

The Role of Evaluation for Effective and Efficient Change in Higher Education Institutions

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Abstract : That the University as we have known it is no longer serving the needs of the vast majority of students and potential students has been a topic of much discussion. Institutions of higher education, in this age of global culture, are in a process of metamorphosis. Technology is being used to allow more students, older students, working students and disabled students, who cannot attend conventional classes, to have greater access to higher education through the internet. But change must come about only after much evaluation and experimentation or education will simply become a commodity as, in some cases, it already has. This paper will be concerned with the meaning and methods of change and evaluation as they are applied to institutions of higher education. Organization's generally have different goals and different approaches in order to be successful. However, the means of reaching those goals requires rational and effective planning. Any plans for successful change in any institution must take into account both effectiveness and efficiency and the differences between them. "Effectiveness" refers to an adequate means of achieving an objective. "Efficiency" refers to the ability to achieve an objective without waste of time or resources (The Free Dictionary). So an effective means may not be efficient and an efficient means may not be effective. The goal is to reach a synthesis of effectiveness and efficiency that will maximize both to the extent each is limited by the other. This focus of this paper then is to determine how an educational institution can become either successful or oppressive depending on the kinds of planning, evaluating and changes that operate by and on the administration. If the plan is concerned only with efficiency, the institution can easily become oppressive and lose sight of its purpose of educating students. If it is overly concentrated on effectiveness, the students may receive a superior education in the short run but the institution will face operating difficulties. In becoming only goal oriented, institutions also face problems. Simply stated, if the institution reaches its goals, the stake holders may become satisfied and fail to change and keep up with the needs of the times. So goals should be seen only as benchmarks in a process of becoming even better in providing quality education. Constant and consistent evaluation is the key to making all these factors come together in a successful process of planning, testing and changing the plans as needed. The focus of the evaluation has to be considered. Evaluations must take into account progress and needs of students, methods and skills of instructors, resources available from the institution and the styles and objectives of administrators. Thus the role of evaluation is pivotal in providing for the maximum of both effective and efficient change in higher education institutions.

Keywords : change, effectiveness, efficiency, education

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