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**Abstract**

This research analyzes the scheme proposed to assess the quality of higher education institutions in China, namely, the Quality Assessment of Undergraduate Education (QAUE) scheme. This article aims to determine the impact of the QAUE on universities and explore the reasons that intended effects have or have not been generated in the evaluated universities by conducting case studies of three Chinese universities with different statuses. The empirical studies show the effects on the various dimensions of quality provisions at different universities were not the same. It was found that the impact of the QAUE was not a linear consequence of policy implementation, but the result of an interaction between the external quality assessment scheme and the evaluated universities. Quality assessment is regarded to be an external force to cause universities to change. This empirical study of the QAUE shows that changes will only take place when the external force is integrated with the evaluated universities? internal motivation and capacity.(HRK / Abstract übernommen) Liu, Shuiyun, E-Mail: shuiyunliu@bnu.edu.cn