



From measurement to use: Monitoring and evaluation as instruments of justice and governance

Da mensuração ao uso: monitoramento e avaliação como instrumentos de justiça e governança

De la medición al uso: el seguimiento y la evaluación como instrumentos de justicia y gobernanza

Raphael Mendonça Guimarães^{1,2}

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ABSTRACT This review critically examines the second edition of ‘Monitoring and Evaluation of Social Programs: An Introduction to Concepts and Techniques’, by Paulo de Martino Jannuzzi, situating the book within contemporary debates on public policy evaluation in Brazil and internationally. The review argues that Jannuzzi has become a leading reference in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) by combining conceptual rigor, technical expertise in social indicators, and extensive experience in public sector management. It discusses the book’s main analytical axes – program representation, evaluation, monitoring, methods, and the institutionalization of M&E systems – highlighting the central role of the Process and Results Map (PRM). Through critical dialogue with classical authors such as Vedung, Rossi, and Freeman, Patton, and Weiss, the review shows that Jannuzzi offers an original contribution by adapting international debates to the institutional challenges of the Brazilian state. The review concludes that the book goes beyond a technical manual, presenting a strategic reflection on evaluation, decision-making, and state capacity-building.

KEYWORDS Health evaluation. Program evaluation. Public policy. Social indicators. Decision making.

RESUMO Esta resenha analisa criticamente a segunda edição do livro ‘Monitoramento e avaliação de programas sociais: uma introdução aos conceitos e técnicas’, de Paulo de Martino Jannuzzi, situando a obra no debate contemporâneo sobre avaliação de políticas públicas no Brasil e no cenário internacional. Argumenta-se que o autor se consolida como referência no campo do Monitoramento e da Avaliação (M&A) ao articular rigor conceitual, domínio técnico sobre indicadores sociais e experiência institucional na gestão pública. O texto percorre os principais eixos do livro – representação de programas, avaliação, monitoramento, métodos e institucionalização de sistemas de M&A –, destacando o papel central do Mapa de Processos e Resultados (MaPR). Em diálogo crítico com autores clássicos do campo, como Vedung, Rossi e Freeman, Patton e Weiss, a resenha evidencia a contribuição original de Jannuzzi ao traduzir debates internacionais para as especificidades do Estado brasileiro. Conclui-se que a obra ultrapassa o caráter de manual técnico e afirma-se como reflexão estratégica sobre avaliação, decisão pública e capacidade estatal.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE Avaliação em saúde. Avaliação de programas e projetos de saúde. Política pública. Indicadores sociais. Tomada de decisões.

RESUMEN Esta reseña analiza críticamente la segunda edición del libro ‘Monitoreo y Evaluación de Programas Sociales: Introducción a Conceptos y Técnicas’, de Paulo de Martino Jannuzzi, situando la obra en el debate contemporáneo sobre la evaluación de políticas públicas en Brasil y a nivel internacional. Se argumenta que el autor consolida su posición como referente en el campo del Monitoreo y la Evaluación (M&E) al articular rigor conceptual, dominio técnico de los indicadores sociales y experiencia institucional en la gestión pública. El texto abarca los temas principales del libro: representación de programas, evaluación, monitoreo, métodos e institucionalización de sistemas de M&E, destacando el papel central del Mapa de Procesos y Resultados (MPR). En diálogo crítico con autores clásicos del campo, como Vedung, Rossi y Freeman, Patton y Weiss, la reseña destaca la contribución original de Jannuzzi al adaptar los debates internacionales a las especificidades del Estado brasileño. Se concluye que la obra trasciende el carácter de un manual técnico y se consolida como una reflexión estratégica sobre la evaluación, la toma de decisiones públicas y la capacidad estatal.

PALABRAS CLAVE Evaluación en salud. Evaluación de programas y proyectos de salud. Política pública. Indicadores sociales. Toma de decisiones.

¹Fundação Oswaldo Cruz (Fiocruz), Centro de Estudos Estratégicos Antônio Ivo de Carvalho (CEE) – Rio de Janeiro (RJ), Brasil.

raphael24601@gmail.com

²Fundação Oswaldo Cruz (Fiocruz), Escola Nacional de Saúde Pública Sergio Arouca (Ensp) – Rio de Janeiro (RJ), Brasil.

THE PUBLICATION OF THE SECOND EDITION of 'Monitoring and Evaluation of Social Programs: An Introduction to Concepts and Techniques'¹ [Our free translation from Portuguese] in 2025 consolidates Paulo de Martino Jannuzzi as one of Brazil's leading references in the field of Public Policy Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E). In a context marked by the expanded discourse on evidence-based policies and, simultaneously, by the weakening of state capacities, the work stands out for articulating conceptual rigor, institutional realism, and commitment to the effective use of evaluation in public decision-making.

Jannuzzi's trajectory – as a sociologist, Ph.D. in demography, researcher of social indicators, and former official of the Information Evaluation and Management Secretariat (SAGI) – gives the book a distinctive depth. Unlike predominantly academic approaches, his reflection emerges from within the State, directly engaging with dilemmas faced by managers in large-scale social policies. This stance brings his work closer to international traditions that understand evaluation not merely as a measurement technique, but as a political and institutional process.

In the preface to the second edition, the author makes this framing explicit by recognizing advances in the field – such as the dissemination of monitoring systems – as well as significant setbacks, notably institutional discontinuity and the instrumental use of evaluation as an *ex post* legitimization mechanism. This critical analysis echoes Weiss's classic warning, according to which evaluation rarely influences decisions linearly and directly, often operating in a diffuse, conceptual, or symbolic way². Jannuzzi, however, advances this discussion by examining how fragile institutional structures can block even these indirect uses of evaluative knowledge.

The first chapter, dedicated to social programs and the Process and Results Map (PRM), reveals one of the author's main conceptual contributions. By insisting on the need to make explicit the operating logic of

programs, Jannuzzi offers a concrete response to a recurring problem in Brazilian public administration: the formulation of policies with diffuse objectives and implicit causal chains. This approach critically dialogues with the European tradition systematized by Vedung, which emphasizes the importance of clarifying objectives and evaluative criteria, but goes further by integrating programmatic representation, monitoring, and evaluation into a single analytical framework³.

In the field of evaluation, addressed in the second chapter, Jannuzzi distances himself from reductionist perspectives that equate evaluation with impact measurement. By valuing process, implementation, and intermediate outcome evaluations, the author approaches the classic tradition of Rossi, Lipsey, and Freeman⁴, for whom evaluation must answer multiple questions – about program theory, implementation, effectiveness, and efficiency – and not only about final causality. Jannuzzi's originality lies in translating this approach into the Brazilian institutional context, marked by strong territorial heterogeneity and unequal administrative capacity.

The methodological chapter reinforces this critical stance by relativizing the centrality of experimental designs. Without denying their importance, the author warns against the risk of an uncritical hierarchy of methods, especially in complex and intersectoral public policies. This view dialogues directly with Patton⁵, whose proposal of utilization-focused evaluation holds that the quality of an evaluation should be judged, above all, by its usefulness to real users in specific contexts. Jannuzzi shares this perspective by emphasizing that sophisticated methods, when dissociated from the institutional conditions of use, tend to produce knowledge that is irrelevant to public decision-making.

In the chapter dedicated to monitoring, indicators, and dashboards, the author delves deeper into his critique of informational technicism. Aligned with international debates on

performance management, Jannuzzi demonstrates that the central problem is not scarce data, but the inability to convert them into actionable knowledge. By conceiving monitoring as an analytical narrative structured on the basis of the PRM, the author distances himself from merely managerialist approaches and moves closer to more reflective interpretations on the role of information in public governance, such as those inspired by Weiss's literature².

The fifth chapter, dedicated to structuring M&E units and systems, makes the work's normative stance more explicit. Here, Jannuzzi converges with Vedung³ and Rossi et al.⁴ in arguing that evaluation only produces lasting effects when institutionalized as a State policy. However, his specific contribution lies in showing how, in Brazil, institutional fragility – marked by administrative discontinuity and personalized initiatives – compromises organizational learning. In doing so, the author directly criticizes the logic of episodic projects and defends the construction of permanent state capacities.

The final considerations, crossed by the recent experience of the COVID-19 pandemic, reinforce the ethical-political character of evaluation. In a crisis, fragmented public policies and fragile information systems exacerbate inequalities and produce irreversible harm. In this setting, monitoring and evaluating cease to be technical choices and become public responsibility imperatives. This interpretation brings Jannuzzi closer to Weiss², by recognizing the limits of evaluation, as

well as to Patton⁵, by insisting on the need for evaluations oriented toward use and decision-making.

It is precisely this capacity to articulate technical rigor, critical reflection, and institutional commitment that explains why Paulo de Martino Jannuzzi has become consolidated as a M&E reference in Brazil. His work dialogues with central authors in the international debate, but does not merely import them: it translates, adapts, and tensions these contributions in light of the specificities of the Brazilian State. Rather than offering universal recipes, Jannuzzi constructs an analytical framing that recognizes the complex nature of public policies and the centrality of evaluation as an instrument of democratic learning.

Ultimately, the second edition of 'Monitoring and Evaluation of Social Programs'⁵ reaffirms the book as essential reading for public policymakers and decision-makers. Its value lies not only in the presentation of concepts and techniques, but also in the construction of a critical view of the role of evaluation in contemporary governance. By situating M&E at the intersection of knowledge, power, and decision-making, Jannuzzi makes a substantial contribution to the maturation of the field in Brazil and to its qualified inclusion in the international debate.

Authorship contributions

Guimarães RM (0000-0003-1225-6719)* is responsible for drafting the manuscript. ■

*Orcid (Open Researcher and Contributor ID).

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Editor in charge: Marcelo Moreira Rasga, Fundação Oswaldo Cruz (Fiocruz), Estratégia Fiocruz para a Agenda (EFA 2030), Rio de Janeiro (Rio de Janeiro/RJ), Brasil. Lattes: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/7851702065010431>, Orcid: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3356-7153>, e-mail: rasgamoreira@gmail.com