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TP-TUE-109 THEORY-BASED EVALUATION OF COMPLEX SETTINGS FOR HEALTH: READINESS FOR CHANGE IN HEALTH PROMOTING SCHOOLS.

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Background: Conducting process evaluations to explain the causal relationships between program activities and outcomes is an important area for growth in health promotion. Theory based evaluation (TBE) is an 'approach to evaluation that requires surfacing the assumptions on which the program is based in considerable detail' (Birckmayer and Weiss 2000). Also referred to as Program Theory Evaluation and Logic Models such approaches require the identification of the various steps in the process and to focus the research design appropriately. When these evaluations are being conducted in complex settings, where emergent issues affect the process and where simultaneous causal strands exist, a mechanism to explain non-linear events is required. Funnell's (2000) Program Theory Matrix Approach (PTMA) provides such a mechanism to explain the complex causal links. The PTMA incorporates seven components that help to focus evenly on inputs, processes and outcomes and to measure valid sources of data as well as allowing for external factors to be considered alongside program factors.

The research design to be presented incorporates the Program Theory Matrix Approach and draws on the Health Promoting Schools' framework and guidelines along with theories of readiness for change to define the criteria and sequence for data collection.

Objectives: The objective of this research is to determine the effectiveness of the HPS framework in developing a comprehensive health program in an international school. The process involves making necessary modifications to the HPS framework for the unique setting, the development of a change message and the assessment of the leaderships' support for the message and proposed model. TBE will be used to describe the causal links in the decision making process as they are related to readiness for change theories.

Underlying values and principles: It is the right of all students to be educated in a Health Promoting School and this is the underlying principle and value of this research.

Knowledge base/ Evidence base: The methodology employed in this research draws on the literature for TBE, Program Theory Evaluation, Logic Model and Program Theory Matrix Approach to best address the necessary complexity in the research design. In deciding the casual links and criteria for inclusion in the change message the literature relating to readiness for change theory and the HPS framework have been critical. To further the effort of the HPS movement calls have been made to understand how to introduce the concept and to integrate the program into existing school structures. This research endeavours to add to this research base by clearly describing the school leaderships' response to the individual components of the framework and by describing the process of modification.

Context of intervention/project/work: The context for the research is an international school in a developing country in South-East Asia.

Methods: This is a single case study, employing qualitative and quantitative methodologies. There are two units of analysis including the decision making process of the change recipients involved in the adoption or not of the proposed change and the developmental process of designing the model and change message. The readiness for change theory guides the change message and decision making process and as such is suitable for employing theory based mechanisms for evaluation. The theory and matrix represent the link between the data and propositions. Data collection will include Organizational Change Recipients' Beliefs Scale, interviews, journals and document analysis.

Results and Conclusions: This presentation will provide participants with a sound programmatic approach for the evaluation of complex health promotion issues in settings for health.

References: Birckmayer, J. D. and C. H. Weiss (2000). "Theory-Based Evaluation in Practice: What Do We Learn?" *Eval Rev* 24(4): 407-431.

Funnell, S. (2000). "Developing and using a program theory matrix for program evaluation and performance monitoring." *New Directions for Evaluation* 2000(87): 91-101.

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