Measuring Impact Using Innovative Qualitative Methods

Meghan Cizek, LCSW
Jessica Sprague-Jones, PhD
Center for Public Partnerships and Research

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Overview

• Qualitative approaches in evaluation
  • Qualitative versus quantitative
  • Data collection and analysis

• Case study: Kansas CBCAP evaluation
  • Research questions and data sources
  • Story collection and sensemaking
  • Ripple effects mapping

• Discussion
Use of qualitative methods in evaluation
What is quantitative data?

• Quantitative methods collect data that are numeric.

• Data collected with quantitative methods are used to answer questions with a number, such as:
  • How many?
  • How often?
  • To what extent?

• Collecting and making sense of this type of data requires you to have a clear understanding of the problem, or goal, and what question you want to ask.

• Example: Protective Factors Surveys
Quantitative data collection

• Surveys
• Assessments
• Financial and administrative data
What is qualitative data?

• Qualitative data is information that cannot be counted or easily expressed numerically.

• Qualitative data answers questions that cannot be answered with a number, such as:
  • Why?
  • How?
  • What is the process?
  • What does it mean?

• Provides the opportunity to understand what you should be looking for
• Helps you answer the questions you didn’t know to ask.
• Provides context for quantitative results
Qualitative data collection

• Interviews

• Focus groups

• Document review

• Innovative techniques like ripple effects mapping and sensemaking
What about open text boxes?

- Be cautious in your use of open text boxes in surveys
  - Asks the respondent to make a pronounced mental shift
  - Questions can be easy to misinterpret and responses can be difficult to analyze
  - Using too many can communicate to your respondent that you don’t care about their time

- If you feel a pull toward the open text box, ask yourself: “have I clearly identified the information I need?” and “is fielding a survey the way to get it?”
Why would you incorporate qualitative data in your evaluation?

• Right tool for the job
  • Answers the questions you have

• Triangulation

• Helps you draw conclusions based on imperfect data

• Offers opportunities to partner with your respondents on analysis
Qualitative analysis

• Don’t let it intimidate you!

• Articulate a research question

• Respect your respondents’ expertise
Qualitative analysis

CODE

CLUSTER

CONCLUSIONS
Qualitative analysis

- Transcription is easier and cheaper than ever
- Try to have more than one coder
- Don’t make qualitative data quantitative
  - Try not focus on how many people said one thing versus another.
  - Focus on content, meaning, and how the data speak to your research question
Questions and discussion

• How do you currently use qualitative data in your evaluations – or do you?

• What has been helpful?

• What has been a challenge?

• What would you like to be able to do, but haven't been sure how?

• Do you have any questions about what I have presented here?
Case Study: Kansas CBCAP
Kansas CBCAP Evaluation Questions

• In what ways are CBCAP programs cultivating safe, stable, and nurturing relationships?

• How are CBCAP programs contributing to early intervention for children?

• How are CBCAP program promoting cross-sector partnerships and coordination to address comprehensive needs of families (such as food and housing security)?

• How are CBCAP programs increasing protective factors for families?

• How are CBCAP programs fostering community engagement?
Kansas CBCAP Evaluation

• Protective Factors-2 Retrospective (and Spanish version)

• Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3 and ASQ-SE)

• Family Well-Being Survey

• Ripple Effects Mapping

• Our Tomorrows Prevention Framework & Sensemaking
Goal of Story Collection

1. Capture experiences from the family perspective to understand:
   - Facilitators and barriers to family well-being
   - Family connections to and coordination between supports and services
   - Experiences of seeking and receiving help in and from their community

2. Conduct community sensemaking to:
   - Interpret trends in stories and the associated data from the perspective of community members
   - Understand the impact of CBCAP programs in the community
   - Identify key levers of system change to strengthen services and share with other sites
   - Identify opportunities to strengthen CBCAP services, outreach, and the community system
Thinking about how it looks and feels to live in your community, tell us about a recent experience you or your family had that helps show what life is typically like for you. Your brief story could be about a recent moment when you felt strong and thriving, or about a challenge you often encounter that makes it hard to get ahead. Tell us a little bit about what happened.
WHAT CAN COMMUNITY SENSEMAKING DO FOR THE CBCAP EVALUATION?

- **DETECT**... the patterns, gaps, and opportunities in the stories/data
- **DECIPHER**... the experiences and associated meanings
- **DECIDE**... the lessons, questions, and actions that follow
Building Upon the PFS-2 with Ripple Effects Mapping
Kansas CBCAP PFS-2 Retro Insights

- Data aggregated across all programs
- Practitioner/caregiver relationship strongest protective factor across programs
  - Serving as a protective factor in 77% of CBCAP service recipients
- PFS-2 data illuminated the path for further exploration

**PFS-2 Retro Results**
Participants in CBCAP programming noted the following protective factors after services.

- Social Supports: 65%
- Family Functioning & Resilience: 74%
- Practitioner/Caregiver Relationship: 77%
Ripple Effects Mapping

- Participatory visual approach to evaluation
- Engages providers, program recipients, and key community partners
- Utilizes mind mapping approaches
- Promotes reflection, curiosity, and innovation
- Yields a more nuanced understanding of the impact
Ripple Effects Mapping

Three components of sessions

1. Peer Interviewing/Appreciative Inquiry
2. Whole Group Discussion/Reflection
3. Mind Mapping/Radiant Thinking
Peer Interviewing/Appreciative Inquiry

• Engage peers to identify current experiences with program and future possibilities – acknowledge both positives and negatives

• Purpose: Lay foundation for visual mapping

• Materials: Structured interviews
Group Discussion/ Reflection

• Report results from peer interviews and reflect on shared understandings, hear others’ perspective that can be used to inform future practice within the program

• Purpose: Will be the focus of visual mapping process
Mind Mapping/Radiant Thinking

• Peer-to-peer interviews occur, and participants are asked to identify report what they identify as important effects

• Purpose: Visualize the effects of the program and capture event chains to specific outcomes or alternatives
Takeaways and Benefits

• Using REM has been shown to reinvigorate those who participate in the process

• Identify what is possible and real ways to make it happen

• Provide new perspectives to programs

• Draw clear connections between actions and outcomes
Results

The Levers of Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention

- An extension of the family system
- Being seen as someone who can be relied upon
- Facilitating mindset shift
- Hardship disruptor
- People like to be able to share their stories

- Celebrating achievements
- Dreaming, brainstorming, problem solving
- Modeling skills
- Increased quality of social support
- Trust = support
- Increased help seeking
- Connecting families to resources
- Growing the network of helpers
- Systems change connections
- Educating others as to what Kansas is doing

- Decreasing stigma
- Providers
- Family-level
- Community wide

- Strategically supporting populations
- Providing native language support
- Be disparity identifiers and speak out about it
- Preventing financial hardship
- Reducing social isolation
- Navigating the system
- Coping ahead
- Story telling for systems change
- Stories as validation
How are CBCAP providers promoting quality social supports?

- Encouraging people to share their stories
- Providing opportunities for providing peer support
- Leveraging relationships with families to help them become service connected
- Leveraging relationships with community members to grow the network of helpers

“We are bringing more people into the circle of support and helping people understand that providing basic needs is a maltreatment prevention strategy.”
How are CBCAP providers supporting positive family functioning?

• Helping caregivers learn new skills that they can apply to parenting

• Modeling essential skills:
  • Coping
  • Problem-solving
  • Parenting

• Leveraging proximity to the family to prevent crisis from resulting in family de-stabilization

• Increasing trust in service providers

• Decreasing help-seeking stigma

“We are helping families feel validated and less alone. It inspires them to help others, and translating the skills they learned onto others.”
How are CBCAP providers promoting a quality relationship with caregivers?

- Providers are operating as an extension of the family support system by:
  - Being a listening ear
  - Validating caregivers
  - Celebrating achievements with families
  - Problem-solving
  - Dreaming and brainstorming

“Providers naturally become a part of the client’s lives. [Clients are] seeing the provider as a vital member of their support system. [We are] sitting at the table and dreaming with them. Caregivers are developing self-esteem and problem solving skills and making better decisions.”
What are the CBCAP behaviors and actions that promote protective factors?

• Serving as an extension of the family system
• Being seen as someone who can be relied upon
• Building community relationships and capacity-building
• Facilitating story-sharing
• Disrupting hardship for families
• Facilitating mindset shifts
• Identifying and calling out disparities
Key Insights

• Gained important context about how providers are promoting protective factors

• Generated descriptive data about *how* protective factors are working

• Leveled the data playing field
  
  • Provided nuanced data, particularly for rural grantees that do not have high numbers of quantitative data
Discussion

• What questions do you have for us?

• How has (or how might) your state used other types of evaluation data to complement or further describe PFS-2 results?

• What are some opportunities to use PFS-2 results differently in future evaluation efforts?

• How might story or narrative data pair with PFS-2 data?
Thank you!

Jessica Sprague-Jones, Ph.D
Meghan Cizek, MA, LCSW
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