose its effect.

The implementation process of evaluation can promote dialogue among members of the organization and to proceed deep reflect and thinking. Values, believes, assumptions, and knowledge of personal and organization can be clarified and confirmed through the process. Also, through the interaction, organizational structure and system, culture, and the growth and professional development of members are generated. Figure 1 shows that the possible benefits of school evaluation.

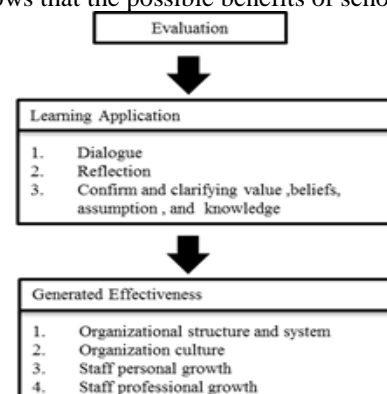


Figure 1. The relationship between school evaluation and evaluation benefit

After reviewing relevant documents in relation to evaluation indicators of high school and vocational high schools and relevant literature [1] [2] [7] [9] [12], we classify vocational school evaluation benefit into two categories, school administration and professional development, and eight domains. Table 1 shows the assessing indicators of vocational school evaluation benefit.

TABLE I. THE ASSESSING INDICATORS OF VOCATIONAL SCHOOL EVALUATION BENEFIT (DRAFT)

Category	Domain
School Administration	1. administration effectiveness
	2. resource integration,
	3. organizational interaction
	4. environmental improvement
Professional development	1. course planning
	2. teacher profession
	3. students' achievements
	4. helping both low and high achieving students to grow and succeed

III. RESEARCH METHOD

In order to construct the assessing indicator system of evaluation benefit for vocational high schools, this study employed document analysis based on the assessing indicators of evaluation benefit for high schools in Taiwan, annual evaluation reports, and literature review to form its preliminary assessing indicators of evaluation benefit. Later, a total of 20 scholars and experts in the fields of educational evaluation, educational administration, vocational education, educational administrative staffs, and principals and directors of vocational high schools were invited to participate in two times of focus group interviews.

The discussion topics of the focus groups are as follows:

1. "School administration" and "Professional development" are the two tentative major categories of evaluation benefit for vocational schools. Are there any other categories ought to be added or removed?

2. School Administration category consists of four domains, including administration effectiveness, resource integration, organizational interaction, environmental improvement. Are there any other domains ought to be added or removed?

3. Professional development category consists of four domains, including course planning, teacher profession, students' achievements, and helping both low and high achieving students to grow and succeed. Are there any other domains ought to be added or removed?

4. Descriptions of questions in the evaluation questionnaire.

5. Overall comments and suggestions.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results of the two focus group interviews are summarized as follows:

1. School administration and academic development are the assessment categories for vocational schools;

2. School administration consists of the four domains, including administrative effectiveness, resource integration, environment improvement, and organizational interaction;

3. Academic development consists of course planning, teaching profession, student's achievements, and helping both low and high achieving students to grow and succeed;

4. The assessing indicators of evaluation benefits for vocational schools.

TABLE II. THE ASSESSING INDICATORS OF EVALUATION BENEFIT FOR VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS (SAMPLE)

Evaluation benefits for Vocational High Schools			
Category	domain	No.	Assessing indicator
School Administration	Admin. effectiveness	1	Can understand current situations and issues of school after evaluation.
		2	Can guide school decision making and development direction after evaluation.
		3	Can promote effectiveness of school admin. After evaluation.
Evaluation benefits for Vocational High Schools			
Category	domain	No.	Assessing indicator
School Administration	Resource integration	1	Can tightly integrate resources of different departments within school after evaluation.
		2	Can tightly integrate resources of different subjects after evaluation.
		3	Can strengthen resource management and integration after evaluation.
	Organizational interaction	1	Can increase interaction among administrative departments after evaluation.
		2	Can enhance teacher interactions after evaluation.
		3	Can enhance interactions between teachers and administrators.
	Environment improvement	1	Can beautify campus and make campus greener after evaluation.
		2	Can enrich school experiment (practice) sites after evaluation.
		3	Can reinforce management and security of school experiment (practice) sites after evaluation.
Academic Development	Course panning	1	Can strengthen the function and running of course development commission after evaluation.
		2	Can respond to course structure of educational policies and social development after evaluation.
		3	Can offer more featured school-based curriculum after evaluation.
Evaluation benefits for Vocational High Schools			
Category	domain	No.	Assessing indicator
Academic Development	Teaching profession	1	Can provide more innovative professional teaching materials after evaluation.
		2	Can utilize multiple teaching methods after evaluation.

		3	Can use multiple evaluation methods based on subjects after evaluation.
	Students achievements	1	Can enhance student's behavior and achievement after evaluation.
		2	Can improve student's learning culture after evaluation.
		3	Can encourage students to form student government to participate in more public affairs after evaluation.
	Helping both low and high achieving students to grow and succeed	1	Can actively promote remedial teaching after evaluation.
		2	Can intensify special education and differentiated teaching after evaluation.
		3	Can offer effective assistance and caring mechanism to disadvantaged minority after evaluation.

V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This study aimed to establish assessing indicators of evaluation benefit for vocational schools through document analysis, literature, and focus group interview. The results of the study suggest that assessing indicators can be classified into three levels, category (school administration and academic development), domain (administrative effectiveness, environment improvement, resource integration, organizational interaction, course planning, teaching profession, students achievements, and helping both low and high achieving students to grow and succeed, and 24 important sub-indicators. These indicators can be used to examine the evaluation benefits for vocational schools after evaluation. In this study, we conducted document analysis and focus group interviews to construct evaluation indicators. Although those indicators have reached a good level of construct validity and effects, we will employ Fuzzy Delphi technique and a large scale questionnaire survey to verify and implement these indicators to obtain actual effectiveness of evaluation benefit for vocational schools.

REFERENCES

- [1] C. J. Amo, and J. B. Cousins. Going through the process: An examination of the operationalization of process use in empirical research on evaluation. *New Directions for Evaluation*, 2007, 116, pp. 5-26.
- [2] J. B. Cousins, S. C. Goh, S. Clark, and L. E. Lee. Integrating evaluative inquiry into the organizational culture: A review and synthesis of the knowledge base. *The Canadian Journal of Program Evaluation*, 2004, 19 (2), pp. 99-141.
- [3] Estyn A self-evaluation manual of schools. 2010. Retrieved Dec 6, 2013 from <http://www.estyn.gov.uk/download/publications/7780.5/a-self-evaluation-manual-for-primary-schools-2010/>.
- [4] V. Faubert. School evaluation: Current practices in OECD countries and a literature review. *OECD Education Working Papers*, 2009, 42, OECD Publishing.
- [5] R. B. Johnson. Toward a theoretical model of evaluation utilization. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, 1998, 21, pp. 93-110.
- [6] L. D. Muraski. Understanding evaluation: The way to better prevention programs. 1993. U.S. Dept. of Education.
- [7] J. M. Owen. Program evaluation: Forms and approaches (3rd ed.). 2007. New York: Guilford.

- [8] M. Q. Patton. Utilization-focused evaluation: The new century text (3rd ed.). 1997. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- [9] J. Reeve, and D. Peerbhoy. Evaluating the evaluation: Understanding the utility and limitations of evaluation as a tool for organizational learning. *Health Education Journal*, 2007, 66(2), pp. 120-131.
- [10] Y. Stukalina. Using quality management procedures in education: Managing the learner- centred educational environment. *Technological and Economic Development of Economy*, 2010, 16(1), pp. 75-93.
- [11] R. T. Torres, and H. Preskill. Evaluation and organizational learning: Past, present, and future. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 2001, 22 (3), pp. 387-395.
- [12] J. Vanhoof, P. and Petegem. The process and results of school self-evaluation through the eyes of experts: A Delphi study. *International Studies in Educational Administration*, 2012, 40(1), pp. 47-61.