

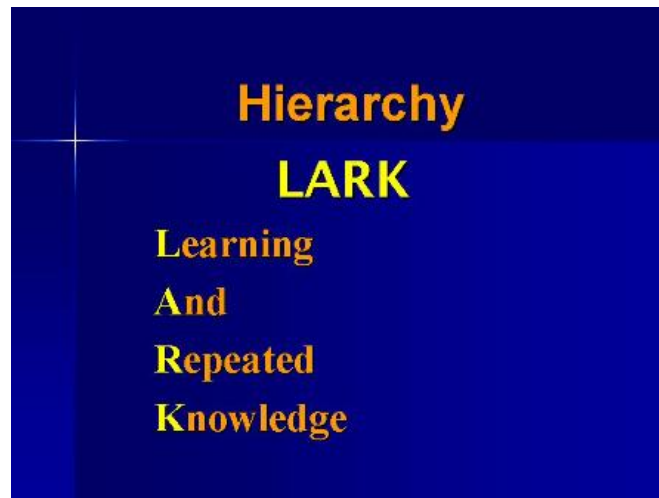
Chapter 8. Action Research and Evaluation in Community Development

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BEHAVIOR OBJECTIVES

After studying this chapter and completing the online learning activities, students should be able to

1. Assemble and use a "tool box" of the components needed for action research and evaluation.
2. Articulate frameworks of action research and evaluation relevant to community development.
3. Understand the importance of logic models and theories of change for evaluation.
4. Identify and discuss the different types of evaluation.
5. Describe a project-driven approach to evaluation.
6. Understand and differentiate between research methods, and determine the most appropriate research methods for a project.
7. Apply the concepts of triangulation to research methods and analysis.
8. Assess the credibility and ethics of evaluation research.



LARK Activity 8.1

Step 1. Select the best answer to each of the following questions.

Robinson and Green
Introduction to Community Development
Online Learning Modules

1. Process evaluation is concerned with the way plans are put together, who is or is not involved, and for recommendations for improvement.

True*, False

2. Process evaluation gives special attention:

- a. to partnerships that may be formed.
- b. to the content and delivery of workshops.
- c. to the characteristics of participants in project activities.
- d. to all of the above. *
- e. to none of the above.

3. One of the strengths of census data is that it fits well with community boundaries.

True, False*

4. One of the primary reasons for conducting evaluation is to justify costs to local organizations and especially to funding partners.

True*, False

5. Most project evaluations focus on only one method of evaluation.

True, False*

6. The American Evaluation Association's guiding principles includes the following topics: competence, integrity and honesty, respect for people, and responsibilities to the welfare of the general public.

True*, False.



SOAR Activity 8.1

Prepare a short essay on similarities and differences of:

- **Stringer's Community-Based Action Research (Figure 8.1)**
- **Stoecker's Project-Based Research Framework (Figure 8.2)**
- **The Basic Logic Model (Figure 8.3)**

- Step 1.** Study the text material for each of the research models, Figure 8.1, 8.2, and 8.3.
- Step 2.** Write a short essay of 200 words, one page, describing the advantages of each model.
- Step 3.** Share your essays with four or five classmates and then with your instructor.

SOAR Activity 8.2

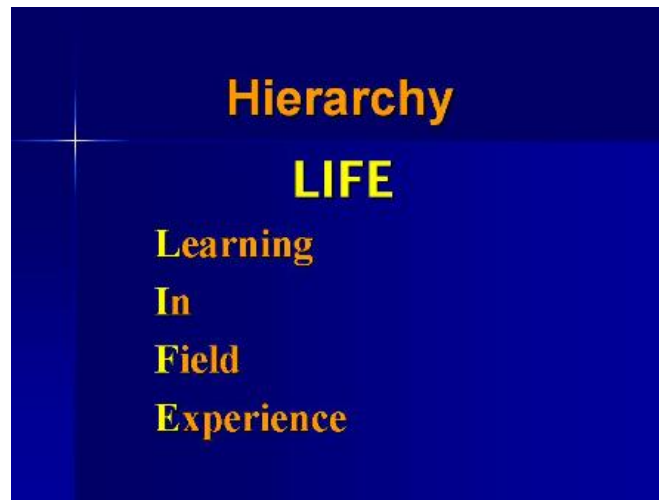
Understanding the five types of evaluation, Table 8.1

- Step 1.** Study Table 8.1, and the written material in the text to assure that you understand the advantages and contributions for each of the five types of evaluation. Be sure you understand how each type of evaluations relate to and complements other types.

SOAR Activity 8.3

Understanding how participatory evaluation research empowers community organizations.

- Step 1.** Study each of the three steps in Fetterman's Empowerment Model: (1) Defining the Mission; (2) Taking Stock; and, (3) Planning for the Future.
- Step 2.** What is Triangulation? And, when is it justified?
- Step 3.** Make sure that you can explain each of the three steps to a team of classmates.



LIFE Activity 8.1

A Service Learning Activity-Preparing an evaluation proposal that you might present to a community organization

Step 1. Chapter 8 contains a good deal of detailed information on each of the following methods of data collection:

1. Administrative Records, Anecdotal Data, and Archival Data.
2. Observation.
3. Interviews
4. Focus Groups
5. Surveys and Secondary Data

Step 2. Study the section on methods of data collection in the text carefully.

Step 3. Organize a work group with four or five classmates.

Step 4. Assume that you and your team classmates have been asked to conduct an evaluation of a community development project sponsored by an organization in your home community. Your first task is to prepare a written proposal for the community organization. Be precise – four or five double spaced pages should be sufficient.

- a. Select the primary research methods that you plan to use
- b. Prepare a justification for each method that will be used.
- c. List types of outcomes expected from each method.
- d. List any difficulties that might be expected
- e. What benefits are to be expected from this research?

NOTE: If you wish, you may prepare a PowerPoint presentation describing the proposed project. Follow guidelines presented earlier.

Step 5. Submit your written work and your PowerPoint presentation to your instructor for review.

