
Heather Manson, MD MHSc FRCPC
Susan Snelling, PhD
Michelle Vine, PhD
Wednesday March 18, 2020, 12:00-1:00pm
Canadian Evaluation Society (CJPE) Book Club Webinar
Presenters

Heather Manson, MD, MHSc FRCPC

Susan Snelling, PhD

Michelle Vine, PhD
Context

Presentation Outline

- Introduction
- Objectives
- Methods
- Results
- Discussion
Introduction

• Evaluation of Indigenous health programs and services is a fundamental component of public health practice in Canada (PHAC, 2015): *Ways Tried and True*

• Historical context of research with Indigenous peoples

• Evaluations are embedded in unique social and historical contexts
**Context**

- Public Health Ontario (PHO) was asked to evaluate a government-funded health promotion program – the Healthy Kids Community Challenge – implemented in six Indigenous communities across Ontario.
- Partnership between PHO and the Well Living House Action Research Centre for Indigenous Infant, Child and Family Health and Wellbeing.
- Scoping review initiated to identify wise practices for undertaking evaluation in Indigenous contexts.
- Complements a systematic review of peer-reviewed literature led by Smylie and others at the Well-Living House (Maddox et al. in press).
Objectives

1. To conduct a scoping review of the grey literature to identify principles, approaches, methods, tools and frameworks reported in Indigenous health service or program evaluation contexts in Canada, the United States, New Zealand, and Australia; and,

2. To consult with key informants to identify gaps in knowledge and understanding, and validate and enrich interpretation of the preliminary findings.
Methods

- **Scoping reviews**: aim to capture breadth and describe characteristics of literature in complex and understudied research areas

  - **Stage 1: Identifying the research question**
  - **Stage 2: Identifying relevant studies**
  - **Stage 3: Study selection**
  - **Stage 4: Charting the data**
  - **Stage 5: Collating, summarizing, and reporting the results**
  - **Stage 6: Consultation**
Stage 1: Identifying the Research Questions

1. What principles for research or evaluation have been reported in Indigenous contexts?

2. What approaches, methods, tools, and frameworks have been used in Indigenous health service or health program evaluation in Canada, the United States, Australia, and New Zealand?
Stage 2: Identifying Relevant Studies

- **Google** and **Google Custom Search Engine** searches of grey literature from research and evaluation contexts, in consultation with two research librarians at PHO
  - 96 websites were drawn upon to create the Google Custom Search Engine
- 8 search queries run in June 2015 including:
  - “Indigenous,” “Aboriginal,” “health,” “evaluation,” “evaluation research”
Stage 3: Study Selection

• **Inclusion criteria:**
  - *Guidance documents:* describing how to conduct evaluation in Indigenous contexts
  - *Application documents:* describing the application of evaluation in Indigenous contexts
  - Including principles related to research in Indigenous contexts

• **Exclusion criteria:** did not focus on Indigenous communities; did not originate in Canada, the US, Australia, or New Zealand

• **Screening**

• Snowballing of reference lists to identify additional grey literature incorrectly indexed or unindexed online
  - Each citation underwent title screen and full text review
  - **86 additional citations identified for inclusion**
PRISMA Flow Chart

Identification
- 1600 citations identified through Google and Google Custom Engine
- 13 citations identified through preliminary searching and expert input

Screening
- 866 citations after website URL duplicates and published sources removed
- 492 citations

Eligibility
- 374 full-text citations assessed for eligibility
- 187 citations
- 81 citations excluded
  - Removed at charting stage (n=63)
  - Bibliographies that did not contain data

Included
- 87 additional citations identified through reference lists of included citations
- 106 full-text citations included
- 185 records included in the final
Stage 4: Charting the Data

- Records meeting inclusion criteria charted and organized (Excel)
- Charting categories: program or service information; evaluation information, including methods, tools, approaches, or frameworks; and principles for research and evaluation

Stage 5: Collating, Summarizing, and Reporting the Results

- Descriptive analyses using Excel to determine frequencies and to characterize origin, type, date of publication
- Findings used to develop preliminary report for consultation

Stage 6: Consultation

- Participants emailed preliminary results to provide feedback via online survey, telephone interview, or focus group
- Consultation included open-ended questions to identify additional documents, and experiences and knowledge
Data Analysis

- Social location and lenses brought by various data analysts/coders

- **Community partner consultation**: principles are culturally informed; purposeful engagement included Indigenous reviewers/coders/input

- Qualitative thematic approach used to examine open-ended survey responses, interview and focus group transcripts
  - Double-coding exercise of two transcripts to ensure relevance of coding to consultation objectives

- **Themes emerged**:
  - **Deductively**: based on predetermined objectives
  - **Inductively**: as categories arose from the data
Results

Classification of records, by country of origin.

- Australia: 31%, n=58
- Canada: 52%, n=97
- New Zealand: 8%, n=14
- USA: 7%, n=13
- Other: 2%, n=3

Classification of records, by type.

- Guidance: 62%, n=116
- Application: 38%, n=69
## Results: Principles

Five principle theme categories from most to least frequently cited.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Principle Theme Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Research with Indigenous communities uses community engagement – (a) prior to the start of the research project, OR (b) during the research project, OR (c) after the data has been collected</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Research with Indigenous communities is culturally appropriate and culturally safe. It reflects, and is responsive to, cultural values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Research with the Indigenous community is specific to the community’s context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Researchers demonstrate respect for participants and subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Researchers demonstrate core values, such as: honesty, inclusion, integrity, openness, trust, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results: Principles

• Consultation
  • Principles correctly capture and, “are consistent with how ... evaluation should be conducted, but not how it necessarily is conducted [in Indigenous contexts]” (ID_6).
    • Participants recognized that adhering to principles may be challenging due: to time to build trusting relationships, limited funding, adhering to funding deadlines, and limited time to strengthen community capacity

• General principles of evaluation (rigour, accuracy, reproducibility) are also valuable in Indigenous contexts, and “transparency in reporting how things go with communities” (ID_2).
Results: Principles

• “There’s a lot of non-Indigenous researchers [who] think they’re doing good work and are really striving to do good work but just don’t have the knowledge of how to do that good work. So, when we think about, you know, demonstrating reciprocity [PTC #12] ... a non-Indigenous researcher may think that means, oh, okay I’ll just give a gift card... But I think for a lot of our Indigenous communities and our Indigenous participants it would mean a lot more than that. It means that I may see you again in three years from now, even when the research is not there” (ID_1b).
Results: Approaches

• 73% (n=135) of records used or described using one or more approach for conducting evaluation in Indigenous contexts

• Examples of approaches: participatory approaches or partnerships, Indigenous-led approaches (e.g., Kaupapa Māori approach), rights-based approach, two-eyed seeing approach

• Consultation

• List of approaches was comprehensive, with caveats:
  • Approaches need to be established in partnership with the community
  • Need to distinguish between community-based researchers and those that use secondary data
  • Need for integration between Indigenous approaches and community-based research efforts
Results: Methods

• 56% of records described one or more methods for data collection

• A majority also used or described using mixed methods:
  • Interviews, surveys/questionnaires, program document, focus groups, secondary analysis, literature reviews, storytelling, digital storytelling, etc.
  • Anishnaabe Symbol-based reflection, storyboards, dream/poem analysis, learning circles

• Consultation: agreement reached; however, recommendation for evaluators to be cautious using “observation” as a method
Results: Tools

• **Two tools identified:**
  • Waawiyeyaa Evaluation Tool (Johnston Research, Inc., 2015)
  • First Nations Research Health Survey (FNIGC, 2015)

• **Consultation**
  • Identified one additional tool for data collection that met inclusion criteria: Aboriginal Children’s Health and Well-being Measure (Young et al. 2013).
Results: Frameworks

• Nine frameworks identified:
  • Seven different frameworks based on the medicine wheel (Atlantic Council for International Cooperation, 2007)
  • Visual maps (Poole et al. 2014)
  • Community Health Indicators Toolkit (Jeffrey, et al. 2006)
    • Six health domains
    • Indicator categories and associated issues
    • Suggestions for community-level data sources

• Consultation:
  • Agreement on frameworks, with several caveats
  • Additional framework identified:
    • The Thunderbird Partnership Mental Health Continuum Framework (Health Canada, 2015)
Strengths

1. Systematic search and snowballing of reference lists used to identify grey literature
2. Rigorous methods used
3. Consultation with Indigenous health key informants at two stages helped identify themes that did not emerge through the literature; validation and interpretation of findings
Limitations

1. Scoping review methodology itself, based on Western methods for screening, sorting, summarizing knowledge on a particular topic
   • Consultation participants noted a better approach – to rely on Indigenous voices from earliest stages of scoping review

2. Possible discrepancy between what was reported and what occurs in practice; need to assess their application in practice

3. Most literature included in review was of Canadian origin, and potentially less applicable to non-Canadian Indigenous contexts
Key Take-Aways

• **Results suggest several implications for practice:**
  
  1. Principles are critically important for guiding evaluation in Indigenous contexts
     • Despite this, challenges affect their application
  
  2. Community engagement principles indicate that partner communities should be engaged at ALL stages of projects
  
  3. Consultation results indicate evaluators should be cautious of the distinction between drawing on principles of community engagement and utilizing community-based approaches or methods
Discussion and Questions
Acknowledgements

• This research was supported by a CIHR Planning and Dissemination Grant (# CIHR-PCS-142061) and funding from Public Health Ontario

• The authors thank the key informants who participated in consultation through an online survey, telephone interviews, or telephone focus groups
**References**


Contact Information

Heather Manson
Physician Consultant
Public Health Ontario
E: heather.manson@oahpp.ca

Susan Snelling
Evaluation Specialist
Public Health Ontario
E: susan.snelling@oahpp.ca

Michelle Vine
Evaluation Specialist
Public Health Ontario
E: michelle.vine@oahpp.ca