L’avaluació participativa: Tapping the power of youth

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Overview

• Background on Collaborative Approaches to Evaluation (CAE)
• Youth Participatory Evaluation (YPE)
• Principles for CAE
• Moving the principles forward
  – Practical use and application
  – Ongoing inquiry
Background on Collaborative Approaches to Evaluation
Terms

• Evaluation: Systematic inquiry to **judge** the merit, worth or significance of a [program]; provide evidence for decision making.

• Collaborative approach to evaluation (CAE): evaluation where trained evaluators **work in partnership with** members of the program community to produce evaluative knowledge.
Members of the CAE Family

- Collaborative evaluation
- Contribution analysis
- Deliberative-democratic evaluation
- Development evaluation
- Empowerment evaluation
- Most significant change technique
- Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA)
- Participatory action research (PAE)
- Participatory eval (practical, transformative)
- Utilization-focused evaluation
Why do CAE?

• Solve practical problems (pragmatic, instrumental)
• Skill building/capacity building, working toward self-determination and action (political, transformative)
• Develop understanding and meaning (philosophical, epistemology)
• *(Ethical responsibility?)*
Two Streams of Participatory Evaluation

• Transformative Participatory Evaluation (T-PE)
  ➢ Emancipatory, empowerment-oriented

• Practical Participatory Evaluation (P-PE)
  ➢ Utilization-oriented, problem solving
CAE: When to do it?

- Formative, improvement-oriented context (arguable)
- Reasonable consensus on issues (arguable)
- Commitment is there: organizational, program practitioner, community.
- Sufficient resource base of time, money and personnel.
Who contributes what?

• Evaluator/evaluation team
  – Standards of professional practice
  – Evaluation logic, knowledge skill
  – *(Content / context knowledge)*

• Non-evaluator stakeholders
  – Knowledge of program context
  – Knowledge of program function
  – *(Evaluation logic)*
What does it look like?

3 Dimensions of Collaborative Inquiry

- **Who controls?** technical decision making (evaluator vs. stakeholder)
- **Stakeholder selection?** for participation in knowledge production (diverse vs. limited)
- **How deep?** stakeholder participation (involved in all aspects of inquiry vs. involved as a source for consultation)
(b) Diversity among stakeholders selected for participation

(a) Control of technical decision making

Stakeholder

Consultation

Limited

Diverse

Evaluator

Deep Participation

(c) Depth of participation

LEGEND:

P-PE - Practical Participatory Evaluation
T-PE - Transformative Participatory Evaluation
SBE - Stakeholder-based Evaluation
Principles for CAE

• The case for principles for collaborative approaches to evaluation (CAE)
  – Growing family of collaborative approaches
  – Recent developments of concern
  – Primacy of context over approaches/models/methods
  – Essentiality of fluidity and adaptability
Developments of Concern

1. **Compartmentalization** of different collaborative approaches to evaluation (CAE)
   - Empowerment evaluation
   - Participatory evaluation
   - Collaborative evaluation
Developments of Concern

2. Rule-Base Decision-Making

- Appropriate for novices
- Less useful for those who have,
  - experience
  - ‘mind maps’,
  - ‘thought webs’
  - ‘schema’ around the complexity of conducting evaluation.
Developments of Concern

3. Visual representation of theory
   - Logic model approach
     • Transformative participatory evaluation
     • Practical participatory evaluation
   - Approach vs. model
Flow

Call for Collaborative Inquiry

Context

- What control should I have over the evaluation process?
- Who should participate?
- How engaged should participants be?

Accountability/Outcome/Impact
Formative/Improvement
Capacity Building
Process Use
Developmental
Knowledge Exchange

Shulha (2010); Cousins, Whitmore & Shulha (2013)
Youth Participatory Evaluation
Youth Empowerment

• From deficit to asset; youth as part of the solution
• Youth as social change agents
• Roles “far in advance of their development”
• Become “who they were not”
• Process as important as results
Why YPE?

• More likely to take serious when ‘real’
• Closer to day-to-day realities than outsiders
• Adaptable to age groups
Factors Supporting YPE

• Supportive adult facilitators
• Opportunities for creating and performing multiple roles
• Engage in activities that can change relationship between youth and community
Adapted from Nan Wehipeihana, 2017
Long view of YPE

- Reshape field of evaluation
- Contribution to democratic dialogue
- Move from ‘engage in knowledge production’ to ‘produce environments that support ongoing growth/change’
Principles to Guide Collaborative Approaches to Evaluation
Principles for CAE

What are principles?

• A foundation for a
  – system of belief
  – system of behaviour or
  – chain of reasoning.

• Pragmatic tools that can encourage readers to extrapolate relevance to different cases.

• Rich, high-level counsel that can support decision making in unfamiliar or undetermined contexts.

• Empirically grounded theory
  – Built from lessons based in evidence about how to accomplish some desired result
Method (N=320)

• What are the top 3 reasons why this collaborative approach to evaluation was ‘highly successful’ / ‘less successful than hoped’?

• Provide more detail about the project (e.g., purpose, context, and other reasons).
Principles to Guide Collaborative Approaches to Evaluation

- **Principles**: eight principles derived entirely from the empirical data
- **Contributing Factors**: each principle was broken down into several contributing factors
- **Themes**: each contributing factor is broken down into a set of themes
- **Quotations**: each theme is supported by verbatim quotations from participants (successful / unsuccessful)
What are Quality Principles?


“For excellence in the systematic and rigorous development of a set of principles, I know of no better example than the principles for use in guiding collaborative approaches to evaluation.” (Chapter 31)
An Integrated Set of Principles for Use in Guiding Collaborative Approaches to Evaluation

- Clarify Motivation for Collaboration
- Foster Meaningful Relationships
- Develop a Shared Understanding of the Program
- Promote Appropriate Participatory Processes
- Monitor and Respond to Resource Availability
- Monitor Evaluation Progress and Quality
- Promote Evaluative Thinking
- Follow Through to Realize Use

Principles to Guide Collaborative Approaches to Evaluation
Principle: Clarify Motivation for Collaboration

“The sponsor of the evaluation wrote an RFP asking specifically for a collaborative approach & I described in detail what that meant to me.”
Principle: Foster Meaningful Relationships

“We may be the evaluation experts, but they are subject matter [program content] experts and both are very important.”
Principle: Develop a Shared understanding of the Program

“The evaluator helped project leaders articulate their program objectives and learning outcomes for participants.”
Principle: Promote Appropriate Participatory Processes

“Staff was involved at all levels from design decisions, to data collection, to findings presentations.”
The program manager was able to devote 25% of paid work time towards the evaluation . . . . It was not something extra.”
“Due to lack of experience on my part as a young evaluator I did not engage the client in troubleshooting problems as they arose as much as I should have and they spiralled out of control, resulting in inconsistent data collection across sites, and problems with the quality of the data collected.”
The organization was committed to the evaluation and very open about its strengths and weaknesses in doing the work.”
“There was a great deal of process learning: stakeholders were given a chance to reflect on their program by being involved in creating the logic model and identifying evaluation questions. They said often that this was just as, or even more helpful than the final report summarizing findings.”
Moving the CAE Principles Forward
Use and Application

- Retrospective analysis and critique
- Prospective planning, framing, doing
- Education/training design & delivery
- Evaluation policy review
- Cross cultural translation/use
- Framework for research on evaluation
- Other?? (e.g., conference synthesis)
Practical Resources

- Brochure document
- Indicators document
Ongoing Inquiry

• In what ways can/do the principles support evaluation practice?

• To what extent can these principles help to plan, or offer guidance throughout the process?

• To what extent can these principles inform stakeholders or educate non-evaluators?

• To what extent are they responsive to contextual complexities?
Ongoing Inquiry

• Do the principles align with existing approaches of evaluation? Do some principles more than others complement these models?

• Are the principles useful to novice evaluators? Or are they best reserved for evaluators with experience?

• Do the principles resonate in cross-cultural contexts?
Toward compendia of field studies

• You are invited!

• Criteria:
  – Field trial must implicate program community partners working with evaluators in evaluation knowledge production
  – Field trial by definition implicates systematic inquiry and evidence generation
Thank you
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