

Archived Information
MATERIALS FOR THE PES WORKSHOP
ON ASSESSING PROGRAM IMPACTS
AND IMPLEMENTATION

conducted by

Howard S. Bloom
Janet Quint

Manpower Demonstration
Research Corporation

for the

Program Evaluation Service,
US Department of Education

December 6, 1999, February 3, 2000,
April 26, 2000 and September 15, 2000

DAY 1
December 6, 1999

Session 1: Basic Concepts

**Session 2: Evaluating a Tutoring Program for Elementary
School Students: A Mini-case**

DAY 2
February 3, 2000

Session 1: Sample Size and Allocation for Randomized Experiments

**Session 2: Interpreting An Evaluation Study: The MDRC
Career Academies Report**

DAY 3
April 26, 2000

Session 1: Accounting for “No-Shows” in Randomized Experiments

**Session 2: Estimating Program Impacts on Student Performance
Using “Short” Interrupted Time-Series**

Session 3: Theory of Change Evaluation

DAY 4
September 15, 2000

Session 1: A Quasi-Experimental Strategy for Measuring the Impacts of Whole School Reforms

Session 2: Deciding When to Evaluate: MDRC's Report on the Evaluability of the Toyota Family Literacy Program

Session 3: Random Assignment of Schools to Measure Program Impacts on Student Performance

**ANNOTATED
BIBLIOGRAPHY**

INTRODUCTION

How should evaluators decide *when* to evaluate an intervention? How can they select *the appropriate research design and sample size to detect program impacts*, given the nature of the intervention and a reasonable commitment of resources? How can they *implement* their chosen research design successfully? And how can they use *implementation research* to understand not only a program's impacts but also its operational feasibility?

To assist staff of the Department of Education's Planning and Evaluation Service (PES) in meeting these evaluation challenges, PES contracted with the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC) to conduct a series of methodological workshops. Between December 1999 and September 2000, Howard Bloom, Chief Social Scientist for MDRC, and Janet Quint, MDRC Senior Research Associate, led four day-long workshops for PES and other Department of Education staff. The general goal of these workshops was to enable Department staff to identify and employ the strongest possible research designs for evaluating Department-funded projects both now and in the future. To achieve this objective, the workshops exposed participants to a variety of impact research designs, ranging from classic random assignment experiments to new and innovative efforts to combine interrupted time-series analysis with value-added analysis. For each of these designs the discussion centered on the conditions under which it was most feasible and appropriate. The workshops also looked at selected current and past evaluation studies to understand how various designs have been used in practice and the issues that they encountered.

The present document contains the handouts developed for each of the workshops with a corresponding description of the goals and topics for each session. In this way, the document can serve as a review for workshop participants and can provide other Department staff with a summary of what was covered. Following the handouts is an annotated list of reference books that can be used to further explore the material presented in the workshops.

Howard S. Bloom
Janet Quint
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