

Complementarity of evaluation methodologies in the organizations in Colombia

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1. ABSTRACT

The complementarity associated with flexible evaluation methodologies will enable the uncertainty which surrounds modern organizations to be more effectively managed in terms of sustainability, which should arise, from effective intervention in organizational evaluation.

This paper will provide an overview of current evaluation methodologies. We shall then address issues associated with these methodologies: Firstly, what views or perspective on organizations is being adopted. Secondly, the choice of the "best" systems approach method for conducting an evaluation. Thirdly, the need to define the indicators through which to access the evaluation methodology being used; Fourthly, whether it is possible to use the different methodologies in a complementary manner. It is these issues which will form the basis for the construction of this paper. However, this paper is directed at the use of these methodologies in Colombia and it is necessary to relate our thinking to the Colombian context.

The paper will conclude with a critical review of complementarist evaluation methodologies with particular reference to differing organizational needs and conditions under which any evaluation intervention takes place. We shall also assess the developmental aspects of such methodologies with respect to the effectiveness of intervention in Colombian organizations.

Keywords: Evaluation; Systems; Effectiveness; Indicators; Management; Organizational Analysis; Performance Measurement

2. INTRODUCTION

This paper is about the complementarity of the evaluation methodologies for measuring performance in modern organizations to be more effectively managed in terms of sustainability. The introduction of methodologies and the flexibility for their complementarity will enable better handling of uncertainty inside and outside the organization.

Colombia (where I am carrying out this research) began to work in an open market environment in 1993, and then it started to modernize its public organizations in preparation for the implementation of the open market. In a turbulent environment, the complementarity of methodologies enable constant feedback to the organizations. The Colombian

government has been creating mechanisms that enable measurement of performance in organizations in respect of the time taken to achieve objectives, and it is expected to develop evaluation patterns according to the new Colombian Constitution of 1991. Today, there is a specific law for the Modernization of the Public Sector: "Ley 87" and "Directiva Presidencial 02" which have been oriented to the process of design and implementation of the Internal Control System in the Public Colombian Enterprises.

Colombian organizations need to be more aggressive and adaptable than they are now. They need to develop a greater capacity for learning in order to survive and change in the open market environment. The evaluation methodologies should enable the comparison of different organizations both in the same economic sector and also between different sectors. The research will also focus on determining how to work in a complementary way the variety of evaluation approaches into the organizations' usual operating functions.

3. COMPLEMENTARITY OF THE DIFFERENT EVALUATION METHODOLOGIES

The complementarity of evaluation methodologies has gained undeniable importance in organizational design and diagnosis. The adequate handling and monitoring of measures of performance makes it necessary to introduce swift mechanisms to allow on-going organizational evaluation. In practical terms, there are certain problems in design, diagnosis and evaluate the organizational future because of the isolated methodologies that have been used up to date. However, in both practical and theoretical terms, there are problems with the integration of evaluation methodologies which have been used in an isolated manner. It will be argued that the synergy produced by these complementarity can improve the learning opportunity for the organization. Using the methodologies together (which I would mention later) improves the strengths of the individual methodologies and compensate for the weaknesses in the other.

Analyzing Table 1 as a whole helps to identify four important issues in the complementarity of the different evaluation methodologies: an overview of the methodologies, different ways of viewing the organizations and the suggested systems approaches for conducting each evaluation approach. This analysis has been influenced by Morales (1995).

@TABLE=TABLE 1

- In a Goal-Based Evaluation Approach, evaluation is based upon the organization's reaching formal, or at least operational, goals.
- The Systems Resource-Based Evaluation Approach is based upon the idea that it is impossible to act without causing multiple reactions throughout the organization. The notion of adaptation to the environment and the ability of the organization to survive is very important in this evaluation approach.
- The Multi-Actor Approach is a pluralistic approach which recognizes that conflict between actors may occur and evaluates performance in terms of how actors' interests are

served.

- The Culture Evaluation Approach must judge whether organizational actors are satisfied with the organizational culture and whether the culture provides for opportunities for change.

3.2 Different ways of Viewing the Organization explaining the different ways of viewing the organization to ensure the appropriate form of evaluation:

- In a Goal-Based Evaluation Approach organizations are viewed as machines seeking to achieve their goals with the minimum use of resources.

- In a Systems Resource-Based Evaluation Approach, the organization is viewed as a complex adaptive system considered as a system of interacting parts.

- "The Multi-Actor Evaluation Approach sees organizations as arenas of social action" (Gregory and Jackson, 1991). Each individual has his/her own set of beliefs and values shared through interaction with others.

- In a Culture-Based Evaluation Approach the organization is seen as a social system which projects itself onto its members in order to produce a culture or identity.

3.3 The Suggested Systems Approaches for Conducting each Evaluation Approach explaining the suggested systems approach for evaluation conducting and monitoring changes outside and inside the organization:

- The Goal-Based Evaluation Approach might be helped by the systems-based methodology of Interactive Management. This Interactive Management method provides a process for deciding on objectives and producing an organizational mission and strategy.

- Turning to the Systems Resource-Based Evaluation Approach, it seems that the Viable System Model of Beer (1979, 1983, 1985) represents the best model for approaching measures of performance, according to this approach, in the systems thinking tradition.

- In a Multi-actor Evaluation Approach and in a Cultural Evaluation Approach some tools of Checkland's Soft Systems Methodology might be used as a model for exploring a problem situation. SSM has been seen by many as an useful tool for managing political and cultural change in organizations (Flood & Jackson 1991) offering the idea that all organizations need to survive and adapt to changing internal or external circumstances.

3.4 Measures of Performance Using the Various Approaches explaining the different organizational performance measures for the different evaluation approaches.

The definitions of effectiveness, efficacy and efficiency are likely to be employed differently by each evaluation approach. I would use Gregory's (1995) definitions of effectiveness;

These do not relate specifically to measurement but to the approaches as a whole.

- The Goal Approach must provide the necessary modeling and quantitative techniques that will allow the systems effectiveness to be measured in terms of its stated goals. Gregory said (1995), "A form of evaluation based upon the view of the organization as a machine should promote a definition of effectiveness such as: effectiveness is the organization's ability to achieve goals."

- The System Resource-Based Evaluation judges effectiveness using concepts such as survival, adaptability, development, growth, flexibility and stability. Gregory stated (1995), "It is logical that a form of organizational evaluation based upon organic principles should adopt a definition of effectiveness such as: effectiveness is the organization's ability to survive and adapt in a dynamic environment."

- The multi-actor approach tends to depend upon a consensus of different actors about organizational effectiveness. "Effectiveness is the organization's ability to satisfy the needs of all those parties influenced by and having an influence upon its activities" (Gregory, 1995).

- In a Culture-Based Evaluation Approach, evaluation can be placed into the qualitative measurement category due to its focus on matters pertinent to individuals and its emphasis on communication and relationships. "Effectiveness is the organization's ability to generate and perpetuate a culture which, by enabling those individuals who serve it to reach their potential, enhances its, the organization's, own variety" (Gregory, 1995).

4. CONCLUSION

It is important to use the evaluation methodologies in a complementarity way for use in Colombian organizations (commercial, industrial, governmental or social enterprise). In conducting an evaluation there are various issues to be addressed: firstly, what views or perspective on organizations is being adopted and the conditions under which a particular view be taken of the organization for the purpose of evaluation are examined. Secondly, in suggesting the best method for conducting the evaluation, it may be assumed that only systems approaches can deal with the complexity and turbulence faced by modern organizations. Thirdly, it is necessary to discover how to define indicators for each evaluation methodology. Fourthly, whether it is possible to use the different methodologies for evaluation purposes in a complementary way must be considered.

Each organization has its own goals, processes, politics and culture. As a result of the interaction process, an organizational social structure emerges that consider the organization as a pluralistic system. The complementarity use of evaluation methodologies must be the core of the evaluation process allowing the performance measurement of goal, survival potential, stakeholders' satisfaction and culture simultaneously and integrally. The complementarity of evaluation methodologies may be helpful to obtain the organizational

performance measurements internally and externally. The crucial question is whether the definition of an appropriate set of indicators will generate the basis for an improvement organizational evaluation process and whether they will permit the form of evaluation used in theory to be significant in practice.

The organization must be interpreted in an adaptive whole considering complementarity and connectivity of the methodologies. We could indeed examine organizations cohesive and coherently providing structure, processes, strategies and values. This comprehension requires not only a complete understanding of each evaluation methodology, but also their synergy and understanding of the restrictions and constraints to be identified under different conditions.

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TABLE 1

Evaluation Methodology organization's	View of the Approach	Suggested Approach	Effectiveness is the Systems- ability to
Goal-Based	Machine	Interactive Management	achieve goals
Systems- Resource	Organization as an adaptive	Viable Systems Model	survive and adapt in a dynamic environment
Multi-Actor	Pluralistic System	Soft Systems Methodology	satisfy the needs of all involved in its activities
Cultural	Cultural		generate and perpetuate a culture

