

Report Overview for “Research on University Evaluation Indicators”

(The full text is available on the National Institute for Education Policy Research website
http://www.nier.go.jp/05_kenkyu_seika/seika_digest_h24.html)

1. Purpose and Overview of the Research

(1) Purpose of the Research

This study is intended to clarify evaluation indicators to enable evaluation based on functions required for national universities. More specifically, it is the aim of this study to explore a better evaluation system that responds to the several university functions by looking into domestic and overseas examples of university evaluations, while considering possible conditions in future, such as the rise of the university enrollment rate and advanced internationalization.

(2) Overview of the Research

A preliminary meeting was held in FY2011 to discuss the purposes and courses of the study. In FY2012, we had workshops to seek a new university evaluation method from a more objective perspective of the society outside universities as an alternative to the conventional evaluation system, which is based on the views of people on the university side. During the workshops, there were intensive discussions on the current situation of university evaluations and university evaluation indicators in and outside Japan, cases in other countries, basic research aiming at standardized methods to survey graduates, basic research for evaluation indicators setting, and other matters. [Study period: FY2012, Leader: TOKUNAGA Tamotsu (- July 2012: Director-General, National Institute for Educational Policy Research), TSUKAHARA Shuichi (August 2012 -: Director, Department for Higher Education Research)]

2. Report Summary

Chapter 1. Basic Idea of the Project

TOKUNAGA Tamotsu (National Institute for Educational Policy Research)

This chapter describes social circumstances where a better method to evaluate universities has been called for. The aspects for discussion are fourfold: (1) social effects of resource investment and the importance of efficiency, (2) the increase of cost for research and education, (3) prioritization of social utility when making decisions on additional resource investment, and (4) expectations for university evaluation. This chapter suggests the necessity of such university evaluation that can present the reflection of social utility and criteria to enable appropriate decision-making regarding resource investment.

Chapter 2. Plan and Process of the Project

KITAKAZE Koichi (National Institute for Educational Policy Research)

In this chapter, the process from the start of this study to the organization of research report is explained. Accumulation of related researches by university evaluation agencies is crucial in the field of the present study. To make the most of such accumulated researches, we set up a study team

consisting of four people from the National Institute for Educational Policy Research (NIER) and six people from outside NIER, including the National Institution for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation. The study was conducted in FY2012, during which six workshops were held.

Chapter 3. Current Situation and Issues of a University Evaluation

TOKUNAGA Tamotsu (National Institute for Educational Policy Research)

This chapter summarizes major university evaluation activities in and outside Japan. Evaluation activities were categorized referring to evaluations by business organizations. Additionally, this chapter illustrates the history of development of the university evaluation system in Japan, evaluation activities that do not use the term “evaluation,” and major evaluation activities in other countries, and presents some proposals for an improved evaluation system for universities in Japan.

Chapter 4. University Evaluation for an Applicant for Admission to a University

TSUKAHARA Shuichi (National Institute for Educational Policy Research)

The information provision for people going to universities is explained as the way information on university evaluation is utilized in Japanese society. Having investigated publications carrying guidance on university entrance examinations and university rankings, it was found that the amount of information on the quality of education students should receive is small and little information is provided on achievements in university education except employment success rate. For the reasons mentioned above, it is recommended to carry out a survey of graduates as a part of university evaluation and to provide information that allows easy comparison of several universities in this chapter.

Chapter 5. Disclosure of University Information in the UK

HAYASHI Takayuki (National Institution for Academic Degrees and University Evaluation)

In the UK, the role of the government changed from a purchaser of education to an information provider in the period between 1998 and 1999 when a university tuition fee for British nationals was introduced. Accordingly, the focus of university evaluation shifted to information provision, and 17 items in particular were announced to be key information, including results of surveys on students in the UK and career paths of graduates. Japanese universities are also obliged to disclose their information. Nevertheless, it is a characteristic of the UK that comparability is ensured through a standardized method of data collection.

Chapter 6. Information on University Evaluation for Industry Sector

TSUKAHARA Shuichi, KOMATSU Akiko (National Institute for Educational Policy Research)

In this chapter, ways to utilize information on university evaluation are examined from the information user’s point of view by considering employment as a case where information on university evaluation is utilized in Japanese society. Results of visit surveys on 23 companies mainly focusing on information processing are as follows:

- Businesses have limited interest in the current university evaluation project.

- During their selection processes of new recruitment, businesses hardly consider applicants' academic performances at university.
- While many companies do not consider what applicants majored in at university, some companies are giving preference to applicants whose detailed specializations at the laboratory level match duties at those companies.
- Many questions at job interviews were about applicants' achievements at university. In the case of students, however, questions about their achievements were mostly related to club activities or part-time jobs.

The above indicates that the current state of universities is not well known. The improvement of such a situation is thus necessary through public relations activities utilizing information on university evaluation. Further, it is desirable to let third-year or younger students have experience of achievements in learning.

Chapter 7. University Information Used for Selecting Universities: From a Survey on Graduates

SAWADA Yoshinari (Center for National University Finance and Management)

A survey was conducted targeting 100 university graduates (working adults). Questions asked in the survey include data they used when selecting universities and data they, as working adults, consider they should have used during university selection. Regarding data the graduates used, more academic performance and regional characteristics were referred to. On the other hand, many of the graduates consider they should have used data on content of education and economic merits. Judging from the changes in university selection trends of high school students and their parents/guardians per fiscal year shown in the preliminary survey, graduates and parents/guardians increasingly tend to choose national and public universities with more prioritization of safety and qualification. All these imply that items of more importance when selecting universities are changing, along with changes in the social environment, especially the economic situation. To deal with such changes, universities are expected to publish data more readily available for society.

Chapter 8. Public University Grant Reform in Tennessee, the US:

Introduction of Outcome Funding and Reform of Performance Funding

YOSHIDA Kana (Hiroshima University)

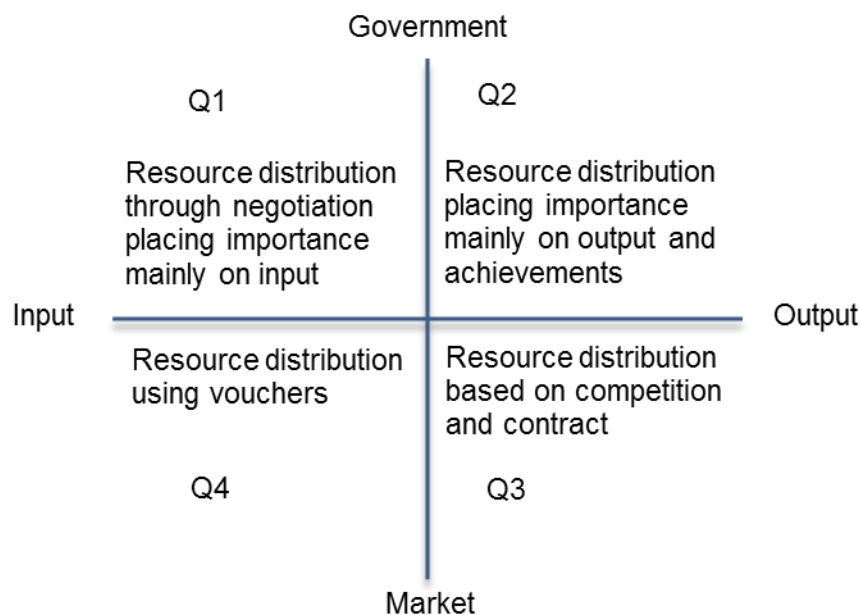
In Tennessee, up to 5.45% of state grants are additionally allocated to public universities depending on their performance. Evaluation items include the improvement of learning achievements of students, satisfaction level of students, continuation of learning, and realizing the state's basic plans. In 2010, the credit acquiring state of students and the graduation rate were newly incorporated into evaluation items. Due to this change, public universities in Tennessee were forced to switch their focus from increasing the number of enrollments to increasing the number of graduates.

Chapter 9. Quality Evaluation and Funding in European Higher Education:

Cases of Sweden, Denmark, and the Netherlands

KAWASHIMA Tatsuo (Institute for Promotion of Higher Education, Kobe University)

Methods of financial allocation in three countries are introduced in this chapter: resource distribution associated with quality of education (Sweden), the taximeter system (Denmark), and resource distribution associated with quality and differentiations (the Netherlands). The number of students receiving higher education is relatively small in these three countries, but all of them are taking measures to reflect achievements into financial allocation. The ways resources are allocated to higher education are divided into two categories (Figure 1) depending on: which of investments or achievements are to be prioritized, and which of the government and the market is to become the subject of resource distribution. A combination of investment and the government is employed in the resource distribution of national universities in Japan. This combination was also observed in all three target countries of this survey. The combination of investment and the market is a so-called voucher system, which is similar to the system currently adopted in the UK. The combination of achievements and the market is used in some countries, including Japan, when allocating research expenses. To introduce the combination of achievements and the government, evaluation of education quality is required. Since the rate of obtaining bachelor degrees is high with 90% in Japan, it is not practical to use this rate as a criterion to evaluate education quality. Instead, the improvement of education and the enhancement of exit management are essential, among other factors.



[Figure 1: Financial patterns for higher education]

Chapter 10. Competitive Funding and Evaluation for Universities in China

LIU Wenjun (Center for Research and Development of Higher Education, University of Tokyo)

Higher education in China has grown significantly since the end of the 1990s. Along with such growth, university functions were further specialized depending on research type, education type, and vocational education type. As for resource distribution, there was progress in terms of the obligation of the beneficiary, the introduction of competition and evaluation, and the diversification of sources of finance. Under such circumstances, the Chinese government took measures to invest resources in a

small number of key universities in an intensive manner. Consequently, quality assurance of higher education and accountability of the key universities came to draw a lot of attention, and systems to evaluate universities and disclose information were established with rapidity. As for the former, that is, university evaluation, the Ministry of Education of China set up two evaluation agencies in 2003 and 2004 to evaluate universities, built a university database, and announced university ranking. Concerning the latter, the Ministry of Education published "Information Disclosure Rules" in 2010, and asked higher education institutions to disclose information related to 12 items.