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**Evaluation influence and the Most Significant Change (MSC) technique**

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*A story of influence: an integrated theory of influence for the Most Significant Change technique*

Evaluation is more than the sum total of its findings; it is capable of having a direct positive influence on not only those directly involved in the process, but also on an organisation as a whole. In recent years there has been an emergence of new and innovative approaches to evaluation. Such approaches have heralded a shift in focus to more participatory, qualitative research which offers a richer picture through which to both interpret the results of programs and provide valuable knowledge to guide program improvement. Such a shift is occurring against the backdrop of a discussion around the need to expand our notion of evaluation *use* to a broader notion of evaluation *influence*. Within this current discourse, this research tests the concept of evaluation *influence* through a study of the Most Significant Change Technique (MSC). This paper presents the findings of empirical research into the use of MSC by the Adventist Development Relief agency in Laos (ADRA Laos). The paper describes the observations made during the study and the subsequent theory of influence for MSC that was developed as a result. It is argued that the concept of *influence* proved useful to demonstrate the extent and impact of the technique at various levels within the organisation. Furthermore, it provided a conceptual framework through which the underlying mechanisms, outcomes and influence of MSC could be made explicit, along with the linkages and pathways between them.