

TACKLING WICKED PROBLEMS IN THE FIELD OF EVALUATION: WHOSE ONTOLOGY? WHOSE EPISTEMOLOGY?

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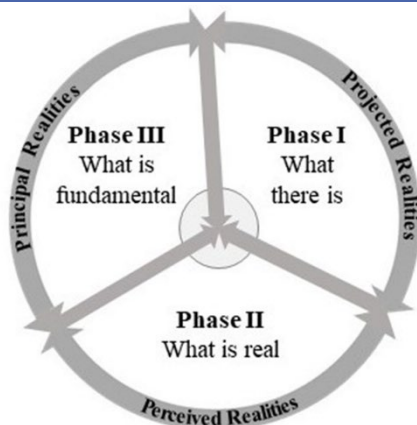
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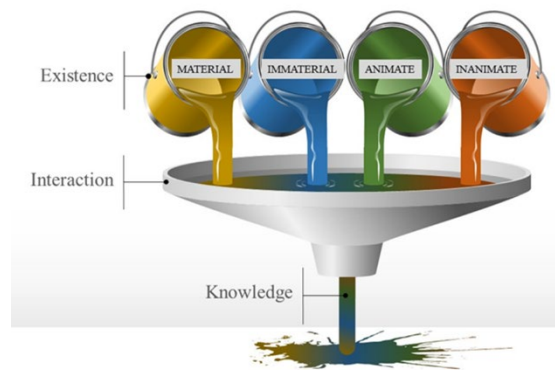
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ONTOLOGICALLY INTEGRATIVE EVALUATION & EMERGENT INTERACTIVE EPISTEMOLOGY



Ontologically Integrative Evaluation Concept Model



Emergent Interactive Epistemology Concept Model

OIE'S SEVEN GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ❖ **Ontological Competence:** One's ability to uphold OIE's guiding principles.
- ❖ **Ontological Fluidity:** A shift in one's ontological stance that occurs over time in response to changes in position/location and subsequent new interactions with the material and nonmaterial world.
- ❖ **Ontological Authenticity:** The extent to which all actors engaged with an evaluation gain understanding of their own and other's realities through interaction with one another and the environment.
- ❖ **Ontological Validity:** The accurate and trustworthy representation of diverse realities as experienced across actors engaged with and impacted by an evaluation.
- ❖ **Ontological Synthesis:** Integration of ontologies such that each is mutually affirmed, challenged, and transformed
- ❖ **Ontological Justice:** The impartial treatment of differing ontological views such that an individual's/group's ontology is acknowledged and affirmed and conflicts between ontologies lead to ontological synthesis
- ❖ **Ontological Vocation:** The act of becoming more fully human through a lifelong commitment to ontological justice.

Billman, J.A.H. (2019). Tackling Wicked Problems in Evaluation (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana, PA.

OIE GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR PRACTITIONERS

<p>PREPARATION</p>	<p>How do I understand reality? 🙌 What do I deem the most effective evaluation approach and why? How has my experience contributed to this stance? 🙌 What do I think of others who hold to varying ontological convictions? How do my perceptions of them support or hinder their well-being? 🙌 How are my experiences influencing where I look for projected realities? 🙌 Is the projected reality data I am gathering of the same form? If so, why is this and where can I look to expand the diversity of the data? 🙌 How do I represent myself in my correspondence and how does representation of myself contribute to the well-being of another? 🙌 Do my requests perpetuate historical power divides? If so, how can I change this? 🙌 If directly communicating with partnering communities, am I listening as much as speaking? If not, what may this suggest to local program partners?</p>
<p>DESIGN</p>	<p>What familiarity do I have with local evaluative thinking? How does this familiarity support or hinder understanding of each other? 🙌 What familiarity do local partners have with external evaluative thinking? How does this familiarity support or hinder understanding of each other? 🙌 What familiarity do funding partner have with local evaluative thinking? How does this familiarity support or hinder understanding of each other? 🙌 Where do these understandings of evaluation overlap? How can we build on these intersections to design a meaningful evaluation approach? 🙌 Do our design decisions reflect the interests and understandings of participants as well as program staff? If not, how does the design need to be adapted to reflect their voices? 🙌 How has flexibility and adaptability been built into the design?</p>
<p>SAMPLING</p>	<p>How does sampling at the individual level support or hinder community well-being? 🙌 Does the sample include individuals holding diverse ontological views? Why/why not? 🙌 Does dependence on local partners exclude voices integral to understanding community impact of the program? 🙌 Does the sample include both central and peripheral knowledge bearers? Why/why not?</p>
<p>DATA COLLECTION</p>	<p><u>General Questions to ask throughout this phase include:</u> What is considered objective knowledge within the local context? 🙌 What is considered subjective knowledge within the local context? 🙌 Who are the key knowledge holders in the community? 🙌 What are the primary modes of knowledge transfer in the community? 🙌 Is knowledge flow cyclical or linear? How can data collection methodology support endemic knowledge flow systems? 🙌 How is knowledge embedded in the community? 🙌 What impact will our data collection method have on local natural resources? 🙌 How will knowledge sharing be reciprocated? 🙌 What steps will be taken to ensure that the true essence of the knowledge shared is maintained as it flows through various transfer mediums?</p> <p><u>Questions addressing empirical knowledge transfer include:</u> Does data from a randomized control trial advance or hinder community and individual well-being? 🙌 Are surveys a local form of knowledge transmission? 🙌 How do local communities quantify knowledge? 🙌 Do obstacles to direct observation exist? If yes, list them and note why.</p> <p><u>Questions addressing traditional knowledge transfer include:</u> Are local myths and proverbs readily accessible? Why/why not? 🙌 How can artistic/creative expressions inform understanding of the community/program? 🙌 Has our evaluation design accounted for the time necessary for story sharing? 🙌 How would conducting focus groups, interviews, or talking circles differently support or hinder community well-being? 🙌 Can song/dance/music convey desired knowledge about program efficacy?</p> <p><u>Questions addressing revealed knowledge include:</u> What steps have been taken to protect sacred knowledge shared? 🙌 How do we account for revealed knowledge among the data? 🙌 How do community members engage dreams, visions, and other spiritual means of knowledge transfer? 🙌 How is revealed knowledge retained at the individual and community levels? 🙌 What are the ethical implications of materializing immaterial knowledge?</p>
<p>ANALYSIS</p>	<p>Where do intersections occur between understandings emerging from data of different/similar forms? Where do divergences occur between understandings emerging from data of different/similar forms? What exists in the spaces between divergence/convergence?</p>
<p>REPORTING</p>	<p>How does the form of the report influence the transfer of knowledge? 🙌 What common elements of knowledge transfer exist between stakeholder groups? Can these elements be combined into a report suitable for multiple audiences? 🙌 How will we integrate empirical, traditional, and revealed knowledge into the report? 🙌 How will ontological authenticity, validity, and justice be represented in the report?</p>