

In What Ways Might Quality Be Controlled in Education, and What Are Their Advantages and Disadvantages?

Yueying Wang¹

¹ Xijing University, Xi'an, Shaanxi, China

Correspondence: Yueying Wang, Xijing University, Xi'an, Shaanxi, China

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Abstract

Quality has always been the key to the development of education, the concept of education quality is as old as education itself. Quality has become a key concept in the education discussion since the 1980s. While improving the quality of education, the issue of quality control has also received increasing attention, and gradually become a hot topic of discussion at the moment. In what ways to control the quality of education has become an important issue. Based on the background of British higher education, this paper will discuss how the performance-related pay (PRP) system and accountability system control the quality of education from the perspective of teacher professionalism.

Keywords: Performance-Related Pay (PRP) System, Accountability System, British higher education, teacher professionalism

1. Introduction

Held in Dakar in 2000, the World Education Forum not only emphasised the importance of achieving education for all, but also stated the need to improve the quality of education (Baker & Wiseman, 2007). The British education system use the performance-related pay (PRP) and accountability systems as techniques to control the quality of education. However, the implementation of these two systems has also brought some controversies. For example, many education practitioners believe that the PRP system is problematic and difficult to implement in schools (Farrell & Morris, 2004, p.81). The use of accountability in education is also considered a double-edged sword (Hao, 2009, p. 85). While monitoring and ensuring the quality of education, accountability may pose a threat to teachers' academic freedom. It can be seen that the advantages and disadvantages of these two systems coexist in the process of implementation.

To a large extent, the development of the PRP and accountability system can control quality in the context of British higher education. First of all, teaching is a professional profession, so teacher professionalism needs to be continuously developed to meet the needs of the times and society (Rohma *et al.*, 2020). Recent surveys indicate that the quality of teachers is critical to student achievement (Atkinson *et al.*, 2009, p. 251). High-quality teaching may be considered the most important factor in the learning process of students, the teaching level is directly related to student achievement, so it is worthwhile to invest in teachers (OECD, 2016). However, teaching is not an economically attractive profession, so many teachers leave this profession because of relatively low wages (Akiba & LeTendre, 2009, p.22). In 2000 and 2001, England and Wales respectively introduced the PRP system (Farrell & Morris, 2004, p. 81). The PRP system is not only an important part of stabilising teacher teaching, but also can further motivate teachers to perform high-quality work (Hulleman & Barron, 2010). The implementation of PRP has two functions. The first is an incentive mechanism to encourage teachers to make greater efforts, and the other is the recruitment and retention mechanism to improve teaching quality (Atkinson *et al.*, 2009, p. 251). In education, the accountability system is more commonly used than the PRP system. Because the accountability system was implemented earlier than the PRP, and the scope of

accountability is broader. The accountability system for higher education in the UK has been developing since the 1980s (Hao, 2009, p. 85). Over the past two decades, the implementation of accountability policies is one of the strongest and most common trends in global education policies (OECD, 2016). The accountability system can not only supervise teachers' teaching quality, but can also supervise colleges and universities to ensure the public interest.

This paper will first define the concept of quality in education, and then analyse the relationships between different quality concepts and higher education. Then, the concept and development of teacher professionalism will be discussed. Next, this paper will outline the practice and development of the PRP and accountability in British higher education, and analyse the advantages and challenges of the implementation of these two systems. Finally, this paper will discuss how the PRP and accountability systems can be improved in educational practice, so as to ensure a higher quality of education.

2. The Quality of Higher Education

Quality is a macro concept, and is interpreted differently based on who uses the term and how it is used (Harvey & Green, 1993, p. 10). Various stakeholders exist in higher education, including students, employers, teaching and non-teaching staff, government and funding agencies, certifiers and evaluators (Harvey & Green, 1993). Most of researchers has different views on quality. This is not to look at the same thing from different perspectives, but to look at different things with the same label from different perspectives. The different concepts of quality are divided into five independent but interrelated categories. These classifications allow people to systematically and overview different ways of thinking about the quality of higher education. These categories include: quality as exception, quality as perfection, quality as fitness for purpose, quality as value for money and quality as transformation (Wittek & Kvernbekk, 2011). Evaluating the quality of higher education requires an understanding of these different concepts of quality.

First of all, quality as exception is related to particularity. Rather than a quality judged by a set of standards, this quality is the type that most people cannot achieve (Elken, 2007, p. 11). For example, Oxford or Cambridge universities are often regarded as educational institutions that reflect the highest quality. It is difficult to assess quality in this sense because there may not be a clear way to determine it (Wittek & Kvernbekk, 2011). People may determine what constitutes excellence based on quality standards, but these are virtually impossible to achieve or can only be achieved to a certain extent. Under normal circumstances, school's reputation and resource level determine the level of excellence, which means recruiting excellent graduates, providing a good environment suitable for learning and other measures to ensure the stability of quality.

Second. For quality as perfection, the key is to ensure that the quality of each part of the process is diligent and perfect. This perspective on quality embodies a concept of prevention rather than control. All participants in the organisation strive to meet the set goals, and everyone is responsible for quality (Wittek & Kvernbekk, 2011, p. 673). Quality is thus defined as the perfect focus on the process, how the actors should behave at each stage, and how to establish an accountability culture for all participants.

The third category is quality as fitness for purpose. This is neither related to ideals nor process, but is judged based on how well the product or service meets its purpose (Wittek & Kvernbekk, 2011, p. 674). In order to measure whether an institution or school has fulfilled the required quality standards, quality assurance serve as the mechanism to examine whether the expected quality results have been produced.

The fourth category, quality as value for money, is difficult to distinguish from the third category, quality as fitness for purpose, because the two are closely related. Closely related with the economy, quality as value for money is measured by profit, which means that the quality of higher education is a measure of its effectiveness. The factors that reflect effectiveness are the control mechanism, quantifiable results, observation ratings of teaching and various research evaluations.

The last category is quality as transformation. There are two concepts in this transformation: improving student abilities and empowering students (Wittek & Kvernbekk, 2011, p. 674). Both seem to imply validity, which adds to the problem of category boundaries. In educational philosophy, transformation is generally discussed under the concept of education.

These five categories provide a comprehensive interpretation of the different categories of quality. Quality represent different things to different people. In fact, the same person may adopt different concepts at different moments. Quality is an important issue in British higher education. This has always been important for those involved in the education process. The expansion of opportunities, the increase in the level of participation, and the pressure of human and material resources, evaluation, audit and evaluation have improved the image of the quality of higher education (Harvey & Green, 1993, p. 9). At present, the competition among higher education institutions is intensifying, and the requirements for quality are getting higher and higher. How to control the quality of education becomes increasingly important.

3. Teacher Professionalism

Teacher professionalism refers to the knowledge, skills, and practices that teachers must possess in order to become effective educators. Professionalism is the unique quality and behavioural characteristics of professional teachers (Rohma *et al.*, 2020, p. 15). Grace (1985) outlined how the concept of professionalism was mobilised in the 1980s as an invisible mode of controlling teachers. Professionalisation utilised both a direct and indirect form of control over teachers (Forrester, 2001). The “pay for results” system that emerged in the nineteenth century is an example of the government’s direct control of teachers, teachers’ salaries are based on students’ performance. And the spread of the government’s promotion of teachers’ professional status is an illustration of indirect control over the profession (Forrester, 2001). Through the professionalisation of teachers, People can reform the teaching profession and curriculum based on this standardisation. Professionalism appears in various forms, and many countries have adjusted their relevant education policies. For example, education departments in the United States and the United Kingdom try to improve professional teaching by increasing the minimum admission qualifications and clarifying the professional standards required by teachers. Ireland established a teaching committee as a national professional institution responsible for self-regulation. In Singapore, the Ministry of Education guides large-scale curriculum learning at the school level, giving school administrators substantial autonomy to implement curriculum learning (Forrester, 2001). Professionalism is seen as a way that can not only improve the quality of teachers, but also enhance teachers’ awareness of their status, job satisfaction and efficiency (OECD, 2016). According to research findings, teacher professionalism is positively correlated with their work environment and career perception, as well as satisfaction (OECD, 2016, p. 83). The survey showed that when their salaries are higher, teachers receive more professional support, and their satisfaction and career perception status are higher (OECD, 2016). However, teachers’ perceptions and satisfaction may also vary based on other characteristics of the entire system, such as PRP and accountability. The education department may adopt policies like attracting more qualified teachers through higher salaries, or through teachers being responsible for the results of students, as a way to improve teaching and control quality.

4. PRP System

4.1 The Concept of PRP

PRP is considered as a strategic method to promote improved performance (Forrester, 2011, p. 6). In a broad sense, it is understood as a clear connection between the individual, team or company performance and salary. Salaries are flexible based on the changes in individual, team and corporate performance; in a narrow sense, it is understood as the relationship between individual behaviour and performance of employees and salary. Many private-sector organisations use PRP schemes, which have become an established reward system for management compensation in the United Kingdom since the 1990s (Forrester, 2011). By managing the performance of employees, the organisational goals are transformed into personal goals, and the results of the performance appraisal determine the salary.

4.2 PRP in Education

The PRP system can be regarded as a management instrument, whether in the political or practical level (Gleeson & Husbands, 2003, p. 505). In the 1980s, the school of thought was that low levels of teaching led to a low level of education, which brought increased attention to PRP (Tomlinson, 2000, p. 282). In the 1990s, the British government tried to introduce PRP into public schools, but ultimately only introduced PRP to the principal and vice principal positions. It was not until 2000 that PRP was expanded to schools (Forrester, 2011, p. 7). Policymakers regarded PRP as an incentive mechanism, because PRP is an incentive payment paid to teachers for excess work or outstanding work performance. Through the recognition of teachers’ past work behaviours and achievements, PRP aims to encourage teachers to improve work efficiency and work quality, and to exchange higher levels of performance for greater economic benefits. Furthermore, PRP is determined through strict performance appraisal. In the field of education, the performance of teachers can be defined as the extent to which teachers can maximise their abilities in order to achieve institutional goals (Rohma *et al.*, 2020, p. 16). Performance appraisal feedback will provide several aspects of content, including: student satisfaction, performance measurement, and recognition of the importance and value of teacher performance (Rohma *et al.*, 2020). The PRP system is implemented to improve the performance of teachers (Farrell & Morris, 2004, p. 85). More specifically, the implementation of the PRP system in education is to better ensure the quality of education. By strengthening school leadership and rewarding leading professionals, PRP will encourage teachers to work actively and provide better support for teachers. As a result, PRP will improve teachers’ status and image, and ultimately help raise school standards and achieve excellence.

4.3 PRP Project in England and Wales

In 2000 and 2001, the PRP project was launched in England and Wales respectively. This project is divided into two stages: performance threshold and performance management (Ingvarson *et al.*, 2007, p. 69). PRP introduced

in other areas only applied to managers, and excluded professionals (Farrell & Morris, 2004). The PRP project implemented in England and Wales is different from the other areas because it was limited to professional (Ingvarson *et al.*, 2007). According to the Green Paper (Department for Education and Employment, 2000), the implementation of the PRP system aimed to address low enthusiasm among teachers, as well as difficulties in recruitment and retention.

After the PRP project was introduced, teachers in England and Wales who were previously unable to raise their wages before were now eligible to apply for the “performance threshold”. They had to fill out an application form, summarise their teaching results, and cite specific cases from their daily work to prove that they had reached the required standard. The school governance agency authorised the evaluation process and delegated the work of receiving and evaluating applications to the school principals. PRP originally had external auditors to participate in the verification process, but due to the high costs, the plan was terminated in 2006, because the auditors generally agreed with the principals’ judgments (Ingvarson *et al.*, 2007, p. 70). Teachers who successfully passed this threshold received an immediate salary increase, and subsequently entered a higher salary level. This threshold was the first part of the implementation of the PRP project, and the second part as the “performance management”. Performance management depended on evaluations similar to thresholds, and was also guided by the principal (Ingvarson *et al.*, 2007). During the annual performance appraisal process, only teachers who met the requirements of the performance standards were eligible to receive an annual salary increase. In theory, this meant that teachers who met the standard at a certain level were rewarded for their performance.

5. The Application of PRP System

5.1 Advantages

The main purpose of PRP in any organisation is to recruit, retain and motivate employees (Chamberlin *et al.*, 2002, p. 33). High-quality employees will be attracted to an organisation where they believe their abilities will be rewarded. In education, the government often faces the issue of not only attracting new employees to join the education industry, but also retaining existing teachers (Forrester, 2001). The implementation of the PRP system has addressed this problem to a great extent. The PRP system can be seen as a policy for recruiting and retaining high-quality teacher labour to improve teacher quality (OECD, 2016, p. 84). Studies have shown that the professional status of teachers is a key factor in attracting more and excellent teachers, while retaining good teachers depends on factors such as job satisfaction and professional growth (OECD, 2016). Therefore, by attracting and retaining the most effective teachers through performance rewards, this leads to a more positive job satisfaction and professional status perception for teachers.

Also, there are many empirical studies showing that the incentive effect of PRP improves teacher job satisfaction, which is conducive to better control of teaching quality (Wragg *et al.*, 2003). From 2001 to 2003, Wragg *et al.* interviewed more than 1,000 principals in British schools and conducted in-depth case studies on 32 teachers who participated in the school performance management system (Ingvarson *et al.*, 2007). The survey results show that most teachers and principals think that PRP is capable of bringing improvements and enhancements in practice. These principals and teachers believe that the PRP project can increase teacher pay to a large extent, motivate teachers to work, and is conducive to professional development. Furthermore, according to a research in the UK, with the implementation of PRP, the highest paid employees had increased job satisfaction, and the motivation to work was greatly improved (McCauley *et al.*, 2005). It can be seen from this study that PRP can greatly increase employees’ expectations of work and have a positive impact on intrinsic motivation. In schools, combining remuneration with personal performance and organisational performance can fully mobilise teachers’ enthusiasm for work. Thus, PRP can motivate teachers to improve the level and quality of teaching, which will contribute to stabilizing the quality of education.

5.2 Disadvantages

In practice, many educators believe that the implementation of the PRP system is a significant burden. In addition to increased bureaucracy, PRP strengthened the supervision of teacher’ work, which may damage their working relationship (Forrester, 2011, p. 7). This is because, PRP focus on the issue of individual rewards, the activities of people working in schools have turned to a competitive culture, which has led to a decline in mutual trust, as well as changes in educational attitudes and values, teachers’ focus and priorities have shifted (Hulleman & Barron, 2010). School teachers especially have a strong aversion to PRP. In particular, teachers believe that isolating the performance of individual teachers is problematic, and will have a harmful effect on the school’s collective cooperation and teamwork. Relevant institutions conducted a survey on teachers’ views, a questionnaire about the attitudes towards the implementation of PRP was filled out by 330 teachers (Farrell & Morris, 2004). The results of the study showed that the vast majority of respondents believed that PRP was a means of increasing bureaucratic control, and did not believe that PRP can lead to more effective teaching or improve student learning. During the teaching process, teachers may focus on those students who are most likely

to improve their academic outcome, while paying less attention to those who are already proficient enough. In this way, the teaching performance can be improved to obtain performance rewards. There are also controversies regarding the role of PRP in recruitment and retention. There is a report on the attitude survey of 1,125 teachers in 49 schools on the PRP plan, and the results showed that 80% of the respondents disapproved of the practice of PRP (Ingvarson *et al.*, 2007). These teachers generally agreed that the plan has little effect on the recruitment and retention of teachers. In addition, through a survey of 461 principals on the implementation of PRP, 60% of them expressed opposition to the implementation of PRP, while only 39% believed that PRP was a positive idea, and the remaining 1% held a neutral attitude (Wragg *et al.*, 2003). Most of these principals opposed the implementation of PRP, because they believed it was impossible to implement fair practices, and was unlikely to raise teaching standards. Especially during the evaluation process, teachers may think that concealing problems or catering to the evaluator can be rewarded, which greatly complicates the manager's evaluation to a certain extent.

On the other hand, PRP may mislead teachers in their career choices and interfere with career motivation. The salary level is a significant factor for people working in any industry. Money and motivation are inevitably intertwined, as one of the main reasons why people work is money (Hulleman & Barron, 2010, p. 30). According to the survey, about 58% of university professors value money very much, while only 42% of professors hold an indifferent or negative attitude towards money (Hulleman & Barron, 2010). Most teachers will gladly accept a raise. With higher salaries, teachers may be more motivated for financial reasons. The implementation of the PRP system in schools can possibly attract people to join the education industry, but some candidates may just be motivated by money than by their own love for the education industry. This may undermine the inherent public service spirit of education (Hulleman & Barron, 2010, p. 29). Money and job security are what everyone needs, but joining the education profession solely because of the financial motivation can change the education atmosphere in an unhealthy way and distort the mission of education.

To summarise, PRP as a means to control the quality of education is applied in schools. Despite some issues that need to be improved, the implementation of PRP can motivate teachers through economic means and control quality. Based on the relevant data collected in this essay, PRP needs to be improved to meet the needs of educational development. Currently, the PRP system is still being optimized. In addition to PRP, another technique to control educational quality is accountability. Compared with PRP, the accountability system covers a wider range and can more comprehensively control the quality of education.

6. Accountability

6.1 The Meaning of Accountability

Trow (1996) defines that accountability as the obligation to report, explain, prove, and answer to others how resources are used, and what results have been achieved. The most fundamental question about accountability is asking who justifies one's responsibilities, explain, to whom, why, in what way and what result (Trow, 1996). There are multiple understandings of accountability. Shafritz, a professor of public and international affairs at the University of Pittsburgh in the United States, believes that accountability is the degree to which individuals respond to higher authorities regarding their actions; it is an obligation to maintain accurate records of finances, documents or funds (Hao, 2009). The proper understanding of accountability is to regard it as a kind of responsiveness, that the organisation must be able to respond to individuals or groups outside of the organisation, and that some people regard accountability as a way of performance appraisal.

6.2 Accountability in Education

Often, accountability is a concept used by politicians when questioning the quality of education (Sachs, 2016, p. 415). As a public service, education has attracted government intervention in many ways. Because teachers provide public services, if they are not properly controlled, there is no guarantee that they can effectively perform this important service (Mosoge & Pilane, 2014, p. 1). Thus, many countries have introduced accountability systems. Countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia have applied the accountability system in education. By implementing the accountability system, governments can determine whether teachers' performances meet the requisite requirements. Holding schools and teachers accountable will enable them to achieve a higher level of performance, thereby ensuring the quality of education. In most accountability systems, performance measurement is combined with rewards and sanctions (Elmore & Fuhrman, 2001, p. 9). The accountability system is based on student examinations, and is also related to learners' learning performance (Mosoge & Pilane, 2014). Schools must not only meet government and public requirements for student academic performance, but also avoid punishment, but they must also continuously improve teacher performance through performance management actions. An aspect of the accountability system, performance management can help teachers achieve desired standards through the assistance of supervisors.

According to Harvey's understanding (Harvey, 2002), the functions of higher education accountability can be

understood from the following five aspects:

First, through external evaluations, ensure that universities can be accountable to stakeholders. The stakeholders here mainly refer to the government, taxpayers, teachers and students. The public usually focuses their attention on public funds. In other words, to ensure the effective use of funds for teaching and research and public management, research evaluation and teaching quality evaluation are often carried out, accompanied by statistical data on student learning achievements and graduate employment rates as the measurement method of accountability or called performance indicators.

Second, ensure that higher education rules and systems are not ignored and eroded. This accountability system is not only used to control the development of private providers but also to ensure that public service providers no longer become harsh. Certification, review, evaluation and standard monitoring play an important role in this regard.

Third, the accountability system is like a program designed and properly operated for students, and reasonable educational expectations may be effective. In some countries, they are deriving greater value from funds. This is consistent with evaluation, namely monitoring of service quality.

Fourth, the evaluation of product quality is to obtain public information about universities in teaching and research. This kind of information has a dual function, that is, for investors, it can help fund allocation, and for users, students, it can seize employment opportunities.

Fifth, the purpose of the accountability system is to use quality assessment as a tool to complete the entire process, and assessment encourages the government to do something.

For higher education, the government is usually the most important and authoritative, because it can provide a lot of funds and control the development of universities in many aspects. The government hopes that higher education will respond. This includes the use-value of funds. It also hopes that higher education is related to social development and economic needs to expand the scale of higher education. Also, when discussing the accountability system, market and trust relationship, Trow (1996) also summarised the function of higher education accountability in one sentence, that is to restrict the abuse of power and corruption from the outside, and from the inside, require higher education institutions to conduct self-inspection and accept external evaluation to ensure and improve the performance and quality of the university.

6.3 Accountability System of British Higher Education

British higher education has an esteemed reputation worldwide. The quality of British higher education, led by institutions such as Oxford and Cambridge universities has long been the pride of British people. British higher education attaches importance to the quality of teaching and emphasises the accountability system. Many reforms have provided the basis for the development of the accountability system, such as the development of higher education and the popularization of higher education. With the introduction of public sector accountability into higher education, accountability has been focusing on quality, efficiency, and effectiveness, as well as results and output (Harvey, 2002). The British government introduced market mechanisms into higher education. On the one hand, these mechanisms can broaden the sources of education funding and reduce the government's financial burden. On the other hand, they can direct university education to market demand and provide products and services in a timely manner according to this need. However, the market mechanism is not enough to guarantee the quality of college education. Rather, the mechanism needs to be combined with an effective management and feedback system to ensure the quality of the college education process and results (Harvey, 2002). Therefore, the federal government began to build a multiple monitoring mechanism for higher education, the most important of which is the accountability system.

The strengthening of the accountability of higher education in the UK began in the 1980s (Hao, 2009, p. 85). Due to multiple reasons such as the recession of the British economy, the Thatcher government pursued neoliberalism and carried out deep reforms in the public sphere, which led to a reduction in education funding (Hao, 2009). At the same time, the popularisation of higher education has made teachers and students very different from the past, and the curriculum and teaching itself have undergone great changes, increasing diversity. The government has expressed concern about the role of education in increasing global competition. The public has shown unprecedented attention to the healthy development and effectiveness of higher education. The shortage of funds has made higher education more and more connected with the market, and increasingly rely on market forces to raise funds (Hao, 2009, p. 85). All these factors are intertwined, and it can be seen that higher education institutions maintain a diverse and complex relationship between funders and stakeholders. Higher education institutions need to explain their responsibilities to the government, the public, and the market. Even the independent spirit of higher education cannot avoid public accountability for how to use funds. It can be said that it is precise because of these factors that accountability was strengthened in British higher education institutions in the 1980s.

In contemporary higher education, professional accountability and political accountability are more common. In some countries, there has been a development trend from professional accountability to political accountability (Huisman & Currie, 2004). British higher education clearly reflects the characteristics of political accountability (Hao, 2009, p. 84). Due to a large number of stakeholders in higher education, the accountability system for higher education is complicated. Universities often have to face accountability from government agencies and the public at the same time. Besides, colleges and universities must ensure the public's interests in various fields such as whether they meet public expectations, integrity, use value of funds, quality and performance. In order to ensure the realisation of the public interest in higher education, the Higher Education Fund Committee of England and other related institutions have developed an accountability tool covering a wide range of areas that represent specific areas of higher education accountability (Hao, 2009, p. 86). Higher education institutions need to make guarantees to the public on the following aspects: 1) Compliance, that is, whether higher education fulfils its promises and meets public expectations; 2) Integrity, that is, the integrity and transparency of the use of higher education funds; 3) The use-value of funds; 4) The quality of higher education, that is, the quality of teaching, research, and service; 5) The risks and maintenance capabilities of higher education; 6) The performance of higher education (Hao, 2009). These aspects constitute the main areas of accountability for higher education. Although the main driving force for accountability comes from the outside, there are also many benefits for higher education institutions themselves, and they have been widely recognized by many institutions.

7. The Application of Accountability

7.1 Advantages

Firstly, the accountability system can supervise educational quality, which ensures the control of the quality of education. The quality of higher education is held accountable through the quality assurance framework and the scientific research assessment of universities (Hao, 2009). The benefit to the public is that it can ensure the minimum standards of higher education and encourage higher education to improve quality. The advantage for universities is that it can gain reputation and be internationally competitive, which is conducive to improving the internal quality evaluation and control. Especially in the evaluation of university research, this has helped enhance the results and image of British research bases (Hao, 2009, p. 88). The accountability system can promote the optimisation of the schools' internal quality, and help improve teacher performance. Secondly, academic fraud, certification fraud, and resource abuse have been rampant in many developing and transition countries, in conjunction with widespread corruption (Harvey, 2002). Accountability is a restriction on power arbitrariness and power corruption in education, including deception and malfeasance. Accountability enhances the legitimacy of institutions. Through accountability, colleges and universities can complete their actions and obligations to report to the corresponding organisations and agencies. In addition, accountability maintains or improves institutions' performances. Accountability prompts universities to critically review their own performances and to accept external evaluations.

7.2 Disadvantages

In higher education, accountability often leads to external supervision (Sachs, 2016). External accountability may be a threat to teachers' academic freedom. When external accountability applies the same standards and guidelines, it is in conflict with the diversity of the university itself (Hao, 2009, p. 85). In the context of accountability, teachers and their peers will self-monitor one another, which will erode trust and is ultimately not conducive to supervision of teaching. Because it is a public process, accountability assessment can also bring negative effects. Schools and teachers may hide their shortcomings for the public (Mosoge & Pilane, 2014). This approach can achieve good results in the assessment, but it can also lead to injustice in accountability, and related issues cannot be resolved in a timely manner. Moreover, accountability will weaken the freedom of the university itself. Accountability sometimes conflicts with universities' confidentiality principle when dealing with sensitive issues, so accountability can interfere with effective management.

8. Discussion

To a certain extent, implementing the PRP and accountability systems can control the quality of education. However, many issues still persist in these two systems, which is not conducive to future development. Thus, the following relevant measures should be taken to improve the implementation of these systems.

The bureaucratic issues noted for the PRP system should be carefully considered. Although competition culture will inevitably appear in practice, government departments should take measures to ensure that the competition culture does not ultimately lead to bureaucratic issues. Evidence shows that teachers' attitudes towards PRP depend largely on they define "performance", and the validity and reliability of the measurement methods used to evaluate performance (Ingvarson *et al.*, 2007, p. 105). The more roles teachers play in setting the proper standards and performance measurements, the lower the levels of suspicion they will draw. Thus, relevant

education departments should focus on improving various quantitative performance evaluation systems, and define and evaluate performance through fair, open and reasonable ways. This is in order to ensure the transparency of performance evaluations and to avoid bureaucratic problems. In addition, PRP rewards teachers by means of financial rewards. Although there is an incentive effect, teachers are also interested in the students they teach, not just financial rewards. In education, it may be more motivating and satisfying for teachers for students to get good grades. Empirical evidence shows that teachers' satisfaction in student development exceeds monetary benefits (Forrester, 2001). In general, while providing better education to students, teachers can also obtain financial incentives through PRP.

Since its implementation, higher education accountability has greatly developed in the UK. The needs of the country's higher education reform and development led to the practical impetus for the accountability of British higher education (Harvey, 2002). The implementation of the accountability system not only effectively responds to stakeholders' demands, but also meets higher education needs. By providing a strong institutional guarantee, the accountability system ensures the quality of higher education, improves the efficiency and effectiveness of education, and strengthens the transparency and legitimacy of education policies. The concern about higher education's accountability has recently focused on how to implement accountability more effectively. At the same time, improving the transparency of accountability is still an ongoing problem. In order to implement accountability more effectively, the stakeholders of higher education should strive to establish extensive contacts with each other, coordinate their accountability needs, and achieve a more systematic quality assurance system. Regarding reforming specific accountability methods, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education in the United Kingdom has changed its evaluation method by replacing subject review with institutional audits, which has been welcomed by many higher educational institutions (Hao, 2009, p. 89).

9. Conclusion

To sum up, there are many ways to control the quality of education. This essay analysed the PRP system and accountability system in the context of British higher education. Both of these methods focus on teacher development. PRP can stimulate teachers' enthusiasm for work, attract and retain qualified teaching talents through generous salaries. The accountability system involves a wider range and more comprehensive quality control in education. Although both systems have advantages and disadvantages during implementation, they are still being optimised to adapt to the development of education, in order to improve the control of education quality in the future.

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