SYNTHESIS OF EVALUATION CAPACITY BUILDING LITERATURE

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Labin, Duffy, Meyers & Wandersman
AEA 2010
WHY ECB SYNTHESIS?

- Growing demand for documenting program results
- Theoretical ECB literature with well-developed models
- Need to assess empirical literature
- Include and integrate concepts from existing theory and models, e.g. Preskill & Boyle; Cousins; Taylor-Ritzler, Garcia-Iriarte, & Suarez-Balcazar.
ECB INTEGRATED MODEL

I. WHY - NEED

Reasons
- Who: Internal-External
- Assumptions
- Expectations

Goals-Objectives

Resources & strengths
- Individual attitudes
- Organizational Resources: material, technological, evaluation expertise, financial
- Organizational processes, policies, practices (PPP); leadership, culture, & mainstreaming

I. WHAT - ACTIVITIES

Strategies:
- Theory, mode
- Level: individual-organizational
- Type, Content

Implementation:
- Target: population, org., domain
- Timing; frequency; dosage
- Adjustments: needs assessment, tailor to context; mid-course corrections
- Barriers

Evaluation of ECB
- Approach, design; data type, timeframe, who is conducting

III. Results-Outcomes

Short & Long term/Sustainable

Individual
- Attitudes
- Knowledge
- Behavior/skills

Organizational
- PPP,
- Leadership,
- Culture;
- Mainstreaming
- Resources

Lessons Learned

Programmatic
SYNTHESIS METHOD

- Meta-analytic principle-systematic decision rules
- *Broad-based:* included broad array of information from all designs.*

  - Evaluation Syntheses from Government Accountability Office (GAO)
    - Framework, e.g. logic model
    - Evaluation Questions
  - Guide to Community Preventive Services from CDC and used at USDHHS and other agencies

STEP 1: INCLUSION CRITERIA AND SEARCH PROCEDURES

- Our working definition of ECB as criteria:

  Evaluation capacity building (ECB) is an intentional process that aims to increase motivation, knowledge, skills, resources, and the use of evaluation at the individual, group, or organizational level.

- Databases Searches yielded final sample of 79 cases
STEP 2: EXTRACT AND CODE

- Mostly closed-ended coding form
- Coding manual for reliability among 3 coders
- Tested reliability sample between coders:
  - Kappa: 46-83; average Kappa = .66
  - Inter-coder reliability = 70-95%; average 85%
- Reliable depiction of literature
- “Other” and “Lessons Learned” open-ended
STEP 3: ANALYSIS

- Field versus Classroom empirically differed on a number of hypothesized characteristics, e.g. target pop, ind vs org level strategies and outcomes.
- Analyses separate for the two groups
STEP 3: ANALYSIS

FINDINGS

What are the goals, resources, and strengths preceding ECB efforts?

- Minimal reporting on reasons & goals: majority (75%) reported existence of goals

- Strengths:
  - Individual level: Attitudes: low
  - Organizational level:
    - Field: highest-resources and leadership support (1/3)
STEP 3: ANALYSIS
SELECTED FINDINGS

Activities: What & How-What *strategies* are being used for ECB and what *implementation* variables are being reported?

- Underlying theory-most, only some specified; most specified participatory/collaborative/empowerment, w empowerment evaluation most explicitly mentioned

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STEP 3: ANALYSIS
SELECTED FINDINGS—cont.

Type of ECB effort: Field vs. classroom

- Field - more variety, e.g. training, t/a, involvement
- Classroom - more than half only classroom

**Involvement in Evaluation**
- Field - 64%
- Classroom - 16%

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INDIVIDUAL LEVEL STRATEGIES: CONTENT

- Attitudes. Low (field-20%/classroom10%)
- Terms, approaches, or methods-<field (60%/40%)
- Logic models->field (50%/20%)
- Design or Plan an Eval->field (80%/50%)
- How to Do an Eval-near 70% both
- Interpret & use data->field (50%/25%)
ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL STRATEGIES: CONTENT

FIELD-BASED EFFORTS

- Reported Content: 51%
- Most frequent: Organizational processes, policy and practices (PPP): 39%
- Organizational Culture & Mainstreaming: 25%
- Leadership: <10%

CLASSROOM-0
IMPLEMENTATION

- Population & Organization
  - Field: staff in non-profits & public, e.g. schools
  - Classroom: students at universities
  - Domains: Education and Health
    - Field: 67%; Classroom: 52%

- Adjustments
  - More needs assessments, tailoring & mid-course corrections for field-based
EVALUATION OF ECB

- About half had some evaluation of ECB
- Over half “case studies”
- Strength: multiple data collection methods-for field group
- Weakness: weak designs, virtually no quantitative data reported (no exp, 3 quasi)
- Three cited instruments-rare discussion of measurement
Some Individual Level Outcomes-90%

Positive Attitudes (1 item): Field: 36%; Classroom 26%

Knowledge & Behavioral Items:
- Hire/work w evaluator
- Concepts, approaches, & method
- Logic Models
- Plan or Design Eval
- How to Do Eval
- Interpret and Use Data

Knowledge: Field : 52%; Classroom 53%

Behavior: Field : 80%; Classroom 63%
## ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL OUTCOMES

### FIELD-BASED EFFORTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>% REPORTING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Org Outcomes Overall</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process, Policies, Practices (PPP)</td>
<td>72%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>46%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Org Culture</td>
<td>28%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mainstreaming</td>
<td>54%</td>
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</table>
CONCLUSIONS

- Need adequate resources to launch and sustain
- Classroom needs > participation in eval for > behavioral skills
- Lessons Learned: Process eval & intermediate findings, use of logic models, tailoring to org culture & situation
CONCLUSIONS cont.

- Empirical Lit reflects ECB Theory Lit
- Empirical Lit adds to Theory
  - Collaborative relationship throughout
  - Programmatic Outcomes
- Synthesis method produces reliable evidence base for lit w narrative accounts & variety of data & methods
CONCLUSIONS cont.

- ECB past infancy - ready for common measures & stronger designs
- The coding/operationalization of concepts empirical basis for measures for ECB, i.e. strategies & outcomes
- Include funders in ECB training and learning efforts
THANK YOU

For questions or comments please contact
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