

Proposal of a summative meta-evaluation tool for the self-evaluation of Higher Education Institutions

Proposta de um instrumento de meta-avaliação somativa para a autoavaliação das Instituições de Educação Superior

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Abstract

Self-evaluation is the starting point of the evaluation process in higher education. It is an ongoing process of institutional self-knowledge and self-criticism, which is an essential tool for reflecting on the institution's identity and for supporting decision-making and action planning. However, for self-evaluation to achieve its objectives, it must also be evaluated (meta-evaluated). Given the importance of understanding and analyzing the procedures and results of the Institutional Self-Assessment reports prepared by Higher Education Institutions, the aim of this research was to develop a summative meta-evaluation instrument designed to verify the degree of compliance of the AAI reports with the guidelines of the National Higher Education Evaluation System (Sinaes) and the quality standards established by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (JCSEE).

Keywords: meta-evaluation; institutional self-evaluation; evaluation of higher education.

Resumo

A autoavaliação é o ponto inicial do processo avaliativo no âmbito da educação superior. Trata-se de um processo contínuo de autoconhecimento e autocrítica institucional, que se configura como uma ferramenta essencial para a reflexão sobre a identidade da instituição e para apoiar a tomada de decisões e o planejamento de suas ações. No entanto, para que a autoavaliação atinja os seus objetivos, é necessário que também seja avaliada (meta-avaliada). Diante da importância de compreender e analisar os procedimentos e resultados dos relatórios de Autoavaliação Institucional elaborados pelas Instituições de Educação Superior. Esta pesquisa teve como objetivo desenvolver um instrumento de meta-avaliação somativa, destinado a verificar o grau de conformidade dos relatórios de AAI com as diretrizes do Sistema Nacional de Avaliação da Educação Superior (Sinaes) e os padrões de qualidade estabelecidos pelo Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (JCSEE).

Palavras-chave: meta-avaliação; autoavaliação institucional; avaliação da educação superior.

INTRODUCTION

Since the 1990s, higher education in Brazil has undergone substantial transformations, particularly in quantitative terms. This trend is supported by data from the Higher Education Census conducted by the National Institute for Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira (Inep), an agency under the Ministry of Education (MEC). The most recent edition of the census, referring to the year 2022, confirms the continued expansion of higher education, indicating a significant increase in the number of entrants to undergraduate programs—from 2,747,089 in 2012 to 4,756,728 in 2022 (Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira, 2022).

The expansion of higher education has been accompanied by growing concern regarding the quality of instruction offered by higher education institutions (IES), which has driven the development of

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evaluation processes to monitor teaching practices and the implementation of quality assurance systems through regulatory and assessment mechanisms. In this context, in response to concerns about regulating the provision of higher education and planning its expansion, Law No. 10,861 was enacted on April 14, 2004. This law established the National System for the Evaluation of Higher Education (Sinaes), encompassing all categories of academic institutions.

To achieve its objectives, Sinaes employs three types of assessment: the Evaluation of Undergraduate Programs (ACG), the National Student Performance Examination (Enade), and the Evaluation of Higher Education Institutions (Avalies). The latter is subdivided into External Evaluation (AE) and Internal Evaluation (AI), also referred to as Institutional Self-Assessment (AAI), which is considered the starting point for institutional evaluation and constitutes the focus of this study (Brasil, 2004a).

Recognizing the complexity of the AAI, Sinaes recommends self-assessment as a feedback mechanism for the system, using its results to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the previous evaluation cycle (Brasil, 2004a). Souza et al. (2018) argue that assessment is a process that must remain in constant transformation, with the primary aim of enhancing its methods, approaches, and tools—and, most importantly, the object being assessed itself. Nevertheless, Law No. 10,861 does not establish specific guidelines, criteria, or procedural and instrumental orientations for the meta-evaluation of the AAI, delegating this responsibility to IESs through their Internal Evaluation Committees (CPAs).

Considering Institutional Self-Assessment (AAI) as a fundamental tool for management, decision-making, and planning within higher education institutions (IESs), and recognizing that self-evaluation is a process of continuous improvement in assessment procedures and criteria, the need was identified to develop a proposal for a meta-evaluative instrument. This proposal will take into account the guidelines set forth by Sinaes and adopt the standards established by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (2011), with the aim of supporting Internal Evaluation Committees (CPAs) in carrying out this stage of the AAI process.

Given the rationale presented and the relevance of understanding and evaluating the procedures and outcomes of the AAI reports prepared by IESs, the following research question was formulated: how can the level of compliance of AAI reports produced by Brazilian IESs be assessed in relation to the Sinaes guidelines and the quality standards established by the JCSEE?

To address the research question, this study established the following general objective: to develop a summative self-evaluation instrument to assess the level of compliance of Institutional Self-Assessment (AAI) reports produced by Brazilian higher education institutions (IESs) with the guidelines of Sinaes and the quality standards defined by the JCSEE. This study comprises four parts: the first examines Institutional Self-Assessment; the second explores self-evaluation; the third outlines the methodology employed; the fourth presents the proposed meta-evaluative instrument; and, finally, the study offers concluding considerations.

INSTITUTIONAL SELF-ASSESSMENT GUIDE

Institutional Self-Assessment (AAI) is a continuous process through which a higher education institution (IES) seeks to generate knowledge about its own reality, aiming to understand the meaning of its activities and improve educational quality, thereby achieving greater social relevance. In this context, the AAI process organizes information, identifies strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities, and establishes strategies to address problems (Brasil, 2004b).

However, the Internal Evaluation Committees (CPAs), responsible for conducting the AAI process, often face challenges in its implementation. According to Zainko (2008), these challenges are frequently associated with a lack of knowledge among CPA members regarding the process itself, as well as difficulties in effectively carrying out the AAI. To support these committees, Inep published the AAI Guide in 2004, with the aim of providing a practical and structured resource for IESs in conducting the self-assessment process. This document continues to be regarded as the primary operational guide for AAI in Brazil. According to Brasil (2004b), the AAI process should be carried out in three stages:

1) Preparation: aims to provide guidance on: (a) the establishment of the Internal Evaluation Committee (CPA), in accordance with Ordinance No. 2.051/04; (b) the drafting of the evaluation

project, including the definition of objectives, strategies, methodology, resources, and timeline; and (c) raising awareness to promote the engagement of the academic community.

- 2) Development: consists of the execution of the planned activities, including awareness-raising actions, systematization of ideas, demands, and suggestions arising from meetings, internal seminars for the presentation of the Sinaes, construction of data collection instruments, definition of the methodology for data analysis and interpretation, determination of the report format, report drafting, and discussion of the results with the academic community.
- 3) Consolidation: involves the drafting, dissemination, and analysis of the final report, including a critical review of the evaluation process and its results in terms of improving the quality of the IES. This stage can be considered the most critical of the AAI process, as it includes the preparation of the final report with all the evidence generated during the self-assessment process (Espírito Santo; Travassos; Caribé, 2016).

In general, institutional evaluation within the scope of the Sinaes is organized into ten dimensions, as established by the system itself and described in Article 3 of Law No. 10.861/2004, as shown in Chart 1.

Chart 1. The ten dimensions of the Sinaes.

Dimension 1	The institution's mission and Institutional Development Plan (PDI).
Dimension 2	Policies for teaching, research, graduate studies, and university outreach, along with their respective forms of implementation.
Dimension 3	The institution's social responsibility.
Dimension 4	Communication with society.
Dimension 5	Personnel policies, academic and technical-administrative career paths, their improvement, professional development, training, and working conditions.
Dimension 6	Institutional organization and management, with particular emphasis on the functioning and representativeness of collegiate bodies.
Dimension 7	Physical infrastructure, especially facilities dedicated to teaching and research, including libraries and information and communication technology resources.
Dimension 8	Planning and evaluation, especially the processes, results, and effectiveness of Institutional Self-Assessment.
Dimension 9	Student support policies.
Dimension 10	Financial sustainability, considering the social relevance of ensuring continuity in the provision of higher education.

Source: Brasil (2004a, p. 1).

The AAI process is consolidated in the AAI Report, which serves the dual purpose of fostering a culture of institutional evaluation and supporting external evaluation processes. The report—whether partial or final—functions as the primary instrument through which the Ministry of Education (MEC) oversees the activities of Internal Evaluation Committees (CPAs) within higher education institutions (IESs). To assist IESs in this process, Inep published a guide in 2002 for the preparation of AAI reports, detailing the minimum elements that must be included (Brasil, 2004b). These documents remain in effect to this day, except for updates introduced by Technical Note INEP/DAES/CONAES No. 065, dated October 9, 2014, which clarifies and structures the guidelines for the preparation and submission of reports.

According to Oliveira (2023), Technical Note No. 065 is recommended for the elaboration of the self-assessment guide for IESs and represents an advancement over the 2004 AAI Guide by detailing report sections that were not previously specified. The Guide for the AAI Report (Brasil, 2014) establishes that the AAI report must be structured into five sections:

- 1) Introduction: Presents information about the IES, the structure of the Internal Evaluation Committee (CPA), and the strategic planning for the Institutional Self-Assessment (AAI), specifying the year covered by the report and whether it is partial or complete.

- 2) Methodology: Details the instruments used for data collection, the segments of the academic community and civil society consulted, and the methodologies applied for data analysis.
- 3) Development: Provides relevant data and information for each axis or dimension, aligned with the Institutional Development Plan (PDI) and the identity of the IES. This section is structured into five topics, each corresponding to one of the five evaluative axes and their respective dimensions: Axis 1 – Institutional Planning: Dimension 8; Axis 2 – Institutional Development: Dimension 1; Axis 3 – Academic Policies: Dimensions 2, 4, and 9; Axis 4 – Management Policies: Dimensions 5, 6, and 10; Axis 5 – Physical Infrastructure: Dimension 7. According to Brasil (2014), this structure ensures coherence and continuity across the presented data, facilitating both the elaboration of the report and the evaluative process.
- 4) Data and Information Analysis: Provides a diagnostic overview of the IES, highlighting progress made, challenges to be addressed, and the extent to which the goals outlined in the PDI have been achieved.
- 5) Actions Based on the Analysis: Outlines measures to enhance the academic and managerial functions of the IES, grounded in the analytical findings.

According to Stufflebeam (2001), issuing reports without including the self-evaluation phase may lead the target audience to make misguided decisions based on unreliable results. Therefore, it is essential to establish mechanisms that ensure the evaluation process conducted by the IES meets key requirements and maintains the quality of the Institutional Self-Assessment (AAI), without undermining the autonomy of the Internal Evaluation Committees (CPAs).

META-EVALUATION

The term meta-evaluation was defined by Scriven (1991) as the evaluation of an evaluation. The reasons and justifications for using meta-evaluations are varied, but they can be summarized into three main functions: (i) assessing the quality of evaluations; (ii) improving evaluations by identifying their strengths and weaknesses; and (iii) demonstrating the usefulness of evaluations for stakeholders (Oliveira; Rothen, 2024).

Stufflebeam (2001) classifies meta-evaluation into two types: formative and summative. Formative meta-evaluations are conducted during the planning or implementation phases of an evaluation, supporting evaluators in the design, execution, refinement, and interpretation of evaluative studies. Summative meta-evaluations, in turn, are carried out after the evaluation process has concluded and help stakeholders identify its strengths and weaknesses, as well as assess its merit and value based on established standards of good practice. They are considered summative because they take place at the end of the process.

Although meta-evaluation is expected to be part of the scope of Sinaes, there is still a lack of studies that define guidelines, criteria, and procedural and instrumental orientations tailored to the particularities of the Brazilian state and its public policies (Oliveira, 2017). This gap underscores the need to develop research that can inform the elaboration of specific guidelines for the national context in order to ensure the effectiveness and relevance of the meta-evaluative process.

Moser, Francisco and Guerra (2023), through a bibliometric survey, analyzed the landscape of research and publications on meta-evaluation in Brazilian Higher Education in recent years. Among the 118 identified works, only eight specifically address Institutional Evaluation and the role of CPAs. The authors conclude that there is a limited body of research broadly covering meta-evaluation in IESs, considering the AAI processes as theoretical frameworks. This scenario reveals a significant theoretical gap in an essential area that remains underexplored, under-investigated, and insufficiently deepened.

According to Elliot (2011), for each type of evaluation, there are specific meta-evaluative procedures that can be most appropriately applied. The most widely recognized conceptual framework found in international literature is the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (JCSEE). In 2011, the JCSEE released the 3rd edition of its Standards, which encompass five attributes: utility, feasibility, propriety, accuracy, and accountability. These five attributes encompass 30 specific standards as shown in Chart 2.

Chart 2. JCSEE Standards and Attributes.

<p>Utility: aims to ensure that the evaluation meets the informational needs of its potential users.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ U1 – Credibilidade do avaliador;✓ U2 – Stakeholder identification;✓ U3 – Negotiated purposes;✓ U4 – Identification of values;✓ U5 – Relevant information;✓ U6 – Meaningful processes and products;✓ U7 – Appropriate and timely communication and reporting; and✓ U8 – Concern for the consequences and influence of the evaluation. <p>Feasibility: Aims to ensure that the evaluation is realistic, prudent, diplomatic, and cost effective, thereby enhancing its efficiency and effectiveness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ F1 – Project management;✓ F2 – Practical procedures;✓ F3 – Contextual feasibility; and✓ F4 – Resource utilization. <p>Propriety: Aims to ensure that the evaluation is conducted in a legally legitimate and ethical manner, with appropriate consideration for the well-being of participants and those affected by the results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ P1 – Inclusive and responsive orientation;✓ P2 – Formal agreements;✓ P3 – Respect for the right of individuals;✓ P4 – Clarity and justice;✓ P5 – Transparency and disclosure;✓ P6 – Conflict of interest; and✓ P7 – Fiscal responsibility. <p>Accuracy: Aims to enhance the reliability and accuracy of the information, assertions, and conclusions, particularly those that support judgments regarding the quality of the evaluation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ A1 – Justified conclusions and decisions;✓ A2 – Valid information;✓ A3 – Reliable information;✓ A4 – Detailed description of the evaluation’s purpose and context;✓ A5 – Information management;✓ A6 – Robust analysis and planning;✓ A7 – Explicit presentation of the evaluation rationale; and✓ A8 – Communication and reporting. <p>Accountability: Seeks to foster accountability in evaluation by means of appropriate documentation, grounded in both internal and external meta-evaluative perspectives aimed at improving processes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ R1 – Evaluation documentation; and✓ R2 – Internal and External Self-evaluation.

Source: JCSEE (Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, 2011)

METHODOLOGY

As the aim of this study is to develop a summative self-evaluation instrument for use in AAI reports, it is classified as applied research. According to Marconi and Lakatos (2007), this type of research is driven by a practical interest, as its results are intended to be immediately applied to address identified problems. This investigation is expected to contribute to the advancement of knowledge and to the improvement of the institutional self-evaluation process in IESs.

Regarding the study's approach, the investigation adopts a qualitative perspective, aimed at an in-depth exploration of the phenomenon through the meanings attributed by the participants themselves within the analyzed context (Creswell; Clark, 2013). Accordingly, Institutional Self-Assessment (AAI) will serve as the theoretical foundation of the study, while summative self-evaluation will constitute its methodological and analytical framework.

To achieve the proposed objective, a survey of theses and dissertations was conducted using the databases of the Brazilian Institute of Information in Science and Technology (IBICT), the CAPES Theses and Dissertations Database (BDTD), and SciELO, covering the period from 2018 to 2023. The search focused on studies addressing self-evaluation within the context of Institutional Self-Assessment (AAI) in Higher Education Institutions (IESs). This survey aimed to map and analyze publications on the subject, resulting in the identification of four articles, three theses, and three dissertations.

The instrument proposed in this study introduces an innovation compared to existing models. Its development followed four main stages: (i) analysis of the SINAES guidelines, the INEP framework, and Technical Note No. 065/2014; (ii) definition of criteria and indicators based on the JCSEE standards; (iii) organization of indicators in alignment with the evaluative dimensions; and (iv) development of an analytical matrix for application to AAI reports. This structure enables a more specific and targeted assessment, with the potential to provide effective support to Internal Evaluation Committees (CPAs). It is important to note that these stages will subsequently be validated and refined as the research progresses, through expert validation, practical application of the instrument, data analysis, and possible adjustments to ensure its effectiveness.

SOMATIVE META-EVALUATION INSTRUMENT

The implementation of summative meta-evaluation requires a high degree of rigor, as it involves the application of a set of evaluative standards to support its judgment. This process results in the development of a new evaluation of the original evaluative study, with the purpose of assessing its value — that is, whether it meets the informational needs of stakeholders and demonstrates merit by fulfilling the established quality standards (Souza; Cortês; Elliot, 2018). It is important to highlight that stakeholders involved in the evaluation process include both internal audiences — such as administrators, faculty, students, and technical-administrative staff — and external audiences, including alumni, institutional representatives, regulatory bodies, and members of civil society. Each of these groups has specific informational demands, which vary according to their interests, responsibilities, and level of engagement with the institution. In this regard, taking into account both internal and external perspectives in meta-evaluation not only enhances the relevance of the process but also strengthens its legitimacy, ensuring that the results obtained are both socially useful and strategically significant for institutional development.

Mariano (2022) emphasizes that Internal Institutional Assessment (Autoavaliação Institucional – AAI) is carried out by a committee composed of representatives from various sectors of the academic community, many of whom do not possess specific expertise in higher education evaluation. Moreover, the National Higher Education Evaluation System (SINAES) does not define clear processes or procedures to ensure the quality of AAI, nor does it establish consistent good practices with the methodological rigor necessary for AAI to reach its full potential.

With the proposal of a summative meta-evaluation instrument, this study seeks to contribute to the improvement of the AAI process and the tools used for this purpose, as the effectiveness of institutional self-evaluation is essential for the academic and social development of higher education institutions and for deepening their commitment to and responsibility toward society.

Stufflebeam (2001) warns that a common mistake made by many evaluators is failing to adapt the JCSEE guidelines to the specific context of the object being evaluated. Accordingly, the following standards were selected: utility, feasibility, propriety, and accuracy, with specific criteria defined for each standard. For each standard, selected indicators were identified in order to assess whether the respective standard is being observed in the Internal Institutional Assessments (AAI). The rating scale used follows the proposal by Davidson (2005).

The self-evaluation process of Higher Education Institutions (IES) is consolidated in the AAI report. Therefore, the JCSEE indicators were reorganized in alignment with Technical Note No. 065/2014, as presented in Chart 3.

Chart 3. Summative Meta-evaluation Instrument.

INTRODUÇÃO		
Analysis Items for Indicator Verification	Standards	Evaluation
✓ Academic background and practical experience of CPA members	U1- Evaluators must be qualified individuals, possessing both theoretical and practical knowledge of the subject under analysis, as well as prior experience in the field.	A B C D E () () () ()
✓ Results from main instruments (AE, ACG e Enade).	U5-Relevant information: Refers to information that is directly aligned with the purposes of the evaluation, that is, with the specific needs of the stakeholders.	A B C D E () () () ()
✓ Report on the importance of the AAI, explaining its contribution to the continuous improvement of the institution's quality.		A B C D E () () () ()
✓ Definition of objectives, strategies, resources and calendar of AAI.		A B C D E () () () ()
✓ Identification of the IES, including an overview of its history, mission, vision, and core values.		A B C D E () () () ()
✓ Segmentation of the academic community: number of students per course; number of faculty and administrative staff.		A B C D E () () () ()
✓ Constitution of CPA (by official ordinance).		A B C D E () () () ()
✓ Report organization and version type.		A B C D E () () () ()
METHODOLOGY		
Analysis Items for Indicator Verification	Standards	Evaluation
Evaluation respondents (identification of participants)	U2-Identification of stakeholders (internal: like managers, faculty members, students, and administrative technicians; external: like alumni, representatives, regulatory agencies, and representatives of civil society).	A B C D E () () () ()

Fonte: Elaborated by the author (2024); legend (Davidson, 2005, p. 217).

Chart 3. Continued...

METHODOLOGY		
Analysis Items for Indicator Verification	Standards	Evaluation
<p>✓ Response rate of the academic community (faculty, students, administrative staff) in the evaluation process.</p> <p>✓ Detailed schedule with specific deadlines for each stage of the AAI process, ensuring that all activities are completed within the planned timeframe.</p> <p>✓ Execution of a pre-test with a small group of stakeholders to identify any issues of comprehension or relevance regarding the instrument's questions.</p> <p>Description of the monitoring mechanism for tracking the progress of AAI activities.</p>	F1- Project management	<p>A B C D E () () () () ()</p> <p>A B C D E () () () () ()</p> <p>A B C D E () () () () ()</p> <p>A B C D E () () () () ()</p>
<p>Definition of the method(s) and period of data collection used (questionnaires, interviews, document analysis).</p> <p>✓ Definition of the awareness-raising actions for the academic community.</p> <p>✓ Definition of method(s) and period of data analysis.</p> <p>✓ Consistency of the statistical method employed for the analysis of quantitative data.</p>	F2- Practical procedures	<p>A B C D E () () () () ()</p> <p>A B C D E () () () () ()</p> <p>A B C D E () () () () ()</p> <p>A B C D E () () () () ()</p>
<p>✓ Customization of questionnaires according to the target group (managers, faculty, students, and administrative staff).</p> <p>✓ Alignment of the evaluation instrument's questions with the stakeholders' context, including their role and experience.</p>	F3 - Contextual feasibility	<p>A B C D E () () () () ()</p> <p>A B C D E () () () () ()</p>
<p>✓ Registration or formalization of responsibilities; what must be done, how, by whom, and when.</p> <p>✓ Level of confidentiality and anonymity ensured throughout the institutional self-evaluation process (AAI).</p>	<p>P2- Formal agreements</p> <p>P3- Respect for the right of individuals</p>	<p>A B C D E () () () () ()</p> <p>A B C D E () () () () ()</p>
<p>✓ Reliable information for its intended use; considering the data collected and the analytical methodology employed.</p> <p>✓ Adequacy of the analytical procedure; ensuring alignment with the evaluation question and the qualitative/quantitative nature of the collected data.</p>	<p>A3- Reliable information</p>	<p>A B C D E () () () () ()</p> <p>A B C D E () () () () ()</p>

Fonte: Elaborated by the author (2024); legend (Davidson, 2005, p. 217).

Chart 3. Continued...

METHODOLOGY		
Analysis Items for Indicator Verification	Standards	Evaluation
✓ Clarity of reasoning; guiding the interpretation of information and the analysis of results.	A7- Explicit presentation of the evaluation rationale	A B C D E () () () () ()
DEVELOPMENT		
AXIS 1		
✓ Adequacy and effectiveness of the overall planning, and its alignment with the Institutional Pedagogical Project and the pedagogical projects of the courses.	Dimension 8: Planning and evaluation	A B C D E () () () () ()
✓ Procedures for evaluating and monitoring institutional planning and educational activities.		A B C D E () () () () ()
AXIS 2		
✓ Knowledge of the mission and the PDI.	Dimension 1: The institution's mission and Institutional Development Plan (PDI)	A B C D E () () () () ()
✓ Coherence between the Institutional Development Plan (PDI) and institutional planning.		A B C D E () () () () ()
✓ University actions and the impact of scientific, technical, and cultural activities on regional development.	The institution's social responsibility.	A B C D E () () () () ()
✓ Initiatives aimed at fostering democracy, promoting citizenship, supporting marginalized social groups, and implementing affirmative action policies.		A B C D E () () () () ()
AXIS 3		
Teaching, research, and outreach.	Dimension 2: Policies for teaching, research, graduate studies, and university outreach	A B C D E () () () () ()
✓ Strategies, resources, and quality of internal and external communication.	Dimension 4: Communication with society	A B C D E () () () () ()
✓ Policies for student access, selection, and retention.	Dimension 9: Student support policies	A B C D E () () () () ()
✓ Policies promoting student participation in teaching-related activities (such as internships and tutoring), scientific initiation, outreach, institutional evaluation, and student exchange activities.		A B C D E () () () () ()
✓ Mechanisms and systematic approaches to the study and analysis of data on incoming students, dropout/withdrawal, average completion times, graduation rates, and student-faculty ratios.		A B C D E () () () () ()
✓ Professional integration of alumni.		A B C D E () () () () ()
✓ Participation of alumni in the IES community.		A B C D E () () () () ()

Fonte: Elaborated by the author (2024); legend (Davidson, 2005, p. 217).

Chart 3. Continued...

AXIS 4		
✓ Career plans for faculty and technical-administrative staff.	Dimension 5: Personnel policies	A B C D E () () () () ()
✓ Professional development and quality-of-life improvement programs.		A B C D E () () () () ()
✓ Institutional climate and levels of personal and professional satisfaction.		A B C D E () () () () ()
✓ Existence of a management plan.	Dimension 6: Institutional organization and management	A B C D E () () () () ()
✓ Operation, composition, and responsibilities of collegiate bodies.		A B C D E () () () () ()
✓ Use of strategic management to anticipate challenges and devise solutions.		A B C D E () () () () ()
✓ Participation of stakeholders in governance		A B C D E () () () () ()
✓ Financial sustainability of the institution, including policies for resource acquisition and allocation.	Dimension 10: Financial sustainability	A B C D E () () () () ()
✓ Policies guiding the allocation of resources to teaching, research, and outreach programs.		A B C D E () () () () ()
AXIS 5		
✓ Adequacy of infrastructure (classrooms, laboratories, recreational areas, computer equipment, networks, and others) according to the needs of teaching, research, and outreach activities.	Dimension 7: Physical infrastructure	A B C D E () () () () ()
✓ Institutional policies for maintenance, updating, and security.		A B C D E () () () () ()
✓ Utilization of infrastructure to support the development of innovative pedagogical practices.		A B C D E () () () () ()
✓ Accessibility.		A B C D E () () () () ()
DATA AND INFORMATION ANALYSIS		
✓ Was any dimension of Sinaes omitted from the analysis? If so, is this omission justified in the report?	U6-Significant processes and products	A B C D E () () () () ()
✓ Are the results of the external student performance evaluation considered in the information analysis?		A B C D E () () () () ()
✓ Do the data analysis outcomes allow identification of the institution's strengths and weaknesses?		A B C D E () () () () ()
✓ Does the full report include the content from the partial reports?		A B C D E () () () () ()
✓ Were graphs, tables, and figures used to facilitate understanding?	U7-Appropriate and Timely Communication and Reporting	A B C D E () () () () ()

Fonte: Elaborated by the author (2024); legend (Davidson, 2005, p. 217).

Chart 3. Continued...

DATA AND INFORMATION ANALYSIS		
✓ Were the generated findings relevant to stakeholders (faculty, managers, and administrative staff) to support planning and decision-making?	P2- Valid information	A B C D E () () () ()
✓ Do the collected data and analysis methodology ensure that the information is reliable for its intended purpose?	A3- Reliable information	A B C D E () () () ()
✓ Were both qualitative and quantitative analyses performed?		A B C D E () () () ()
✓ Was the analytical procedure appropriate to address the evaluation question and the qualitative/quantitative nature of the collected information?		A B C D E () () () ()
✓ Do the results from the self-assessment process corroborate with other sources of information?		A B C D E () () () ()
✓ Are the data presented clearly and understandably?	A8- Communication and reporting	A B C D E () () () ()
ACTIONS BASED ON ANALYSIS		
✓ Do the actions adequately address the needs identified in the analysis?	U5-Relevant information	A B C D E () () () ()
✓ Were the actions based on the data collected and the analyses conducted?	U7-Appropriate and Timely Communication and Reporting	A B C D E () () () ()
✓ Does the report include practical feedback and useful recommendations?	P1-Inclusive and responsive orientation	A B C D E () () () ()
✓ Do the actions promote equity and avoid discrimination?	P3-Respect for the right of individuals	A B C D E () () () ()
✓ Are the actions ethical and transparent?	P4-Clarity and justice	A B C D E () () () ()
Legend – Scale Rating		
A = Fully addresses all key aspects of the criterion and presents them clearly and concisely.		
B = Addresses most aspects of the criterion, but omits one or two elements, or covers the main components but is not 100% clear.		
C = Addresses the criterion but misses some crucial aspects, overlooks several important elements, or presents them in a somewhat disorganized or unclear manner.		
D = Contains one or two elements that implicitly relate to the criterion, however, it provides a deficient level of treatment.		
E = Fails to address the criterion altogether.		

Fonte: Elaborated by the author (2024); legend (Davidson, 2005, p. 217).

Based on the proposed instrument and with the aim of facilitating the organization and planning of the summative meta-evaluation by the Internal Evaluation Committees (CPAs), Chart 4 presents the criteria related to the merit and worth of the evaluation.

The concepts of merit and worth are fundamental in evaluation processes, especially within educational and institutional contexts. Although interconnected, each holds a specific

Chart 4. Guide for summative meta-evaluation.

1- Identify the criteria that will support the analysis of the merit of the evaluation, based on the JCSEE quality standards and the Sinaes guidelines:

- ✓ Relevance of the evaluation items in relation to the objectives of the evaluation;
- ✓ Credibility of the evaluators;
- ✓ Validity and reliability of the instruments and methods used for data collection and analysis;
- ✓ Involvement of stakeholders in the process;
- ✓ Communication of results in a clear and timely manner;
- ✓ Autonomy of the CPA in planning and conducting the self-evaluation process;
- ✓ Coverage of the Sinaes dimensions.

2. Identify the criteria that will support the analysis of the value of the evaluation, that is, those which provide input for institutional decision-makers:

- ✓ Resources (human, financial, and material);
- ✓ Administrative and academic processes;
- ✓ Professional development (faculty, technical and administrative staff);
- ✓ Student satisfaction with teaching and academic support services;
- ✓ Communication channels;
- ✓ Curricula, teaching methodologies, and pedagogical resources;
- ✓ Allocation of financial resources and identification of opportunities for cost reduction or enhanced revenue generation;
- ✓ Research and community outreach projects;
- ✓ Inclusion, diversity, and social responsibility practices, among others.

3. Analysis of information:

Describe the strengths and weaknesses identified after applying the meta-evaluation instrument.

4. Dissemination of results:

Describe the findings and the improvement actions aimed at mitigating weaknesses and enhancing strengths.

Source: The authors (2024).

meaning, and understanding the distinctions between them is essential for constructing a more comprehensive and well-founded evaluative judgment of a program, project, or action. According to Guba and Lincoln (1980, p. 61), the distinction between merit and worth is somewhat arbitrary, since both are components of the broader notion of value. For these authors, merit is associated with intrinsic criteria, whereas worth relates to extrinsic aspects of the evaluated object. In line with this, Bauer (2019) emphasizes that merit concerns the internal quality of the program or action, considering elements such as structure, content, and implementation. Worth, on the other hand, pertains to external quality, taking into account the context of implementation, practical relevance, and the capacity to meet the actual needs of the target audience. Thus, both concepts complement each other in the evaluative analysis, enabling a more comprehensive understanding of the object under consideration.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

All Higher Education Institutions (IESs), both public and private, are required to conduct Institutional Self-Assessment (AAI), as mandated by the National Higher Education Evaluation System (SINAES), established under Law No. 10.861/2004. The AAI is developed and coordinated by each institution's Internal Evaluation Commission (CPA) and aims to

promote the continuous improvement of the quality of teaching, research, and community outreach, while also informing institutional planning and management. However, many IESs face significant challenges in implementing the CPA and conducting the AAI effectively. Key obstacles include the lack of training for CPA members—many of whom do not have specific backgrounds in higher education assessment—the heterogeneity of the commission, turnover among its members, and the absence of clear regulations and quality criteria, which hinders the standardization of evaluation processes.

According to the analysis presented in *Análise dos Relatórios de Autoavaliação das Instituições de Educação Superior*, conducted by INEP between 2004 and 2006, only 12.2% of the 172 AAI reports analyzed were considered complete in addressing all ten dimensions of the evaluation. Furthermore, 63% of the institutions failed to report using the evaluation results for institutional replanning, which underscores the limited efficacy of the AAI (Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira, 2011).

As noted by Goulart (2018), there are still many obstacles to be overcome before the evaluation results can be effectively used as tools for planning and institutional management.

In this context, the use of a meta-evaluation instrument can serve as a valuable resource for CPAs. It functions as a learning tool for its members and contributes to the improvement and efficiency of AAI processes. Its application fosters more effective alignment in conducting the AAI by establishing criteria to support: (i) the analysis of the merit of the evaluation, based on the quality standards defined by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (JCSEE) and the SINAES guidelines; and (ii) the analysis of the value of the evaluation, understood as its practical utility in informing strategic decision-making and planning by institutional leadership. This conception is grounded in Scriven's (1991) approach, which posits that the value of an evaluation does not lie solely in the data collected, but rather in the interpretive construction made from those findings. For Scriven, the value is not found in raw data itself, but in the way it is understood and used. Thus, value is realized through the evaluation's ability to transform information into knowledge—guiding decisions, promoting action, and contributing to continuous improvement.

Therefore, assessing the quality of the evaluation through meta-evaluation enables the identification of strengths and weaknesses in the primary evaluation process. It also allows for an assessment of the reliability and quality of the tools and methodologies used, ensuring that the results are valid and representative. Meta-evaluation contributes to the transparency of the evaluation process by providing a clear account of how results are obtained and utilized, thereby strengthening the credibility of institutional self-assessment within the academic community.

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