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Action research contextualizes DEA in a multi-organizational decision-making process

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Abstract

The theory of participatory action research (PAR) grew out of the practice of problem-solving in groups and organization by involving the participation of all pertinent stakeholders in decision-making process through empowerment. The ontological assumption is that "the world out there" is defined by the participating stakeholders as they understand and perceive it. The actionable knowledge thus produced is mostly used subjectively in the hope of a favorable organizational change or a transformation for betterment. On the other hand, Management Science/Operations Research (MS/OR) is more concerned with epistemological objectivity in identifying and defining managerial issues and finding solutions. In this paper we shall show that MS/OR can benefit from and contribute to PAR in complex decision making contexts. This kind of mutual benefit will be illustrated through a study reported in the area of R&D planning. It will be shown that PAR "contextualizes" problem structuring whereas MS/OR "optimizes" the consensual decision-making process in a multi-organizational context. © 2011 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Author Keywords

Enhanced Data Envelopment Analysis; Multi-methodology; Multi-organizational decision making; Participatory action research; R&D project selection

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