



Top-Down and Bottom-Up Performance Measurement: How Do National and Local Measures Connect in Social Care?



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Background

In a number of settings, monitoring of public service performance using broad brush measures has been instigated at a national government level. However, the actual drivers to improve performance are likely to operate locally.

What links these two worlds? How does what happens at a local level translate to how organisations are rated nationally? How does this relationship vary in different settings?

Studying organisations where local issues are prominent, such as local authority social care, can help us to answer these questions, which in the past have been relatively unexamined.

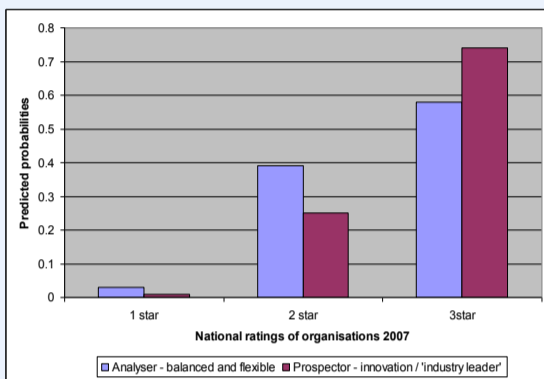


Figure 1
Influence on English National Star Ratings – the role of management strategy

What We Did

There were no UK data on how social care organisations have monitored performance locally, so we conducted national surveys of both service managers and performance 'leads' in English social care authorities and Northern Irish health and social care trusts. Data from these surveys were compared with external, national performance data and ratings. These data were compared with evidence from Japan using documentary materials and managers' views.

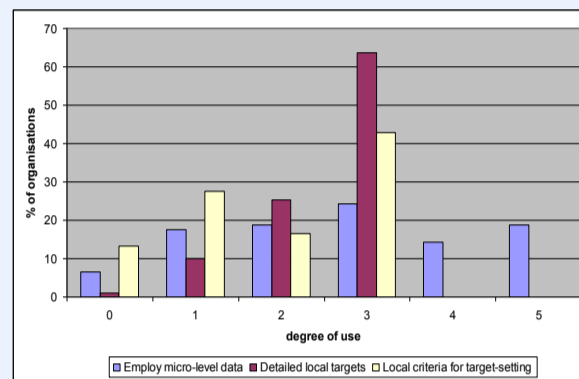


Figure 2
Use of local performance measures and processes in English social services organisations

We grouped UK organisations together in terms of their use of local, 'bespoke' measures and processes using cluster analysis. This was so that we could analyze the relationships between local measures and how organisations 'performed' at a higher level.

Aims

We examined the links between local and national performance in social care organisations in England and Northern Ireland and compared this analysis with data from Japan, where a more localized model of performance assessment operates. We aimed to find out

- What were the main drivers to achieving a high global ('star') rating in English social services councils?
- What practices could be identified in the use of local measures in England and Northern Ireland?
- How did performance practices in social care in England differ from those of Northern Ireland and Japan?

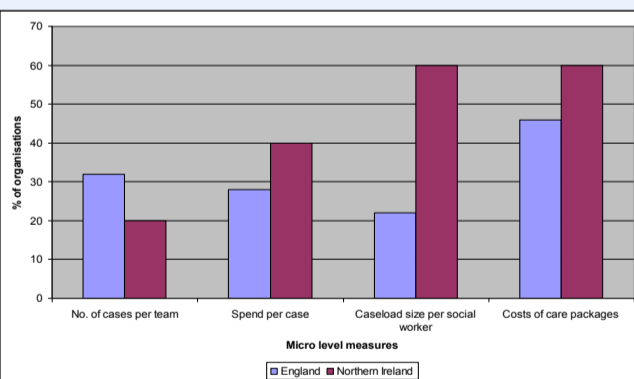


Figure 3
Prevalence of local 'micro level' measures in England and Northern Ireland

Findings

The main driver to achieving a high external ('star') rating in England was management strategy, principally a 'prospector' strategy stressing innovation and being an 'industry leader' (Figure 1). Other external factors, such as resources, were important but much less so.

English organisations varied in their use of local measures and processes; some focused attention on nationally required measures, others constructed their own measures for internal management (Figure 2). There was greater use of measures for internal management processes in Northern Ireland (Figure 3). In Japan a bespoke software tool has been used to monitor performance locally rather than primarily reporting performance nationally as in England (Figure 4).

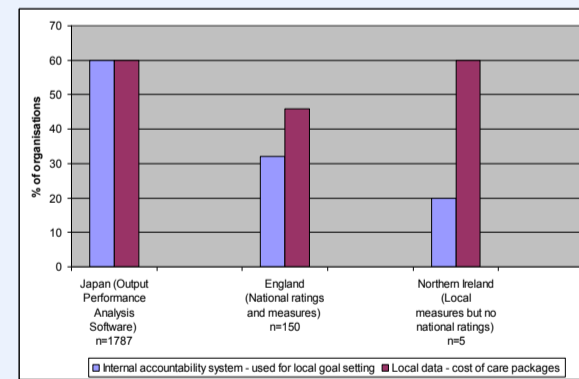


Figure 4
Comparison of social care performance measurement in three countries

Find out more...



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