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This material may be freely cited, as follows:
Outline

- Study objectives
- Study methodology
- Reconnecting with 2005
- Some background on networks
- Nature of networks
- Use and functions of networks
- Effects of networks
- Conclusions
Study Objectives

- To track some topics over 5 years
- To define the concept of networks for evaluators
- To describe the networks used by evaluators
- To determine the use and importance of networks for evaluators
- To document the impact of networks on evaluators
- To ascertain differing uses of networks by different categories of evaluators (e.g. new vs. seasoned)
Study Methodology
*A Survey of Evaluation Producers*

- **Population**
  - Theoretical: all Canadian evaluators
  - Practical: CES members, federal HOE, selected academics

- **Questionnaire**
  - Mainly batteries inspired by the literature
  - Some questions repeated from 2005

- **Sampling**
  - All members of CES invited
  - All federal HOE
  - List of 178 academics from CESEF (not CES members)
Study Methodology
A Survey of Evaluation Producers

- **Operations and results**
  - 1,998 invitations on March 12, 2010
  - Reminders on March 17 and 25
  - 97 non-deliveries
  - 502 Canadian questionnaires completed by deadline
    - Response rate ≈ 26% of the lists
    - But % of evaluators?
    - 600 producers responded in 2005

- **Statistical processing dependent upon the need**
Reconnecting with 2005

Evaluator Identity

- Feeling of belonging to evaluation increased
- As in 2005, federal public servants generally higher sense of belonging (not shown)
- Percentage of “accidental evaluators” unchanged
Reconnecting with 2005
Evaluation Drivers and Characteristics

- Perceived increase in resources to conduct evaluations
- Fewer evaluators feel that evaluations are driven by accountability/central agency requirements – but still high among federal employees (81%) (not shown)
- Federals also less likely to think that evaluations are useful to decision-makers (68% vs. 82%) (not shown)
Reconnecting with 2005
Retention of Evaluators in Profession

- Expected turnover slightly lower than in 2005
- Among federal government evaluators, expected rate fell from 32% to 17% (not shown). Is this the end of a major babyboomer turnover in federal government?
- Lower percentage of visible minorities intending to stay (57%)
Levels of Satisfaction

- Nature of the work yields high levels of satisfaction
- Gap between perceived profession and personal career path
- Visible minorities more likely to be dissatisfied; in some cases related to language as well

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% satisfied (5-7)</th>
<th>(n = 404,498 respondents)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nature of the work</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career path of an evaluator</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My Job overall</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of pay</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working hours</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My career progression</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for prof./personal dev.</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classification/level in organization</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position of evaluation in my organization</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Stat. sig. lower satisfaction among visible minorities
Reconnecting with 2005

On Identity and Workplace Issues

- Identity and sense of belonging to profession have strengthened since 2005 – possibly positive result of process towards certification.
- Lower anticipated HR turnover than in 2005.
- Significant findings indicating lower work satisfaction and lower intention to stay in evaluation among visible minorities. Two conclusions:
  - More research is needed to understand lower satisfaction
  - What can we do to retain visible minorities in our community?
Some Background on Networks

- Networks considered important for increasing capacity, accessing resources, diffusing innovations

- Literature on networks informs us about
  - Network characteristics
    - Size, density, diversity
  - Network functions: what they are used for
    - Filtering information, accessing resources, building community
  - Network impacts
    - On practice, professional life

- Are networks important in evaluation? If so, how?
Nature of Evaluator Networks

Dimensions

- **Size**
  - From minimalist to quite large

- **Resemblance to self**
  - Based on scaled ratings
  - Extent to which the network is like the respondent: same methods, similar job, same types of evaluation, think the same way

- **Formal diversity**
  - Inside/outside organization
  - Evaluators/non-evaluators
  - Geographical dispersion
  - Sectoral dispersion

- **Perceived diversity**
  - Based on scaled ratings
  - Extent to which the network involves meeting new evaluators, variety of perspectives on evaluation, variety of disciplinary backgrounds
Nature of Evaluator Networks

Typology

[Diagram showing four quadrants with labels: Comfortable (19%, 7 members), Unlike me (9%, 17 members), Perceived Open (20%, 13 members), and Scattered (22%, 23 members). Bubbles are Resemblance scores (empty bubbles are negative).]
## Nature of Evaluator Networks

### Typology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Resemblance to Self</th>
<th>Formal Diversity</th>
<th>Perceived Diversity</th>
<th>Network Size</th>
<th>% of Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eclectic</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scattered</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfortable</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Open</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unlike me</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Nature of Evaluator Networks

#### Typology – Determinants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>More likely</th>
<th>Less likely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal evaluators</td>
<td>Perceived Open</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not-for-profit evaluators</td>
<td>Unlike me</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large evaluation units</td>
<td>Scattered, Perceived Open</td>
<td>Comfortable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managers</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comfortable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researchers/analysts</td>
<td>Comfortable</td>
<td>Eclectic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcomers</td>
<td>Perceived Open</td>
<td>Eclectic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seasoned evaluators</td>
<td>Eclectic</td>
<td>Comfortable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female evaluators</td>
<td>Comfortable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Use of Networks for Help

Respondents turn to their evaluation-related networks for help most often to:

- Capitalize on the best practices of other evaluators (54%)
- Confirm that how they are approaching a problem is valid (53%)
- Solve methodological issues (50%)
- Look for new ways to approach evaluation problems (47%)
- Save time by capitalizing on work done by others (45%)
Network Function Categories

Factor analysis yielded six categories of functions of evaluation-related networks:

- **Bolster evaluation practice (44%)**
  - Capitalize on best practices
  - New approaches/Test ideas
  - Save time
  - News about community

- **Tackle evaluation issues (33%)**
  - Interpret findings
  - Develop recommendations
  - Solve methodological issues

- **Feed contract work (27%)**
  - Explore opportunities/Find work
  - Find consultants

- **Deal with work buzz (24%)**
  - Voice concerns
  - Share frustration
  - Solve conflicts
  - Discuss anomalous situations

- **Contribute to career path (20%)**
  - Explore job opportunities
  - Career decisions

- **Support management of evaluation (14%)**
  - New policies
  - Find staff
  - Ethical challenges/Political aspects
  - Look for funds

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Who Uses Networks for What?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uses</th>
<th>More likely</th>
<th>Less likely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bolster practice</td>
<td>Federal, management, large networks, high formal and perceived density, Eclectic, Scattered</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tackle issues</td>
<td>Private sector, newcomers, self-resembling networks</td>
<td>Seasoned, teachers, Unlike Me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contracting purposes</td>
<td>Private sector, older, seasoned, high perceived diversity, Eclectic</td>
<td>Smaller networks, less diversity, Unlike Me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses</td>
<td>More likely</td>
<td>Less likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace issues</td>
<td>Full time, federal, management, female, younger, high resemblance, high perceived diversity, Perceived Open</td>
<td>Older, seasoned, NFP/education, small networks, Unlike Me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career path</td>
<td>Full time, internal, federal, younger, newcomers, female</td>
<td>Seasoned, small networks, less perceived diversity, Comfortable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>Management, high diversity, Eclectic</td>
<td>Smaller networks, less diverse networks, Comfortable, Unlike Me</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Impacts of Networks on Practice

- Many strongly positive impacts: respondents state that interaction with their networks has:
  - Expanded their evaluation knowledge (92%)
  - Brought new insights (85%)
  - Increased methodological capacities (83%)
  - Improved work quality (79%)
  - Increased confidence in ways they do evaluation (79%)

- Negative items
  - Had no impact (12%)
  - Limited contact with different practices (7%)
  - Made lazy (5%)
  - Increased desire to leave field (4%)
Network Impact Categories

Three categories of impacts of evaluation-related networks

● Increased competence-confidence
  • Expanded evaluation knowledge
  • Increased methodological capacities
  • Influence ways of working
  • Improved quality of work
  • Increased confidence

● Connecting to community
  • Feel like part of a professional community
  • Made aware of issues in the community
  • Connected with like-minded people
  • Increased sense of belonging to community
  • Increased desire to remain evaluator

● Instrumental connections
  • Brought new evaluation work
  • Increased access to funds
  • Connected with new disciplines
Who Experiences What Impact?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Network impact on…</th>
<th>Higher</th>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>No difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confidence-competence</td>
<td>Private sector, mun./reg./prov. govt., Eclectic, Scattered</td>
<td>NFP/education, Comfortable, Unlike Me</td>
<td>Tenure in evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community connection</td>
<td>Largeish (11-20), more diverse networks</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sectors, tenure in evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental connection</td>
<td>Private sector, NFP/education, Eclectic, 11+ years practicing</td>
<td>Federal, Comfortable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Use and Impacts of Networks

● **Size matters**
  - Those with larger networks tend to use them more often for a greater variety of functions, see their networks as having greater impacts on practice and belonging
  - Those with smaller networks tend to be less likely to call on their networks for help, or to see that they affect their practice

● **Diversity also leads to more use and impact**
  - Those with the most diverse networks tend to use them more often for a greater variety of functions, see their networks as having greater impacts on practice and belonging
  - If network is too similar, perhaps not as much help in solving new issues or challenges?

● **Echoing previous research findings that network ties don’t have to be strong to be useful**
  - Big networks and weak network ties seem to be more valuable
  - Network size and diversity are important for feeling connected to the evaluation community, regardless of where one practices, or for how long
Conclusions

- Networks are useful
- Network size and diversity are key
- By corollary, subject matter and specialization are less important
- Thus, move North-East
Conclusions

Messages to Evaluators and to CES Chapters

• How to sell networks to evaluators?
  • Product: service to CES, CES to provide structured opportunities to network (e.g. speed networking)
  • Promotion: educate, recognize and communicate the importance of populous, diversified and loose networks
  • Price: CES to offer free events, employers to facilitate participation
  • Place: attend events, build e-networks (à la LinkedIn)
  • Partners: team up with other associations (e.g. universities, economists, planners, auditors)
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