



Educational research methods for researching innovations in teaching, learning and assessment: The nursing lecturer as researcher



Diane Marks-Maran ^{a, b, *}

^a Kingston University and St George's University of London, 30 Beacon Crescent, Tilford Road, Hindhead, Surrey GU26 6UG, UK

^b University of Greenwich, UK

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 29 July 2014
Received in revised form
17 October 2014
Accepted 7 January 2015

Keywords:

Teaching methods
Assessment
Evaluation research
Educational action research

ABSTRACT

The author, who has had previous experience as a nurse researcher, has been engaged in helping nurse lecturers to undertake evaluation research studies into innovations in their teaching, learning and assessment methods. In order to undertake this work successfully, it was important to move from thinking like a nurse researcher to thinking like an educational researcher and developing the role of the nursing lecturer as researcher of their teaching.

This article explores the difference between evaluation and educational research and argues for the need to use educational research methods when undertaking evaluation research into innovations in teaching, learning and assessment. A new model for educational evaluation research is presented together with two case examples of the model in use. The model has been tested on over 30 research studies into innovations in teaching, learning and assessment over the past 8 years.

© 2015 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Introduction

As nurses we have learned to “think like a nurse” just as doctors have learned to think like doctors, midwives to think like a midwife and so forth. It is part of the process of being a member of their respective communities of practice. However, when moving into education, as well as thinking like nurses, nurse educators also need to think like educators. This is especially true when nurse educators undertake research into their teaching and its effectiveness on student learning.

Over the past 8 years, the author, with previous experience as a nurse researcher, has been engaged in helping nurse lecturers to undertake evaluation research studies into innovations in their teaching and assessment methods. One of the very early conclusions drawn was that in order to undertake this work successfully, it was important to move from thinking like a nurse researcher to thinking like an educational researcher, and developing the role of the nursing lecturer as researcher of their pedagogy. This raised some interesting methodological questions such as: is it appropriate to employ research approaches used in practice-related nursing research to undertaking evaluation research into

teaching, learning and assessment? Do research methods for clinical practice translate into research methods for evaluating teaching and learning?

At the **NETNEP 2014** conference in the Netherlands, a pre-conference workshop on educational evaluation research was provided for conference participants. The premise for this workshop as it appeared in the pre-conference information stated:

“It has become increasingly clear the distinction between education and clinical interventions is a false dichotomy. Education is a complex intervention in much the same way as many clinical interventions are as it contains a very complex and multi-layered combination of students and their characteristics, environment, combinations of teaching methods, assessment, learning outcomes and placement patterns, to name but a few elements. This part of the session will draw on the medical Research Council Complex Interventions Guidelines. These Guidelines will be applied to research in nurse education”

[NETNEP, 2014 website, 2014.](#)

This article challenges this statement, arguing that when undertaking educational evaluation research, nurse educators need to look to the discipline of education for its research method, rather than to assume that research methods used in clinical medical or

* 30 Beacon Crescent, Tilford Road, Hindhead, Surrey GU26 6UG, UK. Tel.: +44 01428 609600.

E-mail address: marksmaran@btopenworld.com.

Table 1
Macro, meso and micro level evaluation and evaluation research.

	Evaluation for quality assurance (UK)	Evaluation research
Macro level	QAA/NMC reviews Reviews by commissioners Faculty/school QA processes	Whole school evaluation research
Meso level	QAA/NMC reviews Reviews by commissioners Faculty/school QA processes	Whole programme evaluation research
Micro level	End of module feedback from students	Research into innovations in teaching, learning and assessment

nursing research are appropriate for educational research. The basis for the challenge to the above statement is that when it comes to undertaking evaluation research into innovations in teaching and learning, nurse educators need to think like educational researchers rather than clinical nursing researchers.

The article will explore what is meant by innovations in teaching, learning and assessment and will examine the difference between evaluation and evaluation research. Different levels of educational research will be defined and the role of the nurse educator as educational researcher will be examined. Finally, a new framework for educational evaluation research will be presented together with two case examples of the model in use.

Table 2
Brief overview of models for evaluation.

Model	Description	Components/features
Context-inputs-process-product (CIPP) – Stufflebeam 2003.	A model for whole curriculum evaluation – An evaluation process of delineating, obtaining, reporting and applying descriptive and judgemental information about a programme's merit, worth or significance in order to guide future decision-making, support accountability, disseminate good curriculum practice and increase understanding of the curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Context evaluations: assess needs, problems, assets and opportunities to help define goals and priorities • Input evaluations: assess alternative approaches, competing action plans, staffing plans and budgets for their feasibility and potential cost-effectiveness to meet targeted needs and achieve goals. • Process evaluations: assess the implementation of plans to help staff carry out activities and later help the broad group of users judge programme performance and interpret outcomes. • Product evaluations: identify and assess outcomes – intended and unintended, short term and long term.
Case study evaluation – Stake 1983b.	The purpose of a case study is to study intensely one set (or unit) of something, such as an educational programme	Process: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select a programme to evaluate • Identify sample (usually purposive) • Collect data (who was involved, what did they do, in what context were they working, when did programme activities take place and where, what did participants do, • Use multiple methods for data collection • Analyse data – normally qualitative but can include quantitative • Show a plausible link between outcomes and interventions
Responsive evaluation – Stake 1983a.	A method of programme evaluation – Evaluation is reframed from the assessment of program interventions on the basis of policymakers' goals to an engagement with all stakeholders about the value and meaning of their practice.	Involves 12 stages that include talking to staff and students, identifying the scope of the programme, developing an overview of programme's activities, identifying concerns from all stakeholders, conceptualises issues and problems, identifies what data needs to be collected, determine how data will be collected, explore antecedents, transactions and outcomes, uncover themes and/or case studies within the programme, validate themes with all stakeholders, assemble evaluation report
Realistic evaluation – Pawson and Tilley 1997.	A model of whole programme evaluation – a model of theory driven evaluation that was centred on finding not only what outcomes were produced from interventions but also 'how they are produced, and what is significant about the varying conditions in the which the interventions take place One of the key strengths of realistic evaluation is the ability to take the lessons learnt from one evaluation and apply them across a range of different contexts.	Three areas of evaluative investigation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanism: What is it about a programme that may lead it to have a particular outcome in a given context? • Context: What conditions are needed for a programme to trigger mechanisms to produce particular outcomes? • Outcomes pattern: What are the practical effects produced by causal mechanisms being triggered in a given context?

Defining terms

Innovations in teaching, learning and assessment

Innovations in teaching, learning and assessment refer to the process by which teachers select new ways to teach students in their disciplines. Such innovations are not necessarily earth-shatteringly new. Indeed, most are methods that may have been used elsewhere in other faculties of nursing and healthcare and reported on at conference or in professional journal articles. However, if they are new to a particular organisation, faculty or school of nursing, they are described as innovations to that organisation. As such, they should undergo robust evaluation through research.

Evaluation versus evaluation research

There is a difference between evaluation and evaluation research. Jamieson (1984) suggested that evaluation and evaluation research have different audiences and different objectives and argued that the goal of evaluation is quality assurance – to inform or influence decision-makers, while the goal of evaluation research is to enhance understanding and knowledge of pedagogy through dissemination to the academic community.

“The relative emphasis of the two activities are different.”

Jamieson, 1984 pp. 72–73.

This leads to answering the following question of an educational programme: 'What works for whom in what circumstances?'

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/366744>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/366744>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)