

Who Needs what Social Research for Policy Making?

Charles E. Lindblom

The main issue of this article is an interest in how best to bring social research to the aid of public policy making, or, to put it in even larger terms, an interest in how to use professional fact gathering, inquiry, and analysis to help us solve our society's problems. For some decades, only professional social scientists and researchers themselves took any great interest in this question. They had a stake in pushing their product, enlarging their market, satisfying themselves and at least a few clients that they had a valuable product to offer. Today the question engages a wider audience, for social research has become a sizeable—and expensive—industry, and institutions have sprung up to train policy analysis.

Public Administration as a Technological Social Science

Ricardo Uvalle Berrones

The aim of this article, which uses a reflection as its starting point, is to contribute to research into the technological character of public administration in order to provide the study and conceptualization of public problems with better patterns for solution. It is a work of reinforcement in which the investigation of public administration will allow results to be obtained to facilitate its identification in terms of its observable, empirical, pragmatic, and technological elements. There is a shortfall in practical knowledge; this must be eradicated to prevent public administration from becoming a museum piece and an object of study akin to epitaphs.

Towards an Anthropology of Organization

Jean-François Chanlat

This article centers around the “forgotten” dimensions of organizational analysis, such as: human nature, man's active and reflective character, a being of words, desire, drives, symbolism, and spatial and

temporal essence. In the author's opinion these dimensions have been overlooked by the dominant currents of organizational behavior, and it is therefore vitally important to incorporate aspects of anthropology into the study of individuals within an organization. Today more than ever before, multidisciplinary is essential in understanding the complex human condition within the organizational universe.

Public Administration and Political Legitimacy in Baja California Sur

Marcos S. Reyes Santos

This article analyzes the electoral results in one Mexican state and the consequent changes in administration. The article is divided into three parts. The first offers a brief overview of the concepts of efficiency, effectiveness, and legitimacy within public administration, while the second section places the analysis in context with specific data.

The third section deals with a series of reflections and proposals for subsequent work, with reference to efficiency and legitimacy in public administration.

Municipal Administration in Mexico: Challenges and Prospects

Rodolfo García Del Castillo

In this article the author offers some points of basic reflection regarding the problems of Mexican municipalities and some of the prospects for development they could enjoy in the future. It is divided into three sections. The first identifies the general elements that constitute the current situation of municipalities in Mexico, considering the transformation of public action and its limits. It also emphasizes the importance of reassessing the role of the municipality as a starting point for the overall development of the country.

The second section contains a synthesis of the problems faced by Mexican municipalities, based on the National Survey of Municipal Administration effected by the Center for Research and Teaching of Economics and the National Institute of Geography and Information

Science in 1993. This section is structured in accordance with the three areas of municipal administration considered in the survey: 1) Management and Planning, 2) Public Services, and 3) Municipal Finances. The working hypothesis used offers the possibility of constructing a global diagnosis of the conditions prevailing in Mexico's municipalities.

The final section outlines alternatives for administrative improvements and municipal financing. It offers options for strengthening municipal administration, some of which are innovative and others that, although not innovative, have not been implemented sufficiently in the country. The goal of the text is to incorporate analytical elements and empirical evidence in order to contribute to the debate on the contents of the research agenda for municipal matters.

Ideas for Resolving Public Ills

Eduardo Andere M.

This article studies public decision problems from the point of view of strategic rationality and rational choice. It also describes the dilemma when individuals, either per se or acting as a collective, make decisions that appear contradictory. From an analysis of such contradictions, and of the way in which individuals make decisions, an understanding of many of the apparent contradictions of individual and collective decisions is obtained. The analysis is offered without technical embellishment in order to reach a wider group of readers, and examples relating to environmental problems are used to explain the nature, benefits, and costs of public decisions.

Evaluation and Financing: Towards Quality Elementary Public Education in a Decentralized System

Leonardo M. Álvarez Córdova

The decentralization of education in Mexico was not accompanied by a formal system to provide the states with the resources necessary to finance public education. In addition, there are at present no standardized indicators to quantify educational performance in terms of what the students actually learn. It is therefore very difficult to deter-

mine just how productive investment in education is. The aim of this paper is to analyze the characteristics that an evaluation and financing system in Mexican educational policy should adopt, the main agents who would be affected by such a policy (the National Union of Education Workers, the state governments, the Ministry of the Treasury and Public Credit, and the Ministry of Public Education), their positions and probable reactions to the policy, and the general strategy that should be considered in implementing such policies.