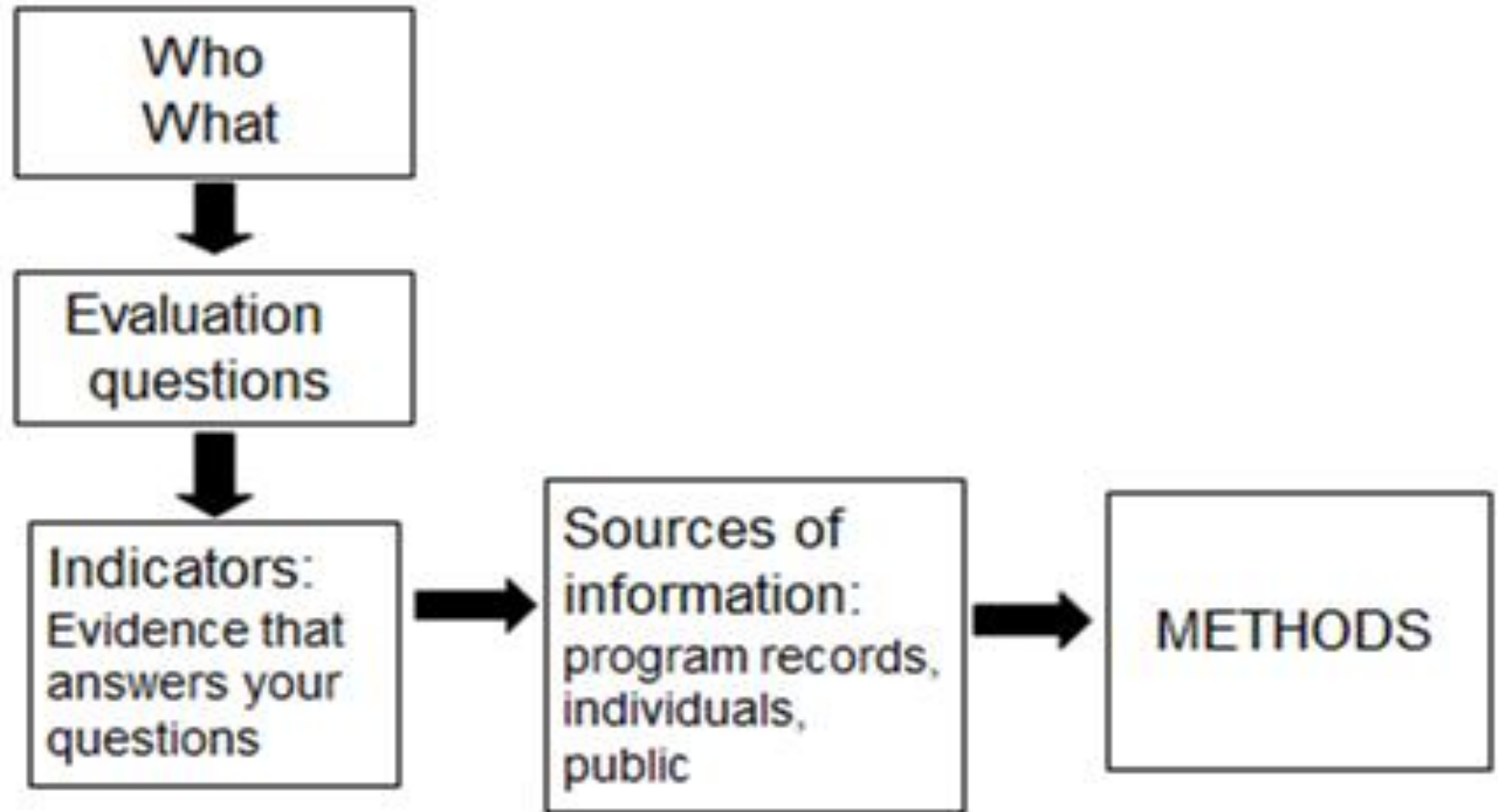


# Qualitative and Quantitative Studies

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# Collect data



## Source of evaluation information

- Existing information
- People
- Pictorial records and observations



## 5 (Quantity) Happy (Quality) Kids

**Quantitative:** numbers    breadth    generalizability

**Qualitative:** words    depth    specific

Remember, **"Not everything that counts can be counted."**

# Paradigm dimensions

## Qualitative

- Naturalistic inquiry
- Holistic, system-wide perspective
- Uniqueness and diversity
- Inductive reasoning
- Qualitative data (words)
- Qualitative methods – unstructured, open-ended
- Purposeful sampling
- Emergent, flexible design
- Content analysis
- Extrapolations

## Quantitative

- Scientific/experimental design
- Independent, dependent variables
- Standardized, uniform
- Deductive reasoning
- Quantitative data (numbers)
- Quantitative methods – structured, standardized
- Probabilistic, random sampling
- Fixed, controlled design
- Statistical analysis
- Generalizations

# Quantitative methods – Qualitative methods

Quantitative	Qualitative
Surveys Questionnaires	Focus groups
Tests	Unstructured interviews
Existing databases	Unstructured observations

Often, it is better to use more than one method....

### Mixed methods for one program

- Log of activities and participation
- Self-administered questionnaires completed after each workshop
- In-depth interviews with key informants
- Observation of workshops
- Survey of participants

## Are the data reliable and valid?

- **Validity:**  
Are you measuring what you think you are measuring?
  - Example:
- **Reliability:**  
if something was measured again using the same instrument, would it produce the same (or nearly the same) results?
  - Example:



## **“Trustworthy” and “credible” data**

**What do these words mean relative to your evaluation information?**

**How can you help ensure that your evaluation data are trustworthy and credible?**

# Common data collection methods

- Survey
- Case study
- Interview
- Observation
- Group assessment
- Expert or peer reviews
- Portfolio reviews
- Testimonials
- Tests
- Photographs, videotapes, slides
- Diaries, journals, logs
- Document review and analysis

## When choosing methods, consider...

The purpose of your evaluation –

Will the method allow you to gather information that can be analyzed and presented in a way that will be credible and useful to you and others?

The respondents –

What is the most appropriate method, considering how the respondents can best be reached, how they might best respond, literacy, cultural considerations, etc.?

## Consider...

- Resources available. Time, money, and staff to design, implement, and analyze the information. What can you afford?
- Type of information you need. Numbers, percents, comparisons, stories, examples, etc.
- Interruptions to program or participants. Which method is likely to be least intrusive?
- Advantages and disadvantages of each method.
- The need for credible and authentic evidence.
- The value of using multiple methods.
- The importance of ensuring cultural appropriateness.

# Quality criteria for methods

## UTILITY

- Will the data sources and collection methods serve the information needs of your primary users?

## Quality criteria...

### FEASIBILITY

- Are your sources and methods practical and efficient?
- Do you have the capacity, time, and resources?
- Are your methods non-intrusive and non-disruptive?

## Quality criteria...

### PROPRIETY

- Are your methods respectful, legal, ethical, and appropriate?
- Does your approach protect and respect the welfare of all those involved or affected?

## Quality criteria...

### ACCURACY

Are your methods technically adequate to:

- answer your questions?
- measure what you intend to measure?
- reveal credible and trustworthy information?
- convey important information?



There is no one right method of collecting data.

Each has a purpose, advantages, and challenges.

The goal is to obtain trustworthy, authentic, and credible evidence.

Often, a mix of methods is preferable.

# Culturally appropriate evaluation methods

- How appropriate is the method given the culture of the respondent/the setting?
- Culture differences: nationality, ethnicity, religion, region, gender, age, abilities, class, economic status, language, sexual orientation, physical characteristics, organizational affiliation



# Are interviews culturally appropriate?

## Things to consider:

- Preferred by people with an oral culture
- Language level proficiency; verbal skill proficiency
- Politeness – responding to authority (thinking it's unacceptable to say "no"), nodding, smiling, agreeing
- Need to have someone present
- Relationship/position of interviewer
- May be seen as interrogation
- Direct questioning may be seen as impolite, threatening, or confrontational



# Are focus groups culturally appropriate?

## Things to consider:

- Issues of gender, age, class, clan differences
- Issues of pride, privacy, self-sufficiency, and traditions
- Relationship to facilitator as prerequisite to rapport
- Same considerations as for interview



# Is observation culturally appropriate?

## Things to consider:

- Discomfort, threat of being observed
- Issue of being an “outsider”
- Observer effect
- Possibilities for misinterpretations



## Cultural issues related to use of existing data/records

- Need careful translation of documents in another language
- May have been written/compiled using unknown standards or levels of aggregation
- May be difficult to get authorization to use
- Difficult to correct document errors if low literacy level

# Culturally appropriate informed consent

How can we be culturally sensitive and respectful and ensure the protection of those involved in our evaluations?

- Children
- Marginalized, “less powerful” participants

# Focus groups

## Structured small group interviews

“Focused” in two ways:

- Persons being interviewed are similar in some way (e.g. limited resource families, family services professionals, or elected officials).
- Information on a particular topic is guided by a set of focused questions.



# Focus groups

Focus groups are used...

- To solicit perceptions, views, and a range of opinions (not consensus)
- When you wish to probe an issue or theme in depth

# Survey

A structured way to collect information using questionnaires. Surveys are typically conducted through the mail (electronic or surface), phone, or internet.

# Survey

Surveys are used...

- To collect standardized information from large numbers of individuals
- When face-to-face meetings are inadvisable
- When privacy is important or independent opinions and responses are needed

# Steps in planning a survey

1. Decide who should be involved in the process.
2. Define survey content.
3. Identify your respondents.
4. Decide on the survey method.
5. Develop the questionnaire.
6. Pilot test the questionnaire and other materials.
7. Think about analysis.
8. Communicate about your survey and its results.
9. Develop a budget, timeline, and management process.