

## Evaluation in the People's Republic of China

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Original evaluation practice in China can be dated back to the ancient time of 2200 B.C when the Chinese used essay examinations to help select civil service employees or to choose the most talented learner to serve in the civic administration (Drummond, 2003). Modern evaluation practice is still mostly succeeding the early practice that government-sponsored evaluation plays a decisive role in evaluating all kinds of national development activities. Evaluation conducted by NGO (non-government organization) has not yet exercised any influence on the current evaluation practice. In the past two decades, China has seen rapid growth of a significant number of government-sponsored evaluation organizations established and a lot of evaluation activities conducted, suggesting that the important role of evaluation in national development has been highly recognized. The evaluation defined as providing information for decision making (Cronbach, 1963; Stufflebeam, et al., 1971) has been well accepted by various evaluation organizations. Deng Nan, vice-minister of the Ministry of Science and Technology (*People's Daily*, November 1, 1999) said that evaluation system can be of great help to the government and can function in the following four aspects: 1) improving the decision making process; 2) enhancing the macro-level management of technology; 3) promoting innovation in the science and technology management system; 4) and reinforcing the authority of the making and implementation of the national science plan. However, according to Bao, Zhang

and Li (2002), the conduct of an evaluation and the utilization of evaluation results are governed by principles characteristic of the administration, and also affected by the cultural characteristics. It is not easy to give a comprehensive description of the current evaluation practice in China, for the evaluation organizations are independent of each other and operate their duties closely related to their field respectively. But a brief introduction of some of the evaluation organizations and evaluation activities in recent China can be informative to people working in the evaluation field.

## **Evaluation Organizations**

The National Center for Science and Technology Evaluation of China (NCSTEC) was set up by the Ministry of Science and Technology of China in 1994. According to Bao, Zhang and Li (2002), NCSTEC is a specialized agency with responsibility of the evaluation of government-sponsored Science and Technology (S&T) projects. NCSTEC is the leading organization in the field. It plays an important role in providing objective and impartial evaluation to government departments, enterprises and other investment organizations for decision-making related to S&T development. Since the establishment of the Centre, it has conducted many evaluations of major scientific research programs, large high-tech projects, and ventures in high-tech development zones. The key activities conducted by the Centre include:

- evaluations of government-sponsored S&T projects;
- evaluations of S&T policies;
- performance measurement for government-sponsored research institutes; providing services to enterprises and investment companies in the fields of

S&T project evaluations;

- enhancing relationships with international organizations, government departments and other non-government agencies;
- helping to build the capacity of local S&T evaluation agencies.

NCSTE administers an APEC S&T Evaluation Forum Website <http://www.apecevalu.org> for evaluation discussions. The Evaluation Forum aims at promoting the evaluation capacity development, sharing the theories and experience, exchanging information interactively and understanding each other effectively. Evaluation Forum includes main columns as following:  
*What's new*: for the events announcement;

- ✓ *Forums*: for the discussion and sharing the viewpoints, information and knowledge;
- ✓ *Research*: for the collecting and issuing research work both in theory and practice;
- ✓ *Report*: for publication of evaluation reports and so on;
- ✓ *Questionnaire*: for collecting the information and answers to enhance and update the web content continuously.

Higher Education Evaluation Center was established by the Ministry of Education in 2004 (*People's Daily*, October 27, 2004). According to the Ministry of Education, China's economy as well as higher education has developed rapidly in recent years, and higher education must have a professional evaluation system that accords with the economic development. The evaluation center has the following functions.

- The evaluation center will conduct an evaluation of the teaching quality in China's higher education institutions every five years.
- The evaluation center will evaluate the quality of teaching in nearly 2,000 college and universities in the country;
- Rather than ranking universities, the evaluation aims to publicize the teaching process.
- The evaluation center will produce evaluation reports on the evaluated with one of four grades: excellent, good, qualified and unqualified.
- The center will use some traditional appraisal methods, such as measuring graduate employment rate, and will review data on teaching status submitted by each university and overrule any fraudulent data.
- Education departments will join hands with industry associations to evaluate professional education at the universities, adding that the mechanism combining professional evaluation, certification and certificate granting will ensure quality education.
- Apart from improved assessment, the evaluation center also will distinguish itself in terms of capital and evaluation standard and a special fund will be set up to pay for the evaluation process;
- With this large-scale, recurring evaluation practice, China will establish institutionalized evaluation systems to upgrade China's education level.
- Evaluation of key universities will involve foreign experts.

It is learned that this is the first time China has set up a specialized education evaluation center, although the assessment on the teaching of higher educations

was initiated in 1994. By the end of 2003, the Ministry of Education had conducted evaluations on 296 universities, with 16 graded excellent and 192 qualified.

China Information Technology Security Certification Center (CNITSEC; <http://www.itsec.gov.cn>) was originally established in 1997. It is a Chinese Government's authority designed to fulfill national IT security certification responsibilities. In accordance with China laws of product quality certification and IT security management, CNITSEC operates and maintains National Evaluation and Certification Scheme for IT Security. CNITSEC is China's only authorized information technology security certification organization. It is also the only national certification center in China to adopt the international GB/T 18336 idt ISO 15408 standard to test, evaluate and certify information security products, systems and Web services. CNITSEC has the main functions as follows:

- test, evaluation and certification for infosec product and technology;
- evaluation and certification for information systems security;
- evaluation and certification for qualification of IT security service providers;
- evaluation and certification for information security professionals.

The National Center for Safety Evaluation of Drug (NCSED) was set up in China in June, 2002. (*Xinhua News Agency*, June 21, 2002). NCSED is the first drug safety evaluation center that opens in China. The purpose of the Center is to ensure the safety of medicines and it is intended to meet the requirements of the Good Laboratory Practice for Non-clinical Laboratory Studies. The Center was funded by the Chinese government with equipment and technological assistance provided by the Japanese government and the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

## Evaluation Activities

China to Establish Intellectual Property Rights Evaluation System (*People's Daily*, April 19, 2000). A senior official of China's State Intellectual Property Rights Bureau said that a complete intellectual property rights evaluation system will help speed up the commercialization of intellectual property in the domestic market. The evaluation of intellectual property rights is a product of the market economy as well as an important aspect in the commercialization of intellectual property rights.

Evaluation System to Improve City Environment (*Xinhua News Agency*, October 23, 2003). The Chinese government will institute an evaluation system for the natural and living environments of its cities and towns in the hope to harmonize the economic and social development in a sustainable way. According to Wang Guangtao, Minister for Construction, the new system would be designed to evaluate the conditions of natural and living environments including water and gas supply, sewage and trash treatment, drainage system, city greenbelt, biological diversity, heating system, energy, public transport and cultural relic protection.

China's Land Evaluation Open to Public Scrutiny (*People's Daily*, May 31, 2004). Information on over 200 real estate appraisal institutions and over 21,000 land appraisers can now be found in an online information system, as a move to clear away under-the-table practice in land transactions, according to the Ministry of Land and Resources (MLR). The land evaluation sector has been a major social concern in recent years along with the country's economic boom and scandals of illegal land transactions in the burgeoning real estate industry have frequented the media reports. "The system marks that China's land evaluation has begun to be conducted fully in the sunlight," said the MLR in a statement.

China GLP Standard Safety Evaluation Center to be Set Up (*People's Daily*, August 6, 2004). GLP means “good laboratory practice”. It is special management regulations formulated, specially aiming at the medical safety. Currently, no single GLP laboratory in the country reaches the international standards completely. Under this circumstance, no international “pass” is available when China exports its new medicine. Therefore, it is far from mutual recognition among GLP organizations from China and the other countries. After China’s entry into WTO, it is a dispensable foundation for the medicine industry to have a high-level evaluation organization meeting the international standards.

Patent evaluation System designed in Shanghai (*Xinhua News Agency*, May 4, 2004.). A system that can evaluate a patent and give a fair price to it has been designed successfully in Shanghai, and approved by experts. The system, designed by the Shanghai intellectual property right service center and the Shanghai Lixin asset evaluation company, can store numerous data and patent cases and is equipped with special software for evaluation of patents.

## References

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