

Abstracts

Erik Albæk

Evaluation Research in Scandinavia

Evaluation research are different activities and are demanded by many different users. Evaluation results are seldomly used in a direct and instrumental way. The article discusses organization and quality of evaluation research in the Scandinavian countries. Several suggestions for increasing the quality of evaluation research are put forward.

Erik Albæk og Søren Winter

Evaluation in Denmark: Rationality or Political Weapon?

The use of evaluation is often seen from a rationalist perspective and related to the growth and interventions of the welfare state. From this perspective it is strange that evaluation was developed relatively slowly in Denmark. If evaluation, however, alternatively and more fruitfully is perceived as a weapon in political conflicts, both its late arrival and strong growth in the last decade might be related to a relatively low, but during the 1980'ies increasing, level of political conflict. However, also the supply of evaluation skill has increased, yet the quality is still insufficient.

Kjell Nilsson

From Planning to Result. Evaluation research in Sweden

The absence of a specific evaluation research in Sweden before the mid 1970s is explained by the fact that the implementation of social reforms usually was preceded by a planning and decision process that more or less precluded other forms of policy evaluation. The changes within the public sector, where the previous planning philosophy has been abandoned in favour of decentralization, profit centers and goal management, have contributed to the expansion of evaluation research during the 1980s. As the current changes to a large extent are ideologically motivated, it is less likely that the evaluation results, apart from legitimation, will be directly utilized in policy-making. Critical evaluations, on the other hand, may contribute to "enlightenment" as well as political arguments.

Bergljot Baklien

The Development of Evaluation in Norway

The Norwegian tradition of evaluation is based on four traditions. One concentrates on the relationship between ideals and reality. Another is action research. The third concentrates on causality; what are the effects of specific public policies? The last tradition is implementation research. The two first traditions have been performed in Norway for many years, but not under the label of evaluation research. The two last traditions are more recent and are imported from the USA.

Carol Hirschon Weiss

Mega-Lessons from U.S. Evaluation Experience

After a review of U.S experience with the evaluation of government programs, six lessons are drawn. These include the need to pay conscientious attention to study design (including specification of inputs, outcomes, and the underlying "program theory" that links inputs and outcomes), selecting appropriate criteria for suc-

ces, studying multiple sites in order to compensate for – and capitalize on – variations in implementation, not expecting direct and immediate implementation of study findings (inasmuch as much use of findings is indirect and slow), and the necessity to improve the communication of results to evaluation sponsors and also to legislators, operating agencies, clients, and the public.

Jørn Loftager

Policy Analysis, Interdisciplinarity and Political Science

It is a declared aim of policy analysis to contribute to the solution of concrete social problems. Both regarding its normative ambitions and its focusing on the content of policies, policy analysis is inconsistent with important assumptions in modern mainstream political science. Partly, this version of political science has concentrated on behaviour, processes and structures in the political system rather than on policy content. Partly, political science has given up normative pretension by accepting the so-called scientific value relativism. Searching for a domicile for policy analysis it is more fruitful to look back upon the classical tradition of political science. In that respect Aristotle appears to be of greater interest than David Easton.

Carsten Strøby Jensen, Jørgen Steen Madsen og Jesper Due

Internationalisation of the Trade Union Movement, the EC Single Market and the Maastricht-Treaty

Internationalisation has been a major characteristic among European companies since the second world war, but a similar trend has not been seen among European trade unions. Trade unions has primarily been national oriented and focused on national collective bargaining. However the political development in the European Community has put the internationalisation of the trade union movement on the agenda. Trade Unions in the EC-countries have developed a closer co-operation, due to the common problems they have been faced with as a consequence of the EC-Single market.