

Summary

Complex theory-led evaluation programmes in education

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Past evaluation programmes and evaluation research studies in education, especially those involving curriculum evaluation, have used programme theory to a small extent or none at all. Programme theory and logics of short and medium scope is an essential tool in the development of any programme or evaluation type, whether formative, summative, proactive, monitoring or interactive. Evaluation is often unjustifiably absent from many introductory texts and methodological discussions where it is presented as atheoretical and only a methodically-focused mission. However, the importance of theory (of both the model and the approach) is emphasized by numerous evaluation theoreticians (Patton, Chen, Rossi and Freman, Weiss and others). Theory generally has a number of functions and is the central component of the evaluation process in education. It may, for instance, provide the teacher-evaluator with a solid rationale for the selection of specific methods and methodological approaches to be used in researching pupils with special needs. Elaborating on this issue, the author here uses different models taken from the evaluation practice that may serve in the given context for developing the science of education theories. He particularly emphasizes a practical evaluation taxonomy that is essential in the selection of an adequate evaluation strategy and of an approach most appropriate for intervention programmes in different areas of education.

Keywords: evaluation programme, evaluation research, programme theory, practical taxonomy, formative and summative evaluation, participants.