Research on the Reform of the Education Management Evaluation System Based on the Fundamental Task of Fostering Virtue through Education

Yang Wang

Qujing No.1 Middle School Zhanyi Qingyuan School ,Qujing City, Yunnan Province, 655331;

Abstract：The cultivation of students' moral integrity and comprehensive development, often summarized as fostering virtue through education, has long been regarded as the fundamental mission of modern schooling. However, the current education management evaluation system in many contexts remains dominated by utilitarian indicators such as examination performance, resource allocation, and institutional efficiency. These metrics tend to neglect the humanistic and moral dimensions of education, leading to imbalances in students' overall development. This study investigates the reform of the education management evaluation system from the perspective of the fostering virtue through education paradigm. It argues for a comprehensive shift in evaluation philosophy, indicators, and implementation strategies to better align with the holistic development of learners. Through literature review, policy analysis, and case studies, the paper explores both theoretical frameworks and practical pathways for constructing a people-centered evaluation system that integrates moral education with educational governance.

Introduction

Education serves both instrumental and humanistic purposes. While it must provide knowledge and skills that empower individuals to contribute to society, it also bears the responsibility of shaping moral character, civic responsibility, and cultural identity. In China, the principle of 立德树人 (fostering virtue through education) has been established as the core mission of education, reflecting a commitment to cultivating well-rounded individuals who embody ethical values, intellectual capabilities, physical health, and aesthetic sensibilities.

Despite this clear mandate, the education management evaluation system has often lagged behind in aligning its standards and mechanisms with this mission. Traditional evaluation systems place overwhelming emphasis on academic achievements, measurable outputs, and institutional rankings. Such a narrow focus results in excessive competition, neglect of moral education, and limited attention to the personal development of students.

This research seeks to address the following questions:

How can the fundamental task of fostering virtue through education be effectively incorporated into the education management evaluation system?

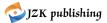What challenges currently hinder the reform of evaluation practices?

What theoretical frameworks and practical models can support such reform?

The remainder of the paper will analyze the theoretical foundations, review current practices, identify problems, and propose strategies for reforming the evaluation system in accordance with the mission of fostering virtue through education.

1 Theoretical Foundations of Education Evaluation Reform

1.1 The Concept of Fostering Virtue through Education

The idea of fostering virtue through education emphasizes that moral cultivation is not peripheral but central to the

educational process. It integrates moral character with intellectual growth, reflecting Confucian traditions as well as contemporary educational goals. In global discourse, this corresponds to UNESCO's call for "education for sustainable development" and the OECD's emphasis on "21st century competencies" that go beyond academic skills to include values, empathy, and responsibility.

1.2 Limitations of Traditional Evaluation Systems

Conventional evaluation practices are largely quantitative and exam-oriented. They assess success in terms of test scores, admission rates, and institutional competitiveness. While these metrics are easy to measure, they fail to capture intangible but critical aspects such as moral reasoning, civic responsibility, creativity, and social adaptability.

1.3 Philosophical Basis for Reform

Educational evaluation reform must be grounded in humanism, developmental psychology, and systems theory. Humanism stresses respect for students' dignity and individuality. Developmental psychology underscores the need to consider cognitive, emotional, and moral stages of growth. Systems theory highlights that education is an interconnected ecosystem where changes in evaluation affect teaching, learning, administration, and policy.

2 Current Problems in the Education Management Evaluation System

2.1 Overemphasis on Academic Achievement

Schools and teachers are frequently judged by student performance in standardized exams. This pressure narrows the curriculum and sidelines moral, aesthetic, and physical education.

2.2 Lack of Moral Education Indicators

Although moral education is widely advocated, current evaluation systems rarely provide concrete, measurable, or credible indicators to assess its effectiveness. As a result, moral education is marginalized in practice.

2.3 Inconsistent Policy Implementation

Government policies often emphasize holistic education, but local evaluation systems remain heavily exam-driven. This inconsistency creates tension between policy rhetoric and practical execution.

2.4 Teacher Evaluation Challenges

Teachers are primarily evaluated by students' academic results, limiting their motivation to invest time in moral guidance, creative teaching, and emotional support.

2.5 Student Development Imbalance

Overly utilitarian evaluation leads to psychological stress, lack of creativity, and insufficient attention to moral and social development among students.

3 International Perspectives and Comparative Insights
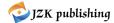
3.1 OECD Education Indicators

The OECD promotes assessment frameworks that include creativity, collaboration, and well-being. The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) has expanded beyond academic literacy to include global competencies and problem-solving.

3.2 UNESCO's Holistic Education Approach

UNESCO emphasizes education for peace, sustainability, and global citizenship. These goals resonate with the idea of fostering virtue and provide international legitimacy for reform efforts.

3.3 Case Studies: Finland and Singapore

Finland's education system prioritizes equality, student well-being, and teacher autonomy. Its evaluation system focuses less on standardized testing and more on formative assessment. Singapore balances rigorous academic standards with explicit moral education, integrating values-based curricula and community service into evaluation frameworks.

4 Reform Pathways for Education Management Evaluation

4.1 Redefining Evaluation Philosophy

The evaluation system should adopt a people-centered philosophy that prioritizes holistic development. Success should be measured not only by knowledge acquisition but also by the cultivation of values, civic responsibility, and personal growth.

4.2 Constructing Comprehensive Indicators

Reform requires the establishment of multi-dimensional indicators, including:

Moral education: civic engagement, ethical reasoning, integrity.

Intellectual development: creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving.

Physical health: sports participation, fitness levels.

Aesthetic growth: artistic appreciation and creativity.

Social adaptability: teamwork, communication, resilience.

4.3 Diversifying Evaluation Methods

Evaluation should combine quantitative and qualitative approaches:

Standardized tests for academic achievement.

Portfolios, reflective journals, and project-based assessments for creativity and moral reasoning.

Peer evaluations and teacher observations for collaboration and values.

Community-based projects for civic engagement.

4.4 Teacher Evaluation Reform

Teacher performance must be judged not only by student scores but also by contributions to students' moral growth, classroom climate, and engagement in professional development.

4.5 Policy Alignment and Institutional Support

National policies must provide clear guidelines, funding, and training to support local implementation. Accountability mechanisms should reward schools that successfully integrate virtue-oriented evaluation.

5 Practical Implementation Strategies

5.1 Pilot Programs

Selected schools can pilot comprehensive evaluation frameworks, testing new indicators and assessment methods. Lessons learned should guide broader implementation.

5.2 Teacher Training

Teachers must receive professional development in moral education, formative assessment, and interdisciplinary teaching.

5.3 Integration with Curriculum Reform

Evaluation reform should be synchronized with curriculum changes, ensuring that new teaching goals are aligned with assessment systems.

5.4 Stakeholder Involvement

Parents, communities, and social organizations should participate in evaluation, reinforcing the link between schools

and society.

5.5 Technology Support

Big data, AI, and digital platforms can provide comprehensive monitoring of students'　academic and moral development, offering real-time feedback.

6 Challenges and Countermeasures

6.1 Measurement Difficulties

Moral qualities are difficult to quantify. To address this, hybrid approaches combining self-report, observation, and community feedback should be employed.

6.2 Risk of Formalism

Evaluation reform may become superficial if schools simply "tick boxes." Regular monitoring, third-party audits, and genuine stakeholder involvement can mitigate this.

6.3 Resistance to Change

Teachers and administrators accustomed to exam-driven systems may resist. Incentives, training, and gradual transition strategies are essential.

6.4 Resource Inequality

Rural and under-resourced schools may struggle to implement reforms. Targeted funding and support programs are needed to ensure equity.

7 Case Example: Reform in Practice

A provincial experiment in China integrated moral education into evaluation by requiring all high schools to implement service-learning projects. Students were evaluated on participation, reflection, and community impact. Early results showed improved civic awareness and reduced exam stress. This demonstrates the feasibility of embedding fostering virtue into evaluation practices when supported by policy and resources.

8 Conclusion

The reform of the education management evaluation system must be grounded in the principle of fostering virtue through education. It requires a paradigm shift from exam-centric evaluation to holistic, people-centered assessment. By redefining philosophy, constructing multi-dimensional indicators, diversifying methods, reforming teacher evaluation, and aligning policies, education systems can better fulfill their fundamental mission of nurturing virtuous, capable, and responsible citizens.

While challenges remain, international experiences and domestic pilots suggest that reform is both necessary and feasible. Future research should focus on developing reliable tools for assessing moral education and on creating adaptive frameworks that can accommodate diverse educational contexts. Ultimately, evaluation reform is not merely a technical adjustment but a profound cultural transformation of education itself.

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