

ბიზნეს-ინჟინერინგი მასობრივ კომუნიკაციებში

Communication Technologies in Program Evaluation

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პროგრამული შეფასება პროცესებისა და/ან შედეგების სისტემატური შეფასებაა, რომელიც საბოლოოდ მის განვითარებასა და გაუმჯობესებას ისახავს მიზნად. ამგვარად, ეს კოლაბორაციული პროცესია, რომლის დროსაც შემფასებლები შეფასების ობიექტთან მჭიდრო კავშირში მუშაობენ, ადგენენ შეფასების დიზაინს, რომელმაც უნდა დააკმაყოფილოს შეფასების ობიექტის საჭიროებები. ამ დროს არასწორი კომუნიკაცია ხშირად ხდება პრობლემების დაწყების საფუძველი. კარგი ურთიერთობის ჩამოყალიბებისთვის აუცილებელია საკომუნიკაციო გეგმის შემუშავება და მისი აქტიური გამოყენება. ეფექტური კომუნიკაციის წყალობით მმართველი რგოლი ისე შესრულებულ სამუშაოს იბარებს, რომელზეც მან გასცა განკარგულება.

პროგრამულ შეფასებას საზოგადოებაში სხვადასხვა მნიშვნელობა ენიჭება. იგი ხელს უწყობს სხვადასხვა ორგანიზაციებს, დონორებს, ინვესტორებს, სამთავრობო სტრუქტურებს გაიაზრონ პროგრამებისა და პროექტების განხორციელების სტატუსი და წარმატება, რომელშიც მათ თანხა დააბანდეს. ამ დროს კვლევის მიზნებისთვის შესაძლებელია მოხდეს საკომუნიკაციო ტექნოლოგიების ჩართვა პროგრამულ შეფასებაში.

სტეიკჰოლდერებს ხშირად აინტერესებთ ის პროგრამები და პროექტები, რომლებსაც ისინი აფინანსებენ და ახორციელებენ, შესაძლებელია თუ არა გამომწვევითი ეფექტის მიღწევა. პროგრამული შეფასებისას თუ ძირითადი აქცენტები ამ დეფინიციას ეკუთვნის, მნიშვნელოვანი მოსაზრებები ხშირად გულისხმობს იმის გარკვევას თუ როგორ შეიძლება მოხდეს პროგრამისა თუ პროექტის გაუმჯობესება, არსებობს თუ არა უკეთესი ალტერნატივები, არსებობს თუ არა გაუთვალისწინებელი შედეგები და რამდენად შესაფერისი და სარგებლიანია პროგრამისა თუ პროექტის მიზნები.

პროგრამული შეფასებისას მიზანშეწონილია საკომუნიკაციო ტექნოლოგიების, კერძოდ ორმხრივი სიმეტრიული მოდელის, გამოყენება. მისი გამოყენების მიზანია შეფასების პროცესი განვითარდეს

უფრო მიზანმიმართულად. ორმხრივი სიმეტრიული კომუნიკაციით სარგებლობისას მიღებული შედეგი - უკუკავშირის ეფექტური, ინფორმატიული და ცოდნის მომცემია საჭირო ცვლილებების განსახორციელებლად.

Summary

Program evaluation is the systematic assessment of the processes and/or outcomes with the intent of furthering its development and improvement. As such, it is a collaborative process in which evaluators work closely with evaluand and staff to craft and implement an evaluation design that is responsive to the needs of the evaluand. Wrong communication often causes problems. Developing a communication plan and its use for establishing a good relationship. Management team receives completed work in the way they have ordered on.

Program evaluation has various importance in the society. It helps various organizations, donors, investors, government bodies to understand the success and implementation status of the programs or projects on which they have invested funds. This time communication technologies can be involved in program evaluation for research goals.

Stakeholders often want to know whether the programs and projects they are objecting, funding, implementing and receiving are producing the intended effect. While program evaluation first focuses around this definition, important considerations often include how the program or project could be improved, whether there are better alternatives, if there are unintended outcomes, and whether the program or project goals are appropriate and useful.

It is appropriate to apply communication technologies in program evaluation, in particular the two way symmetrical model. Its goal is that the evaluation process should be more purposefull. The obtained result of using the two way symmetrical communication is effective feedback, informative and gives the necessary knowledge in order to make necessary changes.

Keywords: evaluation; program; project, evaluator; evaluand; approach; stakeholder; information; collection; outcomes; data; decision; PR; strategy; technology; model;

society; communication.

Introduction

Spending time and money on the evaluation is worth if this will help supporters and people interested to deepening their knowledge on various politics, strategies, programs and projects and apply this knowledge [1]. In our view, based on specifications of this mentioned field, high quality evaluation can be achieved by using a program evaluation method. We would like to note as well that alongside with advantages it also has disadvantages such as hard working and comparative high costs.

Program evaluation is the systematic assessment of the processes and/or outcomes with the intent of furthering its development and improvement. As such, it is a collaborative process in which evaluators work closely with program staff to craft and implement an evaluation design that is responsive to the needs of the program and/or project.

Program evaluation is a systematic method for collecting, analyzing, and using information to answer questions about programs and projects [2], particularly about their effectiveness and efficiency. Wrong communication often causes problems. Developing a communication plan and its use for establishing a good relationship. According to the communication model of Grunig and Hunt, [3], [4] a balanced communication is the most important. At this point, a two way symmetrical model can be used which can be considered the most ethical model comparing with other models. The goal of this model is to understand audience psychology in order to receive effective outcomes by defining more purposeful messages. The aim of the two way symmetrical communication model is a dialogue not a monologue. Feedback obtained by using this type of communication is useful to make necessary changes. The mentioned communication model is mainly used by non-commercial organizations in order to obtain desirable effects [3], [4].

By using this communication model the management team receives completed work in the way they have ordered on. Good communication is based on bilateral exchange of information from the management circle to employee and vice versa. Effective communication is a managing skill. The communication connects knowledge and information. Knowledge is not useful until it becomes an information. Based on this knowledge and correct communication is necessary. Well known expression “knowledge is power” must be transformed in “used knowledge is power”. In order to use it effective communication is necessary. [5].

Program evaluation has various importance in the society. It helps various organizations, donors, investors, government bodies to understand the success and implementation status of the programs or projects on which they have invested funds. This time communication technologies can be involved in program evaluation for research goals.

“The research is a controlled, objective and systemic gathering of information in order to describe and under-

stand it”. In order to achieve the organization outcomes and meet communication needs of society research approach is determined based on a specific aim, subject and existing situation. [6]. This kind of evaluation is a part of social service and it is designed accordingly to the need of the clients.

Effective communication with a society is a process and the first step in this process is a research which is considered by PR professionals as an integral part of planning, program development and an evaluation process [7].

In both the public and private sectors, stakeholders often want to know whether the programs and projects they are objecting, funding, implementing and receiving are producing the intended effect. While program evaluation first focuses around this definition, important considerations often include how the program could be improved, whether the program is worthwhile, whether there are better alternatives, if there are unintended outcomes, and whether the program goals are appropriate and useful. Program evaluation - evaluators help to answer these questions, but the best way to answer the questions is for the evaluation to be a joint project between evaluators and stakeholders. During program and projects implementation, evaluators can provide formative evaluation findings so that program/projects staff can make immediate, data-based decisions about program/projects implementation and delivery. In addition, evaluators can, towards the end of a program/projects or upon its completion, provide cumulative and summative evaluation findings, often required by funding agencies and used to make decisions about program/projects continuation or expansion [8].

Theoretical Approaches to Program Evaluation

Vital to any rigorous evaluation is a complete understanding of the multitude of evaluation theories. Marvin Alkin and Christina Christie [9] illustrated the progression and development of evaluation theories by situating leading evaluation theorists on an evaluation theory tree. The evaluation tree is an image which illustrates the underlying root reasons and goals for evaluation and categorizes the theorists into three overarching categories labeled use, methods, and valuing while not every evaluation theorist wholly agrees with Alkin and Christie’s evaluation theory tree or where they are situated among the branches, this illustration is useful to gain a preliminary understanding of the progression and development of evaluation theory, where evaluators have made major contributions, and what are three key facets of good evaluation. While the evaluation theory tree has been updated by Alkin and Christie [10], either evaluation theory tree is useful for the purpose of starting to think about where the different evaluation theories originated.

There are a number of approaches used to conduct evaluations from which an evaluator can choose. These approaches differ in terms of the underlying assumptions they make, what they value and emphasize, the methods used,

the role of the evaluator, and the areas of application (The University of North Carolina at Greensboro Department of Educational Research Methodology ERM Department, School of Education Building).

The management-oriented approach focuses on identifying and meeting the informational needs of managerial decision-makers. This approach requires a close link between the evaluators and the manager/key decision makers, but it may not address critical issues.

The objectives-oriented approach focuses on specifying goals/objectives and determining the extent to which those goals/objectives have been attained [11]. This approach assumes that goals exist and are worthwhile and attempts to link program activities with outcomes.

Policy-oriented approach recognizes the influence that evaluation findings can have on policy decisions and incorporates that into the evaluation activities. This approach highlights the fact that the evaluator has some political influence regardless of their intent.

Theory-based approach investigates whether a program's challenges are chiefly a result of problems in the program theory. While program goals may be implemented with fidelity to the program theory, the underlying theory may be the root of program challenges.

Adversary-oriented approach centers the focus of the evaluation on planned opposition in stakeholder or participant points of view. This approach has been used in the context of highly controversial issues, but can be resource intensive.

Consumer-oriented approach develops evaluative information based on consumer needs and perceptions [12]. This approach tends to require the evaluator to maintain distance from program staff and is goal-free in order to determine if the program meets the consumer needs.

Expertise-oriented approach will depend primarily on the application of an evaluator's professional expertise to judge the quality of the evaluand [12]. The critical aspect of this approach lies in the reputation of the critic or expert.

Participant-oriented approach require the involvement of multiple levels of stakeholders in determining the values, criteria, needs, and data collected for the evaluation. The evaluator acts as a facilitator, encouraging dialogue, participation, and deliberation among all stakeholders involved.

Utilization focused evaluation approach focuses on the intended use for the intended users. A key aspect is that the evaluator is responsible for ensuring that the evaluation results are used.

Methodology

Program evaluation is as scrupulous and systematic in collecting data as social research. Primary objective of evaluation is to provide timely and constructive information for decision-making process about evaluand, not to advance more wide-ranging knowledge or theory. Evaluation is typically more client-focused than research, in that evaluators work closely with evaluand staff to create an

evaluation plan that attend to their particular needs.

Data methodology decisions are important in evaluation and involve many different considerations. As part of the methods in an evaluation the evaluator must determine whether they will used qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods types of information, or data, as all of these are potential data that can be useful in an evaluation. Qualitative data is not numerical information and is typically textual or observational information that is in a narrative form [13]. Quantitative data is numerical information [13], [14]. Lastly, mixed methods information is more than simply using both qualitative and quantitative data within an evaluation. Mixed methods data are combined, or associated, qualitative and quantitative types of data that strengthen the evaluation of a construct or specific research topic [12], [15]. Ultimately, the most important rule of thumb to keep in mind when deciding what types of data, methods, or procedures to use is that evaluators should select that which is "most appropriate for answering the evaluation question at hand given the context of the program and its stakeholders" [12]. The methods of data collection that are commonly used to conduct an evaluation include tests, surveys, direct measures of specific constructs, individual interviews, focus group interviews, observations, and artifacts [12]. In cases in which the evaluator is actively collecting data from program stakeholders the sampling methods should be determined and two common types of sampling are purposive and random sampling methods [13]. Purposive sampling is when the evaluator justifies the selection of specific people for their sample for specific reasons [13]. Random sampling is when the evaluator uses a method of sampling that allows for the laws of chance to determine who is chosen to be in the sample and in itself random sampling justifies sample selection because it minimizes the potential for bias [13] also provides specific examples of situations in which purposive and random sampling are each appropriate. Three other types of sampling that are highlighted by Weiss [13] are opportunistic sampling, convenience sampling, and snowball sampling, which are all possible methods of sampling in qualitative data procedures [13], [16].

There are many types of evaluation, depending on the purpose, timing, and procedures used. A summative evaluation, sometimes called outcome evaluation, is conducted for the purpose of documenting the results of a program. Specific goals of a program are identified and the degree of accomplishment of those goals is documented. The results of a summative evaluation might point to changes that should be made in a program in order to improve it in subsequent implementations. The results of summative evaluations can specify program status and conditions for accountability purposes. The results can also be used as a needs assessment for the subsequent planning of changes in a program or of the introduction of new programs and interventions [17].

A formative evaluation examine various aspects of an ongoing program in order to make changes/improvements as the program is being implemented. This type of evalua-

tion attempts to document exactly what is transpiring in a program. Data are collected and analyzed at a time when program changes can be made to ensure that the quality of the program implementation is maintained throughout [17].

Effective program evaluation is a carefully planned and systematic approach to documenting the nature and results of program implementation. The suggested evaluation process contains nine steps [17]:

1. Define the Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation
2. Specify the Evaluation Questions – What Do You Want to Know?
3. Specify the Evaluation Design
4. Create the Data Collection Action Plan
5. Collect Data
6. Analyze data
7. Document Findings
8. Disseminate Findings
9. Feedback to Program Improvement

It is recommended to apply communication technologies in nine step program evaluation, in particular the two way symmetrical model. Its goal is that the evaluation process should be more purposeful. The obtained result of using the two way symmetrical communication is effective feedback, informative and gives the necessary knowledge in order to make necessary changes.

Conclusion

Nowadays Georgia is in the next stage of development of different types of organizations. Programs or projects financed by international donor organizations or internal investments are implemented, being carried out and being planned. Modern scientific methods are not used for organizations development, defining, implementing and progressing of program and project priorities, evaluation of results and impacts. A modern and common evaluation method such as program evaluation is barely known for public and specialists. Using communication technologies and models specifically in evaluation is the novelty and do not know its precedent in Georgia. We consider modern methods of evaluation, research of using abilities of communication technologies and models in evaluation process as a promising direction generating necessary and positive results.

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