

Performance Evaluation of Schools: Content Analysis of Studies Published Between 1972 and 2017

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ABSTRACT This research was conducted using the Scopus database to examine the methodological dimensions of studies of the performance evaluation of schools, and to reveal the general trend. To this end, between the years 1972 and 2017, 353 studies published in Scopus 2017 on the performance evaluation of schools were examined using content analysis. Data were analyzed by using descriptive statistical methods, including frequency and percentage. In terms of the findings of the study, the number of studies has increased, especially in the last ten years, with most studies being carried out in 2015. Moreover, when the subjects of the studies were examined, the subjects in the field of Social Sciences were investigated the most and the quantitative methods were the most commonly used approaches. Students and teachers were the most commonly preferred study groups.

INTRODUCTION

According to the Performance Based Budgeting Guide prepared by the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Turkey in 2004, performance evaluation is the evaluation of the objectives determined by public institutions, the methods of achieving these objectives, the activities and projects involved in achieving these objectives, and the results of such activities and projects. For more efficient educational performance in modern education systems, such performance evaluation must be carried out (Akca et al. 2015).

Performance evaluation in Turkey was first addressed in the "Eighth Five-Year Development Plan" adopted in 2000, and then in the "Ninth Development Plan" (2007-2013). In the Eighth Development Plan, some basic principles were determined during the reorganization of public administration. Some of these principles were improving performance in terms of efficiency, efficiency and decisiveness, establishing a system that effectively measures the performance of employees, and improving accountability and managerial transparency with empowerment and flexibility. In the Ninth Development Plan, it was stated that there were still weaknesses when it came to performance monitoring. Performance-

based budgeting was launched in 2004 and continued to improve in line with the results obtained. It was also mentioned that a model based on performance evaluation was to be developed for higher quality education.

In the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, the Performance Evaluation Regulation for Public Officials was established in 2010, and subsequently altered in 2012. This regulation was written to support the evaluation of the performance of public officials, and to decide on the training they needed.

Nowadays, teacher performance evaluation attracts unprecedented attention on the part of politicians and academics around the world (Ozcan and Zaroglu 2016). A study of teacher perceptions related to teacher performance measures in China was conducted. Also, a mixed method research approach with some degree of quantitative dominance was used to investigate Chinese teachers' preferences, and the possible causes of such preferences in terms of performance measures. Considering the quantitative results, co-operation with faculty and staff, and the use of student test scores were required for performance evaluation. In addition, teachers who participated in the qualitative questionnaire stated that the morale and the workload of

the teacher, and the examination scores of the students could be assessed as well (Liu et al. 2016).

In 2009, an application was launched in China that provided teachers with performance-based wages. Additionally, performance evaluation based mainly on quantitative data such as student test scores enabled teachers to shape their work and adopt a harmonious professionalism approach. As a result of this practice, the workload of teachers increased and teachers who performed well in terms of empirical performance indicators were given professional development and remuneration opportunities. The findings revealed the need to focus on the autonomy of the teacher in order to achieve the goal of increasing the quality of education (Wang et al. 2014). Kan (2015) and Bowen and Mills (2017) also achieved similar results in their research. To sum up, there is no consensus that performance-based wages will lead to improvements in the workforce.

A study in Uganda demonstrated the need to develop teacher innovation competency in order to have effective higher education. The importance of using students and education administrators to assess teacher performance effectively at universities was also emphasized (Wilson et al. 2015).

The assessment model of public school teachers in Portugal has undergone significant changes since 2007. These changes, worth highlighting as of concern to public education, were seen as reflections of a political rationalization that struggled to empower the procedural quality in public administration. However, Portuguese teachers reacted negatively, and eventually this led to numerous modifications to the initial performance evaluation model (Tomás and Costa 2011). In Chile, for instance, the Teacher Association, the Union of Municipalities and the Ministry of Education, being the three public bodies responsible for evaluating teacher performance, underlined the importance of necessary negotiations, consultations and sufficient time for the system to be embedded for a reasonable system to be developed (Avalos and Assael 2006).

Performance evaluation is an important component of every institution, including educational establishments. The results of a substantial amount of research conducted in the field of education highlights the fact that form teachers

are the most important predictors of primary school students' academic success. Teachers assume an important position in ameliorating or reforming the education system of their countries, and this is the reason behind the importance of teachers doing their best in helping students to become educated to the best of their abilities, as well as helping them improve their academic performance by highlighting their weaker and stronger aspects. Both such aims can be achieved by advancing a research-based teacher evaluation system (Uzunboylu and Tuncay 2010). Navidinia et al. (2015) for instance, proposed a new model for evaluating teacher performance in the domain of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education and Kuimova et al. (2017) agreed with this notion.

Filipe et al. (2015) underscored a multi-criteria information system for aiding the assessment of pedagogical applications. Performance evaluations using earlier procedures were studied with respect to individual school boards and/or professionals responsible for evaluating assessment progress, a situation that inevitably led to variations in their specifications. Giving rise to a degree of uncertainty, this situation handicapped the pedagogical evaluation of teachers as the tenets of equality, impartialness and managerial transparency could not be fully highlighted. The aim of this research is to infuse the technique of cognitive mapping with the uses of survey measures as part of an evaluation technique based on a categorical basis (MACBETH), and thus provide a more transparent evaluation system that could possibly provide new insights into the career development of form teachers.

Tasdemir (2007) focused on levels of perception and colleague competency in the case of form teachers, with a sample of 219 participants working in public schools registered by the Turkish Ministry of Education. Data were obtained from surveys of primary school education assessment and from the evaluation of teachers with regard to the process of instruction programming. The study results suggested that the participating teachers tended to make poor use of computer technology, and were also in significant need of vocational training. In addition, the participants tended to rate their own professional competency and vocational enthusiasm higher than that of their coworkers. They also indicated that performance-based evaluations were necessary in organizing the rights of teach-

ers as employees. Teacher performance was also indicated elsewhere as an important factor when it came to ensuring a successful and efficient education system (Pikoň et al. 2017). However, it is known that teachers need to be competent in using technology in education (Ozdamli 2013; Uzunboylu and Tugun 2016; Baglama et al. 2017).

Studying student feedback responses from 80 voluntary participants, Turhan et al. (2005) highlighted that such data could be a valuable method for evaluating the quality of primary school education. These students indicated that their form teachers had significant communication problems, and that teachers offering poor feedback were considered as having worse communication skills.

Aksit (2006), on the other hand, added to the existing insights into performance evaluation by underscoring the value of supervision in education. It was highlighted that a supervising body would be necessary for personal development, as well as for improving professional competency in line with the goals of the institution of education. The same condition applies to teachers as well: they need to be supervised in order to improve their professional competency and efficacy in teaching (Erdem 2006). Supervision in terms of achieving goals in education can be likened to a compass: it can be used to pinpoint certain drawbacks and to introduce necessary corrections (Uzunboylu et al. 2015; Farren 2016). Zarnaghash et al. (2015) also pointed out the importance of performance, and reported a statistically significant correlation between the level of performance and the happiness ratings of the participants. In a recent study, Bayram et al. (2016) aimed at examining the attitudes of teachers in training within a learning atmosphere. Their findings indicated that avoiding performance was the least popular option amongst their sample group, which could mean that teachers in training tend to put emphasis on their performance.

Altun and Memisoglu (2008) also pointed out that supervision, having a central role in teaching, is an important factor that needs to be seriously addressed to remedy the current deficiencies. Consequently, the extent of unsatisfactory supervision makes research into the supervision of teaching performance an important area of focus. For this reason, the researchers intended to undertake a content analysis of stud-

ies published in this area. Consequently, they aimed to outline certain characteristics of the studies concerned with performance evaluations involving distribution over time, sources and authors, distribution with respect to universities, countries, document types, research topic by year, methodological tendencies and, finally, study group tendencies.

Sahin and Turkoglu (2017) investigated expectations of in-service training programs of classroom teachers. According to the study, the successful ones were awarded financially based on the the performance evaluation results at the end of the course programs. Sarialtin (2017) stated that the efficiency goals and individual performance evaluation have influenced the sustainable productivity positively. In the study of Bayir et al. (2017), frequent performance evaluations and feedback to employees ultimately affected the productivity of the institution.

Sezgin et al. (2017) conducted a survey in Tokat province in Turkey to investigate the new system in which teachers' performances are evaluated by school administrators. Opinions of school administrators and teachers were taken for this purpose. Participants expressed that the performance evaluation system was implemented in order to improve teachers' professional orientation. Although the majority of teachers did not think that this new practice would achieve its goal, the majority of school principals had the exact opposite opinion. School principals also pointed out some shortcomings in the system.

Objectives

The main objective of this research is to investigate the studies in terms of methodological aspect used in the performance evaluations of schools. Also, this study attempts to evaluate the general trends by analyzing the papers utilizing the descriptive statistics in Scopus database.

METHODOLOGY

In this section the researchers will be presenting the study method, sample group characteristics, data collection procedure and the data analysis process.

The content analysis procedure was conducted with regard to 353 studies of performance

evaluations published in the Scopus database. Content analysis is a technique that is used for organizing, classifying, comparing and deriving results from written texts (Cohen et al. 2007; Demirok et al. 2015).

Study Group and Data Collection

In this study the researchers focused on 353 studies published in the Scopus database between the years 1972 and 2017 on performance evaluations in primary schools. The term “performance evaluation” was searched in Scopus, and studies found were then limited through the use of the keywords “education”, “school” and “teacher”. These keywords were identified in conjunction with a professional in the field. The reason for choosing Scopus is that it is the largest existing database, and includes journals, bulletin resources and books from as many as 5,000 publishers from all over the world. It is also the only database that is updated on a daily, and not on a weekly basis (Scopus 2017).

Data Analysis

Data presented in these studies were analyzed using descriptive statistical methods (percentages and frequencies). In other words, the frequency of studies published on performance evaluation was followed by their percentage values in terms of distribution. Tables and figures were also added for further clarification.

RESULTS

The results of the data analysis with respect to the study aims will be presented in this section. Again, tables and figures will be used for further clarification.

Distribution of Studies on Performance Evaluations with Respect to Year of Publication

Distribution of studies (published documents) on performance evaluation with respect to year of publication was given in Table 1. The 46 year interval between 1972 and 2017 could be seen to involve such studies, with the exception of an 8-year period when there were no apparent publications. Publications could be observed to have increased in number in the last 10 years,

with 2015 appearing to be the year with the highest number of documents published.

Table 1: Frequency and percentage values of research over time

<i>Year</i>	<i>Frequency (f)</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
1972	2	0.4
1973	0	0.0
1974	0	0.0
1975	0	0.0
1976	2	0.4
1977	0	0.0
1978	2	0.4
1979	2	0.4
1980	0	0.0
1981	0	0.0
1982	2	0.4
1983	0	0.0
1984	3	0.5
1985	1	0.2
1986	1	0.2
1987	2	0.4
1988	2	0.4
1989	0	0.0
1990	1	0.2
1991	4	0.7
1992	2	0.4
1993	3	0.5
1994	5	0.9
1995	3	0.5
1996	3	0.5
1997	6	1.1
1998	3	0.5
1999	7	1.3
2000	4	0.7
2001	5	0.9
2002	5	0.9
2003	10	1.8
2004	16	2.9
2005	10	1.8
2006	13	2.4
2007	17	3.1
2008	19	3.5
2009	27	4.9
2010	38	6.9
2011	33	6.0
2012	54	9.9
2013	46	8.4
2014	45	8.2
2015	69	12.6
2016	63	11.5
2017	18	3.3

Distribution of Studies on Performance Evaluation with Respect to Research Sources

Studies on performance evaluation were derived from 134 different sources. One study was taken from each of 94 sources, two studies were taken from each of 24 sources, three studies from

each of five sources and finally four studies from each of six remaining sources for inclusion in our study. The “Medical Education”, the “Journal of the American Osteopathic Association” and the “Journal of Research in Music Education” included five publications each on the topic under consideration. Five of the six studies in the journal “Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences” were published in 2010, while one study was published in 2009. The highest number of studies were published in the “Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education” with a count of nine documents in total. Two of these documents were published in 1995, while another seven documents were published in the years 1991, 1993, 1994, 1999, 2000, 2005 and 2007.

Authors of Studies on Performance Evaluation

One hundred and sixty different (160) authors conducted studies on performance evaluation. One hundred and nineteen (119) of these authors published one study each, while 35 authors published two studies each. The authors “K.M.J.M.H. Lombarts”, “S. Liu”, “J.R. Boulet and “O.A. Arah” published three studies each, while the highest number of publications were authored by “J.H. Stronge” and “J.R. Gimpel” with four studies each.

Distribution of Studies on Performance Evaluation with Respect to Universities

The studies on performance evaluation published within the Scopus database originated from 160 different universities was shown in Table 2. Accordingly, The College of William and Mary University was the university with the greatest number of publications with five distinct studies in total (1.7 % of total publications). The universities that follow with four published studies each are Universiti Teknologi MARA, University of Missouri-Columbia, Harvard University, Maastricht University, National Taiwan Normal University, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, University of California and the University of Wisconsin Madison.

Distribution of Studies on Performance Evaluation with Respect to Countries

As indicated in Table 3, the frequency and percentage values of studies done on perfor-

Table 2: Distribution of studies done with respect to universities

<i>Universities</i>	<i>Frequency (f)</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
The College of William and Mary	5	1.7
Universiti Teknologi MARA	4	1.4
University of Missouri-Columbia	4	1.4
Harvard University	4	1.4
Maastricht University	4	1.4
National Taiwan Normal University	4	1.4
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	4	1.4
University of California	4	1.4
University of Wisconsin Madison	4	1.4
Academic Medical Centre	3	1.0
University of Amsterdam	3	1.0
University of Pennsylvania	3	1.0
Louisiana State University	3	1.0
Western University	3	1.0
Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel	3	1.0
Universidad de Chile	3	1.0
Universidade do Minho	3	1.0
Beijing Normal University	3	1.0
Qufu Normal University	3	1.0
Tehran University of Medical Sciences	3	1.0
Marmara Universitesi	3	1.0
UCLA School of Public Health	3	1.0
Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico	3	1.0
Griffith University	3	1.0
Jingdezhen Ceramic Institute	3	1.0
Other	204	71.1

Table 3: Distribution of studies done with respect to countries

<i>Country</i>	<i>Frequency (f)</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
USA	135	33.9
China	45	11.3
Taiwan	22	5.5
Turkey	17	4.3
Australia	16	4.0
United Kingdom	14	3.5
Canada	12	3.0
Malaysia	10	2.5
Iran	8	2.0
Chile	7	1.8
Portugal	7	1.8
Spain	7	1.8
Germany	6	1.5
India	6	1.5
Japan	6	1.5
Mexico	6	1.5
Netherlands	6	1.5
South Korea	6	1.5
Other	62	15.6

mance evaluation with respect to countries were sampled from Scopus, originated from 52 different countries. Countries with five or less published studies were separated under the heading “other”. Accordingly, the United States of America (USA) was the country with the greatest number of studies published, with a total of 135 (33.9 %). The countries that follow are China (11.3 %), Taiwan (5.5 %), Turkey (4.3 %), Australia (4.0 %), the United Kingdom (3.5 %), Canada (3.0 %) and Malaysia (2.5 %), respectively.

Distribution of Studies on Performance Evaluation with Respect to Study Document Type

Distribution of studies on performance evaluation with respect to study document type were analyzed by using Scopus. The document type with the highest percentage was “article” with approximately seventy-seven percent, to be followed by “proceedings” with fourteen percent, “review” with six percent, “book chapter” with two percent, and finally, “book” with one percent.

Distribution of Studies on Performance Evaluation with Respect to Research Fields

The study sample involved 22 research fields under the topic of performance evaluation. The Scopus database indicates that a total of 548 studies were published in these fields. This number, though, is a result of some publications belonging to more than one research field. The research field with the highest number of publications is social sciences (185). This is followed by medicine (74), computer science (55), business administration and accounting (53), psychology (34), engineering (25) and finally, arts and humanities (21).

Distribution of Studies on Performance Evaluation with Respect to Research Methods Employed

The distribution of studies on performance evaluation with respect to the research methods used are outlined in Table 4. Accordingly, quantitative research methods were the most frequently employed in slightly more than half of the studies with 51.3 percent. Qualitative methods were employed in approximately 40.5 percent of studies included, while 5.9 percent of the studies used a mixed methods approach, with the

remaining 2.3 percent relying on a background literature review as a research method.

Table 4: Distribution of research methods

<i>Research method</i>	<i>Frequency (f)</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Quantitative	181	51.3
Qualitative	143	40.5
Mixed	21	5.9
Literature	8	2.3

Distribution of Studies on Performance Evaluation with Respect to the Study Groups Included

The distribution with respect to study groups’ highlights, as indicated in Table 5, that the category of “other” is the most frequently examined study group (177 studies). This category involves studies using literature reviews as a method and studies that developed their own models of performance evaluation. “Students” (68) as well as “teachers” (60) were also amongst the most commonly indicated study groups.

Table 5: Distribution of study groups

<i>Study group</i>	<i>Frequency (f)</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Other	177	50.1
Students	68	19.3
Teachers	60	17.0
Teachers and students	8	2.3
School administrators	5	1.4
Medical intern doctors	5	1.4
Schools	4	1.1
Patients	4	1.1
Faculties	3	0.8
Musicians	3	0.8
Medical intern doctors and faculty members	3	0.8
Managers	3	0.8
Teachers, managers and students	2	0.6
University teachers and students	2	0.6
Technical institutes	2	0.6
Medical doctors	2	0.6
Company managers	2	0.6

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study was conducted to assess the methodological specifications and general tendencies of studies published in Scopus on the

performance evaluation of form teachers. The researchers' results indicate that the number of such studies has increased in the last 10 years, and 2015 saw the greatest number of publications in recent years. The greatest number of studies on performance evaluations were published in the "Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education", and this journal has been renamed "Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability" since 2007. The main objective of this journal is to promote research in various levels with respect to sub-fields in education, evaluation and accountability (Springer 2017). For this reason, it was no surprise to find out that the greatest number of studies published in assessment and evaluation research were found in this journal.

The authors with four publications each, the highest number that the researchers could identify in their study group, were "J.H. Stronge" and "J.R. Gimpel". Stronge's research interests involve teacher competency and efficacy, teacher as well as managerial evaluation, and policies concerning teacher selection. Stronge's professional past includes employment in public as well as international institutions of education in terms of designing and applying evaluation systems, as well as employment strategies with regards to teachers and managers (Ozcan and Gunduz 2016; William and Mary School of Education 2017). Amongst all the 160 universities, The College of William and Mary was the university that published the greatest number of studies in the field, with five individual publications. J.H. Stronge is currently employed at this university and wrote four of the five studies attributed to this institution. The researchers' findings also indicate that USA is the country with the greatest number of publications, with a total of 135. The content analysis undertaken by Cherrstrom et al. (2017) on adult education which incorporated a 10-year longitudinal design, also revealed USA is the country with greatest number of published studies. These studies span the interval between 2006 and 2015.

The majority of published studies on the field of the performance evaluation of form teachers was in the form of journal articles in the social sciences field. The researchers were able to identify 185 distinct articles under the heading of social sciences. Further examination revealed that 181 studies employed a quantitative research approach, while 143 studies made use of

qualitative methods. However, mixed designs (21) and literature reviews (8) were not frequently relied-upon methods. Arriving at a similar conclusion with a content analysis study, Selcuk et al. (2014) identified quantitative methods as the most frequently-chosen method of study. Their study examined publications in the journal "Eđitim ve Bilim" (Education and Science, Turkish trans.) and, similar to the researchers' study, identified the most frequently chosen research method to be quantitative methods, followed by qualitative designs, mixed designs and finally, literature reviews. Sozbilir et al. (2012) also reached a similar conclusion relying on the results of their content analysis, highlighting qualitative and mixed designs to be less frequently chosen than quantitative methods. Goktas et al. (2012) listed literature reviews to be followed by qualitative methods and mixed designs, consecutively, as the most frequently-chosen quantitative methods. In addition to this, the study of Pendse and Inman (2017), covering 34 years on international student-centered counseling, revealed that quantitative method in content analysis was the most commonly used method.

Further examination of the findings revealed that the category of "other" was the most frequently indicated study group with a total of 177 studies. "Students" and "teachers" were also amongst the most frequently-chosen study groups, with 68 and 60 studies, respectively. In a similar manner, Gokmen et al. (2017) reviewed the methodological trends of distance education theses published between 2005 and 2014. In these studies, the most preferred study groups in all methodologies were found as students and adults. Moreover, according to the study by Eraslan and Algun (2005), although many performance evaluation methods are available, the majority of these methods can only be used for certain systems. Therefore, the current array of performance evaluation methods is not sufficient.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it can be stated that the performance evaluations have been considered as assuming increasing importance in recent years compared with the past. This has led to an increase in academic interest in the topic lately. But still the majority of these studies are carried out based on qualitative methods.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the viewpoints of different perspectives, the research method of choice for such studies is still being debated. The future studies examining the effectiveness and findings using different research methods can offer invaluable insights for contemporary discussions related to the field.

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