

## Abstract

# OECD AHELO Project in Korea(V) - AHELO Feasibility Study from 2009 to 2013 -

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The importance of the quality and performance of university education is a common issue that various countries have faced. In 2008, the OECD launched the AHELO feasibility study, an initiative with the objective to assess whether it is possible to develop international measures of learning outcomes in higher education. OECD AHELO project aims to complement institution-based assessments by providing a direct evaluation of student learning outcomes at global level and to enable institutions to benchmark the performance of their students against their peers as part of their improvement efforts. The purpose of the feasibility study is to examine whether it is practically and scientifically feasible to assess what students in higher education know and can do upon graduation within and across these diverse contexts. The Korean government has joined the project since 2008 and appointed the Korean Educational Development Institute(KEDI) as the National Center. Since then, the AHELO National Team within KEDI has carried out five-year research of the AHELO Feasibility Study. Throughout the five-year research from 2009 to 2013, the project aims to support the AHELO feasibility study including instrument development and assessment implementation and analyzing the results of the feasibility study. In 2013, the final phase of research is designed to analyze the result of five years study synthetically and provide an integrated information for stakeholders in higher education sectors. The main results of the 2013 research can be outlined as follows.

Chapter II examines the processes and results of AHELO Feasibility study at international level. It includes the background information about participation in AHELO

feasibility study, assessment design, working body, the development of assessment tools, administration of test and survey and scoring processes in each participating countries of 17. The AHELO feasibility study has demonstrated that it is feasible to develop instruments with reliable and valid results amongst different countries, languages, cultures and institutional settings. This is well presented in Chapter II, sections 4 and 5.

Chapter III presents the main tasks and processes of AHELO feasibility study at national level for past four years. It includes recruiting participating institutions, sampling participating students and faculty, administering test and survey and scoring in each nine participating institutions in Korea. Furthermore, it focuses on analyzing 1) the levels and characteristics of generic skill of Korean university student, 2) the relationship between the educational experience and the levels of generic skill, 3) the characteristics of educational environment from the results of faculty survey.

The first part of Chapter IV explains the experience of the feasibility study from the point of view of participating countries. Each country starts with an overview of main challenges, main achievements and main lessons learnt and others. In most cases, they have challenges in considering the suitability of AHELO assessment tools, adaptation and translation of instrument and recruiting randomly sampled students and faculty. Representatives of 17 participating countries discussed their achievement as successful implementation and development of an instrument for the international assessment, confirmation of a high interest in AHELO among higher education institution and stakeholders, and the opportunity to examine and reform their higher education system. Representatives of 17 participating countries also provided suggestions for AHELO main study. It includes securing sufficient time-frame, resources and budget before implementing AHELO main study, re-examining protocols and process for assessment of generic skills strand, and developing more systemic approaches in designing sampling and recruiting students and faculty. Moreover we examined two specific cases of Japan and Australia in which reflect a number of significant insights and implications in the preparing and implementing AHELO feasibility study.

The second part of Chapter IV reviews current assessment system of learning outcome at domestic level and examines the relationship between them and AHELO feasibility study.

We conducted an interview with a group of 41 education experts including Institution Coordinator, specialists in higher education and engineering education. A preliminary analysis of AHELO results confirmed that assessing only input and processes as is currently done does not give a full picture of institutional quality. As a main result, AHELO could become a meaningful tool for higher education improvement as it can provide useful information and data to institutions for further development.

Chapter V presents the comprehensive results of AHELO feasibility study. It is valuable to participate in AHELO main study in order to develop educational activities to further promote student's learning and teacher's teaching in the era of globalized higher education. Chapter V also suggests a number of applications and potential usage plans of AHELO project at both the institutional and national level.