Using Student Assessment Results for Education Quality and Systems Strengthening

CASE STUDY

Uses of assessment information to support student learning in Germany

ESCHBORN, GERMANY – OCTOBER 25, 2011

READ
Russia Education Aid for Development
When children learn, nations prosper
General Overview of Germany and its Education System
- Federal Republic
- Capital: Berlin
- Size: 357,111,91 km²
- Population: 81,752 Mio
# The German Education System

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Advanced vocational training</th>
<th>University</th>
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<td>13</td>
<td>Technical or Trade school</td>
<td>University qualification exam (Abitur)</td>
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<td>12-11</td>
<td>Vocational qualification</td>
<td>Gymnasium or Gesamtschule University qualification exam (Abitur)</td>
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<td>10-9</td>
<td>Training and education at companies and part time vocational schools (Berufsschule)</td>
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<td>8-5</td>
<td>Full-time vocational school (Berufsfachschule)</td>
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<td>6-1</td>
<td>Vocational upper secondary school (Fachoberschule)</td>
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<td>4-1</td>
<td>Secondary general school (Hauptschule)</td>
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<td>3-1</td>
<td>Intermediate school (Realschule)</td>
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<td>2-1</td>
<td>Grammar school (Gymnasium)</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Comprehensive school (Gesamtschule)</td>
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<td>Primary school (Grundschule)</td>
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<td>Kindergarten</td>
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General Overview of Student Assessment Activities in Germany

- Early experiences
  - The IEA studies
  - The International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS)

- The Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMMS)

- TIMMS Video
Lessons learned (1)

• From early studies:
  o One determined scientific leader needed to drive the research agenda
  o Consensus among researchers needed before launching the study
Lessons learned (2)

• From TIMMS
  ○ One determined scientific leader needed to drive the research agenda
  ○ Consensus between scientific project management and decision makers on goals and procedures
  ○ Pre-designed and consensual communication plan for results
The Konstanz Resolution (1)


- Some „fundamental reflections with regard to benchmarking within the Federal Republic of Germany“
The Konstanz Resolution (2)

- Goals:
  - To develop procedures to ensure quality of school education
  - To develop and test assessment instruments (literally: instruments of evaluation)
  - To implement systematic and recurrent student achievement studies across the „Länder“ (states, provinces)
The OECD
“Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)”

• The TIMMS lessons applied
  - involvement of all relevant stakeholders matters

• The German PISA 2000 national extension
• The PISA 2000 results
• The „shock“ and its consequences
The PISA 2000 Results
Student performance in reading literacy
The PISA shock

Wrong? Well, I've never been great in music...
Germany after PISA 2000 (1)

PISA 2000: Student performance in reading literacy

- Need to improve academic performance of students across literacy domains
- Need to decrease disparities for ethnic and social groups
- Need for stronger focus on outcomes and accountability

Diagram showing performances of various countries compared to the OECD average.
Germany after PISA 2000 (2)

- Definition of strategic goals and action programs in the 16 federal states in Germany
- Introduction of various accountability and school evaluation initiatives in the federal states:
  - Standards
  - System evaluation
  - Centralized exams
  - State-wide standardized assessments (Vergleichsarbeiten) at the primary and secondary level (grades 3 and 8)
  - Extended autonomy for schools
  - School inspectorates
Germany after PISA 2000 (3)

→ Foundation of a national Institute for Educational Progress (IQB) in Berlin (4.12.2003)
Germany after PISA 2000 (2)

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State-wide testing as part of the quality strategy

**Task development**
Teachers
Educational researchers

**Pilot studies**
Do tasks and items work well psychometrically and content-wise?

**Test**
Every year
Approx. 2 Mio Students

VERA-TEST
System monitoring vs. state-wide testing

- Difference in goals (system monitoring vs. data-based school improvement for each and every school)
- Time lines (every 3 years vs. annually)
- Sample-based vs. total population
- Test administration (external vs. teachers at schools)
- Availability of results (16 months later vs. immediate feedback)
VERA – Types of Feedback

Immediate Feedback

Class Level Feedback

Individual Level Feedback

School Level Feedback
VERA-Types of Feedback: Analysis → Reflection → Measures

Class Level Feedback→ Individual Level Feedback→ School Level Feedback

Analysis and Reflection within the school → Deriving and Planning Measures and Interventions
Current challenges
Current challenges (1)

- School level and/or class-room level reporting
- The link between large-scale, system-level assessment and school/class-room oriented assessment
- Formative assessment
Current challenges (2)

- Technology-based assessment
- Fine-grained, individual learning progress oriented diagnostics
Conclusions

- Fairly successful at the system level (standards, large-scale assessments, monitoring,)
- State-wide testing: right direction, but difficult implementation
- „Ensuring quality“ beyond assessment studies (e.g. intervention studies) at its beginnings
- Technology-based assessment only at a research/pre-pilot level.
Whatever they say - the one good thing about the German educational system is: It is really consumer friendly!

Three pieces of cake, each two Euro - that'll be five Euro altogether, please.