



Department of Performance Monitoring and Evaluation

Report on the Assessment of Government Evaluations

Monitoring and Evaluation Report on the Impact and Outcomes of the Education System on South Africa's Population: evidence from household surveys

Date Evaluation was completed: 2006

Name of assessor: Stephen Rule

Evaluation Number: 5

Date Assessment Completed: 08 February 2013

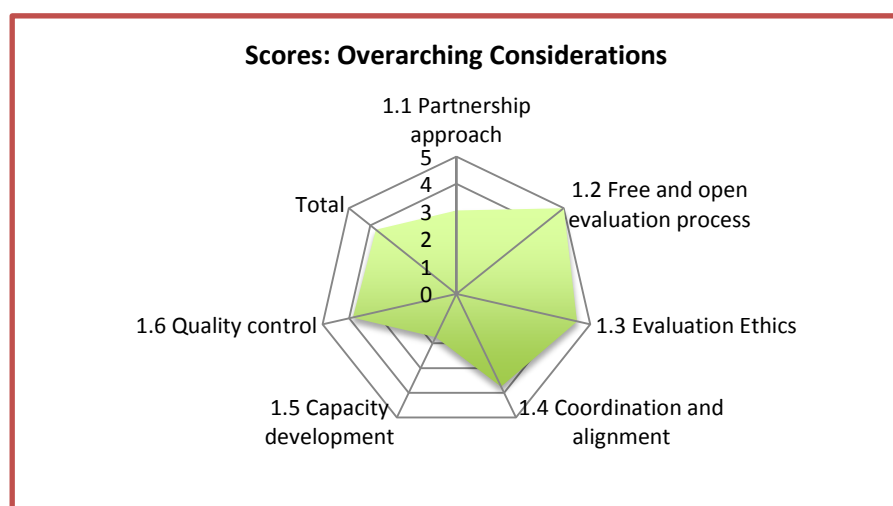
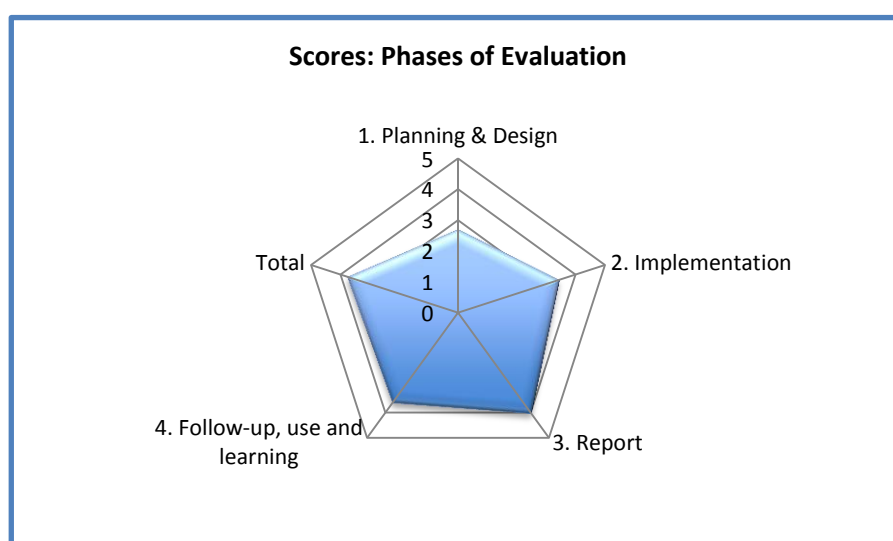
Evaluation Assessment Details

Title of evaluation report	Monitoring and Evaluation Report on the Impact and Outcomes of the Education System on South Africa's Population: evidence from household surveys
Completion Date of Evaluation	2006
Name of Assessor	Stephen Rule
Evaluation Number	5
Completion Date of Assessment	08 February 2013
Initiated by	Department of Education
Evaluation undertaken by	Department of Education
Evaluation area / sector	Education
	Additional
National Outcome	Outcome 1
	Additional
Type of Evaluation	Impact
	Additional
What is being evaluated	Institution
	Additional
Geographic Scope	National
Period of Evaluation	Unknown
Known Cost of Evaluation	Unknown

Quality Assessment Scores

Phase of Evaluation	Score
Planning & Design	2.71
Implementation	3.43
Report	4.01
Follow-up, use and learning	3.58
Total	3.66

Overarching Consideration	Score
Partnership approach	3.03
Free and open evaluation process	5.00
Evaluation Ethics	4.50
Coordination and alignment	3.75
Capacity Development	1.75
Quality control	3.88



1. Planning & Design

1.1. Clarity of Purpose and Scope in TOR

STANDARD: *The evaluation was guided by a TOR with at least the following sections explicit: purpose, scope and objectives; expectations regarding design and methodology; resources and time allocated; reporting requirements; expectations regarding evaluation process and products.*

Comment and Analysis

The purpose of the evaluation was clearly outlined in the report as being to outline changes that occurred in the education system between 1994 and 2006 as measured by national household surveys, and to assess the extent to which such surveys and databases elicit useful education-related data. TOR for the data-mining methodology, timelines, and deliverables were less explicitly recorded in the report and evidence of the planning thereof was not obtainable.

Rating 2

STANDARD: *The purpose of the evaluation was clear and explicit in the TOR*

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: *The evaluation questions were clearly stated in the TOR and appropriate to addressing the evaluation purpose*

Comment and Analysis

The evaluation questions were explicitly to determine the impact of education in the general population, and specific sub-groups thereof; key gaps and areas that need strengthening; specific areas requiring better designed, planned and targeted education interventions for young people and adults.

Rating 5

STANDARD: The approach and type of evaluation was suited to the purpose and scope of the evaluation TOR**Comment and Analysis**

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: Intended users and their information needs were identified in the TOR**Comment and Analysis**

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: Key stakeholders were involved in the scoping of the TOR and determining the purpose of the evaluation**Comment and Analysis**

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

1.2. Evaluation was adequately resourced

STANDARD: The evaluation was adequately resourced in terms of time allocated

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: The evaluation was adequately resourced in terms of original budget

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: The evaluation was adequately resourced in terms of staffing and skills sets

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: *Where appropriate, the evaluation planned to incorporate an element of capacity building of partners/staff responsible for the evaluand*

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

1.3. Alignment to Policy Context and Background Literature

STANDARD: *There was evidence that a review of the relevant policy and programme environments had been conducted and used in the planning of the evaluation by the evaluators*

Comment and Analysis

Awareness of the education and other policy environments appeared to have been factored into planning the research.

Rating 4

STANDARD: *There was evidence of a review of appropriate literature having been conducted and used in the planning of the evaluation by the evaluators*

Comment and Analysis

The bibliography at the end of the report suggested that cognizance was taken of some appropriate local literature.

Rating 3

1.4. The evaluation methods planned were appropriate to the project

STANDARD: There was explicit reference to the intervention logic or the theory of change of the evaluand in the planning of the evaluation

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: Key stakeholders were consulted on the design and methodology of the evaluation

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: The planned methodology was appropriate to the questions being asked

Comment and Analysis

The envisaged data mining was an appropriate approach to elucidating educational trends and impact on the population.

Rating 4

STANDARD: *Planned sampling was appropriate and adequate given the focus and purpose of evaluation*

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: *There was a planned process for using the findings of the evaluation prior to undertaking the evaluation*

Comment and Analysis

No planned process for utilisation of the findings could be discerned.

Rating 1

1.5. Inception phase

STANDARD: *The inception phase was used to develop a common agreement on how the evaluation would be implemented*

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

2. Implementation

2.1. Ethical Review and Considerations

STANDARD: *Where data was gathered in contexts where ethical sensitivity is high, appropriate clearance was obtained through an ethics review board; e.g. in evaluation involving minors, institutions where access usually requires ethical or bureaucratic clearance, and situations where assurances of confidentiality was offered to participants*

Comment and Analysis

There was no new primary data collection and therefore no ethical sensitivity in the use of existing datasets.

Rating N/A

2.2. Evaluator independence

STANDARD: *Where external, evaluation team was able to work freely without significant interference*

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: The evaluation team was impartial and there was no evidence of conflict of interest***Comment and Analysis***

No evidence of conflict of interest was discernible.

Rating 4

2.3. Key stakeholder involvement***STANDARD: Key stakeholders were consulted through a formalised mechanism or institutional arrangement during the evaluation******Comment and Analysis***

Clearly the DPRU at UCT was consulted, no evidence of other expert input was available.

Rating 3

STANDARD: Where appropriate, an element of capacity building of partners responsible for the evaluand was incorporated into the evaluation***Comment and Analysis***

Capacity building did not appear to feature in this report.

Rating 2

2.4. Methodology

STANDARD: The methods employed in the process of the evaluation were consistent with those planned

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: Data collection was not compromised by fieldwork-level problems or unplanned diversions from original intentions

Comment and Analysis

No new primary data collection took place.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: Forms of data gathering were appropriate given the scope of evaluation

Comment and Analysis

The data gathered comprised existing national household survey datasets. This was appropriate for the purposes of the evaluation.

Rating 4

STANDARD: The data analysis approach and methods were appropriate and sufficient given the purposes of the evaluation

Comment and Analysis

The methods of data analysis were appropriately multi-focal, given the broad scope of the evaluation.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Key stakeholders were significantly engaged as part of the methodology

Comment and Analysis

DPRU was engaged in the data analysis.

Rating 3

STANDARD: The methodology included engaging beneficiaries appropriately as a key source of data and information

Comment and Analysis

Engaging of beneficiaries was not applicable in this instance.

Rating N/A

2.5. Project management

STANDARD: The evaluation was conducted without shifts to scheduled project milestones and timeframes

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

3. Report

3.1. Report was well-structured and presentation was clear and complete in each of these areas

STANDARD: Executive summary captured key components of the report appropriately

Comment and Analysis

There was no separate executive summary included in the report.

Rating 1

STANDARD: The context of the development intervention was explicit and presented as relevant to the evaluation

Comment and Analysis

The challenges of closing the educational gaps between the poor and wealthy components of the population were explicitly outlined.

Rating 5

STANDARD: There was a clear rationale for the evaluation questions**Comment and Analysis**

The questions tackled in the report were appropriate and clear.

Rating 5

STANDARD: The scope or focus of the evaluation was apparent in the report**Comment and Analysis**

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: A detailed methodology was outlined in the relevant section of a report (full report or 1/3/25) to the point that a reader could understand the data collection, analysis and interpretation**Comment and Analysis**

The methodology utilised was explained in the introductory sections of the report and the explicit details thereof emerged systematically throughout the analysis of the datasets.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Key findings were presented in a clear way; they were made distinct from uncertain or speculative findings; and unused data was not presented in the body of the report

Comment and Analysis

The key findings are clearly reported.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Conclusions and recommendations were clear and succinctly articulated

Comment and Analysis

Conclusions and recommendations were clear.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Acknowledgement of limitations of all aspects of the methodology and findings were clearly and succinctly articulated

Comment and Analysis

Some reference was made to limitations of the datasets analysed.

Rating 3

3.2. Writing and presentation

STANDARD: *Quality of writing and presentation was adequate for publication including: adequate layout and consistent formatting; complete sentences and no widespread grammatical or typographical errors; consistency of style and writing conventions (e.g. tense, perspective (first person, third person); levels of formality; references complete and consistent with cited references in reference list and vice versa; etc)*

Comment and Analysis

The quality of the writing and presentation was high, with no evidence of formatting or grammatical or compositional inconsistencies.

Rating 5

STANDARD: *Appropriate conventions were used in presentation of data (e.g. use of appropriate statistical language; reporting of p-values where appropriate; not reporting statistically insignificant findings as significant; clarifying disaggregation categories in constructing percentages; not using quantitative language in reporting qualitative data, etc.)*

Comment and Analysis

Appropriate statistical conventions were utilised where necessary, but much of the statistical work was of a descriptive nature, thereby obviating the need for much statistical vocabulary.

Rating 4

3.3. Presentation of findings

STANDARD: *The use of figures and tables was such that it supported communication and comprehension of results; and data reported in figures and tables was readily discernible and useful to a reader familiar with data presentation conventions*

Comment and Analysis

The 54 figures plus 19 tables in the report and 4 summary tables in the Appendix added huge explanatory value and clarity to the text of the report.

Rating 5

STANDARD: Data analysis appeared to have been well executed

Comment and Analysis

The analysis is clear and simple.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Findings were supported by available evidence

Comment and Analysis

The evidence extrapolated from the datasets was used to formulate the findings.

Rating 4

STANDARD: The evidence gathered was sufficiently and appropriately analysed to support the argument

Comment and Analysis

The evidence derived from the secondary datasets was appropriately analysed.

Rating 4

STANDARD: There was appropriate recognition of the possibility of alternative interpretations

Comment and Analysis

Some recognition was given to alternative interpretations, especially given the lack of data on quality of education.

Rating 4

STANDARD: The report appeared free of significant methodological and analytic flaws

Comment and Analysis

No methodological or analytical flaws emerged.

Rating 4

3.4. Conclusions

STANDARD: Conclusions were derived from evidence

Comment and Analysis

The conclusions were extrapolated from the statistical evidence.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Conclusions took into account relevant empirical and/or analytic work from related research studies and evaluations

Comment and Analysis

All conclusions were based on the Stats SA datasets studied and analysed.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Conclusions addressed the original evaluation purpose and questions

Comment and Analysis

The conclusions addressed the questions pertaining to education impact, current gaps and recommended interventions to enhance impact.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Conclusions were drawn with explicit reference to the intervention logic or theory of change**Comment and Analysis**

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

3.5. Recommendations***STANDARD: Recommendations were made in consultation with appropriate sectoral partners or experts*****Comment and Analysis**

It could not be determined whether appropriate sectoral experts or partners were consulted in respect of the report's recommendations.

Rating 2

STANDARD: Recommendations were shaped following input or review by relevant government officials and other relevant stakeholders**Comment and Analysis**

The report was internally produced and would clearly therefore have factored in the perspectives of government officials.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Recommendations were relevant to the policy context**Comment and Analysis**

Recommendations factored in the current policy context.

Rating 4

STANDARD: Recommendations were targetted to a specific audience sufficiently - were specific, feasible, affordable and acceptable**Comment and Analysis**

The recommendations were primarily targeted at policy makers in the education sector. The quantitative nature of the report would have facilitated more accurate planning.

Rating 4

3.6. Relevant limitations of the evaluation have been noted**STANDARD: Relevant limitations of the evaluation were noted****Comment and Analysis**

Some reference was made to limitations in reliance only on the Stats SA datasets.

Rating 3

3.7 Protection of participants and risk considerations

STANDARD: *The full report documented procedures intended to ensure confidentiality and to secure informed consent where this was needed (in some cases this is not needed - e.g. evaluation synthesis - in which case N/A should be recorded)*

Comment and Analysis

Confidentiality was not an issue owing to the secondary nature of the data analysed.

Rating 5

STANDARD: *There were no risks to participants in disseminating the original report on a public website*

Comment and Analysis

There were no direct participants, the evaluation was based on secondary data.

Rating 5

STANDARD: *There were no unfair risks to institutions in disseminating the original report on a public website*

Comment and Analysis

No unfair risks to institutions were evident.

Rating 4

4. Follow-up, use and learning

4.1. Presentation to stakeholders

STANDARD: *Results were presented to all relevant stakeholders*

Comment and Analysis

No evidence of presentations could be determined, but the public availability of the report would have facilitated wide dissemination thereof.

Rating 3

4.2. Resource utilisation

STANDARD: *The evaluation was completed within the planned timeframes*

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: *The evaluation was completed within the agreed budget*

Comment and Analysis

Not applicable.

Rating N/A

4.3. Transparency

STANDARD: *The report was publicly available (website or otherwise published document), except where there were legitimate security concerns*

Comment and Analysis

The report was freely available on the Internet at:
<http://www.education.gov.za/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=%2FMEZNMHU3XM%3D&tabid=422&mid=1261>

Rating **5**

4.4. Lessons learnt

STANDARD: *After completion of the evaluation, a reflective process was undertaken by staff responsible for the evaluation to reflect on what could be done to strengthen future evaluations*

Comment and Analysis

Evidence of a post-evaluation reflective process could not be determined.

Rating **5**

4.5. Symbolic and conceptual value

STANDARD: *The evaluation study was seen by interviewed stakeholders as having added significant symbolic value to the policy or programme (eg raised its profile)*

Comment and Analysis

Interviews or feedback from relevant stakeholders could not be secured, partly owing to the age of the report and partly owing to the business of potential respondents.

Rating N/A

STANDARD: *The evaluation study was of conceptual value in understanding what has happened and possibly in shaping policy and practice*

Comment and Analysis

The evaluation study was clearly of conceptual value in elucidating policy changes and prospects.

Rating 4

4.6. Utilisation of findings and recommendations

STANDARD: *There was clear evidence of instrumental use - that the recommendations of the evaluation were implemented to a significant extent*

Comment and Analysis

Evidence of use could not be determined from interviews, however the heightened general political awareness of the demand for education, for feeding schemes and for the implementation of no-fee schools indicated that cognizance had been taken of the recommendations.

Rating 4

STANDARD: *There was clear evidence that the evaluation has had a positive influence on the evaluand, its stakeholders and beneficiaries over the medium to long term*

Comment and Analysis

Subsequent policy shifts suggest that the recommendations are being factored into educational planning, albeit severely constrained by the might of teacher union resistance.

Rating 3

References

Department of Education, September 2006. Monitoring and Evaluation Report on the Impact and Outcomes of the Education System on South Africa's Population: Evidence from Household Surveys.

List of Interviewees

Mr Justice Libago, Department of Basic Education (Libago.J@dbe.gov.za), brief telephone interview 5/2/2013.