

Parallel Talk: Performance Evaluation of Smart Education Demonstration Zones -
Lessons from China

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Abstract: With the accelerated integration, innovation and fusion development of technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data, mobile communication, virtual reality, and Internet of Things with other technologies, human society is approaching the critical point of a new round of changes. The smart society will accelerate its arrival as a more advanced social form, showing new features of human-computer collaboration, cross-border integration, and co-creation and sharing. Smart education is an important part and a key concern of a smart society. In response to the new requirements for education posed by the social transformation in the smart era, major countries and international organizations around the world are actively exploring new paths for future education development and change and accelerating the cultivation of talents who can adapt to the smart era. Facing the new situation, the Chinese government also attaches great importance to the development of smart education. As a high-end form of ICT in education, smart education is dedicated to building a smart learning environment, exploring new teaching models, and establishing a modern education system. From 2019 to 2021, the Ministry of Education of China selected 20 regions to create (cultivate) as "Smart Education Demonstration Zones" to take the lead in exploring new models, methods, and paths for transforming education with smart technologies. The work of the "Smart Education Demonstration Zones" focuses on six areas: improving teachers' and students' information literacy, exploring new teaching models, evaluating students' comprehensive quality, building a personalized service environment for teaching support, enhancing the regional service capacity of supplying education resources, and enhancing the capacity for modern educational governance. To evaluate the work performance of the demonstration zones, the Ministry of Education selected corresponding observation points around these six tasks and formed 25 evaluation indicators, including 5 indicators in teachers and students' information literacy enhancement, 3 indicators in new teaching models, 3 indicators in the evaluation of students' comprehensive quality, 3 indicators in personalized service environment for teaching support, 3 indicators in the regional service capacity of supplying education resources, 4 indicators in the capacity for modern educational governance, and indicators of the innovation and distinctiveness. The performance evaluation is based on the index system, using regional self-assessment, expert inspection, and comprehensive assessment, combining qualitative and quantitative data for comprehensive evaluation. The performance evaluation work effectively guides the construction of the demonstration zones.