

TRIANGULATION ANALYSIS OF COMPLEX HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS IN FRENCH-SPEAKING BLACK AFRICA METHODS

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ABSTRACT: *African evaluate complex organizations of a public nature, and regional or international scope including non-governmental or humanitarian organizations working in the field of public health is not easy. Many problems related to planning of the study and the lack of relevant methodological tools to better decode the organizational phenomena and make sense of them both descriptive and prescriptive often pose significant obstacles. This is to contribute to solving these problems that should adopt a pluralistic approach or policy based on methodological triangulation. It is the integration of the various methodological tools (triangulation of quantitative and qualitative methods and triangulation of data sources). The use of this approach has allowed to know the story of three regionally-based organizations based in Côte d'Ivoire and Mali, their actual performance and future prospects. We have also been able to verify the rigor of the method, especially in terms of relevance of the observations and criterion validity of the content of investigations.*

KEYWORDS: Evaluation, Triangulation, Public health, Organizational Performance, Africa.

INTRODUCTION

For many managers and organizational theorists, the shortest way to understand an organization is to be considered as a rational phenomenon, with goals and specific and measurable goals. The organization thus appears as a kind of well-rehearsed machine (March and Simon, 1958; Burns and Stalker, 1961; and Merton, 1968 and Kanter, 1983). In reality, we must agree with Morgan (1989: 378) as to better analyze an organization, we better take into account its complex nature, ambiguous and paradoxical. According to this author, the organization can appear both as a machine designed to achieve specific goals; a species of organism capable of surviving in some environments and not in others; an information system capable of some forms of learning, but not others; a cultural environment characterized by values, beliefs and distinctive social practices; a political system in which players are scrambling to serve their interests; an arena in which are held more or less conscious and ideological struggles; the manifestation of a deeper process of social change; an instrument used by one group to exploit and dominate other groups, etc. Evaluate a modern organization is therefore to consider all these complexities that can characterize it.

The complexity of a health organization comes from the approach itself complex public health understood here as a great social enterprise. This global approach to public health cannot be seen as a specific discipline, but as a great social movement whose goal is to use all the knowledge and strategies in place to have maximum impact on the health status populations (Turnock, 2008). That these strategies, methods and knowledge to be curative, preventive or promotional, achievement of the objectives of population-health involves a large number of players multi-, inter- and transdisciplinary. The movement occasioned by the Public Health

complex approach is necessarily exercised in a multisectoral perspective. By involving epidemiologists, biostatisticians, environmental scientists, managerial and behavioral evaluation of complex healthcare organizations requires integration or triangulation of different methods and strategies of research. But the main purpose of any assessment is to produce information, sources of power within organizations. And it is on the basis of such information as decisions are made, usually vital for the life of them. Is it because an uncontrolled evaluation can help to erode the foundations of the power of managers that African health organizations are usually so little studied? There are probably a part of that. If this is the case, we understand that few heads of institutions who accept without hesitation receive a researcher from outside to assess the program, organization or policy which they are responsible.

For Love (1991: 13), internal evaluation is an integral part of the management of an organization, and therefore it is a support to managers on the exercise of their responsibilities as decision makers. Except for some cases in which the role of evaluation is seen as complementary, and therefore it is requested by the internal actors themselves, the task of the assessor can not be at all easy. This is what often appears to be the case in most African organizations whose leaders do not seem very used to this kind of investigation. The fact that African health complex organizations are evaluated bit could also be linked to both the theoretical weakness of researchers at a certain state of mind that wants all that is public, social, governmental or international in Africa Do not be the subject of evaluation. However, it could alleviate the previous complaints that the practice of formal evaluations organizations or social programs is recent, even in the US where they have been taken as a separate discipline than to the years 1960 (Shadish et al. 1991). Another reason for the difficulties of their evaluation could be due to the lack of disaggregated and relevant data. In the context of scarce resources, all these circumstances should not yet be considered as reasons for not retaining African organizations to submit to the test evaluation. It is in their relevance, survival and performance. To achieve a good diagnostic reading of the organizational situation, and a more critical assessment of the meaning and relative importance of the different interpretations that can be obtained by observing the organizations, it is necessary to study the complexity of these organizations a way that is both descriptive and prescriptive. But to achieve a better decoding organizational phenomena, it is necessary to theorize based approaches or methods. Our contribution, through methodological triangulation seeks a better understanding and assessment of African complex organizations, and consequently to improve the performance. By pluralism or political, we mean triangulation or integration of different approaches that require constant movement between actors, methods and strategies of investigation or evaluation organizations. The political attitude also involves knowing how to be sure of the researcher whose behaviors on all routes have to adapt to different contexts of the study. This approach builds on both our field experience (Avocksouma 1995; Avocksouma, et al. 1995), and evaluative research knowledge state. In this work, we will state, first, the foundations and theoretical justifications for this approach, and then we will present some characteristics of the organizations, finally, before dealing with aspects of the rigor of this approach, we will provide some practical steps to follow in the field.

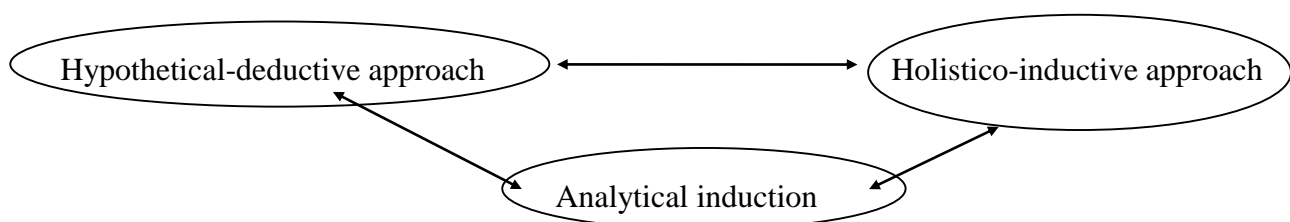
FUNDAMENTALS AND THEORETICAL JUSTIFICATIONS OF THE APPROACH

The major concern for any researcher is to achieve valid results. In the context of sub-Saharan Africa, it seems that the validity and rigor is not always achieved in research, whether based on a quantitative or qualitative approach. This is to increase the potential validation of results that

Webb et al. (1965) have coined the term "triangulation". These authors validate a result is subject to the onslaught of a series of imperfect measures. Pourtois and Desmet, (1989); Leininger (1992); Huberman and Miles (1991); Altheide and Johnson (1994) show that several technical help to achieve valid and credible results in qualitative research. The principles of triangulation methodological or analytical induction ((Glaser and Strauss (1967); Jick (1979)) and the views of stakeholders may well contribute to this expected rigor of qualitative studies. Basis of this method of analysis the principles are based on a methodological approach triangulation or multiplication of data sources and a political approach to the diversification of perspectives of actors located both at macro, meso and micro concerned with the purpose of such organizations. This approach is justified insofar as the organizations operating in the field of public health, national, international or regional appeal as part of the socio-economic integration, are essentially political phenomena that incorporate various non-necessarily converging interests' actors. A vision that would favor a single approach or the sources of the data, or views, might be limited on methodologically and relevance.

For the proponents of this approach, a study that would depend only on a single source of data is methodologically limited because each source has a limited scope as are also the views of a particular group of points (Denzin (1978)). An approach that would favor both the triangulation of methods, data sources and points of view of the actors would have the advantage of better evaluate a social phenomenon. Cantley and Smith (1985: 11) show the focus on the pluralistic approach both the attention to be given to various data sources that the assigning multiple perceptions and interests of the various groups involved in the political process. According House (1980), the evaluation in this context is to enhance the participation of people involved in organizations and programs. It is also to collect the views and opinions of these various people about the subject to observe. It is from the principles, criteria of the various actors and the weight they attach to these criteria that we can get to better evaluate a program, an organization or policy. This pluralistic approach is not only known in the philosophical sense of judgment based on several principles, but also in the political sense of representing the interests of various stakeholders. The proposed approach also includes various methods of scientific disciplines whether qualitative or quantitative.

For Hall et al. (1975), McGrew et al. (1982), evaluation research needs to identify the most influential groups in the strategic basis of the initiative of the policy to evaluate, compare them both in their ideological perspectives about their strategies; to collect data on these groups and their interpretations and perceptions of the object to evaluate and grant them a prominent place in the evaluative analysis. In terms of the triangulation of methods, this approach also applies for the integration of aspects of quantitative research (hypothetical-deductive) and qualitative (Holistico-inductive) (Jick, 1979). This integration leads to what Glaser and Strauss (1967) describe as analytic induction. Concretely, this means that we can rely on a priori chosen models suggested by the literature which the empirically obtained data in the field will be included. Conceptually, the methodological triangulation can be outlined as follows:



The two other aspects of triangulation concern the diversification of sources to collect data (interviews, questionnaires, participant observation and documentary sources) and the views of stakeholders. It is understood that if the qualitative induction tool longer sticks to field realities, and therefore is no longer valid, the quantitative tool, more formalized, is for its most faithful. The integration of the two approaches provides a better understanding and explanation of organizational phenomena to study.

SOME EMPIRICAL TESTS

In some studies of organizations of care in Francophone West and Central Africa (Avocksouma 1995; Avocksouma, Djouob and Voumbo, 1997), diversification of points of view stood at two major levels. In the case studies of regional based organizations in West Africa (Avocksouma, 1995), it was considered internally, to the points of the following actors: principals, administrative and financial managers, personnel manager's doctors, general overseers of services, staff representatives. These internal actors are involved in the activities and thus the effectiveness of the organizations, but also by the internal health (internal cohesion, working atmosphere, satisfaction of Living and Working Conditions). It can also glean information about the administrative and financial management, and to some extent to find the data that can enable the evaluation of efficiency and productivity.

As for the external level, it divides itself into five parts, and covers the following players:

Type of actors	Type information to search
Strategic actors in the implementation of the organization countries (mainly responsible Ministries).	The views of these actors generally focus on outcomes (effectiveness, impacts) and activities. Therefore, they may reflect expectations or assessments of users of services produced by the organizations in the study.
Actors working on behalf of the coordinating institutions like OCCGE ¹ which depend Institutes as IOTA ² and Marchoux located in Bamako (Mali) and to which the OCEAC CIESPAC.	These institutions generally play the role of guardianship are interested in the internal aspects of the management or organizational arrangements. They are also involved in the acquisition of resources and their use.
Actors of international organizations such as United Nations agencies (WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA ...).	These institutions are interested in the acquisition of resources, project and program financing, and various training workshops.
Actors at the Ministry of Cooperation with French executives are often assigned to lead these organizations. This was particularly the case for the CIESPAC ³ in Brazzaville, the Muraz Centre in Bobo-Dioulasso (Burkina	The main cooperating officials responsible management institutions in Africa. At the Ministry of the French Cooperation, may have different information about resources, their use and especially managing personal cooperating. Even when

¹ OCCGE: Organization Coordination and Cooperation against Endemic Diseases in the West Africa. Its headquarters are in Bobo Dioulasso, Burkina Faso.

² IOTA: Institute of Tropical Ophthalmology in Africa based in Bamako, Mali

³ CIESPAC: Interstate Center for Higher Education of Public Health in Central Africa based in Brazzaville, Congo whose guardianship is exercised by OCEAC (Struggle Coordination Organization against the endemic and epidemics in Central Africa based in Yaoundé, Cameroon).

Faso), and Marchoux IOTA in Bamako Heart Institute in Abidjan.	European citizens are not there, we can find there different historical elements of these organizations and the most important documents.
International NGOs working in the African health organizations. This is particularly true of the French Foundation Raoûl Follereau against the Marchoux Institute or the Organization for the Prevention of Blindness (OPC) for IOTA.	Such as United Nations organizations and actors in the French Ministry of Cooperation, NGOs play important strategic roles here both politically and in terms of financing activities.

It is at these three actors (the United Nations system organizations, French Cooperation, International NGO) found support groups, that is to say those that provide resources essential to survival of these organizations, and in fact President in fact the intended thereof. However, all these actors do not have the same vision of the organizations, as they do not have the same expectations to the aims or objectives pursued by them, revealing the complex nature of these organizations. In other words, analyze, for example, these organizations on the basis of their performance, necessarily means considering the different points of view of various actors, and therefore to take a political position evaluation thereof. African organizations, given the weakness in financial and institutional plans of the host country, illustrate this situation characterized by fragmentation of the institutional environment. By this method, it was also able to highlight the paradoxical easier and multidimensional nature of organizational performance as related in many works in organization theory (Cameron, 1978, Cameron and Whetten, 1981 Cameron, 1983; Cameron et al., 1983).

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF COMPLEX AFRICAN ORGANIZATIONS

The development of formal and informal African organizations inherently espouse the context or social environment in which they operate. The social organization, through the social obligations of the contractor or workers, thus heavily affects the operation of production units. Without caricaturing Hernandez (1997), the scheme to borrow to analyze complex African organizations must consider a number of socio-cultural considerations into effect in Africa south of the Sahara, which incorporate the spiritual (submission to the order the divine), the supposed dictatorship of the right time or punctuality, power sharing, social relations between individuals within or outside the workplace, conflict management, the obligations for the creation of value or Search organizational performance and pervasive issue of political inertia. In view of the above and shows the complex nature of African organizations, although there is no universally recommended approaches to better study them, it would be appropriate to leave more general topics before discussing more topics individuals. This approach is also relevant to carry out in-depth interviews. It is supported by case studies by authors such as Miller and Moos (1981), Smith and Cantley (1985). The following points should be addressed according to their degree of simplicity. These are: the history of the organization, institutional objectives, structure, management, performance and institutional development. However, it seems that aspects such as performance and financial management, in particular because they are critical to any assessment, usually the subject of a particular mistrust on the part of responsible organizations.

In most cases, the cooperating directing African organizations do not always have good relationships with their immediate institutional environment⁴. The quest for self-management is akin to quickly complete independence of fact. The fact that the financial resources granted by international donors often seems to explain the non-transparency in the management and bad climate of collaboration between "cooperating" and the rest of local staff. The distribution of resources and power sharing within these institutions are not without consequence on the internal climate of the latter. The fragmentation of the institutional environment of these organizations is a source of power used by managers to avoid supervision or supervision on the part of their line managers. As for the African leaders of these organizations, they also hang the heaviness behind their appointment or promotion, often forcing them to violate the basic rules of orthodoxy manager⁵. Analyze these organizations with the greatest chance of reaching plausible outcomes often falls a challenge. The institutional objectives of these organizations are usually either poorly formulated or hidden in many other sub-goals which themselves are those actually implemented. Their operationalization is not always as clear indicators and assessment criteria have not been fixed in advance. The weakness or lack of financial resources or grants from African countries is often at the basis of the arguments put forward to explain the non-achievement of corporate objectives. Is that available funds may target other objectives than those connected with the quality of services offered.

The existence of the management bodies like the scientific and management committees or the Board of Directors does not appear to be related to the need to formalize the management of these structures. In these organizations controlled by administrators cooperating, they have more power than the members of the Board of Directors. This could be due to the fact that they are valued, not hierarchical by African bodies like the Board of Directors but by those of their country of origin purveyors of resources. In all cases, the imperfect nature of the contracts between the different leaders to their organizations or those who are supposed to be their owners and existing information asymmetry between the one and the other have so many flaws that the trend is opportunism and personal needs. The incompleteness of contracts between managers and owners (country economic communities) and various agency conflicts that result are well illustrated by the agency theory (Jensen and Meckling, 1976; Fama and Jensen, 1983 (to); Fama and Jensen, 1983 (b); Fama, 1980). Transaction costs that result in all processes blithely crippling the performance of these organizations.

PLANNING OF THE STUDY IN THE AFRICAN CONTEXT

Research organizational experiences based from the anthropological or sociological approaches are also relevant in a context like that of the French-speaking Africa (Aktouf 1992: 180-188). However, to further increase the chances of achieving better data collection and a better understanding of organizational phenomena, the researcher should consider the following elements.

⁴ By cooperating means European leaders or from a country other than that of establishment of such organizations. Between those countries and is constantly growing problem of the incompleteness of contracts, and thus the source information asymmetry multiple manipulations, discretionary, opportunistic behavior and divergent interests (agency theory).

⁵ In the context of governance in some African countries, it is not uncommon that the promotion of a framework is facilitated by certain ethnic, regional, religious or mystical / esoteric that must all.

Choice of collection and analysis tools

As described above, the triangulation involves the integration of quantitative and qualitative approaches. To assess for example, organizational performance, quantitative approach may be through the use of simple or multiple regression models (Madsen (1987), Aaby and Slater (1989), Denis (1990), OECD (1993), Julien (1994), Roy (1996), Bergeron, Raymond and Rivard (2004)). The "simple regression" research and establish the type of relationship between the variables from a linear equation that is to say, predict the values of one variable from another. Its objective is to confirm a causal relationship between two or more variables. It seeks regression line that gives the best linear fit compared to scatter having the two variables studied details. Generally, we issue the regression assumptions must be tested. As for the multiple regression (Evrard et al. (2003)), it is intended to isolate a relationship between a dependent variable and several explanatory variables and equate. This relationship is expressed in the form of regression equation that has the variable to be explained as the sum of variables affected their regression coefficients to which is added a constant term. As for the qualitative approach, several techniques help to achieve valid and credible results (Pourtois and Desmet (1989); Leininger (1992); Huberman and Miles, (1991); Altheide and Johnson (1994)).

The construction of the tool for investigation

Before the interviews, the researcher must first be provided with a comprehensive maintenance guide and / or a questionnaire. The construction of such a tool should follow the approach of starting with more general considerations (history of the organization, its goals, its administrative organization...) before addressing more specific aspects such as performance, financial aspects, the use of funds, satisfaction of service users, etc. (Miller and Moos (1981), Smith and Cantley (1985)). As for the reliability of such an instrument, it is not obvious a priori. This is why its prior approval to several key informants and researchers in organizational theory should be an essential step.

The duration of the study

There should be a long enough period for the completion of the study. It will seek an immersion within organizations. However, as noted Aktouf (1985), this anthropological perspective is not often needed within an organization. Management practices do not vary in professional bureaucracies, such a prolonged stay would not bring more new information. However, several authors (Sieber, 1976; Becker, 1970; Bogdan and Taylor, 1975) also argue that the data collected after a long stay in organizations, or after repeated contact tend to be safer. However, for Miles and Huberman (1991: 425), a long stay on the site may by cons, well increase through the site on the researcher and make the bias of the researcher on the site more difficult to detect. The major drawback of this practice is associated with costs. However, it is clear that one stay whatever its duration will not be enough to adhere all organizational actors in the study. We suggest that between two to three stays can be cut more than sufficient.

The choice of topics of investigation

It is generally apparent that certain topics are irritating to the highest point the leaders of African organizations. Their mistrust is often increased when the investigations focus on organizational performance (achievement goals, internal cohesion and human relations of the organization) and financial items. Managers are most prolific when it comes to talking about their relations

with their direct hierarchies. Moreover, the researcher will try to go to the hierarchy, to the General Directorate for example, less really know what happens inside the organization, at least as regards the management or the actual performance of the organization. Least he will speak directly to the workers at the bottom of the scale, better management tolerate. Leaders prefer a situation where everything is under control, and in no way their authority must be scratched. Is that the centralizing tendency of power is often very strong. Obviously, the question of who did the research and for the account of which is very important. It is best in these circumstances to be a European and African researcher.

The triangulation of data sources

Researchers in northern countries tend to first ensure the quality of data collection instruments and to collect information on the ground before embarking on a study. In Africa, this possibility is not obvious a priori for the reason that in most organizations, the information system has failed. Even if it exists, the information is usually scattered among the various levels of responsibility that is not easy to collect. In addition, some players tend to monetize the information available to them when they did not simply refuse to communicate. The researcher has an interest in constantly adapt and invent the means it deems appropriate according to the prevailing circumstances. In any case, a search that would rely on a single source of data is doomed to failure. Also triangulation based various sources (documentary, questionnaire taking notes) is essential. Also note that oral tradition is still alive even in African public organizations. In addition, potential informants would be more tempted to talk about everything to complete questionnaires. The use of recording devices is not always accepted.

The diversification points of view

It is very common that the doors are closed on the nose of the researcher. When this is not the case, the key players may not be present when it needs them. The appointments made in advance do not alter the situation. In these circumstances, it would be appropriate to provide other alternative actors. They usually have as much relevant information as their supervisor. Provide enjoyable outings with them even better guarantee the process, even though the act may be perceived as a bribe. This diversification of perspectives and triangulation of other data sources can also be spatial. This is the information that we can find in point A may be available at point B. In addition, the political perspective of this approach is well served by this spatial diversification strategy views. This is equivalent to interpersonal negotiation process, which increases all the potential observation of the organization, and therefore the external validity without even performing similar studies in different contexts. In addition, the divergence or convergence point increases instead the richness of the study.

The process of positive contamination of players

The actors in African organizations located outside of these are very sensitive to the importance that the researcher grants them coming meet individually and discuss with them things that they relate to the organization lead. These socio-cultural aspects are of paramount importance in the African context. Moreover, from the perspective of action research, or integrate the various interested actors in all processes of the study is one way to get them to the subsequent use of research results. While the purpose of the evaluation is to contribute to positive change in the organization studied, the fact of the workers involved in the study or respond to comments the researcher can encourage the implementation of recommendations field. This process of positive contamination can begin with the various connections to seek

membership of the actors and their support for the realization of the study. It would be desirable that the interviews, recorded and transcribed once in their first version, be referred to the different stakeholders for approval or disapproval. While this practice may have an ethical consequence, the researcher must be true to what was actually obtained from informants. Several players say they often abused by supporters of the Extractive research. They do not end up in the interpretations of research results which they would nevertheless actively participate.

THE RIGOR OF THE APPROACH ADOPTED

In the studies on African complex organizations, the adoption of multi-methodological triangulation method is a compliance strategy and analysis that can be very relevant. It helps to decode the organizational phenomena both in the descriptive and prescriptive sense and provide them with an explanatory content. In terms of the quality of the research, can be achieved with ease to check the different criteria below. The credibility of criteria corresponding to the traditional criterion of internal validity of quantitative research can be achieved to the extent that the researcher is able to bring the guarantee of the quality of observations (spatial triangulation, several stays on the sites), as well as 'accuracy of the relationships between observations when interpreting. The various perspectives of key informants located at various levels and guides depth interviews provided a priori increase this potential (Guba and Lincoln (1989). As for the results portability criterion which is the external validity criterion, whether the conclusions which we manage can be generalized to other organizations, it is not clear a priori, at least in terms of robustness principle (mainstreaming potential in diverse contexts) because of the specificity these organizations (Contandriopoulos et al. 1990). However, by this approach, we have observed that organizations funded by bilateral or even multilateral cooperation have the same characteristics of management or leadership. Under so with some methodological precautions, we can arrive at a transferability of results to other settings. The key understands the organizational phenomena within organizations studied before any action to take. As regards the principle of similarity, that is to say the ability to generalize the same empirical universe, it can be fully achieved. In terms of consistency criterion that refers itself to the criteria of reliability or accuracy of the instruments, it may be questionable, at least if we are forced to take sides between the two positivists vs. constructivist approaches. However, to the extent that, by this approach, we come to better understand the organizations studied in a sense both descriptive and prescriptive, it would be presumptuous not to give any importance to borrowed tools. Finally, what is the criterion of neutrality; it is not obvious, as the independence of these types of studies can be influenced by the ideology of the researcher and organizational actors.

CONCLUSION

The challenge to mobilize the best research tools for organizational phenomena to decode and make sense of them both descriptive and prescriptive explains the choice of this article. It is understood that this concerns the planning of research in African environment. It is by design that the treatment of the issue of data analysis is not addressed. Many books deal with these various methods of quantitative analysis and qualitative data. In fact, in a context where the methodological tools are not accessible to many researchers, can we pretend to have written a scientific paper on the phenomena of complex health organizations in Africa? And if science is

understood, according to the proponents of positivism, the body of knowledge, study of universal value, characterized by an object and a method determined and based on true objective relations, can we consider analytic induction as an undeniable scientific approach? We think so much since we can validate a scientific result by subjecting the onslaught of a series of more or less perfect measures, provided that no scientific method is blameless. The pluralistic approach advocated methodological triangulation is used to assemble the maximum data essential to research on complex health organizations in Africa. The first essential is to understand the organizational phenomena before explaining (Moigne, 2001, 2002 and 2003) and acting. The reconstruction of an African organization is the price. The anthropological or sociological approach of immersion in these organizations constitutes an indispensable means for better data collection. The methodological triangulation (analytical induction) makes it possible to better understand the complex nature of these organizations and to direct them towards performance. The use of various sources of data collection helps to increase the potential for a valid study. Apart from cost considerations, the fact that organizations and key players are located in different places does not affect the progress of the work undertaken. In addition, to involve several actors in the study or benefit from some complicity within the organization or in the institutional environment is an important asset both to finish in the best conditions the proposed study, but also to join key players to institutional objectives and performance thereof. It is further necessary that these actors are involved from the beginning to the process of research planning. Despite his demanding nature in terms of time, financial resources and limitations in the analysis of qualitative and quantitative data, this method may be an effective tool for the reconstruction of the organizations internal and external, and allows give explanations on their actual operation and performance. Decoding the organizational phenomena seems easier to make by such a triangulation approach methods.

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