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## Research on School Organizational Change and its Performance

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### **Abstract**

*Evaluating the performance of organizational change in schools is not merely a routine aspect of the process; it is a critical factor in fostering sustainable development within educational institutions. This paper examines the concept of performance in the context of learning-driven organizational change and discusses various evaluation methods for assessing school transformations. These methods include portfolio evaluation, authentic assessment, value-added evaluation, and index evaluation. Additionally, the paper provides thoughtful recommendations and suggestions for enhancing the effectiveness of these evaluation approaches.*

**Keywords:** School Organization, Online Education, Educational Performance, Educational Integration.

### **Introduction**

Schools, as integral parts of the social system, are influenced by a variety of external factors and internal conditions. Currently, Chinese society is undergoing rapid development within a complex social environment. To thrive in this fast-paced context, schools must adapt and transform, giving rise to the concept of learning organization reform—a new approach to survival and management in education. Performance evaluation is essential for assessing the effectiveness of these organizational reforms, which are closely linked to the future development and sustainability of schools.

### **Performance of School Organizational Change**

From a management analysis perspective, performance represents the output through which school organizations achieve their goals. Consequently, the performance of school organizational change is intricately linked to the objectives of that change. The goals of school organizational reform can be categorized into two primary areas: first, enhancing the organization's adaptability. Members of the organization must engage in effective innovative activities to improve the quality of education, enabling them to respond to the complex and evolving environment. Second, the reform aims to modify the behaviors of organizational members by standardizing the actions of faculty and staff.

Currently, school organizational change performance can be assessed through three key aspects:

**Quality of Education:** This refers to the overall level and effectiveness of educational delivery. Schools serve as the foundation for talent development, and enhancing the quality of this talent begins with the training of students. Measurement standards are based on the educational goals

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and objectives set by schools at all levels. The "Outline of the National Medium- and Long-Term Education Reform and Development Plan (2010-2020)" emphasizes that "improving quality is the core task of education reform and development," advocating for a scientific understanding of quality that promotes holistic development and meets social needs.

**Education Level:** This encompasses the conditions, philosophies, and management practices of schools, all of which are closely linked to the institution's quality and standing.

**School Effectiveness:** Despite four decades of research, a unified definition and standard for school effectiveness remain elusive. Different perspectives provide two influencing factors: from an economic viewpoint, school effectiveness pertains to the impact schools have on students' development and achievement; from an organizational analysis perspective, it considers the effects of educational practices on the school's organizational growth (Armstrong, 2006).

### Organizational Change Model

School organizational reform is a dynamic and complex process, prompting various experts and scholars in organizational theory to propose different models. One notable model is the system reform model, developed by Fremont E. Kast and James E. Rosen. This model emphasizes system theory as its core framework and integrates multiple factors influencing organizational change within an open system context.

In the open system model, different subsystems interact to create a cohesive whole. Organizational change enables schools to evolve rapidly while maintaining connections with the external environment. Additionally, organizational change is also a function of the internal system, necessitating adjustments and optimizations.

The system change model can be examined through three key aspects:

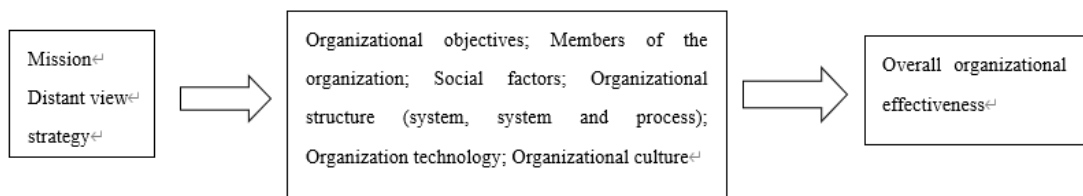


Figure 1: System Change Model

### Realistic needs and existing problems of school organization reform

As an independent social entity, schools play a vital role in societal development. Within the framework of educational management, schools function as unique organizations aiming to achieve institutional goals. The educational organization system typically consists of two key components: the school itself and the administrative organization. This duality is fundamental to understanding the need for organizational change and performance enhancement within schools.

### Imbalance Between Institutional Supply and Demand

A significant driver of organizational change in many schools is the imbalance between institutional supply and demand. According to new institutional economics, institutions can be viewed as standardized commodities; when supply fails to meet demand, reform becomes

necessary. If a new system offers greater net benefits than the existing one during its implementation, optimizing the system is essential. Currently, many educational systems do not align with the needs of contemporary society and schools, necessitating reform as part of broader educational system changes. Internal contradictions and external environmental factors also fuel the impetus for organizational reform.

### **Changes in Internal and External Environments**

Typically, both internal and external factors contribute to changes within school organizations. In the context of China's economic growth and the ongoing reform of its educational system, schools have continually adapted to external influences, accelerating the pace of organizational change.

**Incentive Mechanisms:** Within the educational landscape, effective incentive mechanisms play a crucial role in managing educational resources. They can facilitate the rapid development of human resources, thereby driving reform.

**Educational Policies and Goals:** External environmental factors, including national educational policies, systems, and goals, significantly influence school operations. For instance, the introduction of new curriculum reforms has prompted schools to innovate their teaching models and methodologies based on their specific contexts.

Additionally, advancements in technology, such as big data and the Internet, have enabled many schools to reduce costs while achieving educational objectives. This innovative approach has led to the transformation of educational models and fostered growth through economies of scale.

By addressing these realistic needs and existing problems, schools can more effectively navigate the complexities of organizational reform in the modern educational landscape.

### **Problems in School Organizational Change and Performance Management**

To thrive, schools must align with broader social and economic developments. Currently, schools are navigating a rapidly evolving market economy, facing significant competition and pressure. In this context, school leaders and teachers must recognize the importance of organizational change and invest in performance management to enhance resource allocation.

Despite the critical role of organizational change and performance management in fostering development, their effectiveness is often inadequate. Many schools face challenges related to distribution systems and personnel frameworks, while traditional administrative models persist.

Organizational reform should commence at both organizational and individual levels. Changes must align with the school environment and drive behavioral shifts among staff and students. Typically, the reasons for organizational change are categorized as internal or external. The ultimate aim of reform is to achieve organizational goals and restore balance within the school.

### **Inadequate Management Mechanisms**

One significant issue is that existing management mechanisms do not meet the evolving requirements of school construction. Currently, the management systems in place are outdated and hinder effective educational management. Key issues include: Traditional Administration (Many schools maintain traditional administrative structures that limit flexibility), Lifetime Appointments (Teachers often have lifetime appointments, reducing opportunities for renewal and adaptation), Lack of Academic Evaluation (There is an absence of robust academic

evaluation mechanisms to assess teaching and learning outcomes), Limited Cooperation and Competition (Healthy collaboration and competition among schools are lacking), and Impact of Funding Structures (The allocation and centralized review of research funding can stifle academic diversity and innovation).

### **Insufficient Performance Management Systems**

Performance management encompasses various activities, including planning, evaluation, analysis, communication, and improvement. In implementing school organizational reform, it is essential to focus on the effectiveness of performance management. However, many schools fail to tailor their performance management systems to their unique contexts, resulting in superficial reform efforts that prioritize performance appraisal over essential management processes. Current assessment systems often lack scientific rigor, rationality, and relevance, leading to poor outcomes in both organizational reform and performance management.

### **Unbalanced Focus in Performance Management**

Effective performance management aims to enhance both school and student outcomes through planning, organization, analysis, and evaluation. It should be guided by the school's development goals and strategies. However, the current focus on performance evaluation is often insufficient, resulting in a lack of meaningful representation of evaluation results. While performance management is intended to support teachers and schools, its lack of focus leads to superficial and formalized evaluations that do not contribute to meaningful development.

By addressing these issues, schools can better navigate the complexities of organizational reform and enhance their performance management systems to achieve their educational objectives.

### **Performance Evaluation of School Organizational Change**

The performance evaluation of school organizational change encompasses the comprehensive process of observing, identifying, measuring, and enhancing the performance management of individuals within the organization. Typically, performance evaluation is divided into two key aspects: developmental evaluation and evaluative evaluation. These evaluations are closely linked to promotion and reward systems, influencing how individuals are recognized and advanced within the organization.

Serial number	Index type	Index content	Assessing party
1	Behavior index	Comprehensive quality	all-sided
2	Performance indicator	Teaching, research, talent, society	Self-evaluation; Teachers, schools
3	Achievement index	Achieve results	Academic committee

Table 1: Content of Performance Appraisal

### **Developmental Evaluation**

In recent years, advanced concepts such as school development and innovative school practices have gained traction in school management, with developmental evaluation becoming an integral part of organizational reform. However, there is currently a lack of consensus regarding the definition and concept of developmental evaluation, as no standardized framework exists. With ongoing education system reforms, developmental evaluation primarily serves as a phased

guide for interpreting early evaluation results, functioning as a process of diagnosis and improvement.

British scholars have noted two crucial aspects for effectively implementing developmental evaluation: establishing a clear framework and developing a practical model to ensure that the concept is deeply ingrained in the organization's culture. Developmental evaluation consists of two main components: self-evaluation and external evaluation. Within this process, self-evaluation facilitates diagnosis and improvement. During organizational change, schools should leverage developmental evaluation to assess the entire process, adjusting the content, path, and direction of change to better achieve goals and foster effective organizational transformation (Fullan, 2007).

### **Evaluative Evaluation**

Upon completing the evaluation, it is essential to conduct a value judgment of the results. Typically, evaluative evaluation functions as a summative assessment, classifying and ranking outcomes based on the activities conducted. This approach is characterized by strong objectivity, making it widely accepted by stakeholders. However, post-event assessments are crucial, particularly in evaluating the target capabilities, to avoid misleading information. While developmental evaluation serves as a regulatory method in learning organizational change, evaluative evaluation assesses the success of that change.

In evaluating whether the learning organization reform is progressing effectively, it is important not only to focus on students' academic achievements but also to consider their ideological engagement and practical skills. Additionally, schools must adapt to their environments and support the professional development of teachers (Hargreaves & Goodson, 2006).

### **Main Methods of Performance Evaluation of School Organizational Change**

#### **Portfolio Evaluation Method**

In the mid-1980s, portfolio evaluation emerged as a key assessment method in American educational practices. This approach requires teachers to purposefully collect and accumulate students' work to gain a holistic understanding of their progress. This includes analyzing various aspects, such as the completion process of students' projects, self-evaluations by students, teacher evaluations, peer evaluations, and feedback from parents. By integrating these perspectives, educators can make comprehensive judgments about students' developmental status. However, the portfolio evaluation method can be resource-intensive, demanding significant time and effort from teachers for data collection. This lengthy process may lead to a lack of representativeness in the evaluation results and places higher demands on teachers' skills and capabilities.

<b>Portfolio evaluation</b>	
Evaluation environment	In a natural environment
Evaluation purpose	Students find their own shortcomings, but also provide their own advantages
focus	Daily literacy and behavior
Evaluation result	Guide students to reflect
Home-school	Create opportunities for parents to get to know their students

cooperation	
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Table 2: Portfolio Evaluation

### Authenticity Evaluation Method

The authenticity evaluation method focuses on observing students' performance while they complete tasks, reflecting the educational experiences they encounter in both school and life. This approach lacks a standardized framework and is characterized by its emphasis on the dynamic nature of student engagement. A key feature of authenticity assessment is its focus on the practical application of knowledge and skills, which can stimulate students' critical and divergent thinking in their daily studies and activities. However, the complexity inherent in the authenticity evaluation process often requires substantial manpower, resources, and energy, rendering it somewhat impractical (Stiggins & Chappuis, 2005).

### Value-Added Evaluation Method

The value-added evaluation method uses students' academic performance as a reference point for assessment. It employs statistical analysis to examine variables such as ethnicity and gender during developmental periods, allowing educators to measure student progress and compare it with peers from other schools. This method incorporates various analytical techniques, including statistical analysis and multi-level modeling, and focuses on evaluating students' development throughout the entire learning process. However, it is important to note that the primary goal of education extends beyond simply improving academic performance; it also encompasses fostering diverse skills, values, and emotional intelligence. Consequently, relying solely on the value-added evaluation method may lead to a one-dimensional understanding of student performance.

<b>Traditional evaluation (Final evaluation) Average score, ranking</b>	<b>Value-added evaluation (Formative evaluation) Student progress, school effort</b>
Focus on results, not process	Schools are weighted by focusing on how much students improve over time on their original basis
Ignoring student progress and school effort	Focus on measuring student progress and school effort
The progress of the students and the efforts of the school are not visible	Scientific and fair evaluation of the school and teachers' efforts, that is, the level of the school's educational effectiveness; Formula: Value added = output - input
Education is evaluated on a mile-long equilibrium	Education is evaluated in terms of quality and internal balance
In the disadvantaged school group, there is no hope for development	Evaluation of the whole process of education, intervention in the intelligent management of education (to improve many areas: starting point, process, result, academic level, personal motivation, environment)

Table 3: Value-Added Evaluation Method

### Index Evaluation Method

The index evaluation method involves assessing performance through various forms of data collection, including observation, interviews, and questionnaires. This approach allows for

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comprehensive analysis, summarization, and processing to judge the evaluation object effectively. The index evaluation method can be categorized into two types: quantitative evaluation and qualitative evaluation. The results obtained from this method provide valuable information and references for learning organizational change and performance management, primarily serving as parameters for developing change plans and content settings (Messick, 1989). However, the effectiveness of the index evaluation method is often hindered by vague standards and the absence of a robust mechanism. This lack of clarity can negatively influence the subjective judgments made by schools, teachers, and parents.

## **Discussion and Suggestions**

### **Lack of in-depth research, strengthen exploration**

School organization reform occurs in two distinct stages. The initial stage requires schools to adapt their organizational structures in response to external environmental changes, enhancing their societal impact. In the subsequent stage, schools should optimize their existing structures and models, fostering an educational environment that encourages all personnel to actively engage in the reform process and performance management. Currently, administrative education departments at all levels in our country are actively promoting these organizational reforms.

However, there is a significant disparity between the success of these reforms and their practical implementation. School leaders, who act as both initiators of change and evaluators of performance, often produce evaluation results that lack fairness and objectivity (Weigle, 2002). Moreover, there is a challenge in effectively assessing the outcomes and causes of organizational changes. The reform process involves multiple dimensions, prompting various experts and scholars to argue that school leadership should be the focal point for improvement. They suggest integrating rationality, emotion, organization, and family dynamics. Additionally, a trilogy approach focusing on changes in institutions, procedures, and culture is advocated.

Attention must also be directed toward vague evaluation criteria and the inadequate application of evaluation methods. To address these issues, schools can benefit from external evaluations conducted by third-party organizations. These external evaluators, contracted specifically for this purpose, offer diverse perspectives and methodologies, providing a more comprehensive assessment than internal evaluators.

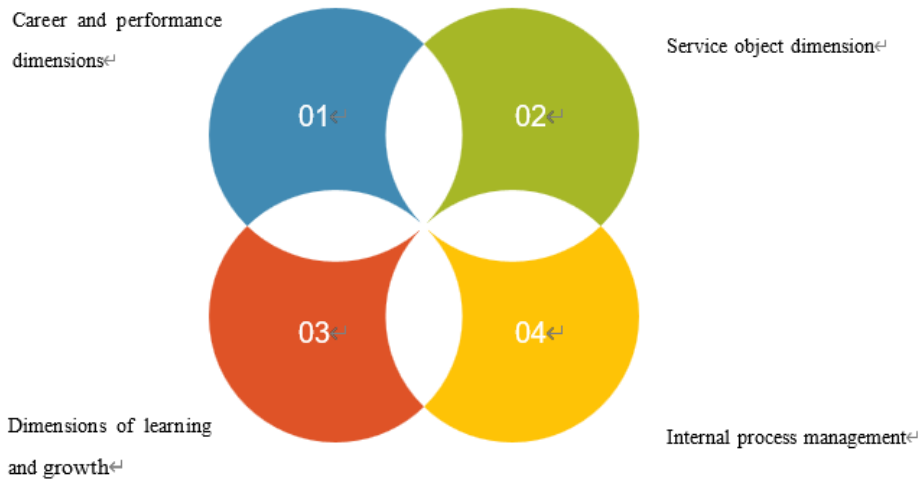


Figure 2: Performance Evaluation System

### **Strengthen Active Connections to Achieve Collaborative Synergy**

Since January 1, 2022, the Family Education Promotion Law of the People's Republic of China has delineated the responsibilities of schools, families, and society, necessitating a collaborative model for effective educational delivery. Parents now receive relevant information through schools, making organizational change and performance management vital bridges connecting educational institutions and families. Schools must actively foster these connections to create a synergistic educational force (Weigle, 2002).

From an educational perspective, schools should implement a series of measures to reform their strategies. By leveraging information technology, they can dismantle barriers between educational institutions, society, and families, enhancing external linkages. This approach promotes cooperation among schools, families, research institutions, and the broader community, facilitating resource sharing to achieve the core goals of education. Transforming traditional closed teaching methods into an open, cooperative, and engaging environment will encourage active participation from society and families, fostering positive interactions. Moreover, as primary providers of education services, schools should integrate into diversified educational platforms, promoting collaborative models among various stakeholders.

Performance serves as a key metric for assessing any organization's activities. Therefore, school organizational reform and performance management must not only align with student organizational characteristics but also support educational and academic development. For instance, integrating performance indicators with management objectives within the appraisal system is crucial. A clearly defined selective incentive strategy is also necessary. In light of the growing influence of economism, school organizational reforms should align with market-driven principles.

### **Move Beyond Performance Dependency to Enhance Reform-Performance Integration**

The ultimate goal of school organizational reform is to drive profit growth. This necessitates leveraging common interests—individual contributions and values—within the reform process. However, conflicts may arise from varying interests, creating challenges for both educators and students. Thus, schools must balance reform and performance management amidst societal

pressures. Given the diversity of interests, identifying common ground for reform can be complex. Hence, school organizational change and performance management should rely on a quantitative evaluation framework that involves society, schools, and students. Organizational behavior, compared to individual actions, not only consolidates collective intelligence but also fosters effective synergy. As school scales expand, managing organizational dynamics becomes increasingly complex, complicating change and performance management.

Ongoing management and evaluation should account for the preferences of those evaluated, ensuring timely control of performance indicators. In reform and performance management, innovation is essential to create a performance framework that enhances educational objectives. To foster high-quality school development, students should transcend mere performance metrics, achieving empowerment. Given the resource-intensive nature of academic competition, school leaders must focus on the unique elements of higher education systems, implementing quantifiable performance management practices (Kotter, 1996).

### **Engage Teachers and Students in School Organizational Change**

School leaders must acknowledge the significance of change and effectively guide teachers in their transformative behaviors. Teachers should actively participate in situational interactions within the school. Organizational change and performance management should aim to enhance the quality of teaching. A successful reform is measured by the creation of an optimal teaching environment. During periods of diversification in change content and objectives, schools may encounter bottlenecks; thus, integrating teaching and learning becomes essential.

In the context of organizational change performance management, it is crucial to avoid an excessive focus on performance metrics while fostering innovation. Key performance indicators should guide organizational changes, yielding external benefits and achieving internal consensus. On one hand, research and application of evaluation methods should be strengthened, employing objective assessments through the analysis of student performance. On the other hand, a robust evaluation mechanism must be established, as varying evaluation activities can lead to significant differences in performance assessments. Developmental evaluations and school linkages are necessary to understand students' current status and provide reliable data for performance management. Additionally, employing a cycle of “practice - reflection - perfection - re-practice - re-reflection - re-perfection” will further optimize the organizational change plan (Fullan, 2011).

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, as educational system reforms continue to evolve, schools must navigate the challenges of organizational reform and performance management within a new social context. It is essential for schools to adopt a holistic perspective, implementing organizational changes that align with contemporary educational needs. By effectively leveraging performance management and evaluation methods, schools can establish a robust performance analysis system, ultimately enhancing the effectiveness of their governance frameworks. This approach will provide the necessary internal motivation for fostering a thriving educational environment.

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