Analysis on the Guiding Orientation and Influence of Audit Evaluation on the Quality Evaluation of Higher Education

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Abstract. From the perspective of audit evaluation, this paper guides the orientation of quality evaluation of higher education, analyzes the theoretical logic of the evaluation system of higher education quality, explores the connotative development of higher education, analyzes the methods and indexes of quality evaluation, and puts forward the status quo, predicament and transcendence of higher education quality evaluation based on classification guidance.

1. Introduction

The evaluation index of higher education quality is determined by the mechanism and quality view of evaluation organization. The decisive factor of quality view is the view of higher education function. Different countries pay different attention to the three functions of higher education: serving society, teaching knowledge and training talents in specific historical periods. Over the years, China’s higher education emphasizes the social service function, it has obvious tendency for value pursuit and external practical utility of objective[1]. The development function of education on knowledge and human has long been obscured by practicality. Its quality evaluation naturally focuses on the economical practicability of education, and the index and system of quality assessment is mainly around the design of links such as education output efficiency, graduate employment. With the development of the national economy and society and the deepening influence of the internationalization of higher education, the country gradually promotes the transformation of higher education from external-oriented development to connotative development on strategic level. Under the influence of educational philosophy, such as functional philosophy and epistemology, and concepts of "holistic education", "diversification" and "comprehensive management", education circle has changed its design of the quality evaluation system of higher education. The core value of evaluation has become the promotion of balance between practical function and cognition function of higher education.


2.1 The Quality Evaluation of Higher Education Should be Compatible with The Economic Structure Transformation

In the future, the undergraduate training of colleges and universities will face the change of talent demand brought by the transformation of economic structure. Students’ learning needs are more diversified and personalized, and higher requirements for the ability cultivation of talents will be put forward. The development of modern educational technology forces the traditional teaching methods to conform and change, education evaluation methods also change accordingly. Higher education quality construction project is becoming more and more competitive. Quantity itself is a dynamic state of the connection of educational products, services, people, processes and the environment that can meet or exceed people’s expectations. At the same time, higher education and university functions are influenced by society, politics and economy. Therefore, the quality evaluation must be a dynamic system changing with the development of higher education and economic and social changes. At the same time, the quality of higher education has undergone profound changes in the context of
globalization, knowledge economy, popularization, learning society and lifelong learning. Therefore, it is necessary to analyze and compare foreign higher education quality evaluation policies, models and indicators based on China's education quality evaluation practice and the requirement of current national economic development strategy on the reform of higher education, and analyze the available quality evaluation model of higher education and index system for a certain period of time in the future.

2.2 The Guiding Orientation of the New Round of Audit Evaluation on the Quality Evaluation of Higher Education

Since the 20th century, globalization and its competition, the deepening of the popularization of higher education is the important reasons to promote different countries to pay attention to higher education quality evaluation.[2] The reason that European and North American countries implement the quality assessment and certification policy is to use the certification to promote the education subject to continue to strengthen the school base, form good quality assurance mechanism, and adjust the objectives according to the situation to ensure that national higher education and college-running win the advantage in global competition, and at the same time avoid the risk of quality landslide when expanding the scale of popularized higher education.

In 2013, the Ministry of Education formulated the "Undergraduate Teaching Review and Evaluation Program". On the basis of summing up the level assessment and qualify assessment experience, the new round of audit evaluation draws lessons from the experience of teaching quality assurance and evaluation in western countries such as the United Kingdom and United States, focuses on the evaluation of internal quality assurance system and operational efficiency, emphasizes using the assessment to guide the accurate orientation of colleges and universities, standardize the teaching process, improve teaching quality assurance, pay attention to the promotion of teaching reform, aiming to guarantee the quality through process evaluation and results evaluation. Under the background of deepening globalization and diversified interest demands of higher education groups, the quality evaluation of higher education should realize three changes, namely, changes from results-oriented performance evaluation to whole process evaluation on content, change from accountability management to incentive guidance on function, and change from command to service and guide on methods. The higher education quality evaluation system based on the overall quality view, includes 7 first-grade indexes, including positioning and objectives, teachers, educational resources, teaching process, student development, quality assurance, reform and characteristics, and 28 second-grade indexes, such school orientation, training objectives, status of personnel training center, amount and structure of teachers. The value orientation of the index system is to overcome the essential function of educational economics, and realize the return to the nature of education of promoting the comprehensive development of students; its pursuit of management is to achieve the control incentives, guidance and self-evaluation and correction of intervention and accountability; its evaluation perspective needs to change from result-oriented to the balance between process and results.

3. The Theoretical Logic of the Quality Evaluation System of Higher Education

Throughout the development of higher education in the world, university values and educational philosophy determine the development mode of higher education and education quality concept, and quality concept determines the quality evaluation system. Therefore, as a multi-dimensional, dynamic concept, the quality of higher education objectively requires the evaluation subject to build an index system which adapts to the specific educational development phase to evaluate the education quality in accordance with the evolution and development process of higher education. Educational researchers put forward different views on the quality of higher education in the light of the actual situation of higher education. American scholar Lewis argues that quality is a dynamic state of the connection of educational products, services, people, processes, and environments that can meet or exceed expectations. [3] British scholar Göring points out that the quality of higher education is a
dynamic concept that measures the performance of a university through a multidimensional index system that essentially is the sum of characteristics that can meet the dominant or potential needs of individual, group and society. It often manifested by a set of performance indicators such as educatees, educators and the goals, standards and levels required by social development.[4] He also emphasizes the importance of quality assurance for the quality of higher education. In his view, the key to applying quality assurance to quality management in higher education is to emphasize that students, teachers, administrators, and school and faculty leaders are responsible for the quality of education. The UK's higher education quality assessment mechanism and assessment indicators reflect Göring’s ideas. We use it to analyze China's higher education evaluation mechanism and evaluation indicators.

For a long period, the evaluation of the quality of the China's higher education has always been the tractatus politicus higher education philosophy, which has been regarded as dominant thought. Its starting point and objective are the basement of being subordinate to and serve the politics, economy and society beyond the education itself. Although in the early 20th century, with a batch of educators who have been studied abroad in the Germany, United Kingdom and United States returning to China and drawing on the experience of European higher education thoughts of Germany and United Kingdom, which is pattern experience, they advocated that higher education should realize the transformation from the “thinking of official position” of tractatus politicus to the “thought of human basis” and “state based” of epistemology. However, in the late 20th century, the tractatus politicus higher education philosophy [5] put forward by John S. Brook has always been a dominant position in the developing of Chinese higher education amidst twists and turns. Epistemological higher education philosophy [5] only stays in the awareness level of some educators and scholars and the very limited practical level. The overall implementation cannot be conducted in higher education administration and the subjective practice of the subject of education. Over the years, Chinese higher education has always been dominated by the external factors, such as politics, economy and society. However, epistemological higher education philosophy advocate that the starting point, process and the end result of the developing of the higher education should follow the own logic of higher education and reflect the logic of high learning. This concept is always shadowed by the management of economical applicability and evaluation index in practice. Chinese higher education, quality evaluation and evaluation practice lack the concept of epistemological higher education philosophy. In order to make up for the lack of the concept, the important tasks of current education quality evaluation are establishing and permeating the conception of all round quality, multi-perspective of quality evaluation model and index and motivating the essential value return of the higher education. It is also the inevitable choice to make sure of the higher education entering into the connotative development track and to gradually improve the education quality. Quality is changed, and its evaluation is dynamic. The index system of assessment quality is a relatively stable dynamic system, which aims at promoting the education intrinsic value through reform.

4. Connotative Development of Higher Education and Quality Evaluation Method and Index Analysis

Higher education quality is a dynamic and systematic concept. Evaluation index should inevitably pay attention to all dimension of the whole system. [6] To see from a fundamental function perspective of cultivating talents, serving the society and imparting knowledge, its quality closely relates to the fundamental guarantee conditions, cultivation process normalization, scientific research output and transformation rate, student learning outcomes and development potential. British academic Louis Molly emphasizes, “in public service, quality is related to performance, standard and output, rather than input. However, new organization mechanism needs secular investment, emotional labor and is burdened with cultural reform.” That is to say, higher education should not only pay attention to the employment quality and status of training objects, but also pay attention to the knowledge output of colleges and universities, the function of teachers and students play to advance change and input-output performance (material and spirit output) of government, social
organizations, schools, parents and students. Therefore, higher education quality evaluation index system pays attention to universities’ output, as well as the quality assurance process of higher education. And it is also useful to coordinate with the interest demands of various interest groups, such as government, social organizations, universities and colleges, teachers, parents, and students.

However, with the national economic society constantly changing, and higher education international competition and cooperation constantly intensifying and deepening, comprehensively ensuring and evaluating education quality is to change the development patterns of higher education in the understanding and practice of educational program, management and evaluation. Higher education administrative department, colleges and universities and institutions for evaluation should promote higher education to achieve the goal of changing form extended development to connotative development in the practice of policy orientation, educational practice and evaluation and certification. From the perspective of education quality evaluation, index is always the baton of the university activities. Therefore, the evaluation index system should emphasize growth and development, rather than overemphasizing economy and tool practicability. The following thee aspects should be realized, value revolution of higher education, promoting the higher education during the transition period entering into the connotative development orbit from extended development and promoting higher education return to its subject and internal logic. [7] This requires further analyzing the current evaluation mechanism and index, as well as going beyond.

5. Higher Education Quality Assessment Actuality, Dilemma and Surmounting on the Basis of Classification Guidance

The superiority or inferiority of higher education quality evaluated by various interest groups depends on different value orientation. Different groups will evaluate from their own interest elements, with a characteristic of diversity. For example, the quality assessment of evaluation and certification in United States reflects distinct diversity. It is far from enough if universities and colleges only cares about enrollment entrance examination scores and level, examination scores of graduates, entrance examination scores of entering the professional school, the rate of submitting the rejecting the application for admission, graduate financial endowment and employment condition. As a system concept, the evaluation index of quality is a combined system. In addition to the explicit quantitative indicators which are easy to be measured, the implicit qualitative index which are hard to be measured are also emphasized, such as students’ learning ability, critical ability, innovation ability, adaptive capacity and universities’ development potentialities. Furthermore, the advantages and disadvantages of higher education should be considered form the following “five whethers”: Whether to guide students into a rich intelligence word and a wide scientific culture field and to cultivate their insight, logical thinking ability and comprehensive judging ability; whether help students to form a habit of getting the critical analytical data, assumptions and arguments; whether to cultivate students to prepare for meeting new people, new things and new challenges constructively; whether to arouse teachers and students’ consciousness towards the vicissitude of personal life; whether enrich the minds of teachers and students, as well as enhance the human knowledge.

The ideological premise of education quality evaluation under classification guidance is to admit the diversity of quality, the diversity of training target and levels in universities and the respect of personality development of talents. However, there are four real difficulties in the assessment practice: Firstly, the public is hard to identify the validity and reliability of the evaluation; secondly, the public take a skeptical attitude towards the aim of evaluation, the aim of which is whether the motivation of self-improvement of universities and colleges can be realized; thirdly, all parties of evaluation and the public are hesitate about the explicit performance quantitative index and implicit qualitative index easily; fourthly, under the influence of the external factors, such as economy and politics, the result of authentication and evaluation of the backward universities and colleges are hard to be censured. Establishing a performance Indicator that can not only transform macro policy to micro-practice, but also to permeate the essential value into the actions of subject of education is able to get out of these
troubles. Since quality is changing with the economy, politics and society, it will be defined in the changed structure naturally. Therefore, higher education quality evaluation index system should cross over the past and future.

6. Conclusion

As a polydimensional, dynamic concept, higher education requires objectively to establish an index system corresponding to specific education development stages based on the evolution and development process of higher education and evaluate its quality. Therefore, review and assessment should be based on the practice of Chinese education quality evaluation and act in cooperation with the national economy transition of development strategy. It is also essential to explore the future development orientation based on the analyzing of the past higher education quality policy, mode and index system and promote higher education return to its subject and inherent logic.

7. References


