SI 623 - Outcome-Based Evaluation of Programs and Services, Winter 2009

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SI 623:  
Outcome Based Evaluation (OBE): CONTEXTUAL Approaches

Winter 2009  
Wk 2 JAN 27, 2009  
Introduction & Changing Evaluation Landscape  
Toward effective outcome evaluation  
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The Early (Wrong-Headed) “Outcome” Study funded by IMLS. Steffan et al (2002)

Contextual intro from last week.
Above was Table 16. General Information Outcomes from the Counting on Results study conducted by Lance, et al. The table can be found on page 66 of the report at http://www.lrs.org/documents/cor/CoR_FullFinalReport.pdf
Above was a Basic Literacy Postcard Survey used in the Counting on Results study conducted by Lance, et al. The survey can be found on page 74 of the instruction manual at [http://www.lrs.org/documents/cor/manual2.pdf](http://www.lrs.org/documents/cor/manual2.pdf).
Above was Table 13. Basic Literacy Outcomes from the Counting on Results study conducted by Lance, et al. The table can be found on page 50 of the report at http://www.lrs.org/documents/cor/CoR_FullFinalReport.pdf
Above was a Business & Career Info Outcomes Postcard Survey used in the Counting on Results study conducted by Lance, et al. The survey can be found on page 75 of the instruction manual at http://www.lrs.org/documents/cor/manual2.pdf.
Above was Table 14. Business & Career Information Outcomes from the Counting on Results study conducted by Lance, et al. The table can be found on page 51 of the report at http://www.lrs.org/documents/cor/CoR_FullFinalReport.pdf
Let’s look at Outcomes Logic Models

- Logic Model: “A Theory of action” that describes the program is and what it does/will do, including:
- INPUTS: resources, contributions, investments that go into the program
- OUTPUTS: documentation of activities, services, events and products that reach participants or those who are targeted
- OUTCOMES: results or changes for individuals, groups, communities, organizations, communities, or systems
The First Outcomes Logic Model: Developed by United Way

Project Outcome Model

INPUTS → ACTIVITIES → OUTPUTS → OUTCOMES

http://national.unitedway.org/outcomes/resources/mpo/

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Outcomes Reflect Personal, Family, Community Gains:

- Learning
- Intellectual, emotional & social growth
- Personal health and safety
- People’s confidence
- Individual skill building
- Safe, thriving neighborhoods
- Civic engagement
- The quality of life in the community
- Building the community
Outcomes Mandate & HLLH-2005

- Built on IMLS-funded study
- Presents a 4 step model designed to help identify the outcomes of specific services.
- HLLH Includes a variety of case studies showing the outcomes of specific programs (such as literacy, afterschool technology programs for teens, immigrant services, community information programs).
- Premise: Outcome data must be collected from users.
- Premise: Outcomes are specific to a program but not unique to it.
Understanding Context: A key to Identifying Outcomes

A contextual approach builds on what is known now and helps evaluator find out:

- **Who** uses what specific services and their component activities
- **The needs** that participants bring to the program/service
- **How many** use this service/program?
- **In what ways** (how) do they use it?
- **What** is it about this service, activity, resource (including the staff or the building itself) that makes a difference (including hunches)
- **What differences** does it make? (hunches, stories----> outcomes)

Lesson: Approach the Logic Model Wisely
Some Ways HLLH Found that Libs & Librarians Help

**Access:** Increase access to information, knowledge, culture

**Savings:** Save people time, money, & energy

**Place:** Provide a safe, comfortable, accommodating, and nurturing environment

**Attitudes:** Change attitudes and perceptions about libraries, librarians, community, etc.

**Personal Efficacy:** Foster personal efficacy gains (self esteem, confidence, etc.)

**Problem-solving:** Help people progress toward a goal or solve a problem

**Skills:** Facilitate increased skills (Internet, literacy, language, communication, social, coping, etc.)

**Learning:** Foster learning or knowledge gains (including fostering active involvement in learning—“lifelong learning” “information literacy”)

**Connections:** Help people make connections (with ideas, people, to a larger world)

**Engagement:** Foster community connectedness (increased social capital, become more informed or involved as a citizen)

**Advancement:** Facilitate status changes (people prepare to get a job, become a citizen, decide to return to school)

**Community:** Foster community building (civic problem-solving, partnerships, collaboration)
Contextual Factors of Teen Technology Programs: The teen users

- **Users: Teens** in Flint & **pre-teens** in Austin (ages 8-12) who live in poor ‘digital divide’ neighborhoods.
- Flint and Austin participants sought program to gain skills they thought they needed.
- **Flint teens:**
  - were nominated by school counselors as underachievers
  - made an academic year commitment & received a stipend for participating 5 hours/week
- **Austin pre-teens.**
  - Drop-In after school.
  - Latch-key kids who come and stay (and stay) requiring librarians to devise non-computer activities while kids wait for computer availability.
Contextual Factors of Teen Technology Programs: Library Activities and Staff

Flint—CIAO
Intensive academic year computer training program.
- **Inputs:** Multipurpose computer lab for after-school & 1 Sat AM session;
- **Food.**
- **Model:** Number of teen participants limited:
- **Activities:** Intensive hands-on interactive technology training. Project learning. Community focused activities & project. Periodic celebrations.
- **Staff:** Skilled youth librarians. Instruction, coaching; interaction w community leaders. Mentors. Admired by participants.

Austin—WFY
**Drop-in use of computers**
- **Inputs:** Six computers/branch devoted solely to kid use. Adjacent to homework center.
- **Food.**
- **Model:** Computer time limited to 30 minutes. First come-first served. Can’t save work.
- **Activities:** Informal environment; ‘drop-ins’ after school; hands-on instruction as needed; Staff developed activities for those waiting.
- **Staff:** Newly hired staff. Mentors. Admired by participants.
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**Flint Outcome: Technical Skills (Some Expected)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes: Gaining technical skills</th>
<th>Activities that foster technical skill development</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Participants gain technical skills, including:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ability to use a computer</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Skill in using selected software products</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Evaluate the quality of Internet resources</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ability to use a digital camera</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Use software to create own digital art</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Ability to use scanner; import scanned images into web page.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Community-focused web-site development</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Communicated using software</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Trouble-shooting skills</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• 5 hours/week hands-on instruction by staff (after-school and Sat AM)</td>
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<td>• Followed a creative and detailed curriculum designed to hone Internet evaluation and creation skills</td>
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<td>• Community-focused project-based learning</td>
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<td>• Some team learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Used games to teach technology concepts</td>
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<td>• Mentoring by experienced teens</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Encouraged participants to use technology to express themselves &amp; communicate</td>
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Range of After-School Com.Tech. Prog Outcomes.
Note: Outcomes grow out of local context (kids, staff, service design, program goals, activities)

Flint & Austin Participants Experienced:
- **Technology skill gains (expected)**
- The library as a safe place for kids
- Perception changes about librarians
- Personal efficacy gains (sense of self-confidence, responsibility, etc.)
- Communication gains
- Active learning outcomes
- Family outcomes
- Broadened world-view

Flint Participants, In Addition, Experienced:
- Social skill gains
- Increased knowledge of the community
- A growth in community pride
- Increased civic engagement
- Broadened social networks
- Increased social capital
The Outcomes of Flint PL’sTeen Technology Program

C.I.A.O. Community Technology Program Tree removed

The C.I.A.O. Community Technology Program Tree can be found at http://ibec.ischool.washington.edu/teen_programs.php
Contextual Factors: Immigrant “needs”

- Gain language facility (job, communicate with teachers, medical personnel, etc.)
- Maintain own language and pass on to children
- Become more “American”
- Get around in a strange land and community
- Get help getting connected to a community service for a family member or self
- Get a job
- Solve a neighborhood problem
- Become a citizen
- Maintain cultural heritage
Contextual Factors, Queens PL: Activities for Immigrants

- Immigrant Services--the Adult Learner Program (ESOL and Literacy) and the New Americans Program (NAP)
- Services and materials provided in multiple languages.
- Staff in aggregate are multi-lingual.
- **Activities** include:
  - New Americans Program hosted **88 cultural events** and **37 coping skills workshops** which were attended by 7,405 people.
  - **ESOL classes** conducted at various levels;
  - **tutoring**;
  - **conversation groups**;
  - **workshops** on coping skills of various sorts);
  - **collaboration** with community organizations.
  - Extensive **marketing** using ethnic media.
Expected Outcomes of ESOL Programs

- Improved language facility
Figure 1. Progression of Outcomes Found in QBPL New Americans and Adult Learner Programs removed

Figure 1 can be found in the “Queens Borough Public Library New Americans (NAP) and Programs Case Study Report” at http://www.si.umich.edu/~durrance/casestudies/casestudyreports/QueensReport.html
623 2009 Projects

- Lakewood Elementary School Media Center
- Chelsea DL 6-11 Club after school program
- Community Action Network Homework Help Programs
- Canton PL Teen Programs
- Eastern Michigan University Academic Projects Center
- EMU Information Literacy Project
- Chelsea Programming Partnerships
- Ann Arbor District Library Programming Partnerships
- Ypsilanti District Library Public Programs
- CEW Women of Color TF Annual Career Conference
- Canton PL Books by Mail Service
A Logic Model Resource Site

- University of Wisconsin Cooperative Extension-Program Development & Evaluation Division

- [http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/evallogicmodel.html](http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/evallogicmodel.html)