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Policies in Bilingualism and Learning Environment

New or revise policy:
achivements in a policy analysis

Module 3

2021

Oficina de Educación
Virtual USTA



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Oficina de Educación
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Module 3 : New or revise policy: achievements in a policy analysis
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2021

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Content of **Module 3**

Problematization	2
Guiding questions	3
Instructional Analysis	4
Methodology	6
Introduction	8
1 Challenge one	9
2. Second challenge	19
3. Final Challenge	22
Bibliography / Webgraphy	23

Pages



Problematization

Learning Context: Problematization

Finally, our teacher Paola has found different examples of public policies that are carried out in other educational institutions in other regions of the country and even in other countries. At this time, she is aware of how education is established from international and national policies and they are permeating the entire educational system. Likewise, it has been able to investigate certain cases of resistance on the part of the different educational actors, which before adopting a guideline, have carried out an analysis of the policy and have made innovative proposals that are grounded in the particular teaching contexts. Following this model, teacher Paola has started the proposal for her particular context, attending to aspects of inclusion, equality, educational structures, and governance.





Core Questions

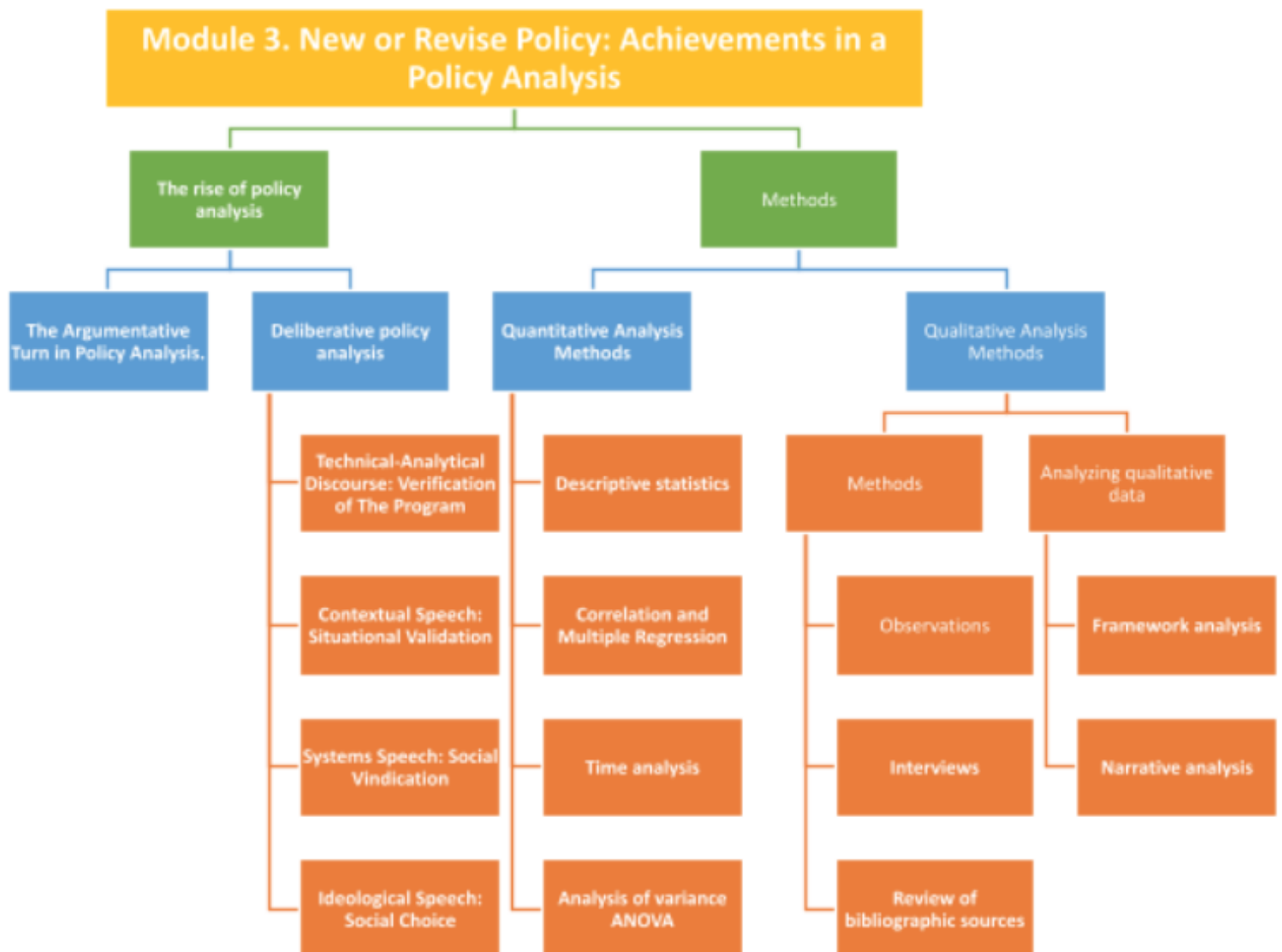
- How does one study and analyze an education policy considering the results and contribution?
- What aspects need to be taken into account to analyze and evaluate education and language policies?
- What contributions and implications do policies have and how we can contribute to improve their tenets?



Instructional Analysis

(Content Synthesis)

Module 3: New or revise policy: achievements in a policy analysis





Methodology

This module uses problem-based learning as the didactic strategy to achieve the learning purposes evidenced by the learning outcomes suggested in the course syllabus.





Introduction

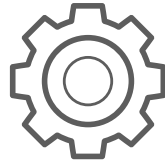
Welcome again to our course 'Policies in Bilingualism and Learning Environments'!

Similar to the previous module, we estimate that you should dedicate around 6 hours per week to complete all the activities of the course, including the graded evaluation activities.

The third module New or revise policy: achievements in a policy analysis, aims at the consolidation of the knowledge studied along the course to propose new ideas that improve or establish a new policy into a particular context. To accomplish the objective proposed in this module, students are invited work in groups to structure their epistemological foundation in their policy analysis, and show the mastery of the factors that compound an education or language policy.

At the end, it is intended that students socialize their understanding, proposal and the integration of the knowledge they did in their own context for a policy that is related to bilingual contexts.





New or revised policy: achievements in a policy analysis

Challenge one

Reflect! Before exploring the module, reflect on the following questions.

Do you know any model for the analysis of educational policy?

What factors do you think should be taken into account in the analysis of educational policies?

Next, we will see some basic concepts to carry out the analysis of educational policies that will allow us to consolidate the study that we began at the beginning of our course.

As we saw in the previous module, language and education policies are articulated with various levels and specificities, taking into account the aspects of the redistribution of resources, values, goals and objectives.

The rise of policy analysis

The analysis of politics emerged and had its peak in the 60s and 70s with different currents that sought to provide service to public institutions linked to a nation. It was thus that various authors designed a series of tools to analyze and evaluate a policy, following at that time the foundations of social research and with a positivist trait, where quantitative data that supported the analysis in large populations was very important, but that sometimes it involved different socioeconomic contexts.

However, by the 1980s, what was called the “rational model” emerged, which in Stone's words (as cited in Fischer & Miller, 2006) was based on providing information that policymakers needed to design policies. This model was based on the policy cycle, that is, the first step was to identify a problem, then the objectives and results to be achieved were formulated, subsequently, the possibilities and means to achieve those goals were evaluated, the budgets and resources that would be required were analyzed, and finally, the results were predicted.

The previous method was used for a long time as a source of information in making important decisions. However, it was also well criticized for not allowing to see beyond the numerical information that was presented, and that sometimes it did not allow to achieve the objectives that had been established in the beginning.

The Argumentative Turn in Policy Analysis.

In view of the above, The Argumentative Turn emerged, which sought to promote deliberation in the development and design of the policy, rather than achievements and results (Fischer & Miller, 2006). This is because through argumentation and debate, it is possible to really establish the epistemological foundations that accompany the design and analysis of politics, since it goes to the root of the problem. This is how “The argumentative turn starts from a recognition that multiple perspectives are involved in the interpretation and understanding of social and political reality and the competing definitions of policy problems to which they give rise” (Fischer & Miller, 2006, p. 224), which according to the authors allows to have a more neutral position when evaluating, analyzing or designing a policy.

Following The Argumentative Turn, policy makers saw the need to include both in the design, as well as in the analysis and evaluation of policies, different representatives of the productive sectors and the community in general, which can actually account for the needs that they have, instead of waiting for others to present ideas that are not related to the reality of the communities.

Deliberative policy analysis

In Deliberative policy analysis, the argument is the main unit of analysis and investigation. This is how Majone (1989, as cited in Fischer & Miller, 2006) argues that the job of a policy analyst is to create arguments that allow them to have a good debate and illuminate the rest of the audience in conflicts, the low probability of fulfillment of goals and the limitations of the policy. Thus, what is sought is centered on the need to establish a dialogic process, which allows the analyst to see and propose new possibilities for solving problems and establishing actions. Through these recommendations and new alternatives, it is then that the ideas that would be part of the policy or its restructuring are redefined.

Usually, in this type of analysis, four types of discourses are considered that are oriented under some basic questions during the analysis of politics where different types of problems are addressed. It should be clarified that the questions are guides and not a script or fixed parameters to follow, which guide the investigation.

Next, we will present some of the types of discourses that are handled within the Deliberative Analysis of Politics.

Technical-Analytical Discourse: Verification of The Program

This type of discursive analysis is more related to the verification of the fulfillment of the policy objectives while its implementation process. In other words, the empirical analysis of educational policy begins to be defined. Authors such as Sylvia, Sylvia and Gunn (1997 as cited in Fischer & Miller, 2006) define the following questions as the basis of this type of discourse:

Does the program meet the established objectives?

Does the empirical analysis uncover unforeseen or side effects that counteract the objectives of the program?

Does the program meet the objectives more efficiently than the alternative means available? (p.232)

In this type of discourses, the objective is to propose a quantitative process, where the degree of fulfillment of the objectives set out in the policy is measured, in comparison with the resources used during the implementation of the same.

Contextual Discourse: Situational Validation

In this type of discourse, it is analyzed whether the strategies that were proposed for educational policy are relevant and contribute to the situation or problem that it sought to solve or improve. The aim is not so much to measure the policy objectives, but to see the problem from a more conceptual point of view including perceptions and status of improvement. According to Fischer & Miller (2006), some of the questions that can guide this type of discourse are:

Are the program objectives relevant to the problem situation?

Are there circumstances in the situation that require an exception to the objectives be made?

Are two or more criteria equally relevant to the problem situation? (p.233)

By its nature, this type of discourses uses more qualitative, ethnographic, anthropological and social studies.

Systems Discourse: Social Vindication

This type of discourse within the analysis of educational policy, aims more to consider the social factors that were modified and improved from the educational policy. That is, how these goals and strategies actually improved the quality of life of a community or positively influenced its development and solution of social problems. According to Fischer & Miller (2006), some of the questions that can guide this type of discourse are: Does the policy objective have an instrumental or contributory value for society as a whole?

Does the policy objective create unforeseen problems with significant social consequences?

Does commitment to the policy objective have consequences (e.g. benefits and costs) that is it considered equitably distributed? (p. 233)

Ideological Discourse: Social Choice

This type of analysis is highly dependent on the value systems and way of life of a community that is affected by the implementation of the policy and focuses on the "ideological and value issues" that are of vital importance to the community. According to Fischer & Miller (2006), some of the questions and statements that can guide this type of discourse are:

Make the fundamental ideals (or ideological principles) that organize the accepted social order provide a consistent basis for a legitimate resolution of conflicting judgments.

If the social order is unable to resolve conflicts of basic values, make other social orders equitably is it tailored to the relevant interests and needs that reflect the conflicts.

Does normative reflection and empirical evidence support the justification and adoption of alternative principles and values? (p. 234)

In this type of analysis, it is necessary to work on a consolidation of fundamental concepts at the time of the investigative process. That is, to agree on the understanding of what values such as equity, freedom, community, coexistence, good behavior, equality, etc. can mean. All of this contributes to and defines what the communities within it define with a good social order. This is how this type of Discourse starts from the social validation that is given from the community and that is a fundamental part of its ideology and all that this implies.



At the end, the policy analysis must always offer different alternatives to contribute to the construction of other strategies that serve well to new political consensus and that stimulate the cyclical process of policy design and implementation. It is not about establishing a position or point of view on political design, but about having a more complete image of the panorama that politics serves, both at an educational, social, economic and ideological level.

To determine the effects that a policy has had in solving a problem and the solutions that can be given, policy analysis includes both quantitative and qualitative methods. This also helps determine how different variables, both contextual and governmental, can change the outcome of the policy.

These discourses are also related to the Five E analysis of educational policy approach.



Figure 1 Five E Approach to analyze a policy

Concepts and basic operations for the analysis of educational policies.

When we carry out educational policy analysis, it is necessary to resort to different methods, both quantitative and qualitative, that allow us to understand the information that is observed in different contexts. In the case of quantitative analysis, the analyst can resort to the different steps that are usually used in statistical studies such as collecting, organizing, classifying, presenting, analyzing, generalizing, and testing hypotheses (Wenge, 2018). Finally, the results of this process will allow you to make decisions regarding the information collected.

Some basic concepts that we must take into account are:

Population: Refers to all individuals who provide information to the study.

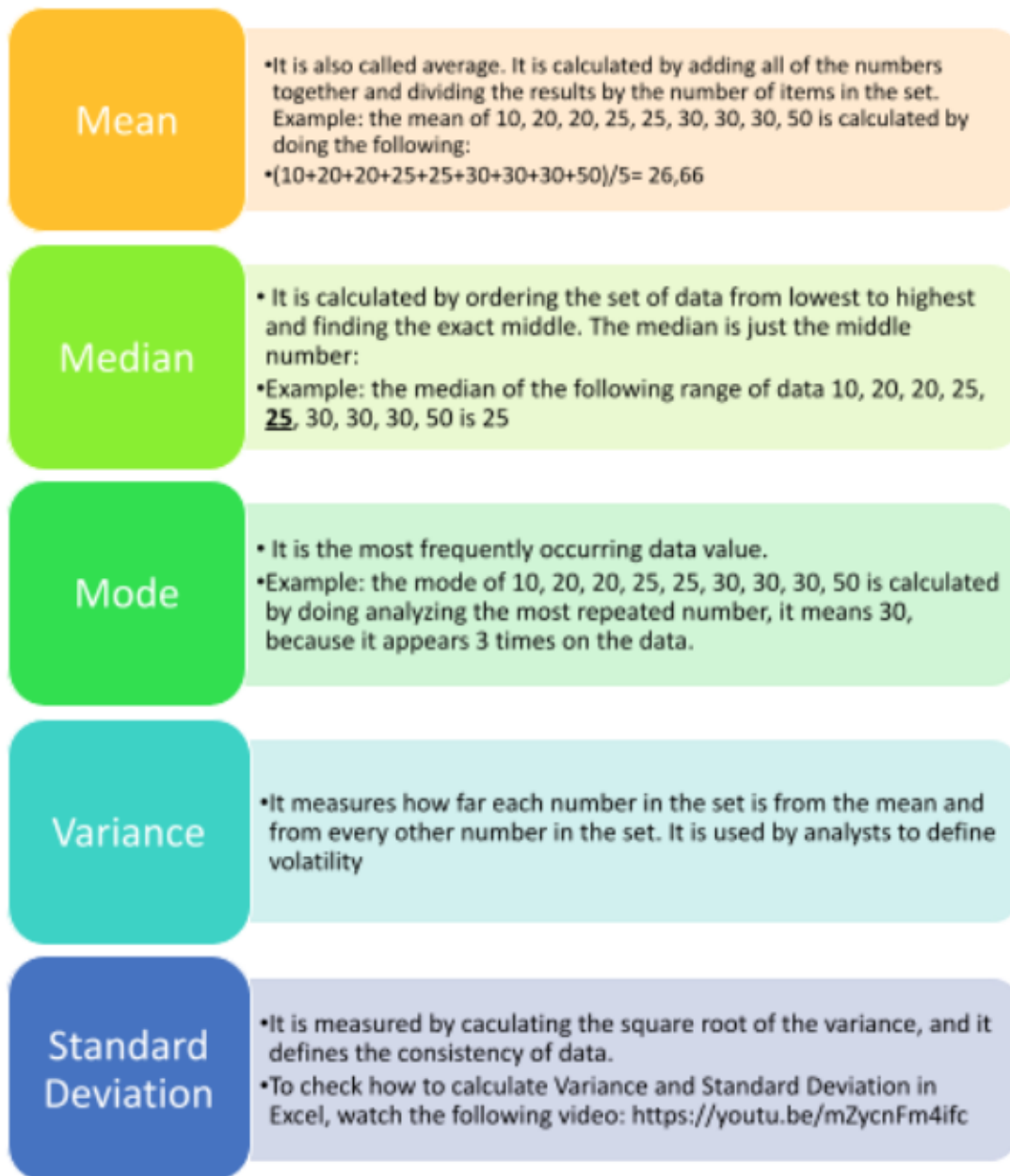
Sample: Population group that has been selected for the study and that meets a criterion according to its purpose.

Variable: Variables are the form a phenomenon takes, and they are qualitative or quantitative.

Data: Refers to all quantitative or qualitative information that is collected through observation or application of research and analysis instruments. It includes all types: geographical, social, demographic, economic, chronological, budgetary data, etc.

Basic Operations

The following chart shows the main calculations we can consider when analyzing quantitative information:



Next, we will see a summary of the quantitative methods used in the analysis of an educational policy:

Quantitative Analysis Methods

Quantitative analysis methods seek to provide information for decision making. On the one hand, there are descriptive statistics that add data effectively and meaningfully; and on the other, we have inferential statistics, which is the use of quantitative techniques to reach generalizations. The decision of the analysis methods to use is given by the purpose of the investigation, the sample, the variables that were defined, and the different forms of measurement.

Descriptive statistics

Descriptive statistics are based on the collection of data that allow the analyst to more easily understand a large volume of information. To do this, in descriptive statistics, policy analysts often include graphs and tables that illustrate and give a complete and generalized sense of the data. Graphs, such as histograms and bars, help illustrate the differences found between population groups or different samples.

An example of this type of method can be found in the results of national standardized tests that governments usually publish to measure the results of educational strategies and programs. In these cases, the measures of central tendency indicate the typical value of the data, and conversely, the mean is the arithmetic mean and is affected by extreme values. For its part, the median becomes the intermediate observation in a data set ordered by range and is insensitive to the values of the observations, but sensitive to the size of the sample. Fashion is the most frequent value.

The analyst must define what type of variable actually shows the results he is looking for according to the purpose of the investigation. Likewise, he can also include dispersion measures that give reliability to the study. This also helps to get a clearer picture of the situation.

Correlation and Multiple Regression

Multiple regression analysis examines the relationship between a single dependent variable and a set of independent variables. Usually, the dependent variable is represented by the value Y and independent variables are represented by the value X . This kind of analysis is most used in policy analysis for the purpose of prediction or explanation.

For example, through this analysis we can make predictions about the performance of strategies and decisions made in a program or economy model. Also, it can be forecasted the attitudes people have regarding government actions. Finally, analysts can use correlation matrix for the independent variables to observe whether high correlations are present.



To understand and see an example of correlation and Multiple Regression analysis, watch the video Correlation and Multiple Regression in Excel by Statistics and Research with Dr. Wendi L. Benson <https://youtu.be/zoAEkmbW4ak>

Time analysis

Usually, we can use time analysis to make predictions of future events based on the data we have from the past and tendencies we could observe, so it could guide us to the explanation of an educational phenomenon, or at least, offering us information that help us to create actions to avoid an undesirable consequence.

For example, and regarding education, we could predict the results of grade on a specific exam, if desertion rates increase or not, number of students who enroll to an institution or receive basic education, etc. Of course, to have a more feasible prediction, policy analysts used to make the study in different contexts, and it is required to have data that is consisted on time.

A proper time series of data can offer us a good prediction of the trend of a behavior or situation. However, analysts need to have consistent data which is considered the pre, while and post information to define how the tendency will be affected.

Jalayer Academy in his video Excel - Time Series Forecasting explains a method in which we can analyze our data using the application Excel and verify if our predictions are okay. Watch his video here: <https://youtu.be/gHdYEZA50KE>

Analysis of variance ANOVA

Using the ANOVA analysis system, we can determine if the samples of two or more groups come from populations with the same means. It is a main tool for analyzing experimental data. Large values of the F statistic greater than 0.05 lead to the rejection of the null hypothesis assuming that there is no greater difference in the mean of the groups.

This type of analysis is useful when we want to analyze the effect of an educational program in two or more population groups that share a dependent variable, such as some socioeconomic factor, but with the independent variable of the program they received.

To learn a little more about how to use this type of variable, we can see the examples in the following videos:

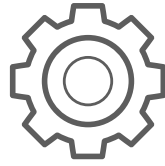
What is an ANOVA? From de U of G Library

<https://youtu.be/uzcqMeNK7Kw>

Análisis de Varianza ANOVA

<https://youtu.be/ZpXVjHRZA1w>





Second challenge

Reflect! Before exploring the module, reflect on the following questions.

What qualitative methods have you implemented in your previous educational research? Do you consider that qualitative methods are sufficient for the analysis of an educational policy?

Let's explore some qualitative methods we use to apply in the analysis of an education policy.

Qualitative methods

Next, we will present the data collection and qualitative analysis methods that we can implement in educational policy analysis. According to Dvora Yanow (2006), in the qualitative analysis we can distinguish the different methods to collect information, which in many cases obey the trend that they follow, be it positivist, social constructionist or generative. However, the author presents three central activities that can be used in a political analysis: reading, observing and interviewing.

Observations

According to Yanow (2006), observation is more characteristic of qualitative ethnographic methods and can be carried out with the participation of the researcher, or from an external role. However, these methods require that the researcher be sensitized with respect to the activities and actions that he observes in the participants, so that he can come to understand and interpret the realities that are presented within the investigative and analytical process.

Likewise, the author mentions the importance of the analyst role in trying to understand the social, cultural and daily rules that emerge from the interactions of community members. What, for the researcher and analyst can be considered as a negative factor, for the researched community can come to be seen as something normal or a neutral or positive assessment.

Finally, and to reiterate, although in most cases the researcher can become a participant-observer in the context to be investigated, the need to always consider the role of researchers, over that of participants or members of the community. This leads us to the need to always question to what extent am I being an analyst researcher and complying with the ethical commitment that the study demands.

Interviews

Like any other conversation, the dialogue that is established, thanks to the action of the interview, requires care and planning, regardless of the trust we may or may not have with the interviewee. The interview in a research study should not be confused with the conversation we usually have in an everyday context. Additionally, the interview should always keep the very purpose of the study and its principle of understanding and being able to interpret the reality of the other.

Although we have different types of interviews, in qualitative methods, structured interviews are usually ignored, which limit the participation of the interviewer in the dialogue and data collection. Then, there is more to use semi-structured interviews that allow the interviewer to investigate and delve deeper into the knowledge of the interview and have a broader panorama of what they want to understand.

Yonaw (2006) also insists on the need to broaden our spectrum of participants in qualitative studies and approach the knowledge from the different actors and representatives of the community, whether or not they are part of the legislative or executive branches of governments. Unfortunately, this is a trend that should be avoided when doing political studies and that only seek to validate the position of some members of the high elites. Different positions and diverse actors will further enrich our study.

Finally, we also emphasize the importance of always verifying the information collected with the interviewee. It is important to return to the context and verify our interpretations in the interviews carried out. The interviews can then become a complement to the activities that are carried out systematically during the observation.

Review of bibliographic sources

During the analysis of educational policies, the documentation made before and during the study is necessary. The bibliographic sources can include any type of reliable information that may be related to the analysis, including, for example, legislative acts, bills, decrees, resolutions, proposed educational programs, reports of previous analyzes, reports, messaging, articles published in the media, mass communication, or official information published on websites.

In this type of analysis, inter-investigative tendencies of a hermeneutic type prevail, which allow the analyst to interpret realities and situations, either synchronously or asynchronously. Likewise, it includes a review of bibliographic sources can also be based on the principles of discourse analysis. Finally, this review that occurs prior to data collection with other instruments, and which can serve as a source of verification of the data is obtained in the documentary review.

Analyzing qualitative data

Now, once the previous inquiries have been made and the information having been collected by the instruments presented above, Yanow (2006) also presents different methods of analysis to carry out the analysis of educational policies.

Framework analysis

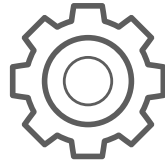
In this type of analysis, the researcher or analyst focuses on understanding the units of meaning and performs a critical analysis of the values collected through the interview or field observations. In general, the focus is on the analysis of the formation of concepts and perceptions carried out by the participants, in order to define values, actions and positions within a specific situation.

This type of analysis may not be limited to viewing the information from a hermeneutic position, but may also tend to carry out action research that allows you to implement interventions in the context and suggest actions to propose solutions in the phenomena presented.

Narrative analysis

Narrative analysis may become emerged from the field of psychology and social research, and have now become the trend of many research analyst. There are various types of narrative analysis. From Story Telling, where the voice of the representatives and those first affected or benefited by educational policies is included, narrating each action that they have carried out during the implementation process from a more argumentative point of view, where the narrative can have a central axis for analysis, which allows to more easily evaluate, interpret and discern positions regarding politics, their different interpretations, and the possibilities of using this information in making decisions.

Finally, the narrative investigations of the latest policies have also focused on depicting that the identity of the teacher as an agent that reacts to politics, but must also implement, adopt and adapt it to the different educational contexts in which they operate.



Final Challenge

We have arrived to the end of this Module. As a final task, we invite you revise your project and reflect about the following questions:

How can I use the different methods of quantitative and qualitative research to enrich my own analysis of educational policy?

Consider the following research objectives and suggest methods that you would apply based on the information in this module:

To analyze how the programs implemented by the state are contributing to the decrease in the dropout rate of elementary school students.

To analyze how current policy programs for language learning and teaching are achieving learning goals according to the Common European Framework for Language Reference.

To define the progress in educational quality in the last 5 years within the national context.

To estimate the fulfillment of the educational program goals 2018-2022.

We have finished our tour of the basic methods of analysis in educational policy. We invite you to continue working as a team to present your final proposal in the socialization of the course.



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BIBLIOGRAPHY / WEBGRAPHY

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