Discussing school value: an educational services viewpoint

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to define school value and its components. This paper discusses the contents of the school's value and the structure of the school's value. This paper also shows findings of educational services and value in high school.

Design/methodology/approach – Comprehensive and inclusive questions were posed about "school value" to high-school instructors. A grounded theory approach was then used to analyze the collected data.

Findings – This analysis found that school value consists of four core categories: "school," "students," "guardians" and "region," which consist of 13 high-ranking categories believed to represent the substance of school value. In addition, three of the four core categories are linked in a star pattern around the core category of "school."

Research limitations/implications – This research analyzes the value of the school using the grounded theory approach. The data used for the analysis are interview data on the value of the school. And these analyzes reveal the contents of school value and the structure of school value.

Practical implications – This study discussed school value based on hearing data of faculty members. In the analysis method of this research, each school can find its own value by changing the target and contents of interview.

Social implications – Study of this school value clarified a leader's role and action in the creation scene of school value. This finding will enable efficient activities of school leaders. As a result, it can be expected to promote school improvement.

Originality/value – The authors identified the categories forming "school value" and their relative relationships. "School value" emphasizes results co-created by stakeholders.

Keywords Education services, Grounded theory approach, School improvement, School value

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

1.1 Awareness of issues

In studying risk management in schools, schools' understanding of risk management was found to differ from corporations. Schools identify to preemptively prevent incidents and accidents. Thus, schools emphasize sorting case studies and setting up environments to ensure the safety of students and faculty (Konomatsu 67). According to COSO ERM, corporations emphasize "activities for properly managing various internal and external risks related to operations managed by the corporation in order to maintain and add to corporate value." (Committee of Sponsoring Organizations of the Treadway Commission Enterprise Risk Management (COSO ERM)). That is to say, it can be considered that an understanding of a school is the activity of the management which does not get interested in "value." On the other hand, it can be considered that an understanding of an enterprise is the activity of the management which has a big concern in "value."

On the other hand, MEXT has indicated the necessity of "risk management as part of effectively using the intellectual property of universities and other entities." (MEXT: the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology: Council for Science and Technology Industry – Academia Regional Support Group: Industry-Academia Collaborative Investigative Commission into Risk Management for Universities: Direction of Studies on State of Risk Management with Promotion of Industry – Academic – Government Cooperation at Universities, 2015). It is thus believed that even at the high-school level, activities are sought for properly managing risk to maintain and

add value. However, there has still been no adequate discussion of school value at the high-school level. Thus, this paper presents the results of analyzing school value at the high-school level.

1.2 Purpose of study and research questions
In this study, schools are discussed with the understanding that they are providers of educational services. Educational services shall be understood as service activities related to education. The purpose of this paper is to define school value and identify its constituents from an educational services viewpoint.

This study investigates the following two research questions:

RQ1. What type of school value is created by educational services, and what type of service value constitutes school value?

RQ2. What elements constitute school value?

Furthermore, general education public high schools, representing the most common form of high schools, were used as the subjects of investigation.

2. Review of prior research
We review the literature on school value from the viewpoint of research on school management and educational services.

2.1 Review of research on school management
Brezicha *et al.* (2015) reported that providing teachers with differentiated support improves teachers' understanding of the reform and supplies teachers the necessary tools to implement the new idea, facilitate teacher voice and participation in the process. Hatanaka (2013) established the investigation of research methodologies as the purpose of his study and asserted that the current school management research is in the process of exploring methodologies. Takei (2008) pointed out that research into educational administration was changing from being theory oriented to practicality and usability oriented. Pil and Leana (2009) analyzed the influence of teachers and social capital on the academic performance of children in a study of public school reform in the USA.

2.2 Review of research into school value
Daniel (2015) argued that continuous improvement and effective collaboration are essential components of a positive school culture. Grissom *et al.* (2015) reported that principals capable of managing their time better spend more time on instruction and less time on internal relations in their schools. Hidaka (2007) pointed out the importance of actual research into service with a variety of perspectives, subjects, and methods, using service science as an emerging academic field. Bolton and Nie (2010) asserted the necessity of value creation for stakeholders in schools of higher education. Steiner and Harmon (2009) described the significant influence of the intangible entities of products and services on markets. Hirota (2009) discussed strategies for raising the service value of work in the service industry to bring about changes for customers themselves and their property. Dong (2014) stated that in addition to the value sought, common services are characterized by a mission to develop talent. Thus, this study indicates the importance of value co-creation by providers and users in educational services. XOMEHKO (2015) considered the pricing policy of the educational service in an educational market. In this consideration, analysis of the feature of educational service emphasizes necessity. Ishii (2014) emphasizes the importance of an educator and a student sharing a student's future figure, in order to increase value of educational service. Kimita (2014) aimed at building the methodology which designs

the educational service for the achievement of a learning outcome. Idei (2016) indicated that the value co-creation by the donor and recipient of service is important for the realization of educational service value. Mizoguchi (2015) noted that a gap was between a student's expectation which a teacher assumes, and the expectation which a student holds. This gap is a main factor which checks achievement of a learning outcome. Mizoguchi suggested the approach of clarifying a student's expectation. Sugino (2015) considered competency/ literacy concept by making study service into a case. Kimita (2015) mentioned the achievement of the learning outcome for a student as value in high education. This research defined the overall status expression model of the student including study status.

2.3 Review of the educational research by GTA
Hatanaka (2013) claimed that the output of knowledge by practice and output of the knowledge by research are required for school management research. Then, he examined the possibility of GTA about producing the knowledge by practice, and the knowledge by research from the viewpoint of methodology. He claimed as follows about agreement between school management research and GTA. GTA has the possibility for producing the knowledge by research or practice in school management research. Kimura (2010) analyzed about transition of the emotion in a teacher session from the data obtained at the interview to a teacher. Hirahata (2007) analyzed about the quality and capability which the Japanese who works as a Japanese teacher in foreign countries should learn. Otsuka (2008) tried extraction for the concept of agency theory by GTA in the field of human well-being.

3. Method
3.1 Research design
There has been no adequate discussion of high-school value. This paper uses descriptive data obtained by hearing about school value. Therefore, this research posed comprehensive and inclusive questions about "school value" to high-school instructors who work to provide educational services. The hearing data consists of interviews with ten teachers and principal in high school. This research analyzes the data using the method of grounded theory approach (Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Strauss, 1987; Saiki, 2010, 2012), and these analyzes reveal the contents of school value and the structure of school value.

Since the purpose of this paper was to clarify the concept of school value, it decided to depend on the simple version (Willig 52) which performs only theoretical coding.

3.2 Data collection and data analysis
We twice asked ten instructors for written responses to questions. Data collection and data analysis were conducted by turns activity in this study.

3.2.1 First round of questions. We obtained 25 groups of responses to the three questions shown below:

- Question 1. What do you think school value is?

- Question 2. Please explain your reasons for choosing this to mean value.

- Question 3. What activities are required to achieve this value?

3.2.2 Analysis of first round of questions. The analysis procedure of the grounded theory approach is as follows. First, analysts create the data. Second, analysts extract subordinate concepts "property" and "dimension" from the data. Third, analysts attach a "label name" with a slightly higher degree of abstraction based on "property" and "dimension." Fourth, the analyst collects similar "labels" and extracts "category" of superordinate concept.

We present the analytical process for responses received using the sample responses shown in Table I.

On the basis of the responses, text data T1_1 to T1_3 were prepared (hereinafter, sections).

T1_1: "Guardians expect a lot out of schools in terms of establishing and improving their child's academic performance. In addition, there is a trend for guardians to select their child's educational course early in their third year on the basis of school recommendations and related factors, desiring that the remainder of their year be about enjoying their high school life. In tandem, there is a trend toward increased interest and demand for instructors and schools to provide guidance in many areas of school life, such as curriculum of study, academic and career counseling, course guidance, and extracurricular activities."

T1_2: "We believe making the implementation and enhancement of classes, supplementary lessons, and extracurricular activities known to students provides a solution for guardian and student expectations."

T1_3: "We believe that it may be possible to create value for schools providing high-quality educational services if the implementation and enhancement of services described above fulfill the expectations of students and guardians."

We obtained 75 sections from 25 responses by a similar procedure. From these sections, the analyst extracts "property" and "dimension." And concept names (hereinafter, labels) L1_1 to L1_3, which are somewhat high in their level of abstraction, were derived from these sections:

- L1_1: "Desire to decide course early during a student's third year."
- L1_2: "Necessity of classes that enable students to score high on exams."
- L1_3: "Gaining trust by fulfilling the demands of students' guardians."

We derived 64 labels from 75 sections in this manner. In total, 22 categories distinguished by referring to the characteristics of the obtained labels were derived (see categories derived from the first survey in Table III).

3.2.3 Second round of questions. The Question 3 responses mentioned of 13 educational services in the first round. In the second round of questions, 63 responses were received to the question "What do you believe is the value of 'educational services,' and to whom?" Educational services include overseas school excursions, language study abroad during lengthy holidays, classes in English, use of the school webpage, participation by instructors and students in community events, increased school hours, supplementary lessons during lengthy vacations, Saturday classes, internships, open school implementation, civic education implementation, regional contribution through volunteering and event participation, qualitative enhancement of extracurricular activities, and daily supplementary lessons.

3.2.4 Analysis of second round of questions. Table II shows the responses to the question, "What do you believe is the value of having overseas school excursions and to whom?" as a sample from 13 groups of responses.

School value	Teachers, instructors
Response backgrounds	Strong feelings among students and guardians toward academic development and guaranteed advancement; expectations of persons in class for instructor, expectations of educational counseling, etc.; expectations for extracurricular activity guidance
Activities to achieve value	Training to improve class quality, designing teaching materials, implementing class evaluations, establishing an educational counseling system, training extracurricular activity instructors

Table I.
Sample responses to the first round of questions

Serial No.	Who questioned	What sort of value?
1	School	Satisfaction of students and guardians, expectations of incoming students, school image enhancement, ensuring number of incoming students
2	School	Evaluation of enthusiasm for initiatives; trust of guardians, middle schools or cram schools, etc.; school branding; consistently securing students whose interest in learning, school life, etc. is high; validation of school existence
3	School	Tangible results, improved evaluation of school by students, guardians and region through publicity, improved branding, increased trust in the school, stable school management
4	Students	Opportunities to widen perspectives, enhanced appetite for learning, belief in school's enthusiasm to guide students
5	Students	Social experiences such as getting a passport, cross-cultural experiences, widened perspectives, increased number of paths to choose from, a prosperous life
6	Students	Cross-cultural experiences, acquisition of widened perspectives and multifaceted viewpoints, opportunities for global activities
7	Students	Possibility of real-life experiences, forming opinions, possibilities to gain awareness
8	Students/ School	Increased sense of expectations for school, securing applicants, stable school management

Table II.
Sample responses to
the second round of
questions (overseas
school excursions)

We obtained 115 sections from 63 groups of responses by a similar procedure, and obtained 58 labels.

3.3 Derivation of high-ranking categories
From the second round question asking "Value to whom?," four entities were obtained – "school," "students," "guardians," and "regional community" – as recipients of value (hereinafter, the four entities are referred to as stakeholders). Similar to Bolton and Nie (2010), we sorted 47 survey categories into four stakeholders. In each stakeholder, categories were classified by similar characteristics. The group obtained in this way was taken as a high-ranking category. Then, the group was given a high-ranking category name in accordance with the characteristics. And we derived the 13 high-ranking categories shown in Table III.

3.4 Derivation of core categories
The high-ranking categories belonging to the "school" entity was summarized by taking a bird's-eye view, stating "Schools establish their own missions as organizations. Then they formulate specific services for achieving those missions and take action to realize those services. Those actions create service value." Thus, we named "school innovation" as a core category.

The high-ranking categories belonging to the "students" entity was summarized by taking a bird's-eye view, stating "Students establish their awareness and self-consciousness as constituents of the next generation of society. Students themselves look inward, and also look at those around them, which enables them to truly experience growth in their academic performance, physical strength, and awareness. Thus, they are able to have an enjoyable school life in which classes are understandable." Thus, we named "student motivation and self-realization" as a core category.

The entity of "guardians" was summarized by stating "Guardians have a sense of satisfaction when they personally experience their child's growth and self-realization, and their sense of satisfaction leads to trust in the school. By participating in school management and school events, guardians gain a sense of satisfaction from their

Stakeholder	High-ranking category	Categories per survey derived from first survey	Categories per survey derived from second survey
School	Establishment and spread of school mission	Declaring and publicizing school mission, formulating roadmap for school education activities, encouraging a sense of faith in the school, fulfilling course of study through individualized academic and career counseling, improving grades and academic and career counseling through career design, setting individualized student goals, building trust by providing satisfaction	Validating school existence, desire for career building and results, trust in school due to sense of security, guardians feel secure due to school compliance
	Sustaining the school through recruitment	Safe and appropriate learning environment, qualitative enhancement of school activities	School branding, school image enhancement, appealing to examinees and sustaining school through branding, recruiting applicants by publicizing high quality of educational services, acquisition of international perspectives, learning fundamental skills for living in a global society, quantitatively defining class times
	Addressing today's educational issues	Overcoming "weaning from home learning," enhancement of extracurricular activities and their effects, conversion from pressure-free education, establishment of a normative consciousness, qualitative improvement and quantitative enhancement of classes, enhancement of information transmission by school	Good interpersonal relationships, strengthening of sentiments, self-fulfillment by students through self-affirmation, degree of motivation to tackle goals, communication with stakeholders, school visualization
	Coexistence and cooperation between school and region	Balanced cooperation between school and region	Coexistence and cooperation between region and school, demonstration of regional educational capabilities
	Reform of organizational culture of school	Failure to meet unrealistic expectations for school, reform of organizational structure (results, problems, and issues that are difficult to make public), obsolescence of precedents, use of conventional resources	Faculty development
Students	Enhancement of school life	Overcoming "weaning from home learning," enhanced school life for students	Degree of motivation to tackle goals, good interpersonal relationships, recruiting applicants by publicizing the high quality of educational services, communication with stakeholders
	Motivation for social and personal growth	Establishment of a normative consciousness	Acquisition of a normative consciousness and an ethical viewpoint, awareness of whether the school is suitable for the

Table III.
High-ranking categories per entities and categories per survey

(*continued*)

Stakeholder	High-ranking category	Categories per survey derived from first survey	Categories per survey derived from second survey
	Establishment of motivation for career building	Setting individualized student goals	students, sense of belonging to school and region Degree of motivation to tackle goals, strengthening of sentiments, learning international fields, learning fundamental skills for living in a global society, motivation for career building and results
	Burden reduction for guardians	Desired school of entry	Acceptable school of entry
Guardians	Establishment of trust in school	Trust in school from gaining satisfaction	Trust in school due to sense of security, degree of satisfaction of guardians, guardians feel secure due to school compliance
	Participation in school management	Visualization of school educational activities	Communication with stakeholders, recruiting applicants by publicizing high quality of educational services
Region	Communication via various means	Visualization of school educational activities, enhancement of information transmission by school	Communication with stakeholders, recruiting applicants by publicizing high quality of educational services
	Coexistence and cooperation between school and region	Balanced cooperation between school and region	Coexistence and cooperation between region and school, utilization of regional educational capabilities

Table III.

contributions and cooperation, and a sense of fulfillment from their results." Thus, we named "guardian satisfaction" as a core category.

The entity of "region" was summarized by stating "If it is possible for schools to make students visible, then support and cooperation in school educational activities may provide a sense of satisfaction and a sense of fulfillment from the results." Thus, "demonstration of regional capabilities" was named as a core category.

4. Results
We derived concepts (hereinafter, core categories) encompassing the high-ranking categories per stakeholders, as responses to *RQ1*. Furthermore, we asked for interconnection between core categories, as a response to *RQ2*.

4.1 Contents of core category
These analyzes extracted four core categories that constitute the school value. They are "School innovation," "Student motivation and self-realization," "Guardian satisfaction" and "Demonstration of regional capabilities." Under "School innovation," we extracted five high-ranking categories. These are "Establishment and spread of school mission," "Sustaining the school through recruitment," "Addressing today's educational issues," "Coexistence and cooperation between school and region" and "Reform of organizational culture of school" Under "Student motivation and self-realization," three high-ranking categories were extracted. These are "Enhancement of school life," "Motivation for social and personal growth," "Establishment of motivation for career building." Under "Guardian satisfaction," three high-ranked categories were extracted. They are "Burden reduction for guardians," "Establishment of trust in school" and "Participation in school management." Under the

"Demonstration of regional capabilities," two high-ranked categories were extracted. They are "Communication via various means,"and "Coexistence and cooperation between school and region."

"Categories per survey derived from first survey" and "Categories per survey derived from second survey" represent categories with a lower abstraction level.

4.2 Structure between core categories

The property belonging to the label obtained in the process in which a category is extracted was observed. Figure 1 was obtained by linking core categories by shared properties.

In Figure 1, the four core categories share the property of "The person concerned of the school evaluation." Furthermore, link A represents the direct providing and receiving of educational services, such as learning guidance and extracurricular activities, and realizing the hopes and dreams of students. Link B represents indirectly providing and receiving educational services to students through PTA activities, and the creators of an educational community centered around the school. Link C represents the creation of an education community that results from the presence of a school, and the construction of new relationships between them. These connections form a structure encompassing the three core categories of "student motivation and self-realization," "guardian satisfaction," and "demonstration of regional capabilities," with "school innovation" at the center.

In addition, Link D represents the properties of "suitability of school to oneself," "do not mind attending school," "acceptable school of entry," and "visualization of growth." Link E represents the "sense of belonging to region" and "proving oneself in regional projects." Link F represents the properties of "visualizing school education activities," "sense of belonging to region," "regional educational capabilities," and "participation in regional projects." Figure 1 illustrates the connections of each category in three directions, which suggests that they are obtained through co-creation by stakeholders.

5. Conclusion and discussion

The purpose of this paper was to learn the substance of "school value." It is hardly considered to discuss the contents of school value and the structure of school value. Comprehensive and inclusive questioning was conducted with high-school instructors on "school value." Then, the collected data were analyzed by using the grounded theory approach.

In response to the question "What type of school value is created by educational services?" the study results can be summarized as follows: school value consists of the four core categories "school innovation," "student motivation and self-realization," "guardian satisfaction," and "demonstration of regional capabilities," and 13 high-ranking categories.
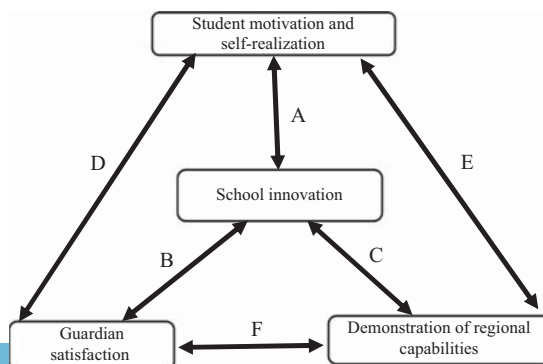

Figure 1.
Structure of
school value

This research was targeted at high school. And this research analyzed the school value with the data collected by listening to teachers. The scope of analysis and the scope of data collection are the characteristics of this study and are the limits of research. However, it is worth considering the contents of school value. The school value is formulated based on the situation of each school. In this research, by changing the target of interview, each school can find its own value. When the school intends to formulate its own value, the method of analysis of this research is effective. Brezicha *et al.* (2015) reported on promoting school renovation as follows. It also considers how leaders influence the school's setting and the delivery of information around new reforms. And providing teachers with differentiated support improves teachers' understanding of the reform and supplies teachers the necessary tools to implement the new idea, facilitate teacher voice and participation in the process. This research on school value will provide information on the contents and object of school reform. And that information will promote school reform.

In response to the question "What elements constitute school value?," as shown in Figure 1, there were shared properties between each of the four core categories, and the remaining three core categories were linked in a star pattern around "school innovation."

Figure 1 illustrates the connections of each category in three directions. This indicates that the value for the school is linked with the value for the student, the value for the guardian, the value for the local community. When the school starts making value, the first procedure is required to form an agreement between the leader and the faculty. Second, coordination with students, parents, local communities and board of education is required. Coordination means content explanation and opinion hearing and so on. The leader will be required to participate in the adjustment between the links D, E and F in Figure 1. According to Daniel (2015), shared leadership provides the venue for continuous improvement and therefore shared values and vision. And continuous improvement and effective collaboration are essential components of positive school culture. Grissom *et al.* (2015) reported that the connection between time management and instruction supports the idea that principals consider instruction their highest priority area, on average. Study of this school value clarified a leader's role and action in the creation scene of school value. And this finding will enable school leaders' efficient activities and contribute to school improvement.

From another point of view, it corresponds to the question "What type of school value is created by educational services?" Dong (2014) insisted on the necessity of exchanging educational services for value co-creation.

The framework of prior research of educational services is as follows. Teachers are those who provide services and students are those who receive services. And a joint innovation creates value. (Idei 105; Ishii 645; Kimita 641; Mizoguchi 661; Sugino 663) Figure 1 means the next. In order for each stakeholder to gain value, it is necessary to exchange educational services among stakeholders. Therefore, Exchange of educational services is required through Links A, B and C. In addition, it is necessary to exchange educational services by a Link of D, E and F. When a school designs new school value, this research suggests the following. It is important to design the school value which can exchange teaching services among stakeholders.

Three implications were obtained from these results:

(1) Implications for research: in this research, we analyze the value of school using the grounded theory approach. The data used for the analysis are interview data on the value of the school. And these analyzes reveal the contents of school value and the structure of school value.

(2) Implications for practice: this study discussed school value based on hearing data of faculty members.

    In the analysis method of this research, each school can find its own value by changing the target and contents of interview.

(3) Implications for society: study of this school value clarified a leader's role and action in the creation scene of school value. This finding will enable efficient activities of school leaders. As a result, it can be expected to promote school improvement.

This research analyzed the school value of high school based on hearing data of high-school teachers. The scope of analysis and the scope of data collection are the limits of this study. In the future, the authors would like to expand the range of data and analysis target.

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