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An Empowerment Evaluation Model at Schools:

Through the Development of the School Evaluation Tools

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The goal of the present study is to develop a comprehensive model for school organizational reform with practical tools and support strategies which enhance organizational autonomy.

In the section I is discussion through research review and the research purpose. Recent schools are expected to demonstrate autonomy in their educational activities due to the policy change since 1990s. That is to say, school are "forced to be autonomous" from the top down. From the community psychology perspective, a social change in top-down manner is likely to lower the sense of active participation and control among the community members. In contrast, a bottom-up social change with empowerment is desirable in community psychology, and empowerment evaluation is one of the practical strategies to foster the bottom-up community change and development. Empowerment evaluation, and Getting to Outcomes (GTO), an approach to execute empowerment evaluation, has been applied in many contexts, and found to be effective in implementing community-based program as well as community capacity building and organizational empowerment.

GTO is designed to support effective and efficient program planning, implementation and evaluation; when installing an innovation (i.e., GTO) to the schools, it is important to consider not only if it is effective, but also if it obstructs the existing activities and system. In other words, it is necessary to consider to incorporate GTO into school organizational activities, not a one-shot trial. This study, therefor, focuses on the School Evaluation legislated in 2007. Both School Evaluation and GTO aim to enhance the autonomous organizational change and self-improvement through self-evaluation; GTO provides practical insights to School Evaluation. However, few studies have investigated the applicability of GTO to School Evaluation that covers wide range of educational goals and objectives; nor how GTO is to be tailored to fit the school contexts. Therefore, the initial aim of this study is to develop the GTO for the School Evaluation Practice (SE-GTO). On that basis, the ultimate goal of this study is a) to investigate the process of organizational change and empowerment, and b) to provide the empowerment evaluation model to promote the autonomous school organizational change.

In the first part Section II, the research methodology of this study was discussed with emphasis on the Interactive Systems Framework (ISF), a comprehensive developmental framework of GTO

and the analytical procedures of the case studies. Then, the literatures related to School Evaluation were reviewed to extract the critical elements of School Evaluation integrated into the SE-GTO based on ISF. Theoretically-developed SE-GTO was then applied in five elementally schools, and the trial processes were analyzed to clarify the effectiveness and improvement strategy. The evaluation results indicated that quality implementation of SE-GTO had positive effects on the quality of the School Evaluation practice. Furthermore, some SE-GTO tools were newly developed or improved and effective use of them were found through the trials. More precisely, it was more effective to prepare the SE-GTO for administrators and teachers separately to the SE-GTO use as well as the organizational empowerment. Additionally, the individual- and school organizational-level change and empowering processes were investigated by looking at the trajectory equifinality modeling (TEM) diagrams. It was found that the value change in the school administrator was critical to promote the organizational-level change. Above all indicated that the GTO-based school evaluation activities promoted not only the effective school evaluation, but also both individual- and school-level empowerment and autonomous organizational change. Furthermore, the role of outside supporters in empowering process was also clarified through this research. That is, in order to promote the autonomous organizational change, outside agents were expected to accommodate the quality and the quantity of their assistance with the premise of termination of the support.

Base on the case analyses described so far, a GTO school evaluation system which promotes school organizational empowerment was proposed in the final section. First, the School Evaluation version of GTO theoretically and empirically developed in this study was summarized in terms of tools and manuals, and the effective support strategies. Second, the empowerment process through the school evaluation practice in school administrators, organizations and teachers were discussed one by one, and it was revealed that the former ones became the antecedence of the latter ones. More precisely, 1) the school administrators were empowered by the GTO use, 2) the empowered administrators reformed the school organizations to be empowering the teachers, 3) the teachers were empowered by the empowering organizations, and finally 4) empowered teachers found that their autonomous educational improvement had positive effect on the pupils as well as the organizations themselves, that lead organizational empowerment. This empowerment model and strategy lead the change in social relationship (Sato, 2000), which is the integral part of empowerment.