

Towards an Understanding of Systemicity: an Investigation into Systems Thinking.

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Since the understanding of systemicity is seen to be very much depending on the individual's viewpoints, the view is taken that an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of systems thinking can not be developed unless different systems perspectives are heard and understood. Therefore, this paper aims at developing an understanding of systems thinking based on various perspectives resulted from an investigation into systems thinking completed by the authors.

The investigation was implemented by employing multiple methods to best achieve the purpose, and, hence, interviews, survey and focus group were applied complementarily. The interview is employed to develop an in-depth understanding of different opinions about systems thinking; while questionnaire survey is used for its ability of large coverage of samples to establish a general picture about systems thinking. The main results obtained from these investigations will be triangulated through a focus group, from which synergism and snowballing effects were hoped to be produced.

The investigation indicates that different people have different understandings of :

- systems and systems thinking,
- the relationships between systems thinking and boundary judgement, systems thinking and participation, and the whole system and the individuals within it,
- the systemicity of an approach,
- evaluating the effectiveness of systems approaches in an intervention,
- difficulties in applying systems perspectives.