Data Connections

Thursday, April 24, 2014 Workshops

Researcher-Evaluator Collaboration

Hosted by Wendy Smith, John Sutton, Xin Wang

Notes from Session 1, 1:45-3:15

What are key questions for researchers and evaluators to consider when planning a project?

- Formal agreement with school partners on data access and use/have schools on team
- Data considerations for evaluation and research (use the logic model to guide you)
- Clear understanding of roles of research and evaluation
- How to deal with attrition (missing data)
- Recognize differences between research and evaluation questions
- Specify the analysis methods that will be used

What are key considerations for researchers and evaluators related to data collection?

- IRB
- Who administers pre/post – comfort with strangers
- Administration protocol
- How to link datasets?
- Protocol for data collection? Do we do this?
  Who owns the data?
- Point of contact for data issues?
  Plan for Quality Control of data?
  How/where store data? Long-term?
- Effects and contracts (administrators change – don’t honor previous agreements)
- Set up/clean/maintain relational datasets?
- Quality control codebook – controlled file only one person edits
- Confidentiality agreement for anyone working with the data – make sure it is signed
- Ways to share data sets – need access across projects and years

What are key considerations for researchers & evaluators when analyzing data and reporting on these analyses?

- Everything already done should drive the analysis
- Does each group have a well-defined analysis plan?
- What journals do we target for publishing?
• Who will lead the reporting and writing on the findings?
• Discussion about authorship order?
• Will we be releasing reports to participants and to the general public?
• Plan and timeline – figured at the front end.
• Discussions about disaggregation of sub-groups
• Research and Evaluation use the same abbreviations or labels

How can researchers & evaluators better collaborate?

• Have them engaged from the beginning – need to have the PIs, evaluators, and researchers involved at the outset
• The TEAM needs to include the full roles being involved. Are there gaps in your team? – Representations in public schools
• Time and effort including money – if no time allocated – nothing will get done.
• Continues through life of project, not just at the beginning
• Institutions often don’t have seed money – no overhead to plan the next grant
• There are a variety of ways to communicate – lots of texting going on – when do you meet (even virtually) when you are in remote locations?
• Ways to document communication

Notes from Session 2, 3:45-5:15

What are key questions for researchers and evaluators to consider when planning a project?

• Evaluators and researchers work together on questions
• Clear roles and responsibilities for research and evaluation
• Data collection, sharing, ways to minimize impact on participants
• Sharing agreements/data collection agreements
• Understanding timelines (planning, data collection)
• Data Management Plan
• Project Goals discussed together

What are key considerations for researchers and evaluators related to data collection?

• Fidelity – buy in
• Cross-site evaluation – access to that data
• What kind of format you want the data in – a whole districts data in pdfs- not useful.
• Prevent mistakes and re-entries.
• Consistent time for data collection – especially for longitudinal
• Use team expertise
• Plan together
• Unintended errors in instruments
• How to handle missing data

What are key considerations for researchers & evaluators when analyzing data and reporting on these analyses?

• Effect of classroom context on student performance with data analysis
• Exploring the data set while doing analysis
• Who are you reporting to and what their use is
• different reports for different groups
• Have multiple plans (back up data analysis plans)