Shaheen Barkat

Doctoral researcher, School of Social Policy

Contact

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Year started: 2010
F/T or P/T: Part time
Supervisor(s): David Prior and Helen Dickinson (/staff/profiles/social-policy/dickinson-helen.aspx)

Research topic

'Evaluation, learning and empowerment: the role of evaluation in improving the effectiveness of public sector organisations'

Qualifications

- MA Research Methodology (2001)
- Postgraduate Diploma Research Methodology (2000)
- BA (Hons) Geography

Background and professional experience

Shaheen has seven years work experience as a Consultant undertaking public policy research and evaluation. She has been involved in a number of research and evaluation projects in the following areas:

- Community based projects delivering preventative services to children, young people and families
- Projects in the learning and skills sector
- Projects addressing barriers to employment and social exclusion

Currently Shaheen is employed by West Midlands Fire Service as the Brigade's Evaluation Officer. Her work involves designing and implementing a robust evaluation process to support evidence based practice and continuous improvement. Shaheen is also building the evaluation capacity of the organisation to improve organisational effectiveness.

Teaching/training experience

Designing and delivering outcomes focused monitoring and evaluation training to Fire and Rescue Services:

- Outcomes focused planning and evaluation training programme to West Midlands Fire Service Managers.
- Evaluating Community Safety Interventions - Hereford and Worcester FRS
- Evaluating community safety interventions - Fire College

Research Overview

With a reduction in public sector budgets, and a call for greater efficiencies of public services, there needs to be a greater focus on evaluation as a means of improving public services. However, with limited resources for external evaluation, there is a case for developing the evaluation capacity of the public sector.

This action research study explores the role of evaluation in organisational learning and improvement through evaluation capacity building efforts in a real-world situation.

The study will uncover challenges, barriers, opportunities and the outcomes of an intervention that aims to increase the Fire and Rescue Services' understanding and use of evaluation as on-going learning process that if integrated into the whole organisation - in its structure, processes and culture - will improve organisational learning and effectiveness and support continuous improvement of public sector organisations.

Conference papers

Annual Conference: Fire Related Research and Developments (RE10): Building the Evaluation Capacity of the Fire and Rescue Service: An Action Research Study.

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