BUILDING THE EVIDENCE BASE FOR BUILDING EVIDENCE BASES

The what, why, and how of research on peacebuilding evaluation

Zach Tilton
1st Oct 2019
Peacebuilding M&E Solutions Forum Workshop

IDPE
Interdisciplinary Ph.D. in Evaluation
Agenda

1. Introduction
2. Values Inquiry
3. Orientation
4. ROE Framework Activity
5. Discussion & Debrief
What is your primary work activity?

- Research: 4
- Management/administration: 1
- Program implementation: 1
- Other: 1
What is your primary work setting?

- National NGO: 2
- International NGO: 3
- Social enterprise: 0
- College/University: 0
- State agency: 0
- Sub-national civil society organization: 0
- Other: 2
What is your disciplinary background?

- Political Science: 2
- Peacebuilding: 3
- Evaluation: 2
Who has heard of Research on Evaluation?

- Yes: 4
- No: 3
What do you hope to get out of this workshop?

- A sense of how others approach rigorous evaluation in peacebuilding
- Expand my understanding of what the field needs
- Key concepts on how to improve work through evaluation
- To learn
- See what the field is (not) doing overall
- Best practice for foundations of effective M&E models
- Understand the scope of evaluation types, see what might be more effective types
Objectives

1. Engaged. What?
2. Edified. Why?
3. Empowered. How?
Values Inquiry

Find a partner....
What values did you identify?

- Key concepts in evaluation
- Inclusivity
- Collaborative continuous learning adaptable
- Collaboration
- Community trust
Peacebuilding is a value-laden field.
Evaluation is a value-laden discipline.
Peacebuilding evaluation is value-laden.
Peacebuilding evaluation should be value-neutral.
Fact-Value Distinction

Value-neutrality

So-called “No-ought-from-is” doctrine
Research on Evaluation

"Any purposeful, systematic, empirical inquiry intended to test existing knowledge, contribute to existing knowledge, or generate new knowledge related to some aspect of evaluation processes or products, or evaluation theories, methods, or practices.” (Coryn et al., 2016)
Figure 1. *Five Possible Relationships Between Evaluation and Research*
What is the relationship between research and evaluation?

- Research and Evaluation exist on a continuum: 2
- Evaluation is a sub-component of Research: 0
- Research is a sub-component of Evaluation: 1
- Research and Evaluation Intersect: 3
- Research and Evaluation are not different: 0
# Research vs Evaluation

Table 3. How Evaluators and Researchers Differentiate Evaluation from Research, If At All

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Differentiation</th>
<th>Evaluators</th>
<th></th>
<th>Researchers</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research and evaluation intersect</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>61.8%</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>44.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluation is a sub-component of research</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>22.4%</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>37.2%</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research and evaluation exist on a continuum</td>
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<td>10.2%</td>
<td>32</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research is a sub-component of evaluation</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research and evaluation are not different from each other</td>
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<td>0.8%</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

(Wanzer, 2019)
## Research & Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research on Research</td>
<td>Research on Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of Research</td>
<td>Evaluation of Evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ROE Frameworks

ROE Agenda (Smith, 1993)
ROE Agenda (Henry & Mark, 2003)
ROE Taxonomy (Mark, 2008)
Theory Eval Criteria (Miller, 2010)
ROE Areas (Szanyi, et al., 2013)
Figure 3. Visual summary of the intersections between Henry and Mark’s (2003) and Mark’s (2008) taxonomies.
ROE Rationale

- Eval theory a-empirical
- Expert-based over evidence-based
- Evaluative dissonance
ROE Relevance

"To be useful, evaluation research must focus on topics that are valued by evaluation scholars and practitioners; to refine this focus, specific areas and questions of study need to be identified." (Szanyi et al., 2013)
What areas of ROE are most important to you?

1st: Research on methods
2nd: Research on impact
3rd: Research on context
4th: Research on Professional development/training
5th: Research on culture
6th: Research on ethics
7th: Background research
8th: Research on policy issues
9th: Conceptual research
10th: Research on technology
## ROE Area Priorities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas of ROE</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research on impact</td>
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<td>.66</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research on methods</td>
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<td>.76</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research on context</td>
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<td>.81</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research on ethics</td>
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<td>.89</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research on culture</td>
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<td>.92</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research on technology</td>
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<td>.90</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research on professional dev.</td>
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<td>.90</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research on policy issues</td>
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<td>Conceptual research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Background research</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>.97</td>
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</table>

(Szanyi et al., 2013)
RO(peacebuilding)E

ROPE  PB  Eval  PB  Peace
RO(peacebuilding)E

DO NO HARM
HOW AID CAN SUPPORT PEACE—OR WAR
Mary B. Anderson

Aid for Peace
A Guide to Planning and Evaluation for Conflict Zones
Thania Paffenholz, Luc Reydler

RECLAIMING EVERYDAY PEACE
Local Voices in Measurement and Evaluation After War
Pamina Firchow
The evaluation of research
Evaluation as research
Evaluation as accountability
Research on evaluation
Research in evaluations
Research evaluation as ethical compass
Research evaluation as advocacy
Research evaluation as inst. strengthening
RO(peacebuilding)E
The Evaluation Deficit

- Provincial or national level
- Unconnected to national or international programmes;
- Informal in nature
- Defined in terms other than peacebuilding
- Continued over a long period of time
Practitioner-informed Research on PB Eval

“...based on practitioners’ problematization of their own experiences in daily work, their puzzles, concerns, and worries” (Styhre as quoted in Christie, 2009)
ROPE Frameworks

Each table has a framework....
Large Group Discussion

Each table report on their framework....
Debrief

What is ROE?
Why?
How?
What are you taking away from this workshop?

- Reminder to be clear about which values guide your (RO)E
- New ways of approaching how we evaluate our approach to evaluations.
- Encouragement that there ARE people doing ROE... and that this is a thing I could also possibly do
- A plea for evaluators to be more self evaluative
- how this relates to CBO and Faith leaders who are just starting evaluation - how you introduce them to a huge field yet make it practical for them
- Keep in mind the flexibility of evaluation tactics