Analysis on the Construction of the Credibility of the Third Party Evaluation Agency of Higher Education in China

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Abstract. The necessity of introducing a third-party evaluation system in China's higher education is, from a macro perspective, the inherent requirement of the modernization of the national governance system and governance capacity. At the micro level, it is to improve the evaluation system of higher education and improve the quality of higher education evaluation needs. The advantages and credibility of the third-party evaluation agencies of higher education come from the evaluation of the basic characteristics of the subject's legitimacy, authority, independence and professionalism. The third-party evaluation organization of higher education in China currently has different degrees of problems in these five aspects. The credibility of the third-party evaluation organization of higher education in China should be started from four aspects: perfecting laws and regulations, establishing third-party evaluation organization legal status; introducing “The Evaluation System” establishes the authority of third-party evaluation agencies; transforms the role of government to ensure the independence of third-party evaluation institutions in higher education; establishes a vocational certification system for higher education evaluation, and guarantees the professionalism of third-party evaluation institutions in higher education.

Introduction

The third-party evaluation of higher education is to improve the evaluation system of higher education and improve the quality of higher education evaluation. Further, from the perspective of national reform, it is also the inherent requirement of the modernization of the national governance system and governance capacity. However, the credibility of current third-party assessment agencies has become an important bottleneck for the development of third-party assessments of higher education. To this end, it is necessary to conduct an in-depth analysis of the problems existing in the third-party evaluation institutions of higher education in China, and on this basis, put forward the countermeasures and suggestions for constructing the credibility of the third-party evaluation institutions of higher education in China.

The Necessity of Introducing Third-party Evaluation System in China's Higher Education

(1) Macro level: the inherent requirements of the national governance system and the modernization of governance capacity In the national modern governance system, the participants have shown diversified characteristics, including national government departments, non-governmental organizations, private departments, various social groups and national individuals, which can enhance the democratization of modern governance and promote self- The combination of top-down management and bottom-up management. In the new round of reform and policy innovation to promote the modernization of the national governance system and governance capacity, the third-party evaluation system will play an increasingly important role. The essence of third-party evaluation is to promote a good government through a more objective social supervision and governance.

(2) Micro level: It is to improve the evaluation system of higher education and improve the quality of higher education evaluation. The National Medium- and Long-Term Education and Development Plan (2010-2020) states: “Encourage specialized agencies and social intermediaries to
assess the level and quality of disciplines, majors, courses, etc.; establish a scientific and standardized evaluation system; International high-level educational evaluation agencies cooperate to form a school evaluation model with Chinese characteristics." In the top-level design of higher education evaluation in China, the government, society, universities and professional evaluation agencies and other multi-subjects participate in the evaluation of higher education quality. Social and professional assessment agencies are important participants in the implementation of assessment and supervision. The participation of multiple entities not only guarantees the fairness and democracy of the assessment, but also improves the quality of assessment. However, China's higher education evaluation has long been handled by government departments. The evaluation is initiated and organized by the government. The government determines the evaluation criteria and indicator system, and finally the government accepts it. The closedness of the whole evaluation process can easily lead to various internal operations in the evaluation process, which cannot reflect the actual school quality of the university in a true and objective way. In addition, the evaluation index system and observation standards cannot reflect the needs of the society, resulting in following the evaluation results. The colleges and universities are out of touch with the actual needs of the society in terms of personnel training, scientific research, and social services. The third-party evaluation agencies are independent of the government and universities, and the evaluation index system and observation standards are based on professional standards, which can objectively reflect the actual quality and problems of colleges and universities, which largely compensates for the neutrality of government evaluation. The disadvantages of missing.

The Source of the Credibility of Third-party Assessment Institutions in Higher Education

The third-party evaluation institution of higher education is an institution independent of the education administrative department and the university and has the qualification for education evaluation. The construction of its credibility is not only the basis for the development of third-party evaluation institutions of higher education, but also the ultimate goal of institutional development. The advantages and credibility of third-party evaluation come from the basic characteristics of the legality, authority, independence and professionalism of the evaluation subject. These aspects will be discussed separately below:

(1) Legality. The legalization of educational evaluation is the trend of development. Formulating and improving laws and regulations related to third-party assessments is an important condition for ensuring that third-party assessments are conducted normally. From the perspective of the development of third-party evaluation institutions in developed countries in Europe and America, perfect education legislation has become the foundation and basis for the existence of third-party education evaluation institutions. Most of them are based on a certain legal basis, and there are operational mechanisms for the institutions themselves and legal provisions.

(2) Authoritative. The establishment of the subject of the third-party educational evaluation agency is an important manifestation of professionalism and authority. The establishment of third-party educational evaluation agencies can be broadly divided into two categories: one is established by industry associations or unofficial organizations; the other is government-led or authorized, but independent of other education administrations. Despite the different main bodies, strict accreditation and access mechanisms have been established. The evaluation agencies are subject to strict government and social recognition to carry out assessment activities and enjoy full management and evaluation freedom.

(3) Independence. The independent status of third-party educational evaluation agencies is reflected in various aspects, such as independent rules and regulations, independent organizational evaluators, etc., but the most prominent manifestation is the independence of funding. The survival and development of third-party educational evaluation agencies is based on stable and reliable sources of funding and independent and independent use of funds. In the absence of independent funding, third-party assessment agencies must rely on the government or certain interest groups for survival and development. The impartiality, professionalism and authority of the assessment will be greatly reduced.
Professional. The professionalism of third-party evaluation agencies in higher education is mainly reflected in two aspects: on the one hand, it is a diversified and high-quality evaluation team. The composition and quality of the third-party assessment is an important factor affecting the quality of the assessment and ensuring the authority and professionalism of the assessment. On the other hand, higher education third-party assessment agencies have professional assessment capabilities, comprehensive and complete evaluation procedures, advanced scientific assessment techniques, professional research support, and in addition to ensuring the normal operation of third-party assessment agencies and the impartiality of assessment results, Openness and authority need to develop a more comprehensive supervision system, information disclosure system and social accountability system.

The Problems Faced by Third-party Assessment Organizations of Higher Education in China

1. The legal system is not perfect and the rights and obligations are difficult to guarantee. The lag and imperfection of the laws and regulations for the construction of China's higher education quality assurance system is a common problem faced by the entire domestic education third-party evaluation market. At present, China has not yet established clear legal provisions on education evaluation. At the same time, there are few formal laws and regulations on education evaluation matters, and most of them are policy guidance. This also shows that education evaluation work is in the legal provisions of our country. Still blank. Because of the lack of clear legal provisions, the rights and obligations of various educational third-party evaluation organizations cannot be guaranteed, and their legal status is unfounded. In addition, due to the lack of laws and regulations, some third-party evaluation organizations are also more casual. Lack of self-discipline, the accuracy of their own speech and results is not entirely responsible.

2. Lack of meta-evaluation, blank access mechanism, lack of authority. Whether the third-party assessment organization's evaluation plan is reasonable and whether the evaluation indicators are scientific or not, is required to have a special “re-evaluation” to control this; otherwise, if the market does not have a third-party assessment organization's entry threshold, Any group or organization can register and conduct educational evaluation services without a certain professional review, which will certainly disrupt the order and norms of the education evaluation industry. In addition, the lack of “meta-evaluation” makes the evaluation of education evaluation unsuccessful and restrictive. It is difficult to ensure that all aspects of the evaluation process are accurate and illegal. If the subsequent monitoring and follow-up assessment cannot be implemented, then it is impossible to improve higher education. Quality level. Therefore, the absence of “meta-evaluation” is a reason why the third-party evaluation organization of domestic education is limited in authority and normative.

3. Insufficient independence and excessive dependence. It can be said that the problem of insufficient independence is the biggest obstacle to the transformation of third-party assessment organizations of higher education in China to completely third parties. Although the third-party evaluation organizations of higher education in China all have independent legal person status, it is undeniable that they are still the result of the top-down promotion of the government departments. Therefore, the level of autonomy of the evaluation organization is low, then the government has to carry out too much. Administrative intervention to compensate for the lack of autonomy. The lack of self-sufficiency in financial resources is also a manifestation of insufficient independence. Many semi-official assessment organizations, whether directly affiliated to the education sector or affiliated institutions, have almost all of their founding funds from government support, including daily expenses and organization. In addition, in the appointment of third-party evaluation organizations, the organization itself often only has the right to make recommendations without the right to decide, and the third-party evaluation organization eventually becomes a subsidiary of the government.

4. Evaluation of scientific needs to be improved and lack of professionalism. The existing education evaluation institutions in China generally lack professional evaluation talents, and the composition of the assessment personnel is also very confusing. Some “assessment experts” do not
have professional evaluation qualifications and experience, and they are mostly part-time, many of whom are retirees of educational administration units. Full-time positions, lack of business people or professional evaluators with extensive assessment experience, do not reach the level of professionalism that provides advice and advice to each other. In addition, there are still some gaps in the evaluation methods, concepts and levels of third-party assessment institutions in higher education in China. The assessment of data sources and the normativeness of the assessment process are also urgently needed to be improved. Moreover, due to the interests driven, the difference in the concept of beneficiaries, the existing evaluation criteria used by third-party evaluation agencies, and the content of evaluations, etc., which also led the public to question the results of the assessment, such as the ranking of various university rankings. With a certain geographical color, its ranking is difficult to gain the trust of the whole society.

The Countermeasures and Suggestions for Constructing the Third Party Evaluation Organization of China's Higher Education

(1) Improve laws and regulations and establish third-party assessment of the legal status of the organization. At present, the government is in an absolute leadership position in the Interim Provisions, and universities and third-party evaluation organizations are in a leading position. Their role is more in line with government assessments, which seriously restricts the development of third-party assessments in higher education. Therefore, it is necessary to clarify the equal status of the government, universities and higher education third-party assessment organizations in order to establish good cooperation and efficient communication. Since it is in an equal position with universities and governments, third-party evaluation agencies of higher education can sign agreements. Effective cooperation, including project evaluation commissions, joint commitment project evaluation, etc., each play its strengths and avoid its shortcomings. In addition to the equal status and corresponding rights and obligations of each evaluation subject, the special laws for higher education evaluation should also refine their legal responsibilities and clearly stipulate the punishment measures for violations of laws and regulations.

(2) Introducing the “meta-evaluation” system and establishing the authority of third-party evaluation agencies. As the country with the most perfect quality guarantee for higher education, the US “meta-evaluation” system is the most worthy of our reference. The two “meta-evaluation” institutions in the United States—the National Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) and the Federal Ministry of Higher Education. (USDE) is responsible for the implementation of qualification certification for major regional assessment organizations in the United States. Among them, CHEA is a non-governmental organization, and USDE is an official organization. It is the “responsible person” who has these two “meta-evaluations”. In order to ensure that the evaluation of higher education in the United States is carried out in a normal and orderly manner. In view of this, the Chinese government can also set up relevant departments or organizations as “meta-evaluation” institutions, and develop a series of third-party evaluation market access mechanisms, including clarifying the scope of business of third-party evaluation organizations, funding sources, and evaluators of the organization. The background of the technical staff, whether the organization has a fixed business place, and whether the organization's rules and regulations and operating mechanism are in compliance with regulations. For the qualification admission and qualification examination of third-party evaluation institutions of higher education, it is necessary to conduct long-term and dynamic investigations to prevent them from happening once and for all, and to formulate corresponding exit mechanisms to ensure the effective operation of third-party evaluation of higher education.

(3) Transforming the role of the government to ensure the independence of third-party evaluation agencies in higher education. Before conducting a third-party assessment of higher education, it must be ensured that the third-party institution has the eligibility to evaluate, that is, it should be irrelevant to the interests of the entrusting party and the assessed party. Only by ensuring the independence of the evaluation organization can it be ensured that it maintains value neutrality in the evaluation and promotes the construction of credibility. First of all, for the staffing, the third-
party evaluation agencies of higher education need to have the personnel rights. The evaluators are selected and appointed by the evaluation agencies, the full-time team of the evaluation agencies is expanded, the time and energy of the evaluators are guaranteed, and the government and universities are reduced. The cross-impact, avoiding biased value judgments. Secondly, for the operational mechanism, the existing market environment and mechanism should be fully utilized, and the evaluation project should be openly tendered to ensure the peer-to-peer relationship between the evaluation agency and the client. Finally, for the source of funds, the reliance on government funding should be reduced. The third-party evaluation agencies of higher education should establish financial departments and market departments, seek foundations, enterprises, social donations, and publications, and sell research results to obtain funds. Efficient fund management operations are taken to ensure the normal conduct of each evaluation project.

(4) Establishing a vocational certification system for higher education evaluation to ensure the professionalism of third-party evaluation institutions in higher education. The basis for establishing a third-party assessment of the credibility of higher education is whether the professionalism of the institution can be recognized. First of all, in terms of professional strength, it is necessary to increase the number of professional personnel for education evaluation. It is necessary to set up an education evaluation major in colleges and universities to reserve for the third-party assessment professional strength of higher education. Nationally set up an education appraisers qualification examination, screening education evaluation professionals, and conduct pre-employment training and regular continuing education to maintain and improve their professional level. Establish a complete career system, attract more talents to enter third-party evaluation of higher education, and provide effective protection for the development of professional evaluators. Therefore, it strengthens the professional strength of the third-party evaluation institutions of higher education, enhances its professional standards, and perfects its professional system, which is a solid foundation for the construction of credibility. Secondly, in terms of professional standards, it is necessary to increase the proportion of compound talents. For example, the assessors should have any two or more professional knowledge reserves in the fields of education, assessment, law, mathematics, management, economics and so on.

References


