

ABSTRACT

HOW TO COORDINATE RESOURCES AND RESULTS IN EVALUATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION?

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In this paper we develop a methodological approach, relying on the concept of field in a bourdiean manner, for analysing the coordination of resources and results. In our empirical context, i.e. the Finnish System of higher education, the boundaries of the field are relatively sharply outlined by the budget funding of the State. From the perspective of the coordinator, Ministry of Education, leaning on the national policy of higher education, the distribution of resources between departments/disciplines is far more important than the distribution of resources between universities. In practice, however, resources are *coordinated* between universities, where they are further *employed* into distribution of resources and results between departments. Therefore the distribution of results between departments is a quite natural starting point for evaluating the series of *employment and coordination* of resources within the field.

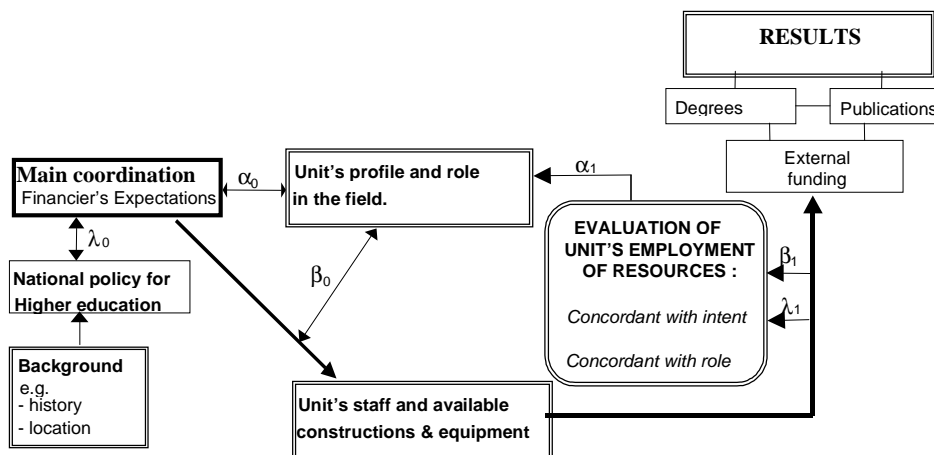


Figure 1 *The framework for evaluating the coordination of resources and results within a publicly funded system of higher education*

Our framework for evaluating the coordination of resources and results entails both 1) the “rhetorical game” played by universities and the main coordinator (see fig. 1, $\alpha_0, \beta_0, \lambda_0$) and 2) actual employment of resources within universities (see fig. 1, $\alpha_1, \beta_1, \lambda_1$). Bowen’s (1987) “*Revenue Theory of Cost*” gives an

apt description of the “rhetorical game”, which follows a simple incrementalist logic; “the more you have it, the more likely you are able to supplement it”. However, this game is not isolated from the actual employment of resources within universities, which, for example, Yuchtman & Seashore (1967) have modelled using a “*System Theoretic Approach*”. In their modelling, great emphasis is laid on the organization’s (university’s) need to secure its operations and existence. Our approach concentrates especially on the mechanisms within the field.

In our empirical application we outline the mechanisms within the Finnish system of higher education by evaluating the coordination of resources and results. We use two key concepts 1) concordant with intent and 2) concordant with role and introduce how they are applicable in evaluating mechanisms within a wider range of productional networks. Our panel data (KOTA- database) covers the past 20 years of resource and result allocation in Finnish Higher Education comprising 1,314 observational units. By using two step regression analysis, we produce comparable estimates for evaluating the *coordination* of resources (staff and equipment) and results (degrees, publications and external funding) concordant with intent and concordant with role. By applying these estimates we further analyse the functions of the Finnish system of Higher Education in terms of *employing* resources into results.