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POLICY RESEARCH PAPER

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**Evaluation model of the performance of
the higher education system in
developing countries**

Summary

In this research paper, we analyse the present model of higher education in several countries, and more particularly in developing countries. Our main objective is to identify the malfunctioning of the organisation of distance higher education in countries in which technologies are less accessible, and where higher education demand is very high. Organisational learning has now become a major problem, whether in the private or public sector, and often in developing countries. According to Dodgson (1993), the process, through which corporations and organisations build, develop and organise their knowledge according to their actions and their cultural characteristics, is very difficult to apply in an uncertain and unstable environment due to a lack of sustainable strategy by actors of different stakeholders as per the needs of the ecosystem. When a citizen is educated, trained and informed, civic behaviour becomes a reference to him. He can produce good governance thanks to his modest participation

Our research has not only examined the opening of the labour market to future graduates, but also the organisation and the ease of access to education. Our research will study the different aspects of accessibility and organization of distance learning for higher education. Organisation of education today is a major concern both with regard to its organisation and to quality. Every country, every region, every continent, and more particularly every institution, is looking for the best means to attain qualitative and quantitative objectives as well as a maximum of financial satisfaction. Some countries face difficulties in their organization and in the accessibility of education for their citizens in democratic life, while enumerating the mechanisms required for good management. (Paquet, 2001)

Key words: Governance, education, techniques, cost and hidden performance

Organisational learning

Is governance a method for a good coordination, rather efficient in a structure already preconceived to receive a learning model? One discusses issues more imaginary than realistic in a country in which the idea is already utopian, while knowing that a good governance translated by organisational learning requires a certain pre-established configuration, in other words a knowledge concept with compatible resources and power. According to Bonnet (**Bonnet , 2010**) and Henri Savall Henri Savall (1978), « the economic and social performance of an organisation depends on the quality of the interaction of the structures of the organisation and of the behaviour of the men who act in the organisation». Our main theoretical setting is the socio-economic theory of management as presented by Savall and Zardet in 1992. The socio-economic theory rests on conflict-cooperation concepts used by sociologists and by the French economist Perroux. It puts into question the implicit hypothesis of neo-classic theories according to which the economic actors are obedient and the scientific observation is erroneous. «Organizational learning is important for all companies, as the creation, retention and transfer of knowledge within the organization will strengthen the organization as a whole. The importance of organizational learning is shown by the various benefits that occur in organizations that develop a learning culture: 1 Increased employee job satisfaction, 2 Lower turnover rates, 3 Increased productivity, profits and efficiency, 4 Developing leaders at all levels and 5 Enhanced adaptability throughout the organization». ¹

A broad literature review has been carried out so as to better understand the theories that apply more specifically to our problem. Experimentation aims to show that there is a need for organisational learning as defined by Argyris to favour individual learning. There is therefore a need, as regards action-research, to activate the concerned stakeholders so that they cooperate more in the undertaking of an educational system.

When a citizen is educated, trained and informed, a civic behaviour becomes a reference for him. It can produce good governance thanks to his modest participation in democratic life, while establishing an inventory of the mechanisms required for good stewardship. (**Paquet, 2001**)

¹ <https://www.valamis.com/hub/organizational-learning>

Organisational learning has become today a major problem, whether in the private or public sector, and often in developing countries. Very few persons are conscious of learning and of what this implies individually or collectively.

We have put the accent on different authors who have their own individual definition, but in general terms learning is a realization and a collection of new knowledge according to **(C. Argyris)**, in other words to learn from our mistakes, whatever our level.

Experience shows that developing countries are not conscious of their past mistakes, mainly in public structures, nor of possible improvements of the activity and the organisation at present. No doubt, they lack foresight. For Chris Argyris, individuals, the group or the organisation are a result of action. According to Argyris and Schön (1978), one needs a process through which the members of an organisation detect 'errors' and correct them, while changing the action theory.

According to Dodgson (1993), the process through which corporations and organisations build, develop and organize their knowledge, according to their actions and their cultural characteristics, is very difficult to apply in an uncertain and unstable environment due to a lack of sustainable strategy by the actors of the different stakeholders so as to meet the needs of the ecosystem. When this world is molded in its economy and its technology, one talks of globalisation, but this rhetoric of globalisation really puts the accent on the gap in interference by countries in the various areas of social sciences. It also brings its own contribution to our understanding of the complex range of strengths which reshape the world order (Held, 2000).

Managerial pathologies, which worsen from year to year, are considered, prior to becoming serious, as a problem. Their dangerousness is examined in the light of the complexity of their situation. **(M. Crozier, 1989)**.

Socioeconomic theory of organisations

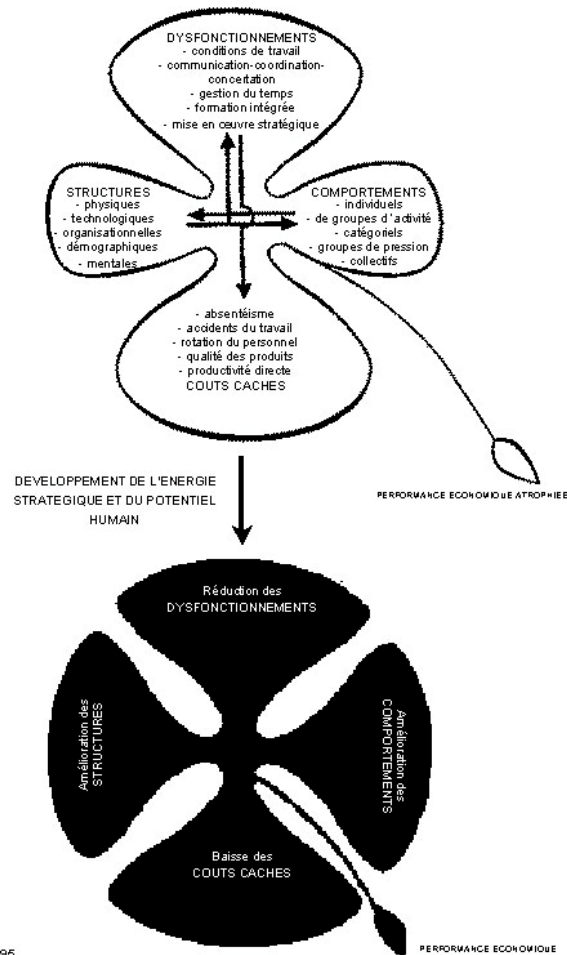
Thanks to the work of Professor Henri Savall in 1973, socioeconomic analysis rests on two important hypotheses, which allow this research project to undertake an in-depth analysis. «The first experimental research of ISEOR on the hidden costs related to quality go back to 1976 and they were followed by very numerous other deep projects relating to quality in industrial corporations, profitable service companies and organisations of public service. »²

The first step is human development, the main factor of corporate efficiency, in the short, medium and long term. The second is independent of their business area and of the size of the organisation and the corporation, which must face social, economic and financial losses, resulting from interactions between leaders and structures which create dysfunctions. Cause of hidden costs and performance, they are often difficult to identify by the organisation, the personnel and/or the corporate leaders. These two elements have led Professor Henri Savall to consider that «the social and economic performance of an organisation depends on the quality of the interaction of the structures and of the organisation and of human behaviour who act inside this organisation.»

According to the socioeconomic theory of Savall and Zardet, 1987, the corporation is a complex whole made up of five types of work structures interacting with five types of human behaviour. **(Savall, 2015).**

² Henri Savall et Véronique Zardet 5^e édition, economica , p. 17.

The general model of socioeconomic theory is schematized with the help of a clover



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Source : http://theses.univ-lyon2.fr/documents/getpart.php?id=lyon2.2002.moulette_p&part=63669

« The five types of structures (physical, technological, organisational, demographic and mental) are supposedly relatively stable and permanent.

The five behaviours (individuals, group activity, categorical, affinity groups and collective groups) are characterised by their conjectural nature and their relative instability. Dysfunctionality is classified in six families: work conditions, work organisation, communication-coordination-consultation, time management, integrated training and application of strategy. »³

³ http://theses.univ-lyon2.fr/documents/getpart.php?id=lyon2.2002.moulette_p&part=63669#Notefn181

All corporations and organisations, and more particularly public administrations, are increasingly affected by this problem, in other words by hidden costs which often lead to difficulties «From 1973 to 1977, socioeconomic analysis was centered on research methodology to identify and evaluate the hidden costs of dysfunctions. These costs are called 'hidden costs', in opposition to visible costs, inasmuch as they are spread, without specific denomination, without a surveillance system, and because they do not appear in the classic information systems of corporations (budgets, general accounting, etc). They are grouped in five indicators: absenteeism, work accidents, personnel rotation, quality defects of products and direct productivity gaps and in five components: overpay, overtime, overconsumption, non-production and non-realization of potential.»⁴

This hypothesis has been confirmed and validated by the research undertaken by ISEOR. They have also put forward the idea that corporations and organisations not only have hidden costs, but also hidden performance, which do not allow us, for these types of structures, to forecast certain eventualities which could have an impact on their financial activities, on the development of finance, on the development of performance, of competition and/or the services supplied by public administration. «On the basis of this fundamental hypothesis, the ISEOR team studies and elaborates concepts and tools which aim to improve the functioning as well as the level of economic and social performance of corporations and organisations. »⁵

In our research, we will analyse hidden costs, as well as performance based on the socioeconomic theory of organisations. Let us just note that according to the theory all corporations and organisations need a new managerial approach. In fact, according to the complexity of the market and the needs of services, all the structures, public and private, identify hidden costs and attempt to reduce permanent costs which often create problems. On top of the hidden costs, there is often a lack of a long-term vision of development, as per Fayol, considered as the father of specialized management in corporate administration. According to him, the administrative organisation of work (AOW) means to forecast, organise, order, coordinate and control (FOOCC), which would allow every corporation and organisation to position itself in its activities according to its very specific situation.

⁴ http://theses.univ-lyon2.fr/documents/getpart.php?id=lyon2.2002.moulette_p&part=63669#Notefn181

⁵ http://theses.univ-lyon2.fr/documents/getpart.php?id=lyon2.2002.moulette_p&part=63669#Notefn181

Theory of education

Today's organisation of education is a major concern both with regard to its structure and to its quality. Each country, each region, each continent, and more particularly each institution, seeks the best way to reach its qualitative and quantitative objectives as well as a maximum of financial rewards. Certain countries are faced with difficulties in their organisation and in providing access to education for its citizens. Other countries face difficulties in putting in place an educational method able to offer their citizens the best access to employment. In the light of our area of research, it concerns not only the opening of the employment market to future graduates, but rather of the organisation and accessibility of education. Our research studies the different aspects relating to the accessibility and to the organisation of distance higher education.

These last two decades, the entire planet has witnessed a strong growth on the market of distance higher education (DHE). In fact, the needs are not identical for the different actors on the planet. In the developing countries, DHE is not an option but rather a need and an emergency to save a population to which all rights are denied.

Researchers have become increasingly interested in experiments in the field of distance education. The problem, is that they concentrate more on the programme than on theories or controlled experiments. It has allowed the conception of new products for DHE, rather than to the evaluation and experimentation of field programmes so as to better apprehend the accessibility modes as well as the adequate configuration adapted to every specific case. This problem, education in its different forms, has become a concern for national development **(Philippe Dessus, 1997)**.

The work of Yves Bertrand « Théories contemporaines de l'éducation » states that “we live in a period in which the directions to be given to education come from all sides”. Everyone questions the nature of educational changes. Which educational changes one should choose? Starting from this consideration, we continue this questioning by asking ourselves which theories to choose to render education in the world more efficient. »⁶ This question of choice is primordial if one wishes to answer the relevant problem, while taking into account the necessary resources, such as time, for change requires time. So as to select the correct theory, or to create

⁶ <http://dipoueducation.over-blog.com/2014/01/introduction-yves-bertrand-dans-son-ouvrage-th%C3%A9ories-contemporaines-de-l%E2%80%99%C3%A9ducation-constate-que-%C2%AB-nous-vivons-une-p-2>

a model, one must take into account human capital, the financial resources as well as the environment of change.

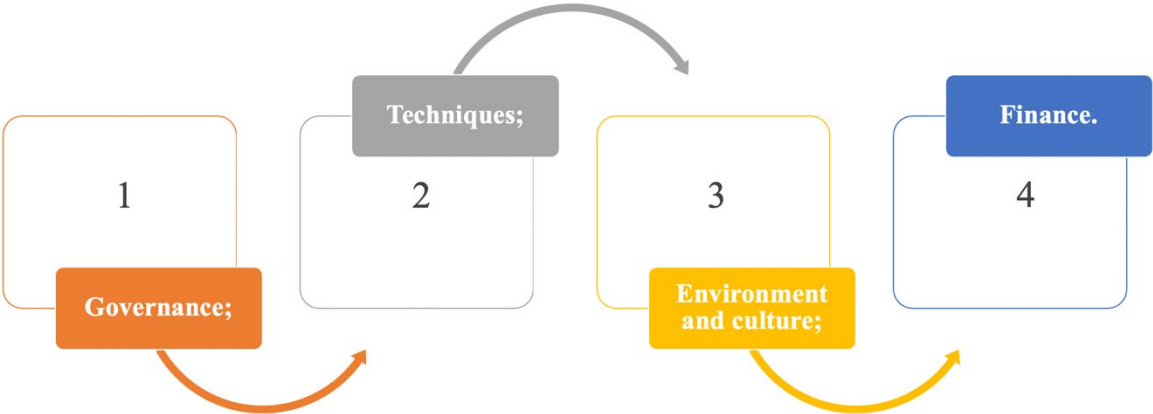
Technological theories

The work of Yves Bertrand stresses technologies, and of course this element is essential to ease communication between lecturers, students and all the other parties. This situation exists only in a very limited number of developing countries. The absence of such a development complicates even more the situation for distance learning.

The theory of technology not only eases communication, but also allows the easy use of digital documents and interactivity between the various interest groups. Internet also allows us to use various technological sources, whether with regard to software or to any other technology. Simultaneously, it is a problem for many countries and persons who are not involved in technologies, due a lack of means, and this is particularly true for developing countries.

Results:

Our result shows that the true problem in developing countries, are summarized in four great elements as shown below, in other words, governance, technology, environment, culture and finance. This is shown in more detail in our table.



Evaluation model of the performance of the higher education system in developing countries

Present situation	Impact
Governance:	
Corruption	Devalues the system and creates a lack of transparency
Absence of good governance and of a confirmed leadership	Very little innovation, absence of an efficient strategy
Lack of experience in the organisation of higher education	Increase of costs and little clarity in the different functions
Big turnaround of its leaders	Lack of continuity in the strategies, each leader bringing his own strategy
Lack of autonomy of managers	Lack of initiative and slowness in decision-making
Deficit in human resources	Weak reactivity when faced with problems and slowing of development
Lack of trust by senior managers towards their personnel	Turnaround of personnel but often incompetent as managers trust their relations
Teaching language	Does not allow access to international publications
Techniques:	
Absence of distance higher education of quality in particular in certain countries	Increase of costs for the state Effect of limitation of access to higher education
Basic infrastructure	Low efficiency in daily work
Connection to the web	Does not allow efficient connection to distance learning
Unreliability of electric network	Limits connections to the Internet and to all the other channels
Absence of information and communication technologies	Does not allow to be updated and to work efficiently
Absence of technological means	Does not allow familiarity with basic techniques
The absence of use of information and communication technologies	Does not prepare young persons for the future
Environment and culture:	
The difficulties tied to security	Bans exchanges and movements, in particular for women
Political challenges	Monopoly of development policies, in particular in higher education and reduces its development
Challenge of education for women	Socio-economic and socio-cultural impact in particular does not allow mothers to assist their children.
Limited transport between the provinces	Little exchange between the different provinces
Finance:	
The absence of a budget for sustainable development	Impact on the quality and the stability of the system, financing being mostly from international assistance
Budget too weak for public institutions	Impact on the functioning and the efficacy of institutions
Lack of financial Independence	Depends on the goodwill of international organisations which are not established permanently in the country
The cost of education is too high in private institutions	Barrier for young persons and creates problems for their employment and their integration in social life

Conclusion:

Governance and organisational learning are key words, whatever the type of organisation, to avoid hidden costs which impact performance of production. Very often, in developing countries, public institutions are not conscious of past mistakes, which impact present actions. When they encounter financial difficulties, they look at their balance sheet to identify how to reduce certain costs. It is no doubt important to master costs, but above all it is essential to analyse dysfunctionalities or hidden costs that are a threat to organisations or corporations. We have identified that the real problems of educational institutions in the less advanced countries, with regard to higher education, are its organisation, in other words governance, cultural resistance, the lack of technical competence, or the lack of mastery in the use of technologies, as well as financial challenges: they are unable to master their budget, for which they depend on external financial support, such as the World Bank, international organisations or foreign donors.

About the Author

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Comment on the SARCEO orientation notes

The SARCEO orientation notes are a series of publications on the results of the symposia and conferences organized by SARCEO, aimed at executives of corporations and organisations, to international relations strategists and to researchers specialising in corporate governance of enterprises and organisations. The aim of these notes is to develop a public dialogue so as to influence the decision-making process. The views expressed by the author of the orientation notes are personal and do not necessarily reflect the views of SARCEO. The access to the SARCEO orientation notes is free.

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