Theory, Methods and Practice of Evaluation

Evaluation in Society: Development, Current State and Perspective

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Abstract

This article addresses the question which role evaluation can play in modern society. A special focus is set on the meaning of evaluation in Germany and identifying changes in the past few years.

The assumption is, that in modern society, evaluation has three purposes: to support social enlightenment (1), to legitimize (2) and to steer politically (3). To be able to serve these purposes, evaluation has to have a clear position in society and it has to be institutionalized. After displaying up to date developments in the field of evaluation, the question is addressed if these developments support evaluation in fulfilling its purposes. Based on this, the challenges evaluation faces in the future are outlined.