

ABSTRACT

OECD AHELO Project in Korea (III)

–Development of Test Instruments and Validity Improvement–

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World-wide concerns for accountability and quality of higher education have increased the importance of students' learning outcomes at the higher educational level. Timely launched OECD AHELO project has received international attentions, and Korea has participated in the feasibility study of the project with high enthusiasm. Korea partake in the Generic Skills Strand among three different fields (Generic Skills, Engineering, and Economics). In 2009, KEDI carried out a research focusing on analysis of assessment instruments of learning outcomes and their uses. And in 2010, the focus of the research was a development of assessment tools; focusing on adaptation and translation of two performance tasks.

Development of test instruments for Generic Skills strand continues to be this year's (2011) research focus. Newly added component, multiple-choice questions and survey tools of Contextual Strand are adapted and translated this year. In addition to the development of these tests and survey instruments, increasing validity of these instruments is another focal point of this year's

research.

Chapter II provides an overview of AHELO project at the OECD level: First, information such as background and the objectives of the AHELO project; assessment areas; updates of participating countries; and brief explanation about the instruments are explained. Second, this chapter summarizes the agenda and conclusion of eight GNE meetings. And finally, mid-and-long term plans of the AHELO project are presented based on country surveys about the project cycles, assessment areas, and participating higher education institutions.

Chapter III explains refinement process of the instruments for the purpose of improving validity and enhancing applicability of the instruments in the Korean contexts. First, this chapter begins with explanations of different concepts and categories of validity. Then, the chapter reviews literatures about cognitive-labs and analyzes cases that employ cognitive-lab method to increase validity of test instruments. The next section provides outcomes of cognitive-labs conducted for validity improvements of instruments including the performance tasks, scoring rubric, and multiple-choice questions. In addition, descriptions of adaptation and translation process and expert reviews of the instruments are included in this chapter.

Chapter IV describes a development process of and information about contextual survey instruments. This chapter begins with participating countries' review outcomes of the surveys. And the ways in which countries' opinions are reflected in the instruments are presented in the chapter III. Related to the development of contextual instrument, a significance of contextual instruments in assessing students' learning outcomes and case analysis, reviews of the literatures are included in this chapter.

Chapter V explains about organizations of the OECD AHELO project.

Organizational structures and functions related to the AHELO feasibility study are presented. Detailed information about roles of consortium and advisory committee, plans for selecting participating institutions; sampling guidelines; necessary resources for test implementation, training plans for test implementation staffs and schedules; and analysis of test outcomes are all provided in this chapter.

Finally, chapter VI explores policy implications for the AHELO project and the feasibility study. First, policy suggestions for both national and institutional levels are recommended for a successful test implementation. Financial and systematic supports; and human and material assists that need to be provided by the government and participating higher education institutions are discussed. In the next section, policy implications of the assessment outcomes are explored at two different levels: governmental and institutional. At the governmental level, the ways in which data of this project can be utilized are explored. Possible policy options include: rationalization of university financial assistance, establishment of quality assurance system, policies of advancement of higher education institutions. At the institutional level policy alternatives such as curricular innovation, resource allocation, establishment of departmental information system, and strengthening service programs for student learning are discussed as a way of utilizing outcomes of AHELO project.

Keywords: OECD AHELO, Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes, Quality Assurance, University Evaluation, Accountability in Higher Education