The evaluation of social programs

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The Evaluation of Social Programs

by

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The Evaluation of Social Programs

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In the uncertain economy of today, there is one thing that we all can be sure of, that prices will increase. It is almost inevitable that everything will be effected by inflation: from food to gas to home heating oil. The very quality of the lives that we lead may be altered by the path that the economy of the United States is taking. The recently elected President, Ronald Reagan, has taken as his main task the stabilization of inflation. The improvement of the economy and the balancing of the federal government's budget. In order to meet these goals, President Reagan has decided that one of his objectives is to decrease federal spending. Already many cut backs in appropriations to different government agencies have been made. These cut backs seriously effect the agencies upon which they are placed, for now these agencies, many of which provide social services (e.g. Health, Education, and Welfare), are being forced to decide which programs to terminate and which programs to reduce, in order to be able to live within their new resource allocations.

It is thus in this beginning of a new decade that social program evaluations become more necessary than ever. In order to be able to make the appropriate decisions concerning programming, administrators and policy makers need the type of information that a well-conducted social program evaluation can provide. In this paper it is the author's intent to provide a broad scope of information concerning the evaluation of social programs, areas from the definition of evaluation to styles of evaluation, to use of the knowledge gained by evaluation. With the economic circumstances the way they are it is felt that evaluation of all types of programs (not just social in orientation) will become necessary and that a knowledge of evaluation skills will become essential.
I Definitions

What is evaluation and what does an evaluation do? Evaluation is a way of judging the value of something by comparing it with previously set standards or other items of the same general classification category. Evaluation provides a rigor that is important when (1) the outcomes to be evaluated are complex, hard to observe, made up of many elements reacting in diverse ways; (2) the decisions that will follow are important and expensive; and (3) evidence is needed to convince other people about the validity of the conclusions. (emphasis added) (Weiss, 1972, p.2)

More specifically a Social program evaluation is the systematic accumulation of facts for providing information about the achievement of program requisites and goals relative to efforts, effectiveness, and efficiency within any stage of program development. The facts of evaluation may be obtained through a variety of relatively systematic techniques, and they are incorporated into some designated system of values for making decisions about social programs. (emphasis added) (Tripodi, Fellin, and Epstein, 1971, p.12)

From the knowledge gained through carefully conducted evaluations, administrators and policy makers will be able to decide which alternatives, if any, are suitable to their needs, after applying their own values, comfortable in knowing the trade-offs that each of the alternatives involves.

II Demands

Evaluations of social programs have increased in the past two decades. The increase in the demand for evaluations comes not only from the economic crisis of the 1980's, but also from other sources as well. Some of these other sources include: the funding source; various professional groups concerned with the focus of a particular program; the general public who may
be familiar with a certain program in their community; and even the clientele themselves, those who use the services provided by a social program. The directors of social programs are becoming aware of their accountability to these above-mentioned groups and are conducting evaluations to provide information in order to maintain their much needed support.

III Purposes

In any evaluation of a program that is done there exist both overt and covert purposes for the evaluation. These reasons can be justifiable or illogical. Generally the covert, unspoken reasons are the ones to be aware of and watch out for, since their existence may make an evaluation meaningless. Examples of covert purposes follow: (1) for postponement of a dreaded event; (2) people in the program's organization may be trying to avoid assuming responsibility; (3) for public-relations: trying to justify a weak program; and (4) for the fulfillment of a grant requirement, nothing more, nothing less. (Weiss, 1972, pp.11-12) A general lack of enthusiasm accompanies this last covert purpose. Therefore, it is necessary, if a well-conducted evaluation effort is to be done, to know what the covert and overt purposes the administrators and policy makers had in deciding to do an evaluation of their program.

IV Conditions

There are two conditions that must be met in order for a useful evaluation to occur. The first condition is that the purpose of the evaluation is clarified among the key persons involved. Secondly, there must be an agreed-upon commitment about the uses and possible consequences of the evaluation. (Tripodi, 1971, p.19) If these two conditions are not met, it will be
difficult for a useful evaluation to be conducted.

V Problems

A program administrator or policy maker may decide to conduct an evaluation of a social program in order to gain information to help in making decisions or solving problems. Problems which may be solved by the information provided by an evaluation include (1) budgeting problems; (2) reports concerning accountability; (3) decision justification; (4) the availability and location of resources useful to the program; and (5) the allocation of monies. (Tripodi, 1971, p.8)

VI Uses

Although the information provided by an evaluation of a social program may be used to solve the problems that an agency may be facing or be of aid in the planning of future programs, the administrator or policy maker of the program may have other uses in mind for the evaluation. When an evaluation is being conducted it is important to be aware of the type of information that is wanted from the study. An important question that needs to be answered is "who expects what" (Weiss, 1972, p.14)? An organization has many different levels, and many different types of information will be wanted by each different level. Policy makers will want different information than will the practitioners of the program. The funders will have different concerns from those of the program directors. The interests of both the consumers of the service and the public living in the community where the program is located will be different. The priority of these purposes has to be known in order for an evaluation to be effective. In deciding which purpose is the most important (has the highest priority) the
evaluator should examine his own values and the ultimate decision that is going to be made using the information that the social program evaluation provides. The evaluation should then be geared toward providing the type of information necessary to answer all pertinent questions.

Two different styles of social program evaluation may be performed. The first style is known as the formative evaluation and the second style as the summative evaluation.

Formative evaluation produces information that is fed back during the development of a curriculum to help improve it. It serves the needs of the developers. Summative evaluation is done after the curriculum is finished. It provides information about effectiveness to school decision makers who are considering adopting it. (Weiss, 1972, p.17)

Although these styles have been defined for the educational evaluation setting, they are easily adapted for use in other fields where evaluation is also done. Before an evaluation is conducted it is best to decide what style best suits the needs of the person or persons requesting the program evaluation.

VIII Abuses

Despite the good intentions with which the evaluation is conducted, there do exist potential abuses which may occur. The information provided by the study may be used in ways that the evaluator had not intended. An evaluator should be wary of the possible misuses: (1) the data is used to force a consistency among the staff of the organization; (2) where the discrediting of a few individuals in the organization appears to be the general use of the information provided; and (3) the data that is collected appears to be used either to solely support or discredit a particular social program. (emphasis added) (Tripodi, 1971, p.23) Although it is an
impossible task to control all the misuses and potential abuses of the information that an evaluation may provide, it is necessary for everyone involved in the evaluation to be aware that they do exist and to attempt to safeguard against them.

VIII Necessary

Should an evaluation be done? This is an important question that needs to be answered by the program administrators and policy makers. Since an evaluation is very costly to conduct, not only in the terms of monetary expenditures, but in terms of manpower and time as well, it is essential to consider the following items before the final decision concerning an evaluation is made: (1) are the programs objectives stated clearly, which would make an evaluation easier to conduct; (2) is there a high degree of certainty concerning the knowledge that is presently known about the program, can the program be explained thoroughly; (3) has it been considered that perhaps the goals of the program be changed, can that possibility become a reality if the evaluation dictates that it is necessary; and (4) have all other positive and negative aspects of conducting an evaluation been considered? (Tripodi, 1971, p.115) If all of the above-mentioned items have been considered and the decision is to go through with the evaluation, the next step is to decide who will conduct the program evaluation?

IX Selection

The first issue in selecting an evaluator concerns defining the role that the evaluator will take in the organizational structure. How will this evaluator relate to the administrative structure? To whom will he report? This will depend on the type of questions that are to be answered by the
Social Program Evaluation

evaluation. If the objective of the evaluation is to determine whether or not to expand, reduce, or change a program, then the evaluator should report to the policy maker of the social program. However, the program director or manager should be the supervisor of the evaluator if the objectives of the evaluation being conducted are to determine the best staffing patterns, structures, techniques and methods to use in achieving the program's goals. The social program evaluator should report to either one of these individuals or the other, but not to both for problems may arise from this dual supervision of the evaluator. A good placement in the organization's administrative structure is important so that a useful and effective evaluation may occur.

The second issue to be considered when determining the selection is whether or not the evaluator should come from inside or outside of the organization itself. The factors to be kept in mind when making this decision include: (1) how much confidence should the administration have in the evaluator, would there be more confidence in an evaluator from a professional company or in an individual from one's own organization; (2) objectivity, would a professional evaluator be more objective in his work than an evaluator who is involved with the program being studied; (3) understanding of the program, which evaluator would best understand the nuances of the organization and the program, one from inside or outside the program; (4) potential for utilization, once all the data and information has been gathered, would recommendations from an inside or an outside evaluator carry more weight; and finally, (5) autonomy, would an inside or an outside evaluator be able to do the things necessary in order to obtain the information that he needed, with whom would the staff and
administrators be more cooperative? (Weiss, 1972, pp.20-21)

The final issue to be considered when selecting an evaluator is the expertise level of the consultant. It is essential to be aware of the fact that consultants differ in their opinions concerning the type of knowledge that should be derived from an evaluation, as well as in the types of evaluation methods that they prefer to employ. It is therefore important for a program administrator to select an evaluator who will conduct the type of evaluation necessary in order to answer the pertinent questions of the population being served by the evaluation. The evaluator should also be one who will emphasize the values that are important to the organization. The following five questions may be useful in the selection process:

1. What is the technical competency of the evaluator?
2. Are technically competent evaluators available?
3. What is the evaluator's conception of evaluation?
4. Does the evaluator have a strong bias in favor of or opposed to the content of the program?
5. Does the evaluator have a vested interest in the program or in competing programs? (Tripodi, 1971, pp.127-128)

Based on the consideration of these issues the selection of an appropriate evaluator may be made.

X Implementation

The next step is the implementation of the evaluation research itself. It is important to note the specifics which evaluation research involves: (1) a research methodology, which will be used to measure the effects produced by a given social program; (2) the outcomes which are the effects that the evaluator chooses to measure and record; (3) the criteria, or standards for determining how well the program is doing; and (4) the social purpose, the contributions that the evaluation will make to improving the program and subsequent decision making. (Weiss, 1972, p.4)
XI Appropriateness

In order for an evaluator to be able to determine the appropriate research methodology to use in evaluating a specific social program, certain aspects of the actual program itself must be examined:

1. **Scope**: Does the program cover a neighborhood, a city, a state, or the nation?

2. **Size**: How many people does the social program reach? Several, hundreds, thousands?

3. **Duration**: How long is the program going to last, a few months, years, or indefinitely?

4. **Clarity and Specificity of Program Input**: How clear are the program's goals and objectives, are they concrete and specific or vague and diffuse?

5. **Complexity and Time Span of Goals**: How complex or simple are the goals; will they be easy or difficult to operationally define and measure; and will the changes produced by the program appear quickly or only after some lengthy time span?

6. **Innovativeness**: Are new and inventive or more traditional operational tactics used by the program? (Weiss, 1972, p.5)

Upon consideration of these aspects the appropriate evaluation methodology and design may be determined.

XII Features

Evaluation research possesses certain distinguishing features which separate it from other types of research that may be conducted: (1) it is used in decision-making; (2) it answers questions derived from the program being evaluated; (3) it involves a judgemental quality; (4) it takes place in an action setting; (5) because of it conflicts of role may occur within the organization; (6) publication may or may not be an important issue; and (7) the evaluator may or may not possess a certain allegiance to the program under evaluation. (Weiss, 1972, pp.6-8) However, evaluation research and
other types of research in various fields do possess two similarities: (1) the variety of data collection methods and (2) the use of the experimental design. (Weiss, 1972, pp.8-9)

XIII Stages

When conducting a social program evaluation, the evaluating consultant must be able to determine the stage of development which the specific program is at presently. There are three basic stages of program development: initiation, contact, and implementation. (Tripodi, 1971, pp.9-10) Initiation refers to the planning stage where individuals are involved in the preparations for shifting from the idea to the actual program action. Program contact is the developmental stage where individuals are involved in the engagement of the specific target population with the staff of the program. The concern here is for what possible physical, material or social barriers will arise to prevent the implementation of the social program. And finally, the implementation stage refers to the actual application of the available technologies and services toward the attainment of the program's ultimate goal or goals.

What follows are guidelines that may be used for the determination of the social program's developmental stage:

1. How does the program allocate most of its staff time and resources? Are present efforts devoted to securing additional resources (initiation), recruiting clientele (contact), or giving service and/or applying a technology (implementation).
2. When there are conflicts between the needs of the various program stages, how are these resolved? Which stage generally dominates?
3. What kinds of data and information does the program routinely collect? Does the intelligence system focus mainly on data concerning the availability of new program resources (initiation), description of clientele (contact), or impact on clientele of agency intervention (implementation)?
4. What kinds of staff activity receive the greatest economic and status rewards? What roles are viewed as most valuable to the program operation?
5. If there were any major cutbacks in funding, which functions would be sacrificed first, which last? (Tripodi, 1971, pp.39-40)

XIV Dimensions

Beside having to determine the social program's developmental stage, it is also essential for the evaluating consultant to determine which dimensions of the social program are to be examined. The dimensions of the social program may be referred to as program efforts, effectiveness, and efficiency. Program efforts refer to the extent to which both the staff and the program are active. The "evaluation of program effort refers to an assessment of the amounts and kinds of program activities considered necessary for the accomplishment of program goals within a particular stage of development" (Tripodi, 1971, p.45). The effectiveness of a social program is determined by the "extent to which goals of a particular stage have been achieved" (Tripodi, 1971, p. 47). Effectiveness also encompasses the consideration of both the positive and negative unexpected outcomes produced by the activities of the program, as well as the attainment of goals in relationship to the need of the program. The efficiency of a social program is "concerned with relative costs for achieving program objectives" (Tripodi, 1971, p.49). Program efficiency may be defined as the ratio between the social program's effectiveness and its efforts. The main question that is answered by an evaluation of program efficiency is "can the same program results be achieved by either reducing the amount of program effort or by choosing other, less costly alternatives (different kinds of efforts)" (Tripodi, 1971, p.50)?
4. What kinds of staff activity receive the greatest economic and status rewards? What roles are viewed as most valuable to the program operation?

5. If there were any major cutbacks in funding, which functions would be sacrificed first, which last? (Tripodi, 1971, pp.39-40)

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XV Formulation

Once the stage of development of the social program being examined has been determined, along with the decision concerning which dimension of the program is to be assessed, the evaluator must then face the task of "formulating the question and measuring the answer" (Weiss, 1972, p. 24). The first step in this process for the evaluator entails the development of program goals, the consequences of the program. These program goals should possess three qualities: clarity, specificity and measurability. (Weiss, 1972, p.26). If there appears to be no agreement about program goals or if the stated goals are vague, this could be an indication that the staff members of the organization under evaluation are working at cross-purposes. This phenomenon should be examined. An evaluator has four alternatives to choose from if a consensus concerning program goals cannot be obtained: (1) he can pose questions for the staff members to answer in order to try and obtain a consensus concerning some aspect of the program; (2) he can formulate his own statement of goals for the program; (3) both staff and evaluator can together try to develop a statement of goals; or (4) the evaluator can do an open-ended study which requires no clearly defined goal. (Weiss, 1972, p.28). If the evaluator has to choose among several goals, how should this decision be made? There exist four criteria for determining the most appropriate goal for study: "usability and practicality, relative importance, incompatibilities, and short or long term goals" (Weiss, 1972, pp.30-31). Each one of these areas should be considered before the final selection of a program goal to be studied is made.

There are two other considerations that the evaluator must be aware of while he is conducting his study. First, the evaluator must determine "how much progress toward the goal marks success" (Weiss, 1972, p.32). And then
the evaluator should also be on the lookout for any unanticipated consequences, both desirable and undesirable. These unanticipated consequences have to be dealt with, otherwise they can ruin the validity and reliability of the evaluation that is being conducted.

XVI Measurement

The next step of the evaluator is to determine the measures, or indicators of outcome, that will be appropriate for the evaluation study that is being conducted. The evaluator may try to find one that has been previously used in similar studies, thereby allowing for a comparison of programs to occur. If a suitable measure of the dependent variable cannot be found, the evaluator may attempt to develop his own measure of the outcome. Two hazards are associated with this latter option. First of all, the reliability and validity of the measures are unknown if the evaluator uses a scale of his own development. And secondly, in order to be able to develop an accurate measure of the dependent variable, a good understanding and definition and conceptualization of the dependent variable are often lacking, thereby making it difficult to develop accurate indicators of the outcome.

If this alternative is not suitable to the evaluation at hand, the consultant may decide to employ multiple measures. A multiple measure consists of combining the measures of different aspects of the program together to create one single outcome indicator. "At best, each is a partial measure encompassing a fraction of a larger concept" (Weiss, 1972, p.36). It is felt that the multiple measures technique has an advantage in that it allows for a more accurate picture of the program outcome. However, in order for this measure to be accurate and effective, each independent measurement must be measuring a separate entity and each item that is measured must be of
equal importance in the evaluation. These two qualifications are often difficult to meet. The only other disadvantage of using a multiple measures technique is the fact that by thus combining them, the individual increases and decreases of the single variables may well be masked. If the evaluator is interested in all trends of the program, rather than just one specific outcome, a multiple measure technique is not the appropriate measure to employ.

Proximate measures may be used by an evaluator when the goal of the program being studied is a long-range goal. Proxy measures are measurements taken of nearer goals which are somehow linked to the program's long-range goals. This link is often dubious and is usually proven not to be true or accurate. The vagueness of the link (if any) between these two goals makes the use of the proxy goal undesirable, however, such measures are often used as a last resort if and when better measurements of the dependent variables cannot be found or developed.

An evaluator of a social program must also concern himself with the different types of measures that exist and with the selection of the most appropriate one for his use. First of all, one may measure effects on the persons served by the program. Attitudes, values, personality variables, knowledge, skills, behavior, and opinions of the clientele may be assessed. (Weiss, 1972, p.39) The effect on different agencies by the program may be assessed. Larger systems may also be effected by the program, and these changes should be examined. Finally an evaluator may measure the program's effects on the public. The type of effect that is measured and assessed by the evaluator will be determined, in part at least, by the intent of the program under scrutiny. (Weiss, 1972, p.39-42)
In the course of collecting the data from the program under evaluation, the evaluator will have to deal with both input and intervening variables. Input variables have to do with variations in: "purpose; principle; methods; staffing; person's served; length of service; location; site of program; auspices; management; and participant measures" (Weiss, 1972, pp.46-47). Intervening variables are those that come between the program input and output, and tend to have an effect upon the latter. Intervening variables can be of two different types: "(1) program -- operation variables; and (2) bridging variables" (Weiss, 1972, p.49). An evaluator's concern for these variables is essential if a well-constructed study is to be conducted. There are two very important reasons for studying and looking at the various program variables that may exist.

1. They clarify the meaning of "the program."
2. They contribute to the analysis of which features of the program work and which do not. (Weiss, 1972, pp.45-46)

Finally, in order to help the evaluator reach a decision concerning which variables to measure, he should construct a model of the program. The use of a model "sensitizes the evaluator to shifts in program strategy that make his evaluation design irrelevant" (Weiss, 1972, p.51).

The next area of concern for the evaluator has to do with the choice of approach and the collection of the data. Among the choices of approach available to the evaluator are such options as: looking at previous records, conducting surveys, using expert judgement and reanalyzing old demographic data. (Morris and Binstock, 1966, p.92) The actual collection of the data may be conducted in a variety of ways, and the evaluator is limited only by the boundaries imposed by his imagination. Data may be collected through:
"interviews; questionnaires; observation; ratings; psychometric tests; institutional records; government statistics; tests of information; projective tests; situational tests; diary records; physical evidence; clinical examinations; financial records; and documents" (Weiss, 1972, p. 53). Program records are also useful for data collection purposes, however, oftentimes they are of little use due to incompleteness. Both government records and the government statistical series can be used as sources for the collection of data. As can be seen, an evaluator is only limited by his imagination's boundaries when looking at ways to collect data (or sources of data collection.)

XIX Designs

Now that the evaluator has decided what is to be studied, the next thing to be determined by the evaluator is how the program is to be studied. Three different experimental designs will be discussed now, while several other methods of study will be dealt with later in this paper. The first design may be called the experimental design. It is the classical approach, employing both a control group and an experimental group. One of the design's greatest weaknesses is that while using it, it is often difficult to control for the Hawthorne Effect, the fact that what is being measured will change due to the sheer fact that it is being measured. Through randomization, the possibility that something else other than the independent variable (in this case the social program) is causing the observed effect, is eliminated. However, while employing this design the evaluator should be aware of the possible threats to internal validity and take the proper action in order to minimize their effect. Such sources of internal invalidity are: maturation, history, testing, sensitivity to the independent variable, instrumentation, statistical
regression, selection, mortality, and a selection x maturation interaction. Despite the fact that this methodological design is used in many fields of research, oftentimes it is not the most appropriate design for use in the field of evaluation. There are no controls or randomized selection of experimental or control group members, which make this design unattractive to many evaluators. Other criticisms of the classical experimental design in evaluation include:

1. It requires holding the program constant rather than facilitating its continual improvement.
2. It is useful for making decisions only after a project has run full cycle and not during its planning and implementation (emphasis added.) (Weiss, 1972, p.64)

If the classical experimental design is deemed inappropriate by the consultant for use in the study, there are two other experimental designs available. One of these designs is known as the quasi-experimental design and it is a viable alternative to the above-mentioned classical design. Examples of quasi-experimental designs are: the time-series design, where measurements of the outcome indicator are taken at specified intervals; the multiple time-series design, where measurements at specified intervals are taken for two or more similar programs simultaneously; a non-equivalent control group design, where a nonrandomized control group is matched and selected on the basis of a predetermined characteristic; and finally the patched-up design, in which different controls are added one at a time to the design in order to eliminate the various sources of confusion. (Weiss, 1972, pp.68-72)

The second alternative is known as the non-experimental design, and it is most appropriate when the quasi-experimental designs are impossible to do. This alternative is suitable for studies interested in formative rather
than summative evaluations. There are three examples of non-experimental design appropriate for use in evaluation studies and they are: one project before and after, where you are not limited to just a pre and post test, but rather where a series of evaluative tests may be used; and ex post facto design, where the evaluator only takes measurements after the independent variable has been appropriately manipulated; and finally an ex post facto design with a comparison group, this is the same basic design as the one mentioned above, however, the addition of a comparison group strengthens the design. (Weiss, 1972, pp.75-77) As mentioned before, there are other evaluative techniques/methods beside those based on the experimental design which will be discussed later on in this paper.

XX Differential

Differential evaluation reflects a certain philosophy in the area of evaluation research, that of attempting to find the best possible evaluative technique (i.e. appropriate) for the particular program at its stage of development. More specifically, differential evaluation asks questions concerning the program's efforts, efficiency, and effectiveness at each stage of development and then chooses the most appropriate question to be studied based upon the needs and goals of the program. (Tripodi, 1971, p.41) For an evaluation to be useful and effective it should be geared to its stage of program development.

Differential evaluation of a social program has six main areas of concern: (1) the determination of long-range and immediate operating goals; (2) the determination of the stage of program development; (3) the formation of appropriate evaluative objectives; (4) the selection of evaluative techniques; (5) the reviewing of both the information and decisions to be made;
and (6) the repetition of steps one to five as the program changes and grows. (Tripodi, 1971, p.43)

XXI Techniques

Like other evaluation research projects conducted, differential evaluation does not limit itself to one specific technique or method. What follows is a description of the various evaluation techniques available to the evaluator, for use in any type of evaluation study. The first category of evaluation techniques is known as the Monitoring Techniques. Two different types of audits are classified in this category, accountability audits and administrative audits. Accountability audits review the consistency, dependability and accuracy of the program's records concerning such items as expenditures, allocation of resources, and the processing of program beneficiaries, in order to establish accountability. There are two types of accountability, general and social. General accounting refers to the tabulation of program costs. This type of evaluation is often done in order to verify the financial status of the program. The knowledge obtained from a general accounting evaluation of the social program includes the "verification of the program's systems, and recommendations for improving the dependability of the program's accounting procedures" (Tripodi, 1971, p.64). The second area of accountability, social accounting refers to the methods used by the program for recording and keeping track of program beneficiaries... The auditing function involves appraisal of the existence, reliability, and accuracy of the program's procedures for reporting on those persons who have been processed through the program -- from recruiting and program contact efforts to final follow-up. (Tripodi, 1971, p.65)

From the information generated by this type of study a recommendation can be made for an adequate data processing system.
Administrative audits are used to describe the activities done by the staff compared to the established norms for said workers. The norms for staff workers are established by both internal and external sources and are the standards referred to for comparison. Administrative audits may serve a fourfold purpose: (1) they may be used to evaluate program policies; (2) to evaluate the practices for compliance with the policies; (Tripodi, 1971, p.70); (3) "to evaluate adherence of staff practices to designated divisions of responsibility and function"(Tripodi, 1971, p.70); and (4) "to evaluate the organizational patterns of work in terms of preferred and efficient procedures within the program and/or between the program and other programs of a similar nature" (Tripodi, 1971, p.70). From the information generated the evaluator is able to learn about both the administrative and staff work practices, and can then suggest ways to improve the goal in relationship to the activities.

A third area covered by monitoring techniques is the one which is concerned with time and motion studies. The evaluator of a social program may use time and motion studies in his work in order to be able to describe the use of time in relationship to the activities involved. The use of such a study may have a two-fold purpose:

1. specify the total amounts of time devoted by staff to program activities.
2. to locate the uses of staff time which were not anticipated, and to recommend reallocations of staff time to those activities which might be more directly related to potential achievement of program goals. (Tripodi, 1971, p.76)

The knowledge obtained from this study will be useful in cutting down on the amount of time wasted by personnel in the organization of the program and will allow for more direction and headway to be made toward the program's goal.
The second category of evaluation techniques is referred to as the Social Research Techniques. There are three specific methods categorized under this heading: experiments, case studies, and surveys. Since experiments have already been covered in this paper, they will not be dwelt upon here. Surveys are used primarily by social program evaluators in order to obtain descriptive facts about the program. For example, questioning the target population of the program about their beliefs, attitudes, et cetera. Surveys may also have an explanatory function, which points up their main advantage -- their flexibility. "Survey methods can be used as approximations to experiments to provide evidence which bears on the total effectiveness of the social program" (Tripodi, 1971, p.88).

The third method in social research techniques is that of the case study. A case study is a "detailed description of a social program as it unfolds in its process of development" (Tripodi, 1971, p.91). In using the case study as an evaluative tool, the consultant attempts to develop hypotheses for the progress noted, or the lack thereof in the social program studied. Both qualitative and quantitative data may be obtained through this research method. Case studies may be conducted in a variety of ways, through: participant observation, informal interviews, content analysis or socio-metric devices. This method is particularly useful for (1) programs that are having difficulty in selecting their objectives and the means by which to accomplish them; (2) pinpointing problems in the operation of the social program; and (3) the evaluation of program efforts. (Tripodi, 1971, pp.91-93)

The final category of research techniques may be classified as the Cost-Analytical Methods. Four different research strategies are placed
under this heading: cost accounting, cost-benefit analysis, cost-outcome analysis and operations research/systems analysis. In using the method of cost accounting in the evaluation of a social program, the evaluator attempts to relate the program costs to output, which may be defined as the measurable actions of the program. Descriptive data concerning the program is obtained, and although it is reliable, it is often very difficult to produce. "Cost accounting produces unit cost figures as a basis for analyzing, budgeting, and allocating resources" (Tripodi, 1971, p.96). The knowledge obtained from this method of evaluation research is useful to both the administrators and the program directors for it can be used (1) to improve the budget of the program; and (2) to help determine the service priorities of the program based on cost. (Tripodi, 1971, pp.99-102)

The cost-benefit analysis is an evaluative method which is used to compare the effectiveness of alternate programs in terms of cost. The evaluator uses such an evaluative strategy to help determine the relationship of expenditures to the achievement of goals.

The cost-benefit analyst attempts to translate criteria of goal achievement into monetary units, in order to make an appraisal of the economic benefits of the program relative to the costs of the program resources and achievements. (Tripodi, 1971, p.100)

The reallocation of funds in order to maximize benefits is one of the tasks that may be accomplished by the information obtained through this research strategy. There are two disadvantages associated with the cost-benefit analysis. First, this type of evaluative study tends to ignore both the sociological and psychological benefits of the program due to the fact that such benefits are not easily translated into monetary units. Second, the actual translation of program benefits of any sort into monetary units is
both difficult and unreliable. Despite these disadvantages, the cost-benefit analysis may provide useful information about the program to those who are interested in it.

Cost-outcome analysis is the third cost analytical strategy. In this form of analysis, unlike cost-benefit analysis, the cost of the program under evaluation is related to the results of the program, without translating such results into monetary units. The cost outcome-analysis is used by the evaluator of a social program to "gauge the relative efficiency of the costs of alternative program inputs with respect to the accomplishment of specified objectives" (Tripodi, 1971, p.104). By using this evaluative strategy, the evaluator of a social program attempts to find the minimum costs necessary to expend in order to produce the desired outcome. The determination of the allocation of funds for program efforts is one of the objectives that may be accomplished when the evaluator of a program uses this evaluative strategy.

The final cost analytical method is known as operations research/systems analysis. Such an evaluation strategy involves the combining of "scientific experimentation, mathematics, statistics, and computer technology in an effort to provide data on alternative ways of conducting and coordinating program activities within an organization" (Tripodi, 1971, p.107). When using such a strategy, the following steps would be followed by the evaluator of the social program:

1. The administrative problem is defined.
2. The organizational system of the program is described in an effort to relate program activities to program objectives.
3. A mathematical model is constructed to represent the system and its objectives.
4. A solution is derived mathematically from the model.
5. The mathematical model and its solutions, which are abstract representations of the program, are tested.
6. The model and its solutions are revised, if necessary, to fit the data collected from the program.
7. The final solution, as approved by the administrator, is put into program operation. (Tripodi, 1971, pp.108-109)

The information obtained from such an extensive analysis may be used in the solving of many problems and in the decision making processes that are used in the organization of the social program.

XXII Comparative

Still yet another alternative that is available to the evaluator of a social program is a method known as the comparative evaluation of programs. "Evaluation research can be designed to compare the effectiveness of several programs that have the same objectives but different content on the same set of outcome measures" (Weiss, 1972, p.78). This technique can also be modified to be conducted within a single program. By doing this the evaluator not only increases the specification of the program under study, but also increases the generalizability of the results obtained as well. Although this evaluative technique possesses a lot of power it can cause problems for the evaluator due to the fact that there exists lots of uncontrolled and unidentified sources of variability. The comparative evaluation of programs should be done when (1) the issues are real; (2) the alternative programs are well-defined; and (3) there is evidence that the program may be successful. (Weiss, 1972, p.83) When the conditions are right this can prove to be a very powerful technique which provides a multitude of information that can be used by the organization involved with the social program.

XXIII Setting

When an evaluator does indeed attempt to study and analyze a social program, he should be aware of the fact that there are certain problems
associated with working in an action setting. The organization of which the program is a part, is the action setting. In such an environment nothing stays the same, things are always changing and it is one of the challenges of an evaluator to try and stay ahead, or at least on the top of, these changes. Such an environment can produce what is known as the shifting program. Social programs tend to shift in one of two ways: either little by little or very suddenly. The evaluator, in order to determine whether the program and its direction are changing, needs to be continuously reassessing it. And if indeed the evaluator discovers that the program under evaluation is changing, what then? The evaluator should update the program's specifications through continuous observation and redefinition of goals, objectives et cetera. The best way to deal with this problem of the action setting is for the evaluator to develop a dynamic model of the social program in question.

Another issue associated with the action setting with which the evaluator will have to deal, is that of his relationship with the program personnel. Although this problem may be lessened to a certain degree or indeed not exist if the evaluator is from within the organizational structure, it is still an area of concern for all evaluators of social programs. The sources of the friction that is often times felt between program evaluator and program personnel may be due in part to: "personality differences; differences in role; lack of clear role definition; conflicting goals, values, interests, frames of reference; or institutional characteristics" (Weiss, 1972, pp.98-101). Many times, however, there also exists certain issues that may lead to this friction between evaluator and program staff, especially if the evaluator is from a consulting firm and not one of their own. Such issues may be in the
areas of "data collection; changes in record-keeping procedures; selection of program participants; control groups; feedback of information into the program; or status rivalry" (Weiss, 1972, pp.102-103).

If the evaluator finds himself in the position where there is a lot of tension between himself and the program personnel, there are some steps/action that can be taken. Among the possible solutions are such things as getting: "support from administrators; involvement of practitioners in the evaluation; minimizing disruptions; emphasis on theory; the feedback of useful information; or clear role definitions and authority structure" (Weiss, 1972, pp.104-107). Problems are to be expected, and the conscientious evaluator will take measures to try and avoid creating them, or when they do appear, he will take all the steps necessary to solve and rectify them. A cooperative attitude must exist between everyone involved in some way in the evaluation process, or the research study being done may lack true meaning.

XXIV Context

Along with the action setting, the social program of an organization also has a social context within which everything occurs. The social context of the program under evaluation may have constraints that limit the use of the results of the evaluation. This is important for the evaluator to be aware of, since there is the very real possibility that the organization, after deciding to have an evaluation done, will not even consider any of the recommendations for improvement that the evaluator has made. This can be a very frustrating experience for both the evaluator and the program personnel, and it is essential for the evaluator to be aware of the possible possible reasons for resistance. Resistance may occur because (1) they feel
that the way in which they have been doing things is just fine; (2) that the recommendations made will not meet with the approval of the funding sources; (3) they feel that the presented recommendations are unworthy of attention; (4) they perceive the recommendations of the evaluator to require subordination; or, (5) the costs of the recommendations appear to outweigh the benefits. (Morris and Binstock, 1966, p.95) Usually more than one reason will be involved in the organization's resistance to the proposals of the evaluator.

In trying to change the views of the organization's personnel, it is important for the evaluator to be able to determine what are the dominant factions within the organization, and which faction plays the most critical role in the program at this time. "The critical considerations for the planner are who plays the dominant roles in the organization's decision-making, and, in their organizational roles, what are their primary concerns" (Morris and Binstock, 1966, p.103)?

In general, there are four basic groups within any organization, and at different times any of them play the dominant role, with their concerns being of primary interest for the organization. The first faction may very well be the Board of Directors. If this group possesses the dominant role, then the evaluator should be aware that the following areas are of interest to this group and use them as tools to help them see his point of view. These areas of interest are: increasing the prestige and recognition of the program and/or the organization; attaining moral and/or ethical goals, and the perpetuation of tradition. However, the group that has the dominant position may be the Executive(s). In general, their concerns include: the enhancement of the organization; seeing that all the elements of the organization receive enough funds and resources to keep them satisfied; and gaining
recognition for themselves from both the organization and community members. An evaluator would be wise to address these issues when dealing with the Executive(s). Concern for client selection and treatment is the issue associated with the staff of the program. Although often they do not play the dominant role, they may possess a good deal of the power at any one time. Therefore, a wise evaluator will know how to deal with them. The final group that may play the dominant role in the organization (although this occurs very rarely) is the one composed of both members and consumers. Their main concern is for their well-being and best interests. The evaluator should be prepared to be able to discuss and explain his findings and reasonings to anyone interested, keeping in mind their biases.

What next? The evaluator has finished his research and has made his proposals to the organization. The organization, however, is resisting the new ideas and proposals. The evaluator's next step is to determine the best means for overcoming this resistance.

If the goal is within the range of organizational purposes as interpreted by the dominant group, then that group's special interests are also a guide to the tools which will be needed for overcoming resistance as to where and how they must be employed. For a planner's goal to be feasible, he must have access to the dominant group and the appropriate means of influencing it. (Morris and Binstock, 1966, p.110)

As can be seen by this quote, the character of the resources used by the evaluator is important in overcoming organization resistance. Some proposed organizational remedies for resistance to evaluative results follow: the use of "(1) agency channels; (2) incentives and rewards; (3) presenting appropriate results to appropriate users; (4) presenting useful comparisons; (5) timing of the report; (6) candor about limitations in the research; (7) communication of results; and (8) planning and development units" (emphasis
The communication of results is one of the most important duties of the evaluator of a social program. Through better dissemination of evaluative results, the degree of organizational resistance may be decreased. Evaluation results should be sent to policy makers at the subordinate levels as well as to policy makers, funders, and clients of similar programs. By distributing the knowledge that has been gained, one may be helping other, similar programs with their own problems. There should be good communication among all social program evaluators.

Once the evaluator is through and has presented his findings to the social program's director and policy makers, what then? In order to best utilize the study's findings, the following questions should be answered by those involved in the program's decision-making process:

1. What do the findings mean in terms of the program's objectives?
2. How can the findings be utilized to bring about changes in a particular program?
3. What implications would the implementation of findings have for the over-all program?
4. What next steps are necessary, such as new evaluation efforts, implementation of change, or movement to new stage of program development? (Tripodi, 1971, p.135)

Using these questions as a guideline, the findings of the evaluation may be best used to improve the social program. However, the program director and policy makers should keep in mind that no evaluation can provide all the answers. The best that any evaluation can do is offer alternatives and suggestions for improvement.
