There’s another point of view: Use of mixed method and other types of research as evidence.

Role of consumers in research.

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Quantitative research: An overview
The essence of quantitative research design

• Assumption: there is a reality that can be studied and known.
  • Nature is essentially ordered and regular; an objective reality exists independent of human observation.

• Use of the ‘scientific method’
  • Orderly, disciplined procedures to acquire empirical information/evidence.
The essence, cont’d.

• Uses deductive reasoning to generate ideas that are tested in the real world.

• Use of mechanisms to control the study:
  • Minimize biases and maximize precision and validity.
  • Controlling for factors not under direct investigation.

• Formal measurement analyzed with statistical procedures.

• Generalizability – degree to which research findings can be generalized to individuals other than study participants – a criterion for assessing quality of quantitative studies.
How do quantitative studies apply to disaster/humanitarian aid research?

• Comparisons:
  • between two or more groups.
  • of one group’s status at two or more points in time.
  • of one group’s status under different circumstances.

• Randomization.

• Quasi-experimental designs.
  • Non equivalent control group only post-test design-as above, but unable to get any pretest data.
Introducing qualitative research
Defining qualitative research

• Generally, qualitative research generates narrative, detailed information that contributes to in-depth understanding of the context in which the phenomenon, issue, or intervention under study takes place.

• Non-experimental:
  • The researcher observes phenomena as they naturally occur without intervening.
Qualitative research is used...

- To explore an issue or problem or practice for which there is scant data.
  - Or to explore an issue or problem from a different perspective.
- To inform design of quantitative research.
- To inform interpretation of quantitative findings:
  - What do the numbers really mean?
  - How can they be explained?
  - What more can we learn from them?
  - How can we explain differences?
    - among categories of populations:
      - Culture.
      - Age.
      - Gender.
    - By geographic area.
Study design characteristics

• Research questions
  • Not intended to yield generalizable data.
  • Exploration of a phenomenon.

• Sample selection
  • Purposive, snowball, saturation.

• Data collection methods
  • Individual interviews.
  • Group discussions.
  • Observation.
  • Can involve merging various strategies.
Study design characteristics, cont’d.

• Analysis: the *meaning* of the responses/comments
  Increasingly rigorous

• Flexibility.

• Requires intense involvement in data collection and analysis.
Summary of qualitative methods...

- Explain numbers.
- Help to understand an issue.
- Tell a story.
Linking qualitative and quantitative research to enhance understanding of disaster response: Mixed methods
Advantages of combining both types of research

• Research development:
  • One approach is used to inform the other.
    • Exploring the policy and/or research questions.
    • Study design.
    • Developing the data collection instruments.
    • Analysis and interpretation of findings.
Advantages of mixed methods, cont’d.

• Increased validity:
  • Confirmation of results through triangulation of data sources.

• Complementarity:
  • Adding information – narrative to numbers and vice versa.

• Creating new lines of thinking:
  • Different perspectives, worldviews.
Approaches to mixed method research

• **Qualitative** method (e.g., focus groups and/or in-depth interviews) used to:
  • identify key domains to include in quantitative study (e.g., household survey post-disaster).
  • further understand findings of a household survey post-disaster.
  • elicit viewpoints of key national policy makers regarding response of international donor community.

• **Quantitative** study includes:
  • household survey and observation of post-disaster emergency medical practice.
  • household survey of client population and in-depth interviews with providers.
Figure 3-3 The 5S levels of organization of evidence from health care research.

Where does mixed method research fit/belong on this pyramid and how can the data/information inform disaster planning/response?
Role of consumers in research related to disaster response
The dialogue continues...

• **Defining consumers:**
  • General public.
  • Populations of people who have directly experienced disaster or who are at high risk.
  • Emergency response personnel.
  • Health, education, transportation, utilities and other public sector service providers.
  • Public sector planners and policy makers.
  • Private sector – businesses, for-profit organizations.
  • Private sector, non-profit responders/donors.
  • Other?
The dialogue continues...

• **Defining the role of consumers**
  • identifying relevant outcomes and questions.
  • participating in:
    • research design.
    • conduct of research.
    • data analysis.
    • interpretation of findings.
  • engagement in policy recommendations.
The dialogue continues…

- Practical realities:
  - Who engages consumers?
  - How are they engaged?
  - Who funds the research?
  - Who decides?