Types of Evaluation:
A Basic Training

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Purpose of this training

• Provide a basic overview of evaluation approaches
  – Implementation research
  – Outcome and impact evaluations
    • Descriptive studies
    • Correlational studies
    • Causal studies
Logic model

Target population → Resources/inputs → Activities → Outcomes → Long-term impact

Eligibility criteria → Funding Staffing Administration → Services Supports Dosage Intensity → Intermediate changes → Targeted “ultimate” changes

Contextual factors
Types of evaluation

Implementation research:
Feasibility and fidelity

Outcome and impact evaluations:
Monitoring outcomes and testing effectiveness

Target population
Inputs and resources
Activities / strategies
Intermediate expected outcomes
Long-term outcomes and impacts

Intervention specification / refinement
Implementation research

• Purposes
  – Assess feasibility and replicability
  – Identify activities in need of refinement
  – Hypothesis formation
  – Assess fidelity to program model
  – Measure activities

• Common methods
  – Document reviews
  – Case studies
  – Focus groups
Outcome and impact evaluations

• Three general categories
  – Descriptive
  – Correlational
  – Causal

• Differences
  – Describing and monitoring program progress versus assessing effectiveness
  – Use of a comparison group and how the comparison group is formed
Descriptive studies

- Purposes
  - Describe characteristics of the target population and program participants
  - Examine outcomes over time for population or program participants

- Limitations
  - Purely descriptive; does not assess effectiveness
  - No comparison group
Example of descriptive analysis

- Describes conditions
- Establishes patterns
- Helps refine hypotheses about possible solutions

Correlational studies

• Purposes
  – Describe outcomes of different groups or different conditions
  – Identify associations between conditions and outcomes
  – Hypothesis refinement
  – Indicator of readiness to test hypotheses

• Common methods
  – Pre-post analysis using administrative and/or survey data
  – Multivariate analyses

• Limitations and pitfalls
  – Cannot demonstrate causal relationship
  – Often misinterpreted and used to demonstrate success
Example of correlational analysis

- Describes pattern of outcomes
- Identifies association between conditions and outcomes
- Helps refine hypotheses without establishing causality

### Expulsion increases with student-teacher ratios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student-Teacher Ratios</th>
<th>Percentage of Children Expelled</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 8</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 to 9</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 to 11</td>
<td>10.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>12 and up</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Expulsion increases with student-teacher ratios.
Causal studies

• Purpose
  – **ONLY way to determine effectiveness—did it work?**
    • Compare treatment and control groups that are the same before implementation
    • Able to assess what would have happened in the absence of the intervention

• Methods
  – Random assignment
  – Quasi-experimental
Example of causal analysis

- Describes outcomes for participants and control group
- Identifies causal relationship between participation and outcomes

High School Completion Rate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program 1</th>
<th>Program 2</th>
<th>Program 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program participants</td>
<td>Control group</td>
<td></td>
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Percentage

0 20 40 60 80 100

Program 1  Program 2  Program 3
Six questions for choosing an evaluation approach

1. What is the purpose and who is the audience?
2. What is the project trying to accomplish? How?
3. What are the research questions?
4. What types and sources of data can address each research question?
5. What is the evaluation budget?
6. When do we need the findings?