



Rigour in Methods and Evaluation for Community Engagement

Christopher Yordy | November 2012

Community First: Impacts of Community Engagement (CFICE)



Community First: Impacts of Community Engagement (CFICE), a major SSHRC-funded project, aims to strengthen Canadian communities through action research on best practice community campus. We ask how community campus partnerships can be done to maximize the value created for non-profit, community based organizations in four key areas: poverty, community food security, community environmental sustainability, and reducing violence against women.

This research was supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada through the Community First: Impacts of Community Engagement Project.



Social Sciences and Humanities
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en
sciences humaines du Canada





Table of Contents

Rigour in Methods and Evaluation for Community Engagement

About the Author	2
Abstract.....	1
Introduction.....	2
Rigour and the Multiple levels of Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis.....	4
Rigour in Methods and Post-Positivist Paradigm Shifting	10
Evaluation and Rigour in defining a Theory of Change	11
Conclusions.....	15

About the Author



Christopher Yordy is a PhD student in the School of Public Policy and Administration (SPPA) at Carleton University. Previous to his studies at Carleton, he worked as an economist and development practitioner in several countries of the Middle East and North Africa. He has been involved in community engaged research work in Egypt over the past 5 years including studies of the sugarcane sector in Aswan and fisheries on the North Coast near Alexandria. His recent work has involved food and nutrition policy analysis with the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO); value chain for development work in Pakistan with Mennonite Economic Development Associates (MEDA); and economic studies funded by Farm Radio International (FRI) on models for the improvement of extension activities in various parts of Sub-Saharan Africa.

Christopher is also interested in alternative methodologies for community engaged scholarship, which means finding new ways to explore the sometimes delicate and asymmetrical relationship between Government, Universities and Community groups. As an avid supporter of student organizations, the particular ways that the food security, poverty and hunger dialogue is advancing in Canada, alongside other key policy issues, may be seen as grounded in social change that takes place at Universities. The ability of students and youth to take initiative in growing their own food, local food purchasing movements, and critically examining food abundance and scarcity, are a constant source of inspiration for Christopher's multiple research passions. His current engagement as a PhD Researcher with the Community First: Impacts of Community Engagement CFICE project is anticipated to contribute to the project's vision of uniting student ideas with community practice to create meaningful policy change, in Canada, and around the world.



Rigour in Methods and Evaluation for Community Engagement

Abstract

This paper is an overview of the important considerations that arise at the outset of a project. There are numerous ways that a work team may decide on which methods should be prioritized among the many tools available for community engagement. As the project comes to grips with the scale and the scope of a 7-year project on Community Engagement, it will be essential to explore how the various evaluative methods: Theory of Change (ToC), Developmental Evaluation, Collective Impact, and Action Research are combined, and how Evaluation scholars have typically approached these subjects in the past. Is it possible to use ‘Theory of Change’ at the same time as other methods? One may answer this question with a resounding “Yes!” In the community sector, there are many versions of a Theory of Change. The term may be applied to both one’s personalized impression of the arrow of change, as well as according to traditional Log Frame models for mapping long term ‘policy change.’ Even if there are dilemmas in coming up with language to describe what is meant by “Theory of Change,” there are many opportunities for ToC to be fused with other methods, and tried and tested over the life of the CFICE project, whatever the original connotations of the researcher or community practitioner may be.

Introduction

Both methods and evaluation (and sometimes evaluative methods) will come into view with increasing clarity over the first year of the CFICE project. As a means to synthesize some of the thoughts from the initial CFICE meetings, this document is a critical reflection on what constitutes analytical rigour in both the methods and evaluative tools that were mentioned in the initial CFICE meetings (of Steering Committee and Program Committee) and in the initial research proposal. Rigour is not something that can be achieved merely by adhering to a quantitative framework, and nor is it something that requires the adoption of one toolset over another. In-stead, the CFICE project will rely on multiple methods and toolsets, and establish a criteria of rigour on the basis of the quantitative and qualitative research needs of the Hubs, and based on their own approaches to the reporting of community activities.

There are various levels at which rigour can be examined according to the various disciplinary backgrounds that make up the CFICE hub teams. On the research methods side, post-positivist theory is a point of departure at the intersection point between policy studies, human geography, social work research and feminist theory. On the evaluation side, the theory of change as well as action research have been used as macro frameworks to bring together (in a semi-rigorous fashion) the theory of change for community actors, and community organizations. Indeed, post-positivism is a common ground from which the *research methods* and *evaluation framework* could both be elaborated.

Another way to view the activities of the Hubs is by subdividing them into micro, meso and macro levels of the project. To use the words of Mark Cabaj, and Mohamad Yunus, this amounts to developing, not only a bird's eye view, but also a "worm's eye view" of community actors in integrated networks (Cabaj, 2011: 139). Part of the definition of rigour for the CFICE project may be determining the extent to which qualitative and quantitative rigour is possible at each of these levels. It also means examining researchers and policy actors as elements in a common ecosystem, and looking at the potential outcomes from the perspective both the highest level of aggregation (such as the country or regional policy level) as well as at the grassroots where local changes happen. At the risk of stretching the metaphor too far, one might also want to consider the meso level of aggregation, the "bee's eye view" of the Hub co-leads, where the community actors are networked, and their knowledge is mobilized for social

change and difused across space between many different organizational units. As the Hubs of the CFICE pro-ject act as points where information and academic data can be moved beyond the cellular “hive” level, to the flower level (i.e. where the community organizations are the organic starting point of community activity) it is anticipated that there will be a cross-fertilization of ideas. Community organizations will benefit from the Hub leads’ cross-pollination efforts as well as being the gen-erative force behind them. Where community organizations are already in full bloom as net-worked organizations, there are ways to strengthen the buzz of activity over the course of the CFICE project in multiple ways with the particular interactivity of the hubs.

This metaphor for conceptualizing micro, meso and macro interactions has been used be-fore in various other studies, but especially in the social sciences and geography (Rose, 1997; Reed and Peters, 2004). As shown in these previous studies, an ecological metaphor involves a power dynamic which must be taken into account between researcher and research subject. Such relationships of power are rarely one way or easily predictable. As Reed and Peters elaborate, this is only one of many metaphors that have been used in the past. (If adhering to a true ecologi-cal model, in the broadest sense, ecological theory is social theory because it considers humans as part of ‘nature’ and develops theory from interdisciplinary approaches used in both the social and natural sciences) (Reed and Peters, 2004).

This brief document on rigour asks a couple of key questions with respect to methods and evaluation, and seeks to define what constitutes rigour for community based research and com-munity service learning initiatives. The approaches to rigour from these sources may be made more specific given our own research questions in the proposal. The condensed version of these research questions include the following:

1. Scale and replication of community-campus engagement (CCE)
2. CBO definition, evaluation and use of CCE
3. CBO control or shared control in design and implementation of CSL, CBR
4. University governance, evaluation, feedback, course design (which maximizes value for CBOs)
5. Capturing community impacts quantitatively and qualitatively with CBOs
6. Ethical issues in community-campus partnerships

Community First: Impacts of Community Engagement (CFICE)

Of concern here in this document are primarily questions of scale (macro meso and micro) which are addressed by the 1st research question. Capturing impacts quantitatively and qualitatively with CBOs (the 5th research question) is also of interest when ascertaining the appropriate re-research and evaluation methods.

Rigour and the Multiple levels of Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis

As Stoecker identifies in his book on research methods for community change, there are several polarities and decision points that often appear when doing community engagement and community based research. These include choices about:

- Basic vs. applied research
- Intensive vs. extensive research
- The project-based research model: diagnosing, prescribing, implementing, evaluating
- Reasons to do project-based research: reduce waste, compete for funding, win on advocacy issues
- Ways to get research done: staff, volunteers, academics, students
- The steps in research: choosing the question, designing the methods collecting the data, analyzing the data, reporting the results
- Definitions of community, organization, and group

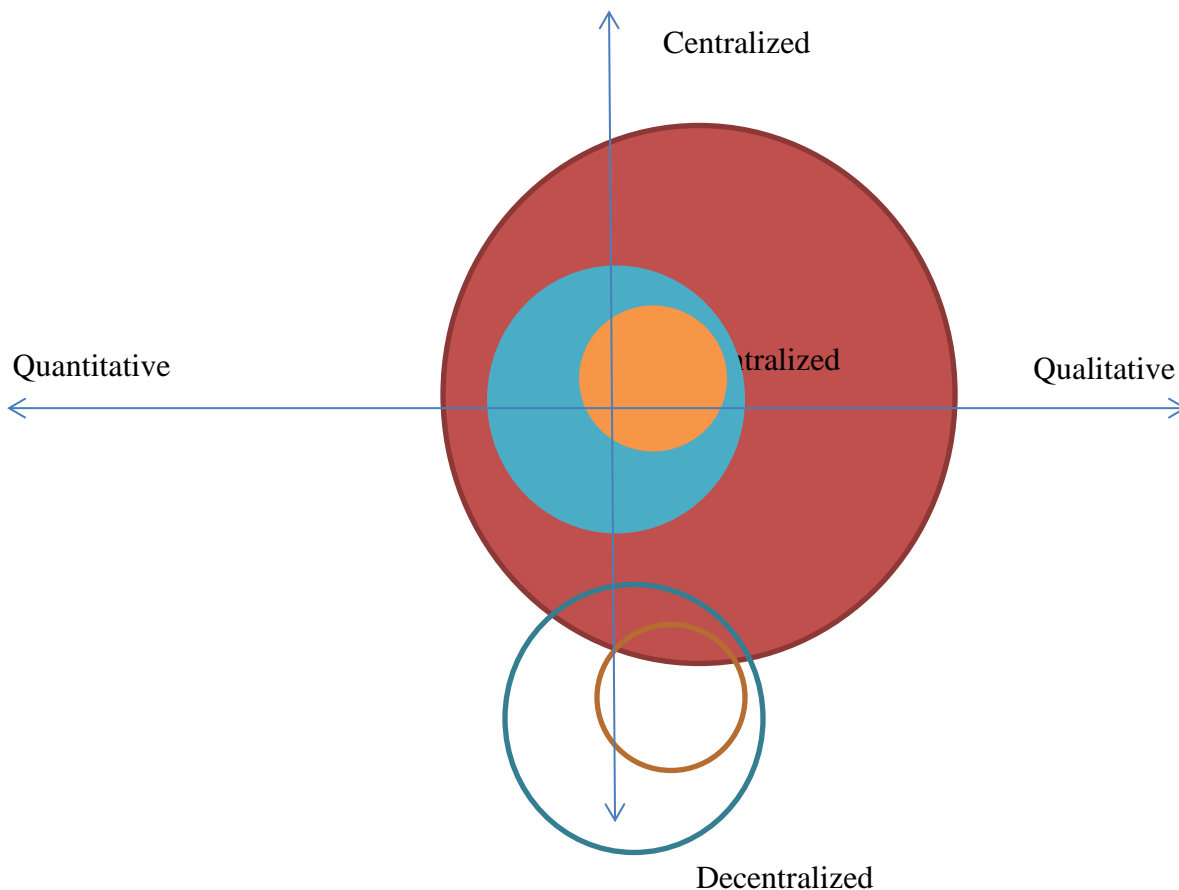
(Stoecker, 2005)

Just as some of these questions may be discussed together in terms of the overall project vision (at the macro level) they may also be made specific on an individual basis as a researcher goes about his or her problem definition or demonstration project (the micro level). In wrapping these ideas around a core of community based design, research problems may be decidedly qualitative or quantitative. They may also depend on the management structure for the project itself. Stoecker's criteria may thus be modified by the addition of two additional factors:

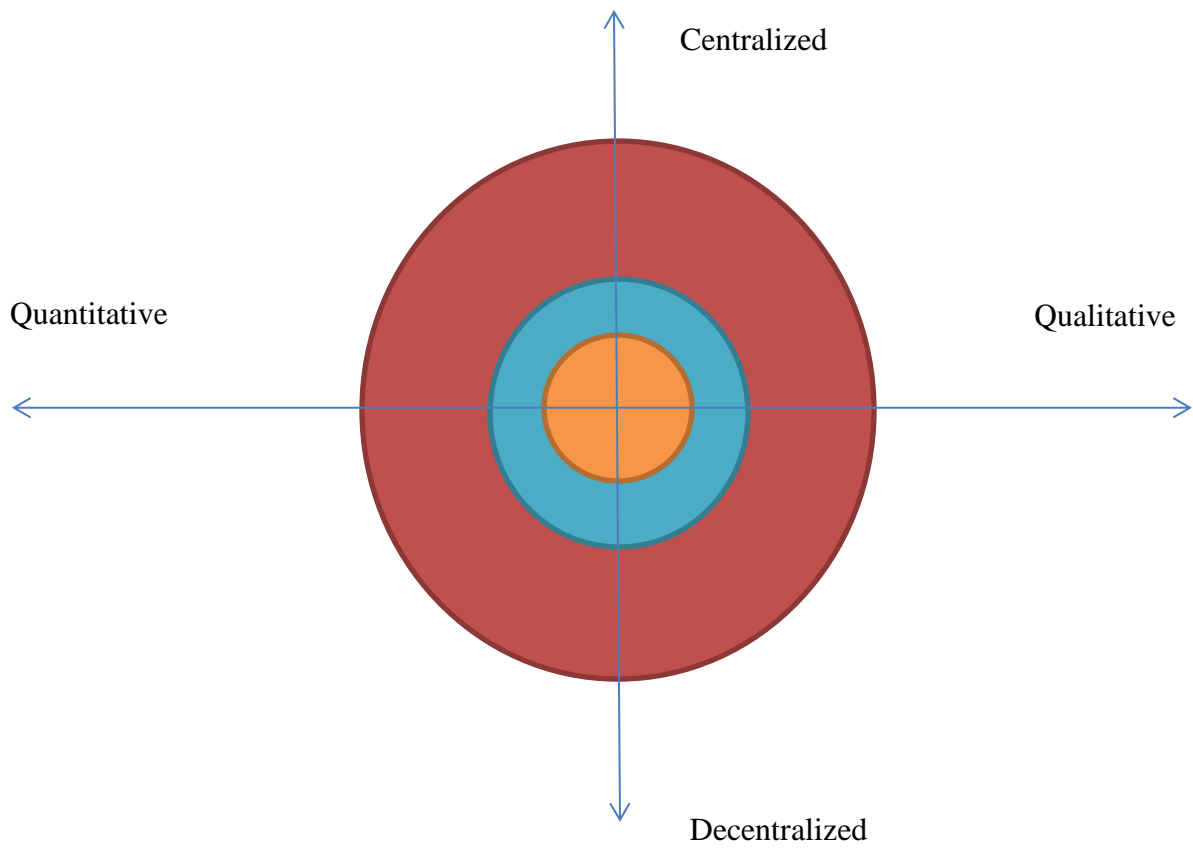
- Qualitative / Quantitative
- Centralized / Decentralized Project Management

In the first meetings of CFICE, one of the points of departure agreed upon was the idea that rigour is not necessarily quantitative rigour, and project teams are committed to working with a di-versity of methods according to the needs of each of the Hubs and their community activities. This also implies that at each of the levels of the project, a decision may be made as to whether qualitative and quantitative are best suited to the needs of stakeholders (whether within demon-stration projects, Hub teams, Program, or Steering Committee). This goes for the micro (com-munity organizational level), meso (Hub level), and (Program Committee). One of the interesting ways to visualize this connection is on a spectrum in three dimensions, because few, if any, re-search designs are purely quantitative, qualitative, centralized or decentralized. Our configura-tion of methods and evaluations may thus take any of the following forms, which will shape how the overall CFICE project is evaluated:

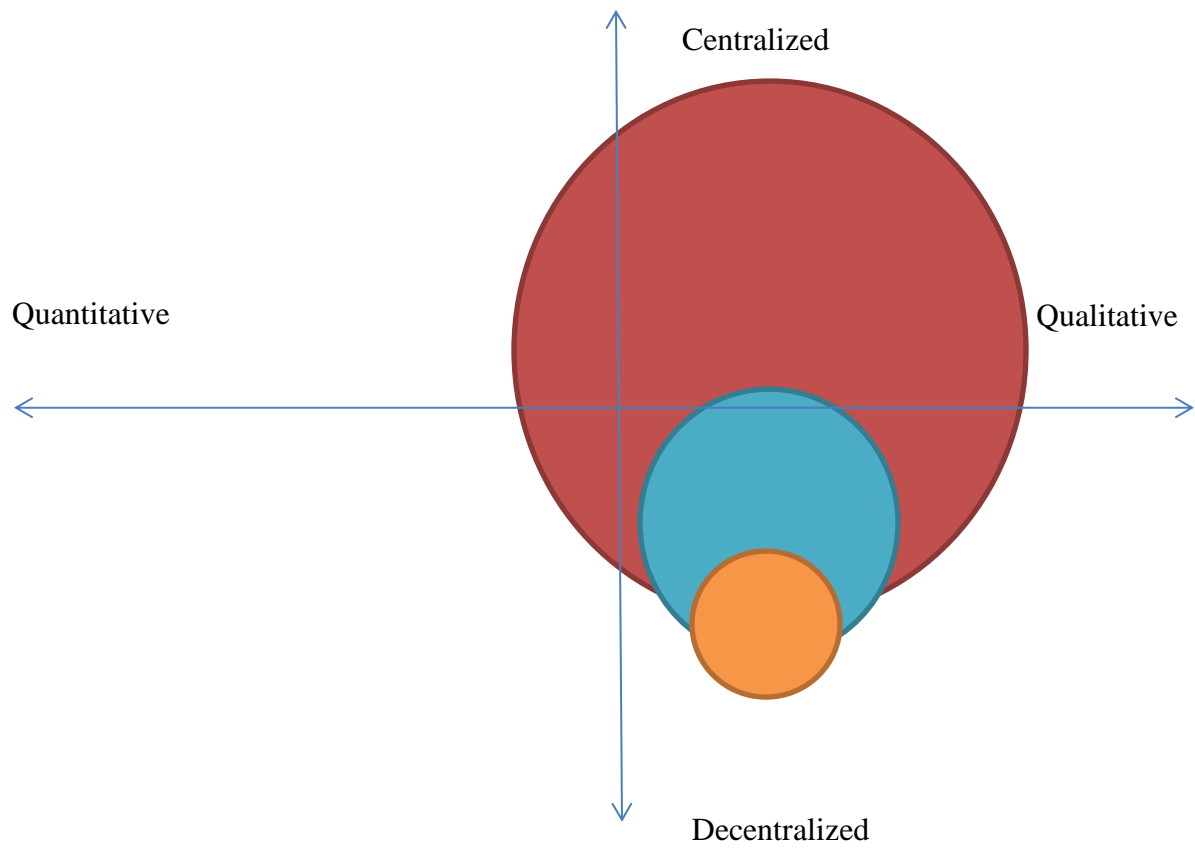
Moderately convergent:



Highly convergent:



Divergent:



The chosen framework once identified (qualitative or quantitative, centralized or decentralized) will shape how evaluators measure impact and outcomes for the project. It is worthwhile considering measurement at each of the levels of the project and the overall project structure because honing in on how much research will be qualitative or quantitative will help determine the appropriateness of an overall evaluation framework (the macro framework for the project). This determines which evaluation styles are best suited to the macro evaluation. For example, an impact evaluation may or may not be possible depending on the amount of overlap that is required between our impacts at the micro, meso and macro levels of the project.

In a specific type of impact evaluation, there is the possibility to determine impact collectively. In order to adhere to a collective impact evaluation structure, the chosen methods would focus on linking together the measurement tools at different levels of the analysis (Kania and Kramer, 2011). Collective impact requires that a high level of integration between macro meso and micro levels in order for the overall evaluation framework to be consistent. This is certainly desirable in forms of evaluation where multiple CBOs or nonprofit organizations are working together:

The nonprofit sector most frequently operates using an approach that we call isolated impact. It is an approach oriented toward finding and funding a solution embodied within a single organization, combined with the hope that the most effective organizations will grow or replicate to extend their impact more widely. Funders search for more effective interventions as if there were a cure for failing schools that only needs to be discovered, in the way that medical cures are discovered in laboratories. As a result of this process, nearly 1.4 million nonprofits try to invent independent solutions to major social problems, often working at odds with each other and exponentially increasing the perceived resources required to make meaningful progress. (Kania and Kramer, 2011)

This quotation also bespeaks a problem that occurs in evaluation that far too often, our organizations try and determine what impact they have on policy, or of an intervention without examining the possibility that a collective change has occurred, which is *not* traceable to any one organization.

‘Collective Impact’ might then be quite useful to our purposes in CFICE, however, it would therefore be typified as a centralized and highly quantitative approach at least so far as

data collection is concerned. This approach has remained critical of the current trends in impact evaluation because it downplays the individual impacts of organizations on their environment. What happens if there are no common metrics within and among organizations? Each organization would then potentially become overly concerned with their own causal linkages between a social problem and their own impact upon it. Since there is a diversity of policy areas common to the organizations that are a part of the CFICE project, there is a possibility of working among organizations to have an impact on poverty reduction, sustainable food security and reduced violence against women. Such policy areas clearly do already have some common metrics which have appeared in the policy literature (for example the negative correlations between food security and poverty, or the positive correlations between sustainability and food security).

Developing a shared measurement system is essential to collective impact. Agreement on a common agenda, however, is illusory without agreement on the ways success will be measured and reported. Collecting data and measuring results consistently on a short list of indicators at the community level and across all participating organizations not only ensures that all efforts remain aligned, it also enables the participants to hold each other accountable and learn from each other's successes and failures.

In summary, when determining whether quantitative or qualitative methods are best at the demonstration project level, and when determining which evaluation frameworks to use, it will be critical to determine how these fit together in the project as a whole. Since a framework such as 'Collective Impact' might be useful to evaluators as a means to create new efficiencies and save costs, it also implies a requisite ability to track and capture impacts along the way by all organizations. Such 'impact tracking' or a common measurement framework implies establishing a common database, or common access points for inputting information. This is not without some investment from community partners to ensure that the correct type of data is being captured (as well as that the data capture processes imply a minimal burden on community service workers). Hence, there are tradeoffs between a more integrated crossover between the micro-, meso- and macro- M&E frameworks for the project and the ones that might diverge to a greater extent.

Rigour in Methods and Post-Positivist Paradigm Shifting

In some of our preliminary discussions of rigour, there was a general consensus that CFICE is mostly interested in post-positivist methods and that there would be further communication about what defines rigour as each of the Hub projects progresses. How to establish rigour when using post-positivist paradigms is one of the important points of intersection for all of the policy inter-ests of the Hubs at the outset of this research project.

Changing the definition of rigour in the natural sciences has often influenced the way that social scientists approach methods as well. In the post-positivist frameworks that have developed since the work of Thomas Kuhn around the 1970s, social scientists and policy scientists alike recognized that a falsifiable mode of hypothesis testing was no longer necessary in order to earn the name of science. Indeed, such models as logical falsificationism were proven difficult to maintain even within the natural scientists¹ (Fischer, 1998). Those writing on feminist methods in the 1990s also affirmed that the definition of ‘scientific inquiry’ had evolved substantially, which was influenced by reconceptualization according to a post-positivist structure: “Until re-cently, most people thought of science as a cumulative process in the discovery of increasingly correct descriptions of the physical world. That is, there seemed to be an increasing better fit between the theories of science and what we thought of as independent, physical reality... Kuhn’s analysis challenged this conception of science, describing it instead as a social-historical process of paradigm transitions (Nielson, 1990: 12). The shifting basis of inquiry for the physical sciences had dramatically changed the mode of thinking in the social sciences as researchers in each discipline became aware of their own epistemological changes and paradigm shifts (van de Sande and Schwartz, 2011: 11).

But there are other reasons that social scientists have chosen research methods that are post-positivist in orientation. Feminists and new social theorists found reason to question the myth of objectivity, particularly for its lack of applicability in the social sciences where human beings and communities (as the subjects of interest) defy typical forms of measurement. Those

¹Not even can the natural sciences live up to their own ideal of binary hypothesis falsifiability. As Fischer further notes: “With the advent of quantum mechanics and chaos theory in physics and evolutionary theory in the biological sciences, growing numbers of scientists have come to reject the Parmenidean worldview in favor of the Heraclitean conception of flux... From quantum theory and its postulate of indeterminacy we have learned that various aspects of the atomic level of reality are so influenced (or co-determined) by other dimensions of the same phenomena that such processes can no longer be described as determinate or predictable” (1998: 131).

writing on feminist methods throughout the 1990s often blazed the trail forward for all science by deconstructing positivist research approaches. As the shift towards post-positivism in social sciences continues to take hold, thanks to the contribution of feminists, “many now acknowledge that objective and value-neutral research, as upheld by the positivist, empiricist view, is a myth” (van de Sande and Schwartz, 2011: 10). Other authors who endorsed the post-positivist approach to research methods include Nielson among others (Nielson, 1990; Harding, 1987; Smith, 1987; Tanesini, 1999).

The use of the scientific method is even held under scrutiny according to the new paradigm emerging in social work research. Assumptions of objectivity imply that the scientific method be used in all cases as a means to establish rigour. The typical assumption that ‘research when adhering to the scientific method must be as objective as possible’ (Rubin and Babbie, 2008) is called into question when applied to social work research (van de Sande and Schwartz, 2011: 1). In a post-positivist world, the scientific method can no longer be regarded as the sole basis of rigour. Furthermore, in defining a post-positivist framework, one has several theoretical subsets of literature which might be examined further (the ‘interpretive-hermeneutic’ and the ‘critical theory’ subset) (Nielson, 1990: 11). This feminist vision may sometimes be at one with the re-emergence of a *critical theory* standpoint when mobilized for the specific purposes of so-cial work research.²

Evaluation and Rigour in defining a Theory of Change

Central to our question of rigour, it is important to investigate how a theoretical basis of change can be applied rigorously, and whether a specific ‘theory of change’ framework is sufficient in establishing an ‘evidence basis’ which is increasingly required by government agencies for per-formance management (Lynch-Cerullo and Cooney, 2011). Although defining an evidence basis for policy and community change can sometimes lead to an increased onus on community organ-izations to carry out their own evidence-based evaluations’ which can be

2

Critical theorists had opposed the wholesale use of a science model, and at the same time have been critical of the practice of natural science itself. As such, when employed by some feminists, it certainly means more than simply a negative judgment of positivism. It is also the unmaking of beliefs that limit human freedom. It is this idea that might stand at the root of post-positivist analysis, when coupled with the development of a new paradigm, which distinguishes itself from the hermeneutic tradition (Nielson, 1990: 9).

burdensome (*Lampkin et al.*, 2006) placing the responsibility for monitoring and evaluation directly in the hands of community can also be empowering. This often depends on the extent to which evaluation is participatory, and in what forms it qualifies as participatory (Cousins and Whitmore, 1998, Whitmore, 1998). In this sense, evaluation can be a 'bridging tool' that adds rigour and is part of the evidence gathering process (Lynch-Cerullo and Cooney, 2011; Saunders *et al.*, 2005). It is thus that the question of rigour is not necessarily quantitative rigour, but also highly qualitative when embedded in evaluation processes. As feminist legal scholars have indicated, developing a rigorous approach to change must necessarily ask the big questions, such as whether the changes are deep or superficial changes (Bartlett, 1995). The remainder of this section, carries out an investigation of the origin and interplay of concepts contributing to a rigorous theory of change, while stopping short of producing a visual representation or 'evaluation theory tree' of these origins (as has been accomplished elsewhere) (Alkin and Christie, 2004; Hansen *et al.*, 2012).

Connections between the micro, meso and macro levels of a project can take time to develop. In seeking for a theory of change or *framework for change*,³ to explain such connections, much has been written already (Cabaj, 2011). The evaluation literature on 'theory of change' program logic models is an area to draw upon for evaluation and has several similarities with existing frameworks. As a macro framework, it stands out for both its flexibility (ability to be combined with other frameworks) and currency in evaluative practice. Even so, it is important to recognize the other evaluative frameworks that might also be incorporated into CFICE at the macro level of evaluative analysis. Above all, it is important to allow a unity among macro evaluative frameworks to develop organically for CFICE, in whatever terminological language best typifies that process, whether it be transformative learning (Vogelgesang, 2009), theory of change (Weiss, 1995; Funnell and Rogers, 2011; Rogers, 2008; Sullivan *et al.*, 2002; Lynch-Cerullo and Cooney, 2011) action research (Abraham and Purkayastha, 2012; Pettit, 2012; Brydon-Miller and Greenwood, 2003) developmental evaluation (Gamble, 2010; Patton, 2011) or combinations thereof (Hargreaves and Podem, 2012; Cook, 2006). Many of these have been applied within a specific service learning framework in Canada (Nelson and Stroink, 2010) while others have emerged from community based practice or engagement in extension departments at land grant universities in the USA (Chaskin, 2009; Stoecker, 2009; University of Wisconsin,³ 2012). http://tamarackcci.ca/files/resource_at_a_glance_framework_for_change_0.pdf

Furthermore, in addition to these frameworks which might be regarded as competing schools of thought in evaluation, there are theoretical hybrids which can easily coexist or be incorporated into theory of change evaluations, such as complexity theory (Dyson and Todd, 2012; Whitmore *et al.*, 2011: 157; Snowden and Boone, 2007: 4; Ramalingham *et al.*, 2008; Patton, 2011; Saunders *et al.*, 2005). Complexity concepts, including the *Cynefin* framework, add depth to the theory of change evaluation framework because they recognize that some ‘best practices’ and social changes are achievable under the chaotic circumstances in which a community finds itself while others are not. Making the level of complexity explicit can feed into the identification of assumptions under the TOC framework, which is essential to its functioning (Vogel, 2012). However, as Ling has emphasized, the fact that evaluations take place in ‘real-time’ makes it all the more important to anticipate by taking into account complexity as a formative evaluation approach (Ling, 2012). In addition to complexity theory that are most easily blended with theory of change (TOC) in a macro framework for evaluation, others may be more difficult to integrate, such as a pure ‘impact evaluation’ or frameworks that force choices among performance measurement dashboards (Carman, 2010: 270). As Carman further writes, “the debate over which performance measurement or dashboard system is better should be replaced with a consensus around accountability expectations” (*ibid.*). Sometimes the terms realist evaluation, theory driven evaluation and TOC evaluation are used interchangeably (Marchal *et al.*, 2012). Other authors have questioned whether TOC frameworks and ‘Realistic Evaluation’ are indeed parallel frameworks (Blamey and MacKenzie, 2007: 452).

Apart from the question of congruence in terminology, there are also complementary approaches that were included in the CFICE research proposal that would naturally be integrated with a theory of change framework even if not being of the same origin. This includes contribution analysis especially (Mayne, 2008; Mayne, 2012). Some are more likely to be categorized as tools rather than frameworks which carry less of a theoretical implication, such as program logic models (McCawley, *circa* 2000; Hansen *et al.*, 2012) outcome mapping (Earl and Carden, 2002; Lampkin *et al.*, 2006) and results-based management (Frechtling, 2007; Morra Imas and Rist, 2009). Some of these tools may even be reframed as ‘theory of change’ logic models (Lynch-Cerullo and Cooney, 2011: 370).

Theory of Change is not without its detractors, however, and as Sullivan and associates have argued, the time constraints implied by the TOC approach as well as the imperative for ‘buy in’ for local government may raise the bar beyond what is achievable for communities in the short run: “In relation to building capacity for collaboration, the process of capacity building – of communities or partners – takes time ... While this is acknowledged by central government it exists alongside the need for ‘early wins’. This political imperative almost inevitably cuts across the developmental imperative suggested by ‘theories of change’ and could (in certain cases) undermine the effectiveness of the approach” (Sullivan, 2002: 209).

Finally, part of the challenge of distilling the concept of ‘theory of change (ToC)’ from its long history in the policy literature, it becomes apparent that ToC thinking does not only exist in evaluation. Rather ToC has come to have a particular set of connotations unique to the field of evaluation, and which does not reflect its common usage in the disciplines from which it emerged. For example ToC when contextualized in the policy research literature most certainly predates its emergence in the field of evaluation in the work of Carole Weiss. It is only since the mid-1990s that ToC found its way into a technical glossary of evaluation as “the assumptions that link a program’s inputs and activities to the attainment of desired ends [including] both implementation theory and program theory” (Weiss, 1998: 338). This narrower definition of ToC (apart from the policy context) bears little resemblance to the theory of change literature in economics prior to the 1990s (Werr, 1995) or even earlier, such as when Huntington wrote about the ‘theory of change’ in political science as a means to discuss the disciplinary shifts that were happening in the field of comparative politics (Huntington, 1968). Hence, the current jargon of ToC focuses primarily on ToC logic models to the exclusion of other theoretical concepts. There may be a means to reintegrate a theoretical consistency into CFICE projects and to ensure that it is simultaneously policy based, however, this might prove more cumbersome than it is worth. The key will be to glean the practical elements of ToC thinking for use in evaluation if that is a useful tool for community managers, and leave the rest. Among the many programs and projects which strove to integrate ToC work since the 1990s, the Aspen Roundtable has led the way to bringing together groups working on Comprehensive Community Initiatives (CCIs) (Sullivan and Stewart, 2006). Such workshops and online resources have proven to be some of the most practical work on ToC to date.



Conclusions

In summary, there are many different approaches to the theory of change (ToC) within policy literature and evaluation literature. These do not always resemble each other because of terminological disunity. In the policy literature, it is important to be aware that 'theory of change' sometimes refers to disciplinary shifts rather than shifts brought about by specific interventions and programs. The integration of the term 'theory of change' into the logic model in the 1990s in the work of Carole Weiss and The Aspen Institute, has meant that there are a number of different ways that theory of change has been fused with specific evaluative tools such as program logic models. This is likely to be an irreversible process, for the concept of TOC is now so widespread that in fact some researchers have sought to lift out the 'participative' aspects of TOC for impact evaluation (Hart *et al.*, 2009). Just as Love and Weiss have contended, it is argued here that theory based approaches are not at all incongruent with community based interventions, because informal theory can emerge from community at various stages – but certainly some form of fundamental theory is necessary (Love, 2012; Weiss, 1995). What matters for the sake of rigour is being able to track such changes at the community level and the ability to come to terms with the power dynamics that those entail (Pettit, 2012; Burns, 2012). As CFICE attempts to develop its own 'theory of change' and ability to leverage community power for change, the formalized models implied by TOC may at times be complemented by informal theories and processes (Love, 2012).

This brief document on rigour has sought to distinguish between theoretically based methods and theoretically based evaluation. For methods, the literature on post-positivist paradigms seems to be a unifying factor among the various Hubs. In evaluation, it appears to be the TOC approach which is the most resilient and flexible to be applied at various levels (micro- me-so- and macro- analysis), although it need not be limited to one. Contribution analysis and participatory evaluation may also come to the fore, and may even be part of what gives the TOC approach its rigour or evidence basis (Sridharan and Nakaima, 2012). The conclusion of importance at the outset of CFICE is that there are several different ways to establish a rigorous evidence-basis within CFICE without necessarily calling it 'evidence-based'. The post-positivist framework assists the project in doing so, as does also the ability to establish an evidence basis through ToC thinking.



References

Abraham, M., & Purkayastha, B. (2012). Making a difference: Linking research and action in practice, pedagogy, and policy for social justice: Introduction. *Current Sociology*, 60(2), 123-141.

Alkin, M. C., & Christie, C. A. (2004). An evaluation theory tree. In M. C. Alkin (Ed.), *Evaluation roots* (pp. 12-65). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Anderson, A. A. (2012). *The Community Builder's Approach to Theory of Change: A Practical Guide to Theory Development*. New York: Aspen Institute Roundtable on Community Change.

Bartlett, K. T. (1995). Tradition, change and the idea of progress in feminist legal thought. *Wisconsin Law Review*, 1995, 303-343.

Beaulieu, L. J. (2002). Mapping the Assets of your community: A Key component for Building Local Capacity. In S. R. D. Center (Ed.), *SRDC Publication: 227*. Mississippi State (Starkville): Mississippi State University.

Bellamie, P., & Johnson, S. (2011). The Vulnerable Researcher: Some Unanticipated Challenges of Doctoral Fieldwork. *The Qualitative Report*, 16(3), 711-729.

Blamey, A., & MacKenzie, M. (2007). Theories of Change and Realistic Evaluation: Peas in a Pod or Apples and Oranges? *Evaluation*, 13(4), 439-455.

Blouin, D. D., & Perry, E. M. (2009). Whom does service-learning really serve?: Community-based organizations' perspectives on service-learning. *Teaching Sociology*, 37(2009), 120-135.

Brydon-Miller, M., & Greenwood, D. (2003). Why Action Research? *Action Research*, 1(1), 9-28.

Burns, D. (2012). Participatory Systemic Inquiry. *IDS Bulletin*, 43(3), 88-100.

Cabaj, M. (2011). *Cities reducing poverty: How Vibrant Communities Are Creating Comprehensive Solutions to the Most Complex Problem of Our Times*. Waterloo, ON: Bastian Publishing Services Inc.

Carman, J. (2010). The Accountability Movement: What's Wrong With This Theory of Change? *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 39(2), 256-274.

Chaskin, R. J. (2009). Toward a theory of change in community-based practice with youth: A case-study exploration. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 31(10), 1127-1134.

Cook, T. (2006). Collaborative Action Research within Developmental Evaluation: Learning to See or the Road to Myopia. *Evaluation*, 12(4), 418-436.

Cousins, J. B., & Whitmore, E. (1998). Framing Participatory Evaluation. *New Directions for Evaluation*, 80, 5-23.

Dyson, A., & Todd, L. (2012). Dealing with complexity: theory of change evaluation and the full service extended schools initiative. *International Journal of Research and Method in Education*, 33(2), 119-134.

Earl, S., & Carden, F. (2002). Learning from Complexity: The International Development Research Centre's Experience with Outcome Mapping. In L. Roper, J. Pettit & D. Eade (Eds.), *Development and the Learning Organization*. Sussex: Oxfam.



Community First: Impacts of Community Engagement (CFICE)

- Fischer, F. (1998). Beyond Empiricism: Policy inquiry in post-positivist perspective. *Policy Studies Journal*, 26(1), 129-146.
- Frechtling, J. A. (2007). *Logic Modeling Methods in Program Evaluation*. San Francisco: Wiley.
- Funnell, S. C., & Rogers, P. J. (2011). *Purposeful program theory : effective use of theories of change and logic models* (1st ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Gamble, J. (2010). Evaluating Vibrant Communities. Waterloo, ON: Tamarack - An Institute for Community Engagement.
- Hansen, M., Alkin, M. C., & LeBaron Wallace, T. (2012). Depicting the logic of three evaluation theories. *Evaluation and Program Planning*, forthcoming, 1-10.
- Hargreaves, M. B., & Podems, D. (2012). Advancing Systems Thinking in Evaluation: A Review of Four Publications. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 33(3), 462-470.
- Hart, D., Diercks-O'Brien, G., & Powell, A. (2009). Exploring Stakeholder Engagement in Impact Evaluation Planning in Educational Development Work. *Evaluation*, 15(3), 285-306.
- Huntington, S. P. (1971). The Change to Change: Modernization, Development, and Politics. *Comparative Politics*, 3(3), 283-322.
- Kania, J., & Kramer, M. (2011). Collective impact. *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, 48.
- Keshen, J., Holland, B. A., Moely, B. E., & International Association for Research on Service-learning and Community Engagement. Conference. (2010). *Research for what? : making engaged scholarship matter*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishers.
- Lampkin, L., Kopczynski, M., Kerlin, J., Hatry, H., Natenshon, D., & Saul, J. (2006). Building a common outcome framework to measure nonprofit performance. Retrieved from www.urban.org/publications/411404.html
- Ling, T. (2012). Evaluating complex and unfolding interventions in real time. *Evaluation*, 18(1), 79-91.
- Love, P. (2012). Informal Theory: The Ignored Link in Theory-to-Practice. *Journal of College Student Development*, 53(2), 177-191.
- Lynch-Cerullo, K., & Cooney, K. (2011). Moving from Outputs to Outcomes: A Review of the Evolution of Performance Measurement in the Human Service Nonprofit Sector. *Administration in Social Work*, 35(4), 364-388.
- Marchal, B., van Belle, S., van Olmen, J., Hoérée, T., & Kegels, G. (2012). Is realist evaluation keeping its promise? A review of published empirical studies in the field of health systems research. *Evaluation*, 18(2), 192-292.
- Mason, P., & Barnes, M. (2007). Constructing Theories of Change: Methods and Sources. *Evaluation*, 13(2), 151-170.
- Mayne, J. (2008). Contribution analysis: An approach to exploring cause and effect *ILAC Brief 16*. Maccaresse (Fiumicino), Italy: Institutional Learning and Change Initiative (ILAC); Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR).
- Mayne, J. (2012). Contribution analysis: Coming of age? *Evaluation*, 18(3), 270-280.
- McCawley, P. F. (c. 2000). The Logic Model for Program Planning and Evaluation. Retrieved from Learning for Sustainability website: <http://learningforsustainability.net/evaluation/theoryofchange.php>



Community First: Impacts of Community Engagement (CFICE)

Morell, J. A. (2010). *Evaluation in the face of uncertainty: Anticipating surprise and responding to the inevitable*. New York: Guilford.

Morra Imas, L. G., & Rist, R. C. (2009). *The Road to Results*. Washington DC: The World Bank.

Nelson, C., & Stroink, M. (2010). Benefits to Students of Service-Learning Through a Food Security Partnership Model. In J. Keshen, B. A. Holland & B. E. Moely (Eds.), *Research for what? : making engaged scholarship matter* (pp. 171-199). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishers.

Nielsen, J. M. (1990). *Feminist research methods : exemplary readings in the social sciences*. Boulder: Westview Press.

Nimon, K., Zigarmi, D., & Allen, J. (2011). Measures of Program Effectiveness Based on Retrospective Pretest Data: Are all created equal? *American Journal of Evaluation*, 32(1), 8-28.

Patton, M. Q. (2011). *Developmental evaluation : applying complexity concepts to enhance innovation and use*. New York: Guilford Press.

Pettit, J. (2012). Getting to Grips with Power: Action Learning for Social Change in the UK. *IDS Bulletin*, 43(3), 11-26.

Phillips, J. T., & Ward, C. V. L. (2009). Two-dimensional approach for assessing transformative campus/community service-learning partnerships. In B. E. Moely, S. Billig & B. A. Holland (Eds.), *Creating our identities in service-learning and community engagement* (pp. 103-127). Charlotte, NC: IAP, Information Age Publishing.

Preskill, H., & Coghlan, A. T. (2003). *Using Appreciative Inquiry in Evaluation* (Vol. 100). San Francisco: Wiley Publications / Jossey Bass.

Ramalingam, B., Jones, H., Toussaint, R., & Young, J. (2008). Exploring the Science of Complexity: Ideas and Implications for Development and Humanitarian Efforts *Working Paper 285 (second edition)*. London: Overseas Development Institute (ODI).

Reed, M. G., & Peters, E. J. (2004). Using an Ecological Metaphor to Build Adaptive and Resilient Research Practices. *ACME: An International E-Journal for Critical Geographies*, 3(1), 22.

Rose, G. (1997). Situating Knowledges: Positionality, reflexives and other tactics. *Progress in Human Geography*, 21, 305-320.

Rubin, A., & Babbie, E. R. (2008). *Research Methods for Social Work* (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Thompson Higher Education.

Saltmarsh, J., Giles, D. E., O'Meara, K., Sandmann, L., Ward, E., & Buglione, S. M. (2009). Community engagement and institutional culture in higher education. In B. E. Moely, S. Billig & B. A. Holland (Eds.), *Creating our identities in service-learning and community engagement* (pp. 3-29). Charlotte, NC: IAP, Information Age Publishing.

Saltmarsh, J., & Zlotkowski, E. A. (2011). *Higher education and democracy : essays on service-learning and civic engagement*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Saunders, M., Charlier, B., & Bonamy, J. (2005). Using Evaluation to Create 'Provisional Stabilities' Bridging Innovation in Higher Education Change Processes. *Evaluation*, 11(1), 37-54.

Smith, D. (1987). *The Everyday World as Problematic: A Feminist Sociology*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Snowden, D. J., & Boone, M. E. (2007). A Leader's Framework for Decision Making. *Harvard Business Review*, 85(11), 1-9.



Community First: Impacts of Community Engagement (CFICE)

Sridharan, S., & Nakaima, A. (2012). Towards an evidence base of theory-driven evaluations: Some questions for proponents of theory-driven evaluation. *Evaluation, 18*(3), 378-395.

Stoecker, R. (2005). *Research methods for community change : a project-based approach*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Stoecker, R., Tryon, E. A., & Hilgendorf, A. (2009). *The unheard voices : community organizations and service learning*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Sullivan, H., Barnes, M., & Matka, E. (2002). Building Collaborative Capacity through 'Theories of Change': Early Lessons from the Evaluation of Health Action Zones in England. *Evaluation, 8*(2), 205-226.

Sullivan, H., & Stewart, M. (2006). Who Owns the Theory of Change? *Evaluation, 12*(2), 179-199.

Tanesini, A. (1999). *An Introduction to Feminist Epistemologies*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers.

Truman, C., Mertens, D. M., & Humphries, B. (2000). *Research and inequality*. London: UCL Press.

University of Wisconsin. (2012). Program Development and Evaluation. Retrieved from <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/evallogicmodel.html>

van de Sande, A., & Schwartz, K. (2011). *Research for Social Justice: A community-based approach*. Halifax and Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing.

Vogel, I. (2012). Review of the use of 'Theory of Change' in international development. London, UK: Department for International Development (DfID).

Vogelgesang, L. J. (2009). Civic engagement and service-learning. In B. E. Moely, S. Billig & B. A. Holland (Eds.), *Creating our identities in service-learning and community engagement* (pp. 237-250). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

Weiss, C. H. (1995). Nothing as Practical as a Good Theory: Exploring Theory-based Evaluation

for Comprehensive Community Initiatives. In J. Connell, A. Kubisch, L. Schorr & C. H. Weiss (Eds.), *New Approaches to Evaluating Community Initiatives: Concepts, Methods and Contexts*. Washington DC: The Aspen Institute.

Weiss, C. H. (1998). *Evaluation : methods for studying programs and policies* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Prentice Hall.

Werr, A. (1995). Approaches Methods and Tools of Change - A Literature Survey and Bibliography. *Economic and Industrial Democracy, 16*(1995), 607-651.

Whitmore, E. (1998). Final Commentary. *New Directions for Evaluation, 80*, 95-99.

Whitmore, E., Wilson, M. G., & Calhoun, A. (2011). *Activism that works*. Halifax, N.S.: Fernwood Pub.

Winter, A., Wiseman, J., & Muirhead, B. (2006). University-Community engagement in Australia: practice, policy and public good. *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice, 1*(3), 211-230.