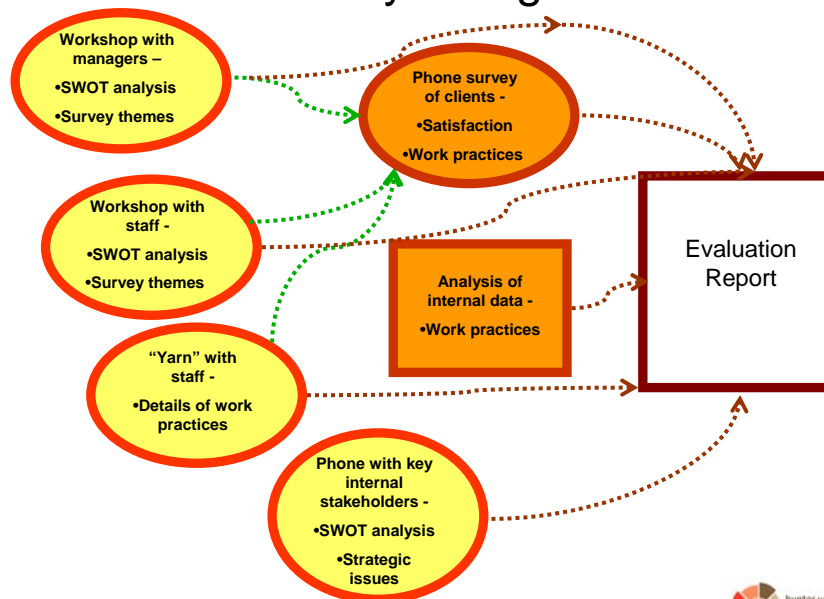


Gathering evidence: Use of mixed methods in evaluation of a program for Indigenous clients

Study Design



Overview

- The project
- **The context**
- Study design
- **Phone survey issues**
- Methodological considerations
- **Assumptions**
- Pros and cons
- **Conclusion**
- Questions and discussion

Why this project?

- Mix of methods used
- **Use of CATI survey with Aboriginal clients**
- An untried technique with this population
- **Unknown outcomes**

Project brief

- Process evaluation
- **Identify, review, evaluate:**
 - work practices
 - stakeholder relationships
 - infrastructure and resources
 - organisational structure

Requirements

- Review of current best practice in service provision
- **Consultation with –**
 - stakeholders in related components
 - other key stakeholders
 - clients

Negotiated elements

- Consultation with staff
- **Analysis of administrative data**

Context

- Aboriginal disadvantage
 - beginning to be addressed
- **Aboriginal service agencies within Western structure**
- Need for evaluation of community service programs
- **Recognised value of mix of methods**
- Participatory research with Indigenous populations:
 - **culturally appropriate**
 - **empowering**



Constraints on participatory research

- Time
- **Cost**
- Availability of sufficiently skilled Aboriginal personnel
- **Geography**

Project Constraints

- **Tight timeframe**
- Clients spread across metropolitan and rural areas
- **Need for independent outsider**



Components

- Workshop with stakeholders – related program components
- **Workshop with agency staff**
- In-depth phone interviews with other stakeholders
- **CATI survey of clients**
- Analysis of administrative data

- Common framework for qualitative methods:
 - **comparison of different perspectives**
 - **open discussion (positives and negatives)**
- SWOT analysis
 - **strengths**
 - **weaknesses**
 - **opportunities**
 - **threats**

Workshops

Workshop with managers –

- SWOT analysis
- Survey themes

Workshop with staff -

- SWOT analysis
- Survey themes

- **SWOT**
 - discussion among participants
- **Survey design**
 - issues to include
 - avoid jargon
 - keep questions simple
 - respect
 - perceptions of rudeness
 - reluctance to use phone
 - distrust of strangers

In-depth Interviews

Workshop with managers –

- SWOT analysis
- Survey themes

Workshop with staff -

- SWOT analysis
- Survey themes

- **Phone-based**
- **SWOT**
- **Strategic view**

Phone with key internal stakeholders -

- SWOT analysis
- Strategic issues

“Yarn” session

Workshop with managers –
•SWOT analysis
•Survey themes

Workshop with staff -
•SWOT analysis
•Survey themes

“Yarn” with staff -
•Details of work practices

Phone with key internal stakeholders -
•SWOT analysis
•Strategic issues

- Increased participation
- **More culturally appropriate**
- Issues raised by staff
- **Discussion within the group**



Administrative data

Workshop with managers –
•SWOT analysis
•Survey themes

Workshop with staff -
•SWOT analysis
•Survey themes

“Yarn” with staff -
•Details of work practices

Phone with key internal stakeholders -
•SWOT analysis
•Strategic issues

Analysis of internal data -
•Work practices

- Ability to “drill into” data
- **Quantification of indicators**
 - client demographics
 - referral sources
 - service timing



Computer Aided Telephone Interviewing (CATI)

Design concerns for Aboriginal respondents:

- **Structured format at odds with Aboriginal culture**
- **Aboriginal people prefer face-to-face communication**
- **Respondent fears of prejudice to services**

Standard CATI protocols

- **On-site facility**
- **Experienced, trained interviewers**
- **Monitoring for quality control**
- **Adequate sample size (95% confidence level)**
- **Piloting of questionnaires:**
- **Up to 6 attempts to contact selected respondent**
- **Voluntary participation**
- **Defer comments to the end**

Strategies Used

- Pre-survey letter from agency
- **Staff participation in questionnaire design**
- Pilot 1 – stakeholders
- **Pilot 2 - clients**
- Simple language, no jargon:
 - “yes/no”, simple scales
 - what happened, not satisfaction

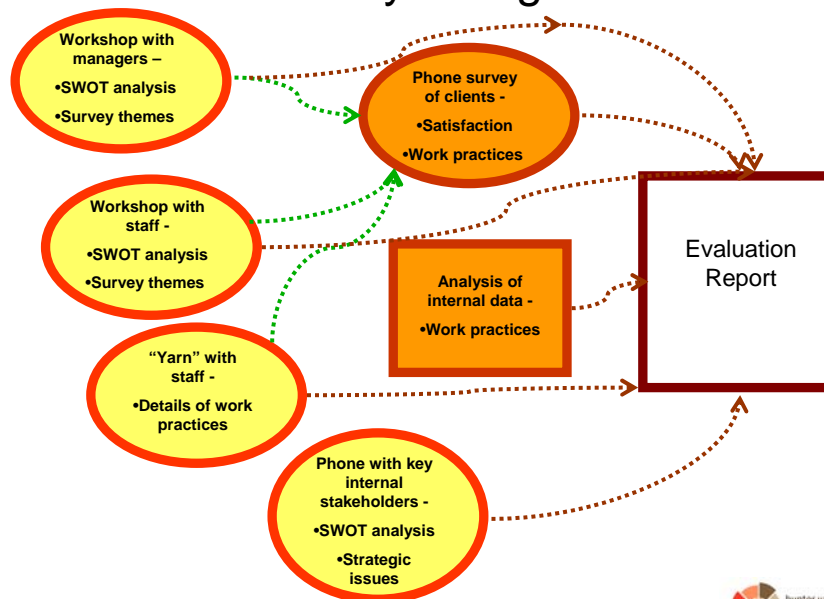
Strategies Used

- “Opt out” any time
- **Respondent “helpers”**
- Random sample, adequate sample size (300+)
- **Screening procedures**
- Modified interview protocol

Interviewer briefing

- Expect respondents to chat and ask questions
- **Aboriginal perceptions of rudeness**
- Comments recorded when made
- **Minimise chatting without offence**
- Situations may be confronting

Study Design



Strengths

Workshops

- **Issues identification**
- Stakeholder perspectives
- **Input into survey design**

In-depth Interviews

- **Issues identification**
- Stakeholder perspectives

Weaknesses

- **Western structure**
- Relative power of evaluator
- **Possibility of “group think”**

- **Phone-based**



Strengths

“Yarn” with staff

- **Culturally appropriate**
- Details of work practices
- **Trust-building**

Administrative Data

- **Quantification**
- Triangulation

Weaknesses

- **Non-Aboriginal facilitator**
- Relative power

- **Narrow focus of data**
- **Quality uncertain**



CATI survey

Strengths

- **Representative sample**
- **Quantitative data on**
 - **work practices**
 - **client experiences**
- **Magnitude of issues**
- **Insight into client perspectives**

Weaknesses

- **Not most culturally appropriate**
- **Limited scope to explore issues in depth**
- **Excludes clients with no phone**



Calculation of response rate

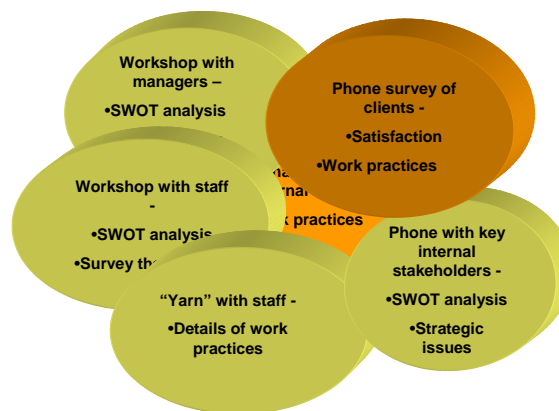
Ineligible	No.	% of total	% of eligible
Call back appointment			
No answer			
Respondent unsuitable			
Answering machine			
Business number			
Disconnected number			
Engaged/busy signal			
Language difficulty			
Unavailable for survey period			
No eligible person at home			
Total ineligible		<i>aa.a</i>	
Eligible			
Completed interviews			<i>xx.x</i>
Personal refusal			<i>yy.y</i>
<i>Terminated</i>			<i>zz.z</i>
Total eligible		<i>bb.b</i>	100.0
Total (eligible+ineligible)		100.0	
Contact rate			



Reliability of CATI results

- 96% response rate
- High level of “fit” with administrative data
- Triangulation yielded meaningful results
- Excludes clients who were confused or couldn't remember program component
- Some difficulties in comprehension
- Some indication of concern about jeopardy

Fitting the evidence together



Conclusion

- Each method contributes
- Increases the value of other methods

- Additional tool for evidence gathering
- Appropriate for many Aboriginal people