Approaching Education Evaluation

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Research in educational settings is uniquely challenging

- Education is always the first priority
Challenges

• Balancing clinical and research activities

• Trying to conduct and publish rigorous education/social science research with little to no formal training or support

• Lack of research lab/mentorship structure commonly found in social and basic science research

• Limited funding opportunities for education research
• Tend to think of scholarship as peer-reviewed journal articles.
Scholarship of Discovery

- generation of new knowledge or validation of existing knowledge
Where to start!
#1 Develop a clear research question

• “I want to know if my intervention is effective.”

• “I want to know if participation in my intervention helps residents become more empathetic to patients.”
#2 What is the significance/innovation?

- Why does your question matter? And to whom?
Literature Review

• Start with PubMed, but be ready to branch out –
  • ERIC
  • PsycInfo

• Take advantage of the resources the library offers

• When in doubt (or when filled with feelings of dread and anxiety), just start with google scholar. We’re all good at googling. This is no different.
#3 Identify your theory of change

- What do you expect to change and through what mechanism?
Figure 3  The logic model for our youth mental health promotion intervention
#4 Select your research method

- Qualitative, quantitative, mixed methods
#5 Know where you might publish

• Med Ed journals
  • JGME, Academic Medicine, MedEdPORTAL, Teaching and Learning in Medicine, The Clinical Teacher, etc...

• What about journals in your area of specialty?
#6 Identify/create your data collection instruments

- Qualitative $\rightarrow$ less time on instrument design, more time on analysis
- Quantitative $\rightarrow$ more time on instrument design, less time on analysis

- PILOT THEM!
Finally: WRITE

• For some, this part comes easy. But for most it does not. What can you do when you’re feeling stuck?
Scholarship Trajectory: an Illustration

• Dr. Oprah Winfrey has an idea for teaching students how to read an x-ray
• Dr. Winfrey does this training and collects pre- and post- data on its effectiveness.
  • She presents the workshop at a society meeting
  • Educators from another institution approach her about doing the workshop at their school
• Next, Dr. Winfrey...
Scholarship Trajectory cont.

• Publishes the curriculum on MedEd Portal
• Gathers evaluation data from doing the workshop at the different sites
• Presents that same data at next year’s meeting
• First authors the publication on the multi-site study
BUSM Educator Resources

• CTSI resources
• IRB Office Hours
• EEC website (next slide)
• EEC Journal Club and Happy Hour
• Health Sciences Education courses
Education Evaluation Core Website

• http://sites.bu.edu/eec/
Questions?