

Linking monitoring and educational leadership – a multilevel-governance approach

Stefan Brauckmann & Stefan Kuehne

2016

A number of authors have agreed on the, more or less, reasoned assumption that the change of system conditions does not only constitute a key challenge but also a relevant influential factor regarding the development of an education system (cf. Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung 2014, p. 15). Besides general social conditions (e.g. demographics, family structures and living conditions), economic circumstances have been identified in this context (public budget, delimitation of national employment markets, skill requirements of the labor market). Conceptually, this assumption is accounted for by an integration of system wide context characteristics in framework and effect models as well as analytically in indicator-based reporting on education.

Generally, authors have pointed out that educational processes and the conditions described above are reciprocally related, yet there is no empirically sound evidence how different variables interact, and which of the system context measures in particular are relevant for the governance and organization of educational institutions. Accordingly, albeit with a few exceptions, evidence is yet scarce regarding the relationship between system conditions and school leadership actions.

Hence, the context mostly presents a control variable and its sense making is ascertained more and more in different research areas. So far, however, the various steering levels that play a significant role in managing education – from classroom, school, regional to system level – hardly have been taken into consideration. While system or local features are important prerequisites for school development, institutional and organizational arrangements and outputs likewise affect the decision-making in higher-level administration. This leads to the question of how a coherent analytical framework should be designed to provide sound educational monitoring data across different leadership levels. Based on the growing number of databased approaches to monitor education in Germany at national, state, local and institutional level, this presentation introduces a possible comprehensive reference framework for indicator-based analysis for educational leadership.