Authentic Assessment, Implementation, and Evaluation in Social Movements: Considerations for Adult Educators

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[Abstract] In the USA historically, Adult Education has included the goal of working for social change by means of education. Such social movements for justice are all about political and social issues, and they are particular to the given circumstance and setting. They intend to improve the quality of life for humans. In an effort to authentically address expressed needs that allow for action to make the desired changes, assessment and evaluation of such movements, along with the design and implementation role that adult educators play, ought to be informed by many disciplines; by many experiences; and by many stakeholders. Therefore, this think piece argues that solution to issues and ought to be firmly grounded in the actual and contextually determined needs of those stakeholders it is to benefit and synthesizes sample how-to approaches to accomplish just that.

[Keyword] adult education, assessment, social movement, social change, evaluation, participatory and critical pedagogy

An Introduction by Way of Problem-Posing

"Poke adult educators unexpectedly and the first thing they shout out is *Assessment and*

Accountability."   (Phyllis Cunningham, 1986, personal correspondence).

These A-words remain at the core of our practice decades later, albeit tattered by habitual definitions and interpretations by academicians. The stance we have taken in the adult education discipline about assessment and evaluation is all too often one that of a conventional research praxis. It props itself up on norms or standards, arrived at through the scientific method with its focus on empirical evidence and its principles of reasoning. But Brookfield would quickly point us to the danger of such values which underlie this stance. Need we define assessment and evaluation based on prevailing, conventional notions that are grounded in paradigmatic assumptions Brookfield (1995) ?

In contemporary USA society, these notions inform the assessment and evaluation of social movements for human justice that are opposing institutionalized injustice and in-egality due to the many ~isms and ~phobias. Such social movements flare up and die swiftly, then recur and solve very little to bring about and maintain social change, as is the experience by those who are to benefit from these efforts. It therefore behooves us to dig at the roots of this discrepancy between perspectives and lived realities so that we can appropriately assess and evaluate the *why* of these cycles (Strohschen, 2016). Within our adult education practice, educators have dedicated but a smidgeon of our work to liberatory (Freire, 1970) or emancipatory (Fanon, 1963) education. Yet, the underlying principles expressed by just two of such thinkers, are crucial to initiating and sustaining social movements. Liberating ourselves from paradigmatic assumptions that thrive within the void of reflection, fester in the lack of critical analysis, are nurtured without cross-cultural experiences, and survive by homo-socio reproduction has been [proclaimed as a purpose of Adult Education for decades in the USA. If we agree that ~isms and ~phobias may dissipate by means of such adult education, then we could also agree to the oft proclaimed call to deviate from conventions in assessment and evaluation. Yet, are we not stuck in the old paradigm of what constitute a research-evidenced 'fact?'

"Participatory and critical pedagogy coupled with egalitarian policies in school and society can

holistically address the education crisis" wrote Shore in the foreword to *Freire for the Classroom* in 1987. And Satre (1963) pinpointed the European continent's knowledge good of philosophy and science as the demise of any chance of holistic, non-classist, intercultural and emancipatory leadership through collaborative study for the betterment of all, "The European elite undertook to manufacture a native elite […] they branded them, as with red-hot iron, with the principles of Western culture […] (p.7).

Fanon (1963) addressed this "changing the shape of the world" in his *The Wretched of the Earth*; however, he limited this observation to the Black Revolution. At the same time, within that era in history and the perspectives of leaders like Freire and Fanon, we do find the seeds for valuing knowledge and participation in the political process and social movements of those not at the decision-making table, beyond the powers-that-be. Participation by the beneficiaries of social movements clearly includes being part of the assessment and evaluation process of social movements to appropriately gauge and guide the impact of solutions on the marginalized.

I amplify here these voices that are on the fringe of our field's knowledge base, which are often quickly dismissed for being radical and counter to prevailing interpretations of democracy by many good colleagues in the field, because this essay seeks to address practices of assessment and evaluation of social movements for human justice. As such, we are already traipsing about the fringes of conventional education institutions, and we are trekking amidst the wretched of the earth (Fanon) or the disenfranchised (Freire) with our *educare* mission, i.e., our goal of leading adults toward liberation from paradigmatic thinking, toward emancipation, toward transforming power structures, and toward ushering in social change by with, and for stakeholders. That this cannot be accomplished within the prevailing standards and norms of positivist thinking nor be assessed and evaluated within the constraints of exclusive systems is only logical.

Premises for such a logical conclusion must start with clarification of concepts so that critical discourse of presented ideas and practices can occur. Considering social movements less of a researchable phenomenon will lead to a different sort of assessment and evaluation practice than thinking of social movements as a regular research project. social movements are not large, powerful, and intractably indivisible and uniform phenomena, each in itself or across movements of different issues. The diverse individuals involved in such movements may and may not have commonly shared ideas about sought impacts. They are groups of people working together to advance a political, social, or human justice causes; however, diverse as any group is, there may be varying desired outcomes. Hence, this essay portrays *that, why, and how* assessment and evaluation practices of social movements ought to begin with participation of everyone, including those it is to benefit.

Theoretical Anchoring: Whose Reality Are We Considering?

At times, especially at those times when a society is in flux, as we are experiencing in this "globalizing" time of the first quarter of the 21st century, confusion and crisis prevail and result in a retrenching of mindsets. Adult education's role includes initiating, guiding, and evaluating social change/social justice movements, and our practices are no exception to such communal psycho-socio behavior. These days, we do not necessarily view the role of adult education as one to conduct radical analysis of systems and related movements that call for justice and change *by, with, and for* the very groups and individuals such movements are to benefit. With the best of intentions, we, adult educators, too, tether ourselves to what we already know rather than to venture, unprotected by accepted theories and models, into those terrains on the fringes of our field. Yet, risk-taking is key to innovation; and trail-blazing appropriate methods and strategies is just a way to "make the road by walking" (Horton & Freire, 1991).

Social movements are relevant in and to their given contexts, and they ought to be gauged as successful within such contexts, *with, by, and for* stakeholders. Assessment criteria ought not be based on norming practices nor ought findings be generalized to disparate contexts. While others in other contexts can extrapolate from evaluation results of a given movement, particular results are not predictive to other settings. It has been the notion of alleged neutrality, objectivity, validity, and generalizability along with

the power and positionality in inquiries, whether conducted for scholarly research or evaluation in the human sciences, which leads us astray from the goal of working together to better the quality of life through what may be termed cross-sector collaboration in social such inquiries and movements. The bottom line in this approach to social change is the stance we take as educators with respect to power sharing. Our critically examined assumptions, clarity of our values, and a willingness to be flexible should build the platform from which we can craft and apply appropriate strategies, methods, and techniques for assessment and evaluation.

Conventional data collection and analysis strategies, based on agreed upon scientific method system, are finely honed, electronically mediated, and have benefit, no doubt. The question is, who are we benefiting when it comes to assessing and evaluating social movements within a conventional research paradigm? The very stakeholders of a movement that our educat*ing* is to address are the added elements to the assessment and evaluation molecule, i.e., when we collect so-termed qualitative data in, say, interviews or offer first level assessments via a survey (Kilpatrick, 1950) we check the temperature of participants. That is to say, that collaborative participation of stakeholders would electrify this assessment and evaluation molecule.

What does that mean? Although we accept the principles of Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) by including many voices in what we term "qualitative" data collection; utilize methods of action research or even participatory action research and have embraced critical theory (Horkheimer, 1992), and even critical race theory (Bell, 1987) in our theoretical framework repertoire, we remain highly influenced by the positivist scientific method. We still make the distinctions between qualitative and quantitative methods, characterizing working with *soft* data in the former and *hard* data in the later paradigm. The risk-taking would come in straying from the conventions which have the researcher be the primary interpreter of the data.

The knowledge capital (Putnam, 2000) of those being assessed is typically considered, but only tangentially. In other words, values and interpretation of data may not be grounded in the interpretations of the voices whence the data came. This point is illustrated in the instance of the critique of Margaret Mead's renowned Samoan research (1928) by Freeman (1999). "Freeman argued that Mead had been influenced by her strongly held belief in the power of culture as a determinant of human behavior, and that this belief had caused her to mischaracterize Samoa as a sexually liberated society when in fact it was characterized by sexual repression and violence and adolescent delinquency" (Shankman, 2009, pp. 64–66).

Understanding human interactions and grasping fully the reality of those other-from-self is extremely difficult; and it most certainly cannot be validated by a scientific method that is based on practices and premises agreed upon but by a select few. It does not make sense to base the evaluation of everyone's realities on normed and validated truths by those few and then to generalize the findings to other contexts.

In qualitative research, there are many ways of analyzing data gathered in the field. One of the two most common methods of data analysis are thematic analysis and narrative analysis. The type of analysis a researcher decides to use depends on the research question asked, the researcher's field, and the researcher's personal method of choice (Smith, 2000-2009). However, the problem is that the power of choice and interpretation lies with the researcher. The collection and analysis of data is not designed, implemented, or vetted by the people who are to benefit from the respective social movement.

Adult Education's involvement as a means for liberation and personal and/or community development, then, ought to value all the engaged voices in the assessment and evaluation of social movements. Evaluators may need to adapt a new lens through which to look at given human justice phenomena when designing, implementing, and investigating success of social movements. That means, first and foremost, not to subjugate the knowledge of those **not** imbued with the same knowledge as those with power that is bestowed by credentials, such as by academic degrees or social institutions to assess and evaluate those whose knowledge has been disqualified. It would mean accepting collaboration with non-educators, would it not? The stance can be one that values interdependence in assessment and evaluation by, with, and for all stakeholders.

Bruffee (1993) put it succinctly, "Collaborative learning makes the Kuhnian assumptions that knowledge is consensus: it is something people construct interdependently by talking together. Knowledge is in that sense, Kuhn says, "intrinsically the common property of a group or else nothing at all." (p. 113).

Collaboration, Interdependence, and the Value of Indigenous[1] Knowledge:

Leaning on action research and principles of civic/social engagement, we can explore a framework for assessing and evaluating social movements for human justice. In order to crystallize a few key points that scaffold a framework as a beginning for 'emancipating' assessment and evaluation from prevailing constraining assumptions, and to open perspectives to critical and participatory investigations, the following real-life scenario of assessing and evaluating a social movement will be reviewed. This scenario describes a type of community-based learning project which sought to organically grow awareness about self and others amidst disorienting moments that arise when assumptions, values, and prejudices cloud perception of one another's reality, particularly in the context of social movements with disenfranchised communities of urban Chicago (Strohschen, 2014; Strohschen et al., 2013; Strohschen & Heaney, 2000).

Summer of 2016 - the 50th Anniversary of the Summer of Love

Graduate students in a civic engagement seminar of a Midwestern university come together to study the tenets of social engagement à la Putnam (2000) and emancipatory education à la Freire 1970), considering the strategies of McKnight & Kretzmann (1996) and McKnight &Block (2010). The context is a grass roots movement on Chicago's West Side that seeks to counter the increasing violence among youths, by youths, and against youths. Stakeholders in these movements are local parents, teachers, business leaders, artists, musicians and pastors. The instructor is a member of several community-organizations who have been banding together for this cause. The community stakeholders invited the participation of graduate and undergraduate adult students.

After reading and discussing the principles laid out in the seminar's texts, the group ventures into the community. At a local diner, they meet regularly with "locals" to listen to ideas of what activities can lead to desired changes and how the students can support the cause. Filled with enthusiasm, the group devises a plan for activities that seek to bring youths, police, and parents together in dialogue at a kick-off event. These include a series of spoken word, dance, and music performances, coordinated by the community youths with input from the group of graduate student and local artists, teachers and musicians.

Community members concur with this plan. According to students' reflection journals maintained, the first key insight emerges after two meetings: Community residents say the same thing about power distribution, disenfranchisement, and annoyance with well-intentioned but uninformed assistance as is critically pointed out by the texts. In discussion with community stakeholders, the students express that they are excited about co-planning this community-wide movement and about connecting with other stakeholders. They begin to contact local high schools, merchants, and organizations to recruit for these activities. Community members concur with the plan.

The group meets regularly with residents to listen to ideas of what activities can benefit the community to achieve a desired change violence prevention and intervention by means of this popular form of education through poetry, music, and other performances. Filled with enthusiasm, the group fine-tunes the plan: A series of word and music performances, coordinated by the youth with guidance from the group of graduate students is sketched out during seminar sessions. In one community meeting, volunteers from outside of the community join, invited by students. They immediately suggest particular marketing approaches and more activities. Students are enthusiastic. Community members concur with the plans.

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[1]   Indigenous refers to any specific group or culture belonging; the common connotation of being "aboriginal" or "third world" people is not intended with the use of this term

The First Products

Students and outside volunteers produced recruitment and announcement fliers of high quality in design and production. Students meet with community residents to learn that they had produced different materials and that the program for the kick-off event had been completely altered. The date for the first event of this empowerment movement was changed past the seminar term by community leaders. The group is awed and retreats into debriefing among themselves. Disappointment prevails among students. According to reflection journals, tears were shed along with concerns that grades would be impacted by the seeming "failure" of their work in this movement. Students felt helpless, insulted, and confused.

The Community Meal, the Debriefing, and the Final Event

Prior to the first and what turned out to be the final event of the beginning of this "movement," the group coordinated a shared meal at the diner, coordinated by the instructor with the owner of the diner that had hosted the meetings. Coinciding with the end of the university term, it was a joyous event. But what had gone wrong with the engagement of all stakeholders in building the movement? The instructor facilitated a relatively honest debriefing, by leading with uncomfortable questions for both community residents and students. According *to reflection journals, students* reported insights that would lead them to doing it all differently next time. Community members were delighted with the final/last event, which had been transformed into a fundraiser with local entertainment by youths and adults and yielded several thousand dollars in donations.

Analysis: Essentials to Consider

On many levels, this experience identifies essentials to assessing and evaluating social movements in terms of their design, impact on, and outcome for diverse stakeholders. Analysis of this experience also pinpoints fundamental elements of assessment and evaluation processes that are appropriate to social movements. This section seeks to inform the design and development of an appropriate framework for the kind of strategies that are appropriate for social movements' assessment and evaluation. The goal is to create a generic, simple, practical, repeatable **guiding framework** for iterative learning, evaluation, and improvement that leads to increasingly improved designs of movements with desired results. This framework is informed by Action Research and power sharing within values of collaboration and interdependence.

Action Research

We can likely agree that Action Research refers to a wide variety of evaluative, investigative, and analytical inquiry methods that are designed to diagnose problems or weaknesses—whether organizational, academic, or instructional. This approach can also aid in developing relevant and appropriate solutions to human injustice issues and the need for social change, addressing them quickly and efficiently.

Action research's *cycles of action* or *cycles of inquiry*, fundamentally look no different than the scientific method that would have us:

- Identify a problem to be studied
- Collect data on the problem
- Organize, analyze, and interpret the data
- Develop a plan to address the problem
- Implement the plan
- Evaluate the results of the actions taken
- Identify a new problem
- Repeat the process

The iterative process of Action Research is understood and relevant to assessment and evaluation of social movements. Unlike conventional evaluations, the participants - rather than **only** alleged independent, impartial, outside observers - are central to the process.

Iterative Action: Organic Emergence of Patterns of Agreement Among Stakeholders

Riel (2017) created a useful visual for understanding Action Research, which is suggested here to emphasize the levels of an appropriate assessment and evaluation for social movements:
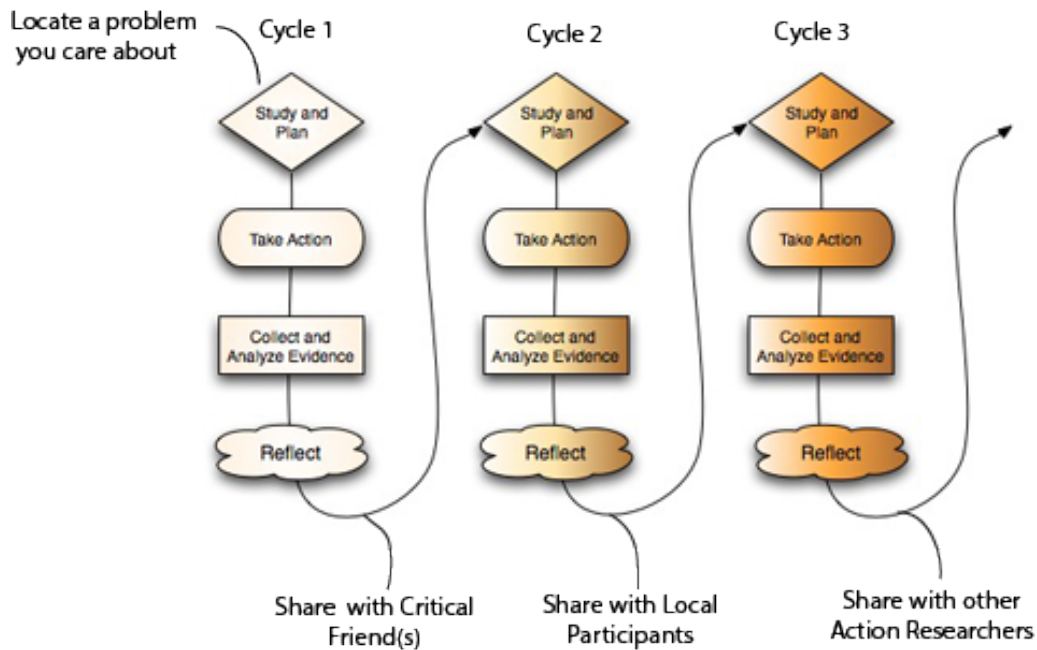

Figure 1. The iterative process of action research
Source: *http://cadres.pepperdine.edu/ccar/define.html*

These action research processes can be aligned to generate assessment criteria for the subsequent evaluation of social movements, which means that that the movements' stakeholders determine:

- The problem
- The intended outcome
- The data to collect for assessment
- The evaluation criteria for measurement

Instead of moving from a researcher's position to member-checking, the processes at each level include participants in the movement in each cycle.   Remember, the movement *is* many people; it is not the one phenomenon of a solid entity that is to be evaluated. Hence, these determinations need to be made within the respective input of members of a cross-sector collaborative. This may get quite messy if the above phases are not determined *a priori* to the implementation of movement activities, as we do with conventional evaluations. Much like in instructional design, the desired outcomes determine the learning and teaching objectives and identify the correlated criteria and measurement choices.

Different stakeholders in the movement will have different "yard sticks" with which to measure and determine goals and success. The entire process of assessment and evaluation then becomes not only cyclical and iterative; it also takes on spiraling vortex dimensions. We need to remind ourselves that pivotal to benefiting from assessment and evaluation in social movements is still the uncovering of experiences and the valuing of perspectives of the people engaged, and that this is at the heart of maintaining the type of interactions that can sustain the momentum toward change.

Power Sharing: Collaborative and Interdependent Determination of Criteria

The Action Steps in all cycles need to become collaboratively developed and implemented by the movement's stakeholders and this is imperative to power sharing in determining if and how the action benefits (or not) the varying beneficiaries in human justice movements. At the same time, as is the case in the sample scenario, stakeholders will have some of the same desired outcomes, vastly opposing ones, unintended ones that surface somewhere along the way, and specific and different ones from one another. **And that is okay** when it comes to the kind of assessment and evaluation appropriate to social movements. It will be organic, emerging, changing, and, indeed, messy.

Interdependence among stakeholders comes into play in the selection of assessment techniques and evaluation measurement processes, and in the means with which findings and insights are recorded. Although conventional inquiry methods are based on particular stances toward knowledge production, one can draw from the toolbox of data collection strategies without adhering to prevailing practices of the scientific method. It is key is that a multiplicity of assessment data points be identified, reviewed, accepted, recorded, and collected by all stakeholders. In this process alone, connections among stakeholders are strengthened, which builds relationship and trust - so important in sustaining social movements.

In the community-based learning project scenario above, this did not happen until the very end, at which time, however, it constituted shared insights, perhaps even values' clarification and unearthing of paradigmatic assumptions. These insights eventually became instrumental to developing subsequent partnerships between students and community agents. These insights can be considered in different settings. In our project, they led to these agreements:

- Individuals who emerge as advocates have relevant knowledge of their reality, of their communities, and of their children/youths
- Such individuals are pivotal for advocating effectively for human justice/change and their knowledge must not be subjugated
- Without recurring, open discourse among all stakeholders, individuals can get trapped in the incongruence between differing goals that undermine collaborative action and threaten the success of movements
- "Indigenous[2]" activism can bridge the chasm created by value clashes between "outsiders" and community members.

With that, our motley group of local and outside *agents in action* gained a deeper insight of one another's reality and values, and this alone may contribute to just a bit more cross-community understanding. For the purpose of developing assessment and evaluation practices it confirms that iterative and interdependent interactions among all stakeholders without power and positionality boundaries are essential.

Participatory Assessment and Evaluation in Social Movements: Some Nuts and Bolts

The other A-word so central to assessment and evaluation is: Accountability. All involved in the processes have a responsibility to answer and reflect on what is happening in the movement before, during, and after. This requires shared power, which comes with clarity and transparency of concepts, actions, and, of course, assessment criteria. In order to identify and elect appropriate practices for how to assess and evaluate, definitions help determine if the practices align to the theories and principles, or the **why** of what we are doing. Therefore, the following definitions are suggested.

Definitions and Clarifications

    Assessment: Assessment is used in the field of education with the connotation that it **is** the evaluation. Given the complexity and multiversity of stakeholders, assessment here, however, means the process of gathering information that is identified in the form of criteria. Assessment is the collection of data that shows, criterion by criterion, that tasks have been accomplished. Evaluation is, therefore, criterion-referenced and it is the Stakeholders who determine the validity of each criterion. These subjectively determined criteria (what do I know/have achieved) and correlated measurements (how do I know that I know/have achieved) is not only within the grasp and awareness of each stakeholder when self-determined; a process of small group or large group dialogue to determine these criteria also serves to meld the group, and with that the cohesiveness of the movement.

    Criterion-Referenced Assessment: Criteria are referenced to the varying units of measure identified and agreed upon by stakeholders. These criteria are not normed to any ranking of individuals, populations, or standards but are set by stakeholders within a given movement. This presupposes that goals are contextually determined for the individuals and for the movement. The messy and laborious part will be to do this within a collaborative process in which consensus for varying criteria has been achieved.

    This is a crucial aspect of movement evaluation, as lengthy and cumbersome as bringing together groups of people and building trusting relationships can be. It is likely that only a core group will emerge that will develop and adopt these criteria. In that case, it requires solid transparency to disseminate and seek agreements or buy-in or adaptation these assessment points. A movement is not an arrow, shot straight. With repeating dialogue around goals and criteria for measuring achievement of the goals, the movement is built that authentically albeit organically aligns to the context of the needs of its stakeholders.

    Evaluation: Evaluation is a concept that defines the appraising aspect of a process, and if and how goals have been achieved. Assessment data is analyzed to indicate that and how performance has been appropriately measured with which specific outcomes. The evaluation process critically examines how the collected and analyzed information provides evidence that the movement's activities have led to the desired outcomes. Evaluation then informs needed changes in the movement's action. The evaluation process is another opportunity for stakeholders to discuss information from multiple perspectives and to consider the diverse sources of input. Of course, findings and action applies only to the given movement at hand, that is, these are contextually appropriate to the given setting and people yet from which others can learn.

Sample Frameworks of Evaluation Practices: Contemporizing Old Models

    The New World Kirkpatrick Model. It needs to be emphasized that assessment and evaluation strategies are typically ordered in a particular hierarchy. Kirkpatrick's (1950) is perhaps one of the fundamental systems that is still applied in varying interpretations. In the 1950s, Kirkpatrick created a model primarily for use in training activities. Over the years, some adaptations resulted in a *New World Kirkpatrick Model*. The levels are appropriate to other education or leadership activities to aid in envisioning a flow of impact levels as much as focusing on the importance of stakes held by different people in such activities:

Level 1: Reaction

The degree to which participants find the training favorable, engaging and relevant to their jobs

Customer Satisfaction

The original definition measured only participant satisfaction with the training.

New World Additions:

Engagement: The degree to which participants are actively involved in and contributing to the learning experience

Relevance: The degree to which training participants will have the opportunity to use or apply what they learned in training on the job

Level 2: Learning

The degree to which participants acquire the intended knowledge, skills, attitude, confidence and commitment based on their participation in the training

Knowledge: *"I know it."*

Skill: *"I can do it right now."*

Attitude: *"I believe this will be worthwhile to do on the job."*

New World Additions:

Confidence: *"I think I can do it on the job."*

Commitment: *"I intend to do it on the job."*

Level 3: Behavior

The degree to which participants apply what they learned during training when they are back on the job

New World Addition:

Required Drivers: Processes and systems that reinforce, encourage, and reward performance of critical behaviors on the job

Level 4: Results

The degree to which targeted outcomes occur as a result of the training and the support and accountability package

New World Addition:

Leading Indicator: Short-term observations and measurements suggesting that critical behaviors are on track to create a positive impact and desired results.

Figure 2. New World Kirkpatrick Model

Source: *https://www.kirkpatrickpartners.com/Our-Philosophy/The-New-World-Kirkpatrick-Model*

These levels and descriptive phrases provide a useful guide to identifying the kind of criteria for assessing the participation, experiences, accomplishments, and impact of social movements.

    The CIRO Model. Another useful example of an evaluation approach was developed by Warr, Bird and Rackham (1970). The CIRO four-level approach looks at context, input, reaction, and outcome measurements. It, too, was applied in the workforce sector to assess and evaluate employee training. It encompasses concepts useful to human agency activity such as we find in the designing, planning, and implementing of social movement activities. The four components of the CIRO model evaluation measure:

- C- Context or environment
- I -Inputs to the event
- R- Reactions to the event

- Outcomes

With that, the CIRO model emphasizes an assessment and evaluation framework for considering the reasons or purpose; the planning and design process; the reaction of participants to the activities; and the learning and behavioral changes that can be clarified to further inform a movement's development and how the outcomes can sustain or improve the movement – or not. In all four levels, the CIRO model focuses on determining the appropriateness and accuracy of the inputs by stakeholders, which makes it appealing as a framework for the assessment and evaluation of social movements.

Methods of Assessment and Co-Diagnosis: Adapting Conventional Approaches

The Kirkpatrick and the CIRO models, as two examples, incorporate the assessing and evaluating of those engaged in an activity, i.e., a variety of stakeholder. As such, these are useful frameworks for the overall design and direction of assessment and evaluation of social movements. Inserted into the Action Research paradigm with the above suggested adaptations, and coupled with the values of inclusive, cross-sector collaborative ownership of assessment and evaluation activities, these models provide a solid framework for designing contextual evaluations. The selection of particular assessment methods now becomes one of discerning which best fit a given stakeholder; a given objective; a given outcome; or a given competence. Whether such assessment methods are conventional measuring tools or expand beyond a traditional researcher's comfort zone can be the decision of the 'owners' of each criterion and measurement. In social movements, it is imperative to remember, however, that analysis and results ought to be accessible across stakeholders and reflect the context of the movement. For that, alternative creative evidence can be produced.

For example:
1. Observations
   --The focus is on specific aspects of an activity
       --A written report by the observer in the form of a performance checklist and/or rubric can be considered a valid and reliable assessment
2. Journals, Writings, and Learning Logs
       --Written products explain what was done with what results
       --Narratives can come in the form of photo journals or videos
3. Interviews, Conferences, Town Halls, and Learning Studios
       --Written or electronically recorded, these provide evidence of attitudes, feelings, reflections, ideas, and perceptions (i.e., the "why", the values, the affective domain)
       --These lends themselves to documentaries of the movement when capturing activities, speech snippets, and clarifying dialogues and so on are edited together.
4. Performance Assessment
       --Performance checklists, developed in collaboration with the assessor(s), focus on actions taken in authentic situations
5. Running Record
       --Maintenance and review of records that chronicle actual events and activities
6. Rubric
       --A rubric can be collaboratively designed to determine to what degree a goal has been achieved for that particular aspect of an activity
       --The rubric should include a variety of "scoring" measures
7. Meta-Cognitive Reflection
       --This is a well-suited assessment method for social movements. A statement can be prepared regarding the monitoring of attitudes, beliefs, values, and the nature of responsibility in accomplishing goals.

--Individuals monitor, assess, and improve performance in activities and critical reflection

8. Portfolio – Culmination of all of the above

--Any combination of the above can comprise a learning portfolio, designed to be a systematic and organized collection of evidence used to assess growth of individuals and achievement of movement goals. This collection connects these separate items to form a clear, complete portrait of individual and group success, and underscores the importance of an iterative learning-reflective process in the assessment and evaluation of a movement.

Adapted from Kaufman et. al. (2005)

Any one or a combination of these methods, as appropriate to the specific criteria, can be designed and developed collaboratively with stakeholders and be, as noted, unapologetically subjectively determined.

Thoughts in Conclusion: Toward a Beginning

We are, indeed, a society in flux and in transition.   Given increasingly available technology, we are closer in access to communicating with one another, locally and globally; and we are more distanced by our tools and attitudes in the necessity to do so in person at the same time. When it comes to social movements that are to move us toward contextually appropriate social change needed to ensure a just and peaceful world, it is in the close interactions with one another that we have opportunity to examine values and beliefs, and examine responsibility and accountability for our own actions, and for those different from our own. This sort of examination of values and grasping of realties – our own and that of others'- requires accountability to one's self and to others.   In social movements, whether in electronically mediated campaigns or during physical marches in our main streets or even in the civic engagement in community work, we seldom have the opportunity to experience more than the moment of our action. The after-action analysis is fed to us by media; in numbers or images that may or may not authentically narrate the reality as experienced by those engaged in the movements. The reports and images are ephemeral; the impact of social movements most of the time, elusive.

We have been taught from childhood to higher education on to trust the alleged neutrality and objectivity of the scientific method paradigm; the notion that studies, interpreted by neutral researchers or assessors, quantified, tested, and normed, have as great a validity and reliability in the Geisteswissenschaften[3] (Human Sciences) as in the Natural Sciences. And that may be a most misleading paradigmatic assumption, in spite of the fact that we have become habituated to statements such as "nine out of ten dentists confirm the positive results of studies based on a population sample of toothpaste users."

When it comes to the social and societal interactions among humans in search of righting wrongs in our structures and systems, or even to simply improve a given situation, it is the shoulder-on-shoulder experience, the relationship among people that make up the movement, that allows us to understand ourselves and our values, when juxtaposed to hearing and seeing the expressions of these by others. That is when we have the opportunity to learn – about our own and others' realities – and, thus informed, can choose to act accountably and responsibly.

Authentic measuring and gauging of action also follows this line of thinking when assessing and evaluating social movements for human justice. With this essay, we hope to inspire us to critically question and examine our much valued culturally-based assumptions about assessment and evaluation as adult educators so that we can discern those kernels of values and processes in established theories, models, and methods that can provide contextual evaluation of social movements – and it calls on us to create authentic new ones as needed *by, with, and for* those we wish to support in social change and human justice movements.

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[3] Geist – refers to the mind/spirit domain of humans. It continues to be a more succinct descriptor of the so-termed soft sciences when expressed in my Mother tongue.

Consulted and Suggested Resources

Bell, D. (1987). *And we are not saved: The elusive quest for racial justice.* New York, NY: Basic Books.

Bruffee, J. (1999). *Collaborative learning: Higher education, interdependence, and the authority of knowledge*. Baltimore. MD: John Hopkins University Press

Dewey, J. (1938) *Experience and education*. New York, NY: Collier Books

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