

# Research on the Improvement of Grassroots Academic Organizations in Open University Under the Background of Academic Evaluation Reform

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## Abstract

The reform of academic evaluation is being implemented globally, presenting new requirements and challenges for the academic organization and governance of higher education institutions. As a crucial component of higher education, the Open University plays a significant role in this wave of reform. However, the governance capacity of grassroots academic organizations at the Open University is relatively weak and requires improvement. This paper aims to study the enhancement of governance capabilities of grassroots academic organizations at the Open University and to provide theoretical and practical support for their development in the context of academic evaluation reform. We aim to offer reference and inspiration for enhancing the governance capabilities of grassroots academic organizations at the Open University, advancing the comprehensive reform of academic evaluation, and fostering the development and advancement of the Open University. This study aims to serve as a valuable resource for research and practice in enhancing the governance capacity of grassroots academic organizations in the Open University.

## Keywords

Academic evaluation reform, Open University, grassroots academic organization, governance ability

## Introduction

The reform of academic evaluation is one of the hot issues in the field of global higher education. With the continuous development of society and the popularization of higher education, traditional academic evaluation methods have made it difficult to meet the diversified needs and challenges. The academic evaluation aims to establish a scientific, fair, and comprehensive evaluation system, and promote the improvement of higher education quality and the innovative development of academic research. Under the background of academic evaluation reform, the Open University, as a flexible and diverse educational model, has its unique advantages and characteristics. The Open University features open enrollment, independent learning, and flexible learning paths, and provides students with equal learning opportunities. However, due to its non-traditional organizational forms and learning methods, the governance of grassroots academic organizations in the Open University faces some challenges, such as the imperfect academic evaluation system, scattered teachers, and poor academic communication channels. Therefore, it is of great theoretical and practical significance to study the improvement of the governance ability of grassroots academic organizations in the Open University. Through in-depth analysis of the characteristics and problems of grassroots academic organizations and exploring effective governance strategies and

methods, it can provide useful reference and guidance for the development of Open University in the background of academic evaluation reform. In addition, carrying out the research, it can also provide reference and inspiration for the improvement of academic organization governance ability of other higher education institutions, and promote the reform and development of academic evaluation in the whole field of higher education (Yan Wenqing & Zhang Yun, 2014).

## **1. Overview of the academic evaluation reform**

The reform of academic evaluation is the innovation and improvement of the traditional academic evaluation method, aiming to build a more scientific, fair, and comprehensive evaluation system, to adapt to the development of higher education and the change of social needs. Academic evaluation is a process of quantitative, qualitative, or comprehensive evaluation of scholars, scientific research projects, and academic achievements, which plays an important role in improving the quality of academic research, promoting scientific innovation, and talent training. The main goal of academic evaluation reform is to abandon the single index evaluation system and to promote the diversification and individuation of evaluation methods. Traditional academic evaluation mainly relies on the number of publications and influence factors of SCI, SSCI, and other academic journals to evaluate the academic level of scholars. However, this evaluation method can easily lead to the concentration of academic resources and the supremacy of the number of academic achievements, which cannot fully reflect the comprehensive abilities and scientific research contributions of scholars. The reform of academic evaluation emphasizes the comprehensive evaluation of academic quality and influence, including the quality of academic achievements, the influence of academic communities, and academic exchanges and cooperation. These evaluation indicators can include the citation rate of scientific research results, the active degree of international academic exchanges, and the innovation and practical application value of scientific research projects. At the same time, the reform of academic evaluation also pays attention to the comprehensive quality evaluation of scholars, including the assessment of teaching quality, scientific research team building, academic leadership, and other aspects (Wang Zhui, 2013).

## **2. Definition and importance of grassroots academic organizations**

### **2.1 Driving force of academic research**

Grassroots academic organizations are an important driving force for academic research. By organizing academic exchanges, seminars, academic forums, and other activities, they can promote the collision and exchange of academic ideas, stimulate the innovation potential of scholars, and promote the development of academic research.

### **2.2 Support for discipline construction**

Grassroots academic organizations play an important role in the discipline construction. They can promote in-depth research and exchange of the disciplines, promote the development and progress of the disciplines, cultivate disciplinary talents, and promote the overall development of the disciplines.

### **2.3 Talent training and introduction**

Grassroots academic organizations are an important platform for cultivating and introducing talents. By organizing academic research projects and academic exchange activities, grassroots academic organizations can attract and cultivate potential scholars, promote the growth and development of new people, and provide high-quality talents for the academic circles.

### **2.4 Communication of academic influence**

Grassroots academic organizations are the channel for the dissemination of academic achievements and research results. By organizing academic conferences, publishing academic journals, and other activities, grassroots academic organizations can promote and spread their academic achievements, increase their academic influence, and promote the wide application of academic influence and the promotion of social influence.

## **3. The Impact of academic evaluation reform on the Open University**

### **3.1 Improvement of academic reputation and competitiveness**

Attracting high-level talents: The improvement of academic reputation and competitiveness will make academic

organizations an important goal for attracting high-level talents. Academic organizations with good academic reputations and competitiveness can attract more excellent scholars and researchers to join them, enrich the teaching staff, and improve their academic level and research strength. Increasing cooperation opportunities and increasing access to resources: Improving the academic reputation and competitiveness will increase the status and influence of academic organizations in academia, thus increasing the opportunities for cooperation with other academic institutions and research teams. Excellent academic organizations have easier access to various resources, including research funding, experimental equipment, database access rights, etc., to provide better support for academic research. This can not only enhance the academic reputation of individual researchers but also enhance the visibility and influence of the entire academic organization.

### **3.2 Improvement of teaching quality**

**Improve student satisfaction and learning outcomes:** Improving teaching quality can improve students' satisfaction and enhance their learning experience and academic outcomes. High-quality teaching can stimulate students' interest in learning, improve their participation and learning motivation, and then promote students' learning effect and performance improvement. **Increase student enrollment and retention rates:** High-quality teaching can attract more outstanding students to choose academic organizations and increase student enrollment rates. At the same time, providing quality teaching services can improve students' satisfaction and learning experience, thus increasing the retention rate of students and promoting the stable development of academic organizations. **Improving academic reputation and social recognition:** Excellent teaching quality is an important basis for academic reputation and social recognition. High-quality teaching results and excellent graduate performance can enhance the reputation and popularity of academic organizations, be recognized and praised by society, and then bring more cooperation opportunities and resource support to academic organizations. **Improving teachers' career development and academic influence:** Improving teaching quality can improve teachers' career development and academic influence. Teachers with excellent teaching can often get more teaching awards and honors, and improve their professional titles and status. At the same time, excellent teaching quality can also attract more opportunities for academic exchanges and cooperation, and improve the academic influence of teachers.

### **3.3 Discipline construction and research team development**

**Enhance academic reputation and discipline status:** Through discipline construction and research team development, academic organizations can enhance their academic reputation and discipline status in specific disciplines. Excellent discipline-building and research teams can promote academic progress and innovation in the field, earning a higher reputation and visibility for academic organizations. **Improve the research strength of the discipline:** the discipline construction and the development of the research team can improve the research strength of the discipline. Through the construction of a high-level research team, the integration of high-quality research resources and platforms strengthens the academic exchanges and cooperation within the discipline and promotes high-level academic research and scientific innovation. **Increasing research projects and funding support:** discipline building and research team development can improve access to research projects and funding support. Excellent disciplines and research teams are more likely to attract scientific research projects and financial support at home and abroad, provide better resource guarantee for academic research, and promotes the development and innovation of disciplines.

### **3.4 Talent training and introduction**

The reform of academic evaluation puts forward higher requirements for talent training and introduction. By improving the training program and teaching system, the Open University can provide diversified learning resources and opportunities to cultivate talents with innovative thinking and practical ability. At the same time, the Open University also needs to attract and introduce high-level academic talents, enrich its faculty, and improve its teaching and research levels.

## **4. Problems facing the governance capacity of grassroots academic organizations of the Open University**

### **4.1 Imperfect institutional setup and management system**

The establishment of grassroots academic organizations at the Open University may be unreasonable or too complicated, and the management system may not be standardized or scientific. The lack of an effective organizational structure and management process will affect the coordinated operation and decision-making efficiency of grassroots academic organizations.

## **4.2 The academic evaluation system is incomplete**

The academic evaluation system of grassroots academic organizations at OU may have defects, relying too much on traditional indicators and quantitative evaluation, and is unable to comprehensively and accurately evaluate the academic quality and influence. This may lead to the neglect of the quality of academic achievements, affecting the development of grassroots academic organizations and the improvement of academic reputation.

## **4.3 Dissemination of teachers and poor communication**

Due to the characteristics of the Open University, faculty are scattered in different regions and disciplines, with limited opportunities for academic exchanges and cooperation. The lack of effective academic communication channels and cooperation platforms may limit the cooperation and development of grassroots academic organizations.

## **4.4 Lack of talent training and introduction**

The OU grassroots academic organizations may face challenges in talent training and introduction. The lack of a systematic talent training mechanism and incentive mechanism to attract talent may lead to brain drain and team building difficulties.

## **4.5 Lack of IT support**

Grassroots academic organizations at the Open University may have deficiencies in the application of information technology, and cannot make full use of information technology to improve the operation efficiency of the organization and the convenience of academic exchanges. The lack of effective information platforms and tools may limit the development and innovation of grassroots academic organizations.

# **5. Strategy for improving the governance ability of grassroots academic organizations of the Open University under the background of academic evaluation reform**

## **5.1 Improve the institutional setting and management system of grassroots academic organizations**

Establish a scientific and reasonable organizational structure: formulate a clear organizational structure chart, and clarify the responsibilities and authority of organizations, departments, and posts at all levels. Ensure that the job responsibilities and collaboration among all departments and personnel within the organization are clear. Formulate a standardized management process and decision-making mechanism: establish a scientific management process, clarify the procedures, and time requirements for each work. Set the decision-making mechanism to ensure scientific and rational decision-making, and avoid the subjective intervention of individual will. Improve the ability and quality of managers: provide relevant training and development opportunities for managers of grassroots academic organizations, and improve their organizational management, communication and coordination, and decision-making ability. Cultivate managers with strategic thinking, innovation ability, and team management ability. Strengthen information construction: establish an information management system, integrate the work information of academic organizations, including personnel management, project management, academic achievement management, etc., and improve the efficiency of information sharing and collaborative work. The use of information technology means to realize information management, improve the accuracy and efficiency of decision-making. Strengthen the internal communication and cooperation mechanism: establish a regular meeting system to promote the communication and cooperation between various departments and personnel within the organization. Encourage cross-departmental exchanges and cooperation, and promote knowledge sharing and collaborative work (Yu Yulong, 2018).

## **5.2 Establish a scientific academic evaluation system and incentive mechanism**

Diversified evaluation indicators: Establish a comprehensive and diversified evaluation index system, including the evaluation of the quantity, quality, influence, innovation and other aspects of academic achievements. It should not only rely on the number of papers published and the influence factor of journals, encouraging academic innovation and teamwork: establish an incentive mechanism to encourage scholars to conduct innovative and forward-looking academic research. For example, establish research project funding and award programs to support frontier research; encourage teamwork and interdisciplinary research to improve the quality and level of academic exchanges and cooperation. Regular evaluation and feedback: Establish a regular evaluation and feedback mechanism to evaluate the academic achievements

and contributions of scholars, and provide timely feedback and guidance. The evaluation results can be used as an important basis for academic title evaluation, promotion, and salary adjustment, to encourage scholars to improve their academic quality and influence. Establish scientific research ethics and academic integrity system: strengthen the cultivation and supervision of scientific research ethics and academic integrity to prevent the occurrence of academic misconduct. Establish academic ethics norms and reporting a mechanism to protect the integrity and impartiality of academic research. Through the above measures, a scientific academic evaluation system and incentive mechanism can be established to promote the academic innovation and contribution of scholars, and improve the quality and influence of academic research. At the same time, the incentive mechanism should focus on balancing the characteristics and needs of scholars in different disciplines and at different stages of development, and encourage diversified academic achievements and contributions (Huang Zhibing, 2016).

### 5.3 Strengthen the talent training and introduction of grassroots academic organizations

Establish a sound talent training mechanism: set up a systematic academic training plan, including academic research methods, scientific research project management, academic paper writing, and other aspects of training, to improve the academic literacy and research ability of all members. Training mentor system, appoint mentors to new members and provide personalized guidance and training plans. Provide opportunities for academic exchange and cooperation: organize regular academic exchange activities, such as academic seminars, academic forums, etc., to encourage academic exchanges and cooperation among members. Promote cooperation and exchanges between grassroots academic organizations and other universities, research institutions, industries, and other enterprises, and broaden the academic vision and cooperation opportunities of the members. Establish an incentive mechanism and reward system: set up incentive mechanisms, including salary incentives, professional title evaluations, scientific research project support, etc., to encourage members to actively participate in academic research and contribution. An academic environment and incentive mechanism to attract and retain outstanding academic talents, and promote the development and innovation of grass-roots academic organizations.

## 6. Conclusion

Under the background of academic evaluation reform, it is crucial to improve the governance ability of the grassroots academic organizations at the Open University. This paper puts forward some strategies and measures, including improving the institutional setting and management system, establishing a scientific academic evaluation system and incentive mechanism, strengthening talent training and introduction, and promoting the application of information technology. These measures are designed to promote the development and innovation of academic organizations and enhance their academic reputation and competitiveness. The improvement of the governance ability of an academic organization is not only related to the internal management and operation of the organization but also related to the quality and influence of academic research and teaching. The reform of academic evaluation is one of the important issues facing the academic community. With the increasing expectations of higher education and academic research, the Open University, as a flexible, inclusive, and innovative academic organization, needs to actively respond to challenges and constantly improve the governance of its ability to meet the needs and development of The Times. Through the research and strategies proposed in this paper, we hope to provide some reference and inspiration for the improvement of the governance abilities of grassroots academic organizations at the Open University, promote the in-depth reform of academic evaluation, and promote the development and progress of the Open University. Only by continuously strengthening the governance capacity of academic organizations can we provide better support for academic research and teaching, and promote innovation and development within academic circles.

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