

Reading questions

Education



The paper makes a comparative study of the research areas of Chen and Worthen and Sanders. It attempts to point out the basic difference in the approach of the researchers. Chen is outright objective in his treatment of the analytical study of evaluation. Worthen and Sanders on the other hand adopt a more subjective approach. Unlike Chen they discuss about the alternative concepts in their field of study and incorporate those to broaden their analysis. Chen is all criticism about other researchers and considers their findings lacking in multiple perspectives. He stresses on his scientific deduction of the evaluation typology as the model framework and establishes it with appropriate examples.

Introduction

Evaluation is invaluable for the functional prospect of any program. Deducing an apt evaluation system has direct impact on the success rate of a process. The studies of Chen as well as Worthen and Sanders focus on the different approaches to evaluation both on the conceptual and functional level. But the researchers have discussed the topic from the perspectives of their individual understanding and findings. Chen goes into an in depth analysis of the evaluation system that involves a study of how it works in the program, its role in defining and affecting the program and its effectiveness. Chen seems to dissect the evaluation process on an operational level. But Worthen and Sanders emphasize the theoretical, philosophical and psychological aspects of evaluation. Their study covers a wider range of the meaning and conceptual basis of evaluation and how it can be implemented accordingly.

Comparative study of Chen and Worthen & Sanders

In discussing evaluation Chen has kept his focus strictly on the key factor of evaluation which is to determine the efficacy of a particular program and the

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success of its outcome or end result. He criticizes the analytical interpretations of both Scriven and Stake regarding the use and purpose of evaluation. Chen attempts to take an objective, data-based and technical approach to the analysis of evaluation. His aim seems to formulate basic scientific criteria of a typology that could be applied to different situations. He holds that the four categories of evaluation, process-improvement, process-assessment, outcome-improvement and outcome assessment, are at the basis of judging any situation. Chen elaborates on these categories defining their inter-relationship and inter-dependency through real-life examples. His main purpose is to emphasize the usability of the evaluation process in a competitive atmosphere.

Worthen and Sanders provide a comprehensive idea about evaluation. They take a sweep of the entire philosophical basis of the concept. Unlike Chen their approach is inclusive of the different theoretical and ideological schools of thought. In fact they refer to the different philosophical perspectives like objectivism and subjectivism, utilitarianism and intuitionist-pluralist evaluation (p65-66). While discussing about evaluation in the philosophical setting they have underlined the ethical and social terms of its function and role (p67). When referring to the contrasting or alternative principles of evaluation Worthen and Sanders try to point out the philosophical grounds from which those are propounded. They highlight upon the importance of quantitative and qualitative mode of evaluation (p69). They mention that the various concepts of evaluation are case sensitive and cannot be generalized. Here they hold a completely different view from that of Chen who stressed upon the formula-based evaluation system typology.

Conclusion

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In conclusion it could be said that Chen aimed to develop an evaluation typology that would act as the basic framework for the evaluation system in a consumerist setting. Worthen and Sanders on the other hand based their analysis on the alternative philosophical and ideological concepts to stress on the socio-ethical purpose of evaluation. But the studies of both Chen and Worthen and Sanders are essential in the understanding of the concept and function of evaluation. Their different outlooks point out the significant role and function of evaluation.

Reference

Chen, Huey-Tsyh. 1996. A comprehensive typology for program evaluation. *Evaluation Practice*, Vol. 17 Issue 2, p121

Worthen, Blaine, R. Sanders, James, R. Fitzpatrick, Jodi, L. 1997. *Alternative Views of Education. Program Evaluation: Alternative Approaches and Practical Guidelines*. New York. Longman.