

## County Education Quality Monitoring: Aim, Content and Pattern

### SURVEILLANCE DU COMITE DE LA QUALITE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT: OBJECT, CONTENU ET MODELE

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#### Abstract

Measuring and monitoring the quality of county education is the key to the education quality monitoring. Why should the quality of county education be monitored? What should be monitored and how to monitor the quality of education in a county? These are the questions I will answer in this paper. Based on comparative study, I put forward the different aim and content of education quality monitoring in a county, and conceived three patterns to monitor education quality in a county.

**Key words:** County; Education quality; Monitoring

#### Résumé

Mesurer et suivre de la qualité de l'éducation du comté est la clé de la surveillance de la qualité de l'éducation. Pourquoi devrais la qualité de l'éducation du comté être surveillés? Quel devrait être surveillée et la façon de surveiller la qualité de l'éducation dans un comté? Ce sont les questions que je vais répondre dans ce papier. Basé sur une étude comparative, j'ai avancé l'objectif différent et le contenu de surveillance de la qualité d'éducation dans un comté, et a conçu trois modèles pour contrôler la qualité d'éducation dans un comté.

**Mots clés:** Département; La qualité de l'éducation; La surveillance

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Improving education quality is the essential purpose of educational reform for every country in the world. While what education quality is and how to measure and monitor the quality of education are confused.

#### 1. WHAT IS COUNTY EDUCATION QUALITY MONITORING?

Monitoring the quality of education is a basic way to measure the development of education in the countries and regions. Education quality monitoring is to get data information, diagnose educational development, and offer combine strategies and decision foundation for the education authorities. The basic function of education quality monitoring is diagnosis. It is also a useful way for educational science research. We can know the problems faced by educational development through monitoring the quality of education, and suggest a reasonable advice for educational reform. As we all know, any education problem is a regional education problem. So county education quality monitoring is the key of education quality monitoring, because county is the smallest administrative district in China. The main problems of county education quality monitoring are why county education quality should be monitored, what should be monitored, and how to monitor the quality of education in a county.

#### 2. THE AIM OF COUNTY EDUCATION QUALITY MONITORING

The basic aim of education quality monitoring is to

diagnose educational development, and suggest how to solve the problems faced by educational development. The OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), created in 1997, represents a commitment by the governments of OECD member countries to monitor the outcomes of education systems in terms of student achievement. The IEA (International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement) Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) is to provide comparative information about educational achievement across countries to improve teaching and learning in mathematics and science.

By all appearances, the basic aim of education quality monitoring is the same in a country and in a county. While educational development has its characteristics in a county, for example, the educational scale is smaller, and the problems of educational development are similar in a county. Consequently, the method to monitor the quality of education in a county is different from that in a country. We can monitor every school, even every student in the same grade in a county, but we can only monitor samples in a country. Of course, we sometimes collect information from a sample when monitoring students' some capabilities in a county. Because of the characteristics, the aims of county education quality monitoring are different from that of country education quality monitoring, and these aims are more microcosmic and comprehensive.

County education quality monitoring includes three aims. For administrative department in charge of education, the aim is to learn about educational development, find out the problems faced by educational development, and provide scientific evidence and reasonable suggestion for educational reform in the county. For school, the aim is to learn out the school's contribution to the students' development, find out the problems faced by school, and provide scientific evidence for school-level assessment, the reform of teaching and school management. For teacher and student, the aim is to learn about the development of student and correlative factor, and tell them how to improve the teaching and learning method.

### 3. THE CONTENT OF COUNTY EDUCATION QUALITY MONITORING

The content of county education quality monitoring is decided by the understanding of education quality. The content of education quality monitoring is different in different countries of the world because of the different understanding of education quality. Only the key subjects such as reading and mathematics etc. are monitored in Australia while the education quality monitoring in American comprises reading, mathematics, science,

writing, U.S. history, citizen, geography and arts. The education quality monitoring comprises not only students' academic achievement but also their background information such as gender, age, race and the parents' education background etc. The educational assessment in Finland is not based on subjects. The subject ability is decomposed into cognitive skill and affective control skill. The former comprises language, understanding of amount, concept of culture, logic inference, learning skills and so on, and the latter comprises insisting and adjusting learning etc. The OECD PISA comprises reading, mathematics and science, the key aim is to monitor the students ability for survive in the future society. The IEA TIMSS assesses the fourth- and eighth-grade students' mathematics and science achievement. Different from PISA, TIMSS is more care about the school curriculum, and assess if the students reached the curriculum targets.

The education quality monitoring includes three levels, such as country level, region level and county level. The content of county education quality monitoring is different from that of country education quality monitoring. It is more comprehensive and detailed. The content of county education quality monitoring corresponds to its aims. For administrative department in charge of education, the content includes the educational development level, teaching conditions, education fund investment, degree of educational equilibrium etc. For school, the content of monitoring includes students' development level, teachers' professional development level, school management etc. For teacher and student, the content includes the students' academic achievement and the correlative factors, such as teaching strategy and students' background information.

### 4. THE PATTERN OF COUNTY EDUCATION QUALITY MONITORING

There are three patterns of education quality monitoring in the world. The first is to found a professional organization or committee which is independent of administrative department in charge of education and reports directly to the Congress or prime minister. The second pattern is the government entrusts a university or research institute to monitor the quality of education. And the third pattern is the administrative department in charge of education monitors the quality of education directly. The United States of America and the United Kingdom belong to the first pattern. The Commissioner of Education Statistics, who heads the National Center for Education Statistics in the U.S. Department of Education, is responsible by law for carrying out the NAEP project. The National Assessment Governing Board, appointed by the Secretary of Education but independent of the Department, sets policy for NAEP and is responsible for developing the framework and test specifications that serve as the blueprint for the assessments. Australia, New Zealand,

Korea and Brazil belong to the second pattern while Japan, Finland and Hong Kong belong to the third pattern. Which pattern is chosen depends on the country political tradition, national power, educational investment and development level of the education assessment.

Accordingly, the county education quality monitoring composes three patterns too. The first pattern is to found a professional organization which is independent of administrative department in charge of education and reports directly to the county government. The predominance of this pattern is that the organization is independent of the administrative department in charge of education. Consequently, the monitoring result of education quality can truly reflect the educational development in the county. While the shortage of this pattern is that the government needs to increase public finance expenditure. The second pattern is the government entrusts a university or research institute to monitor the quality of education in the county. The predominance of this pattern is that the monitoring method is professional and the result is exact. While the shortage is that it is hard to be continued because there is not a changeless team to do this work. The third pattern is the administrative department in charge of education monitors the education quality directly. The predominance of this pattern is that the department knows the educational development very well and the shortage is there is no professional staff of monitoring the education quality. Which pattern is chosen

depends on the educational investment and development level of the education assessment in the county.

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