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Feasibility of Establishing Descriptive Evaluation and its Benefits in Secondary Schools of Iran

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Abstract. The purpose of this study is to assess the feasibility of establishing descriptive evaluation and its use in secondary school from the perspective of secondary school's teachers in Hamadan. Basically, in order to evaluate the achievement of students in schools, used two methods of quantitative evaluation and descriptive evaluation. The quantitative evaluation follows the principles of classical psychology and behaviorism, while the descriptive evaluation follows the principles of constructivist psychology. The method of this research is descriptive and survey type. The statistical population includes all 577 secondary school teachers in Hamadan, of which 234 were selected by stratified random sampling method. In order to assess the feasibility, five components were considered includes human, structural, technological, temporal, and financial. A researcher-made questionnaire with a five-point Likert scale was used to collect information. The validity of tool was confirmed by experts and its reliability was obtained through Cronbach's alpha of 83%. In order to analyze information were used descriptive and inferential statistics. The results showed that in structural component, the studied fields are not provided (submitted circulars, content of books, application of plan in all courses and foundations). In the technological component, there are no hardware and software facilities in secondary schools to implement this plan. In the time component of school year, daily school time and time in classroom are not commensurate with descriptive evaluation plan. The financial component does not provide sufficient budget for implementation of plan. In the human component, education teachers lack of interest and ability to implement this plan.

Keywords: Feasibility, Evaluation, Descriptive Evaluation, Secondary School

1. Introduction

Evaluation is determination of value of a thing or the value judgment of that thing. In evaluation of learning or evaluation of students' achievement, judgments are made about the extent to which they succeed in achieving educational goals or learning objectives. By definition, evaluation of achievement is measurement of learners' performance and comparison of results with predetermined educational goals in order to decide whether the teacher's educational activities and students' learning efforts have been successful and how much success has been achieved [1]?

Educational evaluation according to method of implementation is divided into two categories: final or cumulative and descriptive or formative. The final evaluation is done once after the training to determine if the training has reached its predetermined goals or not. But descriptive evaluation is the process of collecting, analyzing and interpreting information resulting from use of various tools that lead to appropriate decisions and provide useful and effective descriptive feedback to leads the better realization of goals [2]. The basic approach accepted in this type of evaluation is to pay attention to formative evaluation and reduce the extreme role of final evaluation in students' schooling destiny. It means the main goal is to improve learning and not to give degrees and select students, or just a tool for school accountability [3].

The use of quantitative assessment in secondary schools has caused students to be confused about their educational future and also has caused parents to worry [4]. Elementary school students are accustomed to descriptive assessment, and the change in assessment style in secondary school has caused confusion and anxiety for these students. Also, advantages of descriptive evaluation over final evaluation have encouraged the change of evaluation approach from final to descriptive in secondary school. In the continuation of article, some researches are mentioned that related to the subject of this article.

In [5] conducted a study entitled "Phenomenology of Elementary Teachers' Experiences of Complete Implementation of Qualitative-Descriptive Evaluation Plan" with the aim of gaining the experiences of elementary teachers regarding the complete implementation of the qualitative-descriptive evaluation plan in primary schools. The results identify and categorize the six benefits of implementing a descriptive evaluation plan: dynamic evaluation process, rational reduction of stress and increase of self-confidence, compliance with original assessment criteria, problem solving rejection, growth of judgment skills, strengthening the spirit of cooperation. Also seven weaknesses implementation of descriptive evaluation plan: reduction of motivation of gifted students, time problem, ambiguity of concept and results of descriptive evaluation, problems in implementation due to increased activities, lack of accurate information about students' educational status, lack of necessary facilities and reduced meaningful learning.

In [6] entitled "Phenomenological Analysis of Primary School Teachers 'Perceptions and Lived Experience of Strengths and Weaknesses of Descriptive Evaluation Program" identified six weaknesses of: reducing students' motivation, enthusiasm and sensitivity to learning and education, Increasing the decline in learning and fueling student illiteracy, decreasing justice in assessing students, extremely reducing students' stress, increasing wide-ranging psychological and physical pressure on teachers and inadequacy between available facilities and requirements in descriptive assessment as well as eight strengths including: eliminating the hassle of teachers to write students' names, possibility of using multiple methods

in student assessment, reducing student stress, student assessment process, reducing teachers 'difficulties in responding to parents, reducing phenomenon of exam night study, solving the problem of students' rejection due to weakness in a lesson, more flexibility in descriptive evaluation and a wider field of teacher practice. In [7] a study entitled "Pathology of Qualitative-Descriptive Evaluation in schools" showed that the main disadvantages of qualitative-descriptive evaluation plan is scattering content in textbooks, large volume of books especially mathematics, difficult content of textbooks, inconsistency of content with qualitative-descriptive evaluation, lack of facilities for teaching some content, lack of knowledge of teachers about goals of descriptive evaluation and negative attitude to it.

In [8] a study entitled "Pathology of Implementation of Qualitative-Descriptive Evaluation Plan in Schools in Damghan city" found that: in order of priority from teachers' point of view, the harms that caused the descriptive evaluation plan to fail to achieve expected goals are: unclear vocabulary of comparisons, lack of educational time, variety of data collection tools, the possibility of promoting poor students to higher levels, insufficient in-service workshops during the implementation of project, unjustified workshops, unjustified parents to plan, reducing the sense of competition and motivation, incompatibility of volume of content and textbooks with data collection tools and educational time, unclear goals of plan, taste and difficulty in interpreting information in the form of scales, students being confused at entrance to higher level and not evaluating and getting feedback from teachers during and end of the year.

In [9] entitled "Study of Barriers and Methods to Improve the Quality of Descriptive Evaluation System from the Perspective of Teachers in Zanjan City" showed that the implementation of descriptive evaluation has been encountered with barriers and problems within the system: teachers' negative attitude towards innovation and transformation, internal inconsistency between effective components of curriculum planning, lack of motivation of teachers, low educational standards in many schools, low knowledge and awareness of teachers, lack of facilities, lack of teaching and learning appropriate approaches to quality assessment and lack appropriateness of structure and organization in education as well as external barriers such as: lack of appropriate resources and literature on descriptive evaluation approach, negative attitude of parents towards change and innovation and low level of strong media cooperation such as radio and television to properly disseminate the plan. According to teachers, the importance of each barriers is the same within the system and outside the system in relation to the quality of descriptive evaluation. In [10] entitled "Description of Evaluation and Descriptive Evaluation in Practice" have stated that what is being done in the country's schools is not what the experts intended according to the evidence and research of researchers. Various reasons such as time-consuming implementation of the plan and increasing the workload of teachers in school, high density of students, lack of facilities and equipment, multi-grade classes in rural schools, dissatisfaction of group of parents and lack of attention of education officials in a few years Recently, there are factors that have prevented the proper implementation of this plan in schools.

In [11] conducted a study entitled "Pathology of Using Workbook Tools in Descriptive Evaluation and Guidance to Solve these Problems". The purpose of this study is to examine the situation and problems in implementation of student workbook evaluation and also to provide guidance for solving problems. The results showed that common problems in portfolio assessment include lack of knowledge and understanding of teachers in conducting assessment, lack of attention and poor cooperation of students in collecting materials and lack of sufficient budget in conducting assessment. In [12] conducted a study entitled "Using Descriptive Evaluation in Secondary and Higher Education." The results of the study, descriptive evaluation is recommended as an alternative method of quantitative evaluation for students and any other educational system. Because descriptive evaluation provides the achievement of high-level cognitive goals. In [13] concluded in their research that descriptive assessment can be used as a tool for individual or group guidance in student learning. Descriptive evaluation can also be used as a tool in teachers' work experience to improve their teaching methods. The results of [14] research indicate that descriptive evaluation is effective in increasing students' motivation to study and informing them about what they have learned and where they need to study more. Descriptive assessment also serves as a tool for learning, which helps the learning process and outcomes. In [15] in a study entitled "Teachers' Understanding of Descriptive Assessment and its Application in Grades One to Twelve" has addressed the issue of descriptive assessment and teachers' level of knowledge and understanding of it. Findings showed that there was a significant difference between teachers in using evaluation feedback in the classroom, but there was no significant difference in teachers' knowledge and understanding and in method of using this type of evaluation. In [16] conducted a study entitled "Pathology of Descriptive Evaluation Model in order to Provide a Suitable Model in Elementary School" with the aim of pathology of descriptive evaluation model of academic achievement. The results showed that due to the fact that the scope of descriptive-qualitative evaluation plan in elementary school is increasing every year, quantitative evaluation is still used in lower secondary school and this has caused parents and students to worry and confuse about their future schooling.

It should be noted that Feasibility Study basically means studying the possibility or refusal to implement an idea, plan or project. Based on this, the feasibility of a project is examined from different perspectives to answer the question whether it is possible to operate a project at a specific time in a specific organization or institution or not? So in this research, the researchers intend to examine the possibility of implementing and benefiting from descriptive evaluation from different perspectives in the secondary schools of Iran. Five main fields of feasibility study including: human, structural, technological, temporal and financial feasibility study are used to answer this question: How much is possibility of establishing descriptive evaluation plan in secondary school and What is the benefiting of this from perspective of secondary school's teachers in the city of Hamedan in academic year 2019-2020?

Research Questions

1. What is the status of human descriptive evaluation in secondary school according to secondary school's teachers?

2. What is the structural status of descriptive evaluation in secondary school according to secondary school's teachers?

3. What is the status of descriptive evaluation technology in secondary school according secondary school's teachers?

4. What is the status of descriptive evaluation time in secondary school according to secondary school's teachers?

5. What is the status of financial establishment of descriptive evaluation in secondary school according to secondary school's teachers?

2. Methodology

The kind of this research is applied research that is done by descriptive-analytical method and also by survey method. Since statistical population of this study is all 577 secondary school teachers in Hamadan, 234 were selected by stratified random sampling method. In order to obtain results of studies and surveys from receipt form, using a researcher-made questionnaire that were classified in form of Likert scale. Data analysis in this study consists of two main parts: description data and inferential data. In description data section, descriptive statistics and frequency distributions are described. In the inferential data section, used single sample t-test in order to examine the degree of realization of structural, technological, temporal, financial and human feasibility from the perspective of teachers. Friedman test was also used to prioritize the level of human achievement, technological structure, time and financial feasibility of descriptive evaluation in high school. The questionnaire of this research has five main components of feasibility (human, structural, technological, temporal f and financial feasibility) and nine sub-components (human resources, regulations and administrative rules, book content, Courses, basics, hardware facilities, software facilities, length of school year, daily school time, class time and adequate budget and credits) including 32 closed-ended questions and a descriptive survey to gather teachers' opinions about subject of research is that a questionnaire was given to teachers in secondary schools of Hamadan.

3. Findings

Analysis of teachers' answers to questions of questionnaire related to the first research question indicates that there is significant difference between the sample mean and the hypothetical average of population at the level of 0.01 (t = 37.66) regarding the human status of descriptive evaluation in secondary school. The results indicate that descriptive status of human deployment in secondary school according to teachers is lower than average because the average obtained is 2.67 less than the hypothetical average of number (3). Therefore, the analysis of answers related to the human feasibility questions of the research questionnaire shows the lack of teachers 'ability to use different methods and tools of evaluation, teachers' inability to use descriptive evaluation, lack of postgraduate education in the majority of this teachers, weakness in

specialized manpower in order to hold in-service classes and family education to acquaint teachers and parents of students with the qualitative-descriptive evaluation plan, the lack of expertise and experience is necessary in secondary school principals.

Analysis of teachers' answers to questions of questionnaire related to second research question indicates there is a significant difference between sample mean and hypothetical average of population at level of 0.01 (t = 72.21) regarding the structural status of descriptive evaluation in secondary school. The results indicate that the structural establishment of descriptive evaluation in secondary school according to teachers is moderate to low, because the average obtained is 2.85 less than the hypothetical average of number (3). Therefore, the analysis of the answers related to the structural feasibility questions of research questionnaire shows the lack of consideration of teachers' opinions and suggestions in order to implement a descriptive evaluation plan in secondary school by planners and implementers, lack of transparency in administrative circulars to describe and explaining new education plans including descriptive evaluation, not delegating the necessary authority to teachers and principals to upgrade students' educational level, disproportionate content of textbooks with descriptive evaluation plan in secondary school and teachers' emphasis on changing content appropriate to descriptive evaluation and inability to implement a descriptive evaluation plan in all secondary school courses.

Analysis of teachers' answers to questions of questionnaire related to the third research question indicates that there is a significant difference between the sample average and the hypothetical average of population at the level of 0.01 (t = 56.25) regarding the technological deployment of descriptive evaluation in secondary school. The results show that technological deployment status of descriptive evaluation in secondary school is lower to average because the average obtained is 2.47 less than the hypothetical average of number (3). Therefore, the analysis of the answers related to the technological feasibility questions of the research questionnaire shows that the classroom space is not suitable for a large number of students, the lack of appropriate hardware facilities such as desks, benches and boards; laptops, computers, projectors and smart boards; Printing and reproduction facilities, space and laboratory and workshop facilities, and appropriate maps and diagrams; lack of proper educational and evaluation software facilities and high-speed internet and also lack of educational and evaluation publications in secondary schools.

Analysis of teachers' answers to questions of questionnaire related to the forth research question indicates that there is a significant difference between the sample average and the hypothetical average of the population at the level of 0.01 (t = 59.92) regarding time establishment status of descriptive evaluation in secondary school. The results show that the time status of descriptive evaluation in secondary school is lower to average according to teachers, because the average obtained is 2.97 less than the hypothetical average of number (3). Analysis of answers of the section related to the feasibility questions of the research questionnaire shows that the time is not appropriate for all lesson (90 minutes). There are limitations in the field of daily time as well as the length of

the academic year for the optimal implementation of descriptive evaluation.

Analysis of teachers' answers to questions of questionnaire related to the fifth research question indicates that there is a significant difference between the sample average and the hypothetical average of the population at the level of 0.01 (t = 37.66) regarding the financial situation of descriptive evaluation in secondary school. The results show that the financial situation of descriptive evaluation in secondary school is lower to average according to teachers because the average obtained is 2.15 less than the hypothetical average, ie the number (3). Analysis of answers to the financial feasibility questions of the research questionnaire shows the lack of sufficient funds to hold seminars and workshops in the field of familiarization of teachers and parents with descriptive evaluation, inability of education to pay the executive agents of the project, and lack of education support for hardware and software facilities.

4. Conclusion

According to many experts in education, the main and most important factor for success of change, reform and implementation of a new plan is specialized manpower. This manpower must be capable, motivated enough and receptive to new plan. In other words, the new plan must be consistent with the teacher's worldview and ideas so that the teacher does not resist it. Also, the new plan should have privileges for teacher so that teacher can implement the new plan willingly. The teacher must also increase his abilities every year and keep up with the latest information in the world. Also according to the results of this research, many teachers and school principals, especially older teachers and principals have not been able to adapt to change and are not able to fully use computers, audio-visual media and various software and during their service for various reasons such as: not holding classes while serving effectively, not continuing to pursue graduate courses, and lacking sufficient motivation. From the teachers' point of view, education manpower for various reasons lacks sufficient motivation to accept and implement new projects in education. These reasons include: lack of funding for teachers, lack of attention of educational system to their comments, criticisms and suggestions. The findings of this study also show that since teachers are accustomed to traditional assessment methods, they resist to new changes. Also, based on the findings of this study, secondary school teachers are mostly not familiar enough with the descriptive evaluation plan and are not familiar with the different methods of its implementation.

The results of this study showed that education does not have the capacity of specialized human resources to conduct in-service classes for teachers and educational workshops for family in order to get acquainted with the descriptive evaluation plan. Another of the most central human factors is principals of school. Principal who does not believe in new plans, cannot lead school teachers to change. Teachers participating in this study believe that school principals do not have enough expertise and motivation to implement descriptive evaluation plan. Another most central human factors is any change in educational system is school principals. A principal who does not believe in new plans cannot lead school teachers to change. Teachers participating in this study believe that

school principals do not have enough expertise and motivation to implement a qualitative-descriptive evaluation plan. According to them, some reasons for this are:

School principals are selected among teachers with a long history because the increase in management salaries affects their pensions, which has caused many blows to education, like low level of information is the degree and motivation of these managers. Also, school principals are managed mainly politically, not with professional competencies. Therefore, less qualified and motivated teachers are used in school management. According to teachers, in recent years educational system has organized a test to check the qualifications of management volunteers, but according to many teachers, this test is held in a completely formal way. Because the managers of the previous year do not need to take the exam and those who passed the exam must be approved by the education officials of the region.

It should be noted that according to the results of the research, the opinions and suggestions of teachers are not used to implement educational projects, especially about descriptive evaluation. According to the teachers, the circulars sent to schools are not clear enough. Teachers also lacking the necessary practical authority to promote students to higher levels according contrary educational laws. Most teachers stated that the content of secondary school textbooks is more appropriate for traditional evaluation than for qualitative-descriptive evaluation.

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