

SUMMARIES

On some philosophical problems in utilizing social research

by Hannu Nurmi

The problems of utilizing social research are approached from the perspective of the theory of planning as it is developed by J. Kornai. Since the theory has been designed for purposes of rather pragmatic nature, it is used only as a device for focusing attention on the crucial points of the utilization process. It is noticed that two already established branches of investigation seem particularly relevant for the study of the problems of utilization: the theory of decision-making and the theory of causality. The main difficulty in approaching the utilization process from the perspectives provided by these theories is that there does not seem to be any straight-forward way of viewing utilization process as decision-making without making simplifying assumptions concerning the nature of causality and vice versa. In addition, there is no generally agreed-upon theory of rationality on which one would be able to construct a theory of rational utilization of research. Furthermore, the environment of the decision-makers (the utilizers) is far more complex than the one assumed in the formal theories of decision-making. The problems related to causality are, of course, of crucial importance in an analysis of utilization of research. The knowledge most easily amenable for utilization purposes is concerned with causal connections obtaining between phenomena. It is argued that the most important characteristic of causality is not invariance, but productiveness. The only way of attaining knowledge of causal connections is — strictly speaking — by actively interfering with the »natural course of events». It is furthermore argued that the techniques identifying causal connections with invariant relationships may give practically useless results.

The utilization of social research encounters also problems related to the discrepancies in the world-views of the investigators and the actual decision-makers. This problem of »perceptual gap» is briefly discussed and the importance of the role of mediators in the chain of communication is emphasized.

Decision-Making Rules in the Finnish Parliament and Their Modification

by Markku Laakso

The article makes use of the Shapley method to examine, both from a historical (1951 through 1973) and contemporary point of view, the decision-making rules in the Finnish Parliament (the 1/3 holding-over rule, the simple

majority rule and the 2/3 and 5/6 majority rules). It also analyzes which rules help secure important criteria in decision-making when the present relative strengths of the parties prevail. As one of the most important tasks of the study is to analyze the modification of the decision-making rules, Shapley values for the parties have also been calculated using the 3/5, 3/4 and 4/5 rules. These majorities enable us to examine the position of the 1/3 minority, too, because when decision-making rules $k + k'$ equal $N + 1$ the decision-making for the parties are identical ($N =$ number of those taking part in the decision). Accordingly, the 2/3 majority (134 representatives) and the 1/3 minority (67 representatives) are examples of decision-making rules which give the parties the same Shapley values.

Four criteria were used in the study for evaluating the decision-making rules: (1) »equality» (the fact that the relative strengths of the parties correspond as much as possible to the number of their representatives in the parliament), (2) »minority protection» (safeguarding the position of small parties), (3) »centralization of power» (centralizing power in the hands of the biggest party in the parliament, the Social Democratic Party), (4) »decentralization of power» (decentralizing power so that no party could alone block decisions).

The results obtained through applying the Shapley method on the basis of the present relative strengths of the parties can be summarized in a table:

1. Bills requiring the order of constitutional legislation

	»Urgent procedure»	
	Declaring urgent	Final approval
»equality»	2/3	3/5
»minority protection»	4/5	1/2
»centralization of power»	3/4	1/2
»decentralization of power»	2/3	3/5, 1/2

»Tabling procedure»

Final approval	Tabling
1/2	3/5, 1/2

2. Ordinary bills

»Holding-over procedure»

Holding-over	Final approval
1/3	1/2

The table also includes the other possible course of procedure in constitutional matters: the tabling procedure. There should not be any cause to modify the 1/2 approval of holding-over rule. On the other hand, if the majority required for the final approval of a bill in the course of »urgent procedure» were lowered, it would be logical to do the same with respect to the »approval of holding-over procedure».

The stipulated majority required for »urgent procedure» in constitutional matters is quite problematic. Emphasizing different criteria leads one to fairly

divergent propositions. One alternative worth of consideration would be to do away with the procedure of declaring a bill urgent altogether. The deliberations on a bill would in such a case follow the decision-making rules listed in the table under »tabling procedure».

The position of decisions requiring 2/3 majority other than those dealt with in the order of constitutional legislation is, to my mind, closely connected with the results presented above. It would seem natural that stipulated majorities with respect to those decisions would be the same as in the final approval of bills requiring the order of constitutional legislation, as is the case in the present system.

With respect to ordinary bills the results obtained in the study do not give any cause to modifying the present practice, if the holding-over procedure for bills is preserved.