

1. Comprehensive Study on Evaluation in Educational and Research Organizations

Leader: Masaaki Hayo (Director of the Department for Education Policy and Evaluation Research)

(1) Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to explore ideal theories and systems of evaluation from the standpoint of ensuring the quality of public education. In particular, it is aimed at developing a system and method for school evaluation and related class evaluation on an experimental basis.

(2) Study period

FY2005-FY2009 (5 years)

(3) Study organization

- Leaders

FY2005-FY2007: Ikuo Komatsu (Former director of the Department for Education Policy and Evaluation Research)

FY2008-FY2009: Masaaki Hayo (Director of the Department for Education Policy and Evaluation Research)

- NIER members

FY2005-FY2007: 6 persons

FY2008-FY2009: 8 persons

- Non-NIER members

FY2005-FY2007: 42 persons

FY2008-FY2009: 21 persons (2 observers)

(4) Developments

The five-year project was divided into an initial period of three years and a subsequent period of two years.

The first three years involved (i) research addressing the question of how to construct an overall system for school evaluation, (ii) development and trial operation of a system for “proactive third-party evaluation by research institutes, etc.” at the request of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), and (iii) fundamental empirical research concerning curriculum evaluation. The results of the research project were published in “Comprehensive Study on Evaluation in Educational and Research Organizations (interim report)” (March 2008).

The latter two years of research focused on school evaluation by associated parties, an issue

that all schools must endeavor to pursue following an amendment of the Ordinance for Enforcement of the School Education Act. The research involved (i) development and trial operation of a “diagnostic school evaluation system,” (ii) a survey of the websites of prefectural boards of education, and (iii) a survey on the status of activities by municipal boards of education across Japan and a review of possible approaches to be taken if the system of school evaluation by associated parties is developed. The results of the research project were published in “Comprehensive Study on Evaluation in Educational and Research Organizations (final report)” and “Comprehensive Study on Evaluation in Educational and Research Organizations – Questionnaire on the Implementation of School Evaluation by Associated Parties (final report/annex).”

(5) Outline of the study

In the first three years, we conducted investigative research in the three areas of (i) evaluation theory, (ii) class evaluation, and (iii) school evaluation in order to find a system to ensure education quality connecting education policy evaluation, school evaluation, and class evaluation. First of all, in the area of evaluation theory, we summarized policy trends in introducing a school evaluation system and conducted studies on school evaluation systems, school data analysis methods, and the history of school evaluation in Britain. Next, in the area of class evaluation, we conducted research on the connection between school evaluation and class improvement, on the improvement of guidance by utilizing data of academic achievement tests, and on curriculum evaluation. Lastly, in the area of school evaluation, with the aim of developing school evaluation systems (self-evaluation by schools, evaluation by associated parties, and third-party evaluation), we conducted case studies focused on the development of a self-evaluation system for schools ahead of the introduction of a third-party evaluation system. We studied school evaluation trends and evaluation methods in Britain and other countries and, based on the knowledge obtained from the studies, developed school evaluation systems, including formats and methods for school self-evaluation and third-party evaluation. We then conducted empirical studies of the school evaluation systems in the trial operation of third-party evaluation held by municipal governments in Tokyo and by MEXT.

In the latter two years, we focused on evaluation by school-associated parties, which is now being undertaken with some difficulty in response to the amendment in 2007 of the School Education Act that mandated self-evaluation, and the amendment of the Ordinance for Enforcement of the School Education Act that requires all schools to endeavor to conduct school evaluation by associated parties. We conducted practical research and a nationwide survey to promote developmental research based on actual conditions of each school. First, we developed a format, items, and method for school evaluation by associated parties, ways to

summarize evaluation reports and deliver feedback on evaluation results to schools, and then we operated them on a trial basis. We developed a one-day “diagnostic school evaluation system” from the perspectives that evaluation must be useful for school improvement, should not impose an excessive burden, and must be easy for parents and local residents to take part in. Second, we conducted two surveys to find out nationwide trends in school evaluation by associated parties. One of them was an online survey. We summarized how the organizations study, implement, and promote evaluation, practical research and case examples, and the training content posted on the websites of prefectural boards of education. The other was a survey by questionnaire of municipal boards of education nationwide, regarding the status of school evaluation by associated parties and the problems involved therein. The questionnaire was mailed to 1,795 municipal governments across the country (response rate was 55%).

(6) Results of the study

The achievements of the first three-years of research include (i) the establishment of items for class evaluation, exploration of ways to connect class evaluation and school evaluation, and exploration of the relationship between curriculum evaluation and teacher evaluation by using an exploratory statistical method; (ii) the development and trial operation of evaluation items and formats for self-evaluation, and third-party evaluation for school evaluation; and (iii) the utilization of study results in the trial operation of third-party evaluation by MEXT and prefectural governments, and in implementation of self-evaluation by schools.

In the latter two-years of research, (i) we were able to understand the outline of each prefectural government’s school evaluation system and the process of introducing a school evaluation system, and (ii) we were also able to understand, for the first time, the implementation status of evaluation across the country and analyze problems involved therein through the survey by questionnaire of municipal boards of education concerning associated parties’ school evaluation. School evaluation by associated parties is being conducted by 88.0% of municipalities (total of municipalities where all or part of the schools conducts evaluation). However, they have problems in their training and implementation systems. The survey revealed that 53.4% of the municipalities think that school evaluation “is effective to some extent but needs improvement in some areas.”

Many of the responding municipalities cited the need for teachers, parents, and local residents to improve their understanding and capacity of school evaluation. This has made clear the future direction for us to take in designing institutional arrangements for school evaluation and in spreading and improving school evaluation.

The third achievement of the research is that in the practical research, through the development and trial operation of formats, etc. for school evaluation by associated parties, we proposed a “diagnostic school evaluation system.” This system is convenient, being easy for parents and local residents to take part in and express their opinions. Some of them said that the system is useful for promoting communication between schools, communities, and parents, which indicates the significance of introducing the system.

(7) Reports on this study

- “*Comprehensive Study on Evaluation in Educational and Research Organizations (interim report)*,” (March 2008).

http://www.nier.go.jp/RSL_User_seika/RSL_OM_GetFile?LIT_CODE=SEIKADB1&LIT_NUM=431&TAG=TXT&BR=IE

- “*Comprehensive Study on Evaluation in Educational and Research Organizations (final report)*,” (March 2010)

http://www.nier.go.jp/04_kenkyu_annai/pdf/seisaku_15.pdf

- “*Comprehensive Study on Evaluation in Educational and Research Organizations – Questionnaire Survey on Implementation of School Evaluation by Associated Parties (final report / annex)*,” (March 2010)

http://www.nier.go.jp/04_kenkyu_annai/pdf/seisaku_18.pdf