The purpose of the IOCE (International Organization for Cooperation in Evaluation) is to promote an international movement that enhances the development and strengthens the capacity of professional evaluators and evaluation organizations around the world. As an evaluator, you may be an active member of one or more professional evaluation association/society/networks. If those organizations are not yet members of the IOCE you should encourage them to join.

Evaluating program impacts and effects
A list of references and resources
IOCE \(^1\)
October 2011


August 2011

Bamberger, et al (2006) *RealWorld Evaluation*, Sage. (an excellent overview of how to undertake evaluations of development programs while facing various types of constraints, also includes a discussion of the most commonly used designs for evaluating the impact of development programs)


Barca, F. (2009) *An agenda for a reformed cohesion policy*

\(^1\) Thanks to many sources for this bibliography but in particular the following. The EES statement (2007) drafted on behalf of the EES Board of Directors by a workgroup led by Burt Perrin and the piece by Ben Ramalingham in 2011, learning how to learn: eight lessons for impact evaluations that make a difference (ODI, London). Also, thanks should go to Scott Bayley (also for some annotations) and Jim Rugh for their generous contributions.
Barlow & Hersen (1989) Single Case Experimental Designs, (Pergamon)

Becker, D (2000), Discussion Notes: Causality, http://web.uccs.edu/lbecker/Psy590/cause.htm  (a brief summary of different philosophical perspectives on causality)


Boruch, 2005, Randomized Experiments for planning and evaluation: A practical guide, Sage.  (a good introduction to the topic)


Brinkerhoff, D. (1991) Improving Development Program Performance: Guidelines for Managers, Lynne Rienner.  (includes a discussion of the most common causes of performance problems in development programs)


Campbell, D. and Stanley, J. (1963) Experimental and Quasi-experimental Designs for Research, Rand McNally.  (the all-time classic text, discusses the strengths and weaknesses of various research designs for assessing program impacts)


Cook T and Campbell D (1979) Quasi-experimentation, Houghton Mifflin.  (contains a useful review of different theories of causality and how to test for causal relationships as well as the application of quasi-experiments for impact evaluations)


Cracknell, B. E. (2001). Knowing is all: Or is it? Some reflections on why the acquisition of knowledge focusing particularly on evaluation activities, does not always lead to action. Public Administration and Development, 31, 371-379.


Davis, J (1985), The Logic of Causal Order, (Sage)


Dept of Finance and Administration, 2006, Handbook of Cost-Benefit Analysis, Australian Government Publishing Service. (an easy to read introduction). This book is available free on the net at:

Dept of Finance, 1987, Evaluating Government Programs, Australian Government Publishing Service. (introductory, includes a useful table comparing different types of research designs)


Donaldson, S Christie C and Mark, M (2009), What Counts as Credible Evidence in (eds) Donaldson, S Christie C and Mark, M Applied Research and Evaluation Practice (Sage).


Guba, E and Lincoln, Y (1989) Fourth Generation Evaluation, (Sage). (the authors argue that 'cause and effect' do not exist except by imputation, a constructivist perspective))


Hatry, H (1986) Practical Program Evaluation for State and Local Governments, Urban Institute Press. (a good introduction, includes a review of the circumstances in which it is feasible to use experimental designs)


Langbein, J (1980) Discovering Whether Programs Work, (Goodyear). (good but technical)

Larson, 1980, Why government programs fail, Praeger. (The reasons: a faulty theory of change; poor implementation; a changing external environment; or the evaluation itself is faulty)


Mayne, J. (2008) Contribution analysis: An approach to exploring cause and effect, ILAC Brief 16. (an approach that is increasingly popular based on using program theory and shares the same strengths/weaknesses)


Miles, M. and Huberman, A. 1994, Qualitative data analysis, (Sage) (contains examples of undertaking causal analysis with qualitative data)


Norad, 2008, The Challenge of Assessing Aid Impact: A Review of Norwegian Evaluation Practice, (provides a number of examples of problematic impact evaluations along with various lessons for better practice). Available free on the net at:


Patton, M. Q. (1990) Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods, Sage. (good all round reference, excellent description of different types of purposeful sampling)


Pearl, 2000, Causality: Models, Reasoning, and Inference, Cambridge University Press. (advanced technical examination of causal/statistical modeling)


(good all round text, includes a summary of the types of evaluation questions that can be answered by particular research designs)


Ramalingham B. (2011) Learning how to learn: eight lessons for impact evaluations that make a difference (ODI, London)


Reynolds, K. and West, S. (1987) 'A multiplist strategy for strengthening nonequivalent control group designs', Evaluation Review, 11, 6, 691-714. (an excellent example of how to fix up a weak research design by adding additional features thereby improving your assessment of the program's impact)


Rossi, P. Lipsey, M and Freeman, H (2003) *Evaluation – A Systematic Approach*, Sage. (recommended, includes an excellent discussion of different types of research designs and when to use each of them)


Treasury Board of Canada, no date, Program Evaluation Methods: Measurement and Attribution of Program Results, (useful overview). It is available free on the net at:


World Bank (Independent Evaluation Group) 2006, Conducting Quality Impact Evaluations Under Budget, Time and Data Constraints, author. (this text is a highly summarized version of Bamberger’s book).

Yin, R. (2000) Rival Explanations as an Alternative to Reforms as Experiments’, in Bickman (ed) Validity and Social Experimentation, (Sage) (good review of how to identify and test rival explanations when evaluating reforms or complex social change)

Yin, R. (2003) Applications of Case Study Research,( Sage) (very good reference, includes advice on undertaking causal analysis using case studies)

Websites relevant to Impact Evaluation

http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/12/13/101213fa_fact_lehrer?currentPage=1

EES Statement: The Importance of a methodologically diverse approach to impact evaluation - specifically with respect to development aid and development interventions" which can be downloaded at:
<http://www.europeanevaluation.org/images/file/Member_section/EES%20Statement%20on%20Methodological%20Diversity/EES%20Statement.pdf>. It does deal with many of these issues (including alternative models of causality

MCC (Millennium Challenge Corporation) Impact Evaluation website:

Center for Global Development (CGD) www.cgdev.org,
The International Initiative for Impact Evaluation (3ie)www.3ieimpact.org

Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) at MIT www.povertyactionlab.org

ODI Learning how to learn: eight lessons for impact evaluations that make a difference


William Easterly “Measuring How and Why Aid Works—or Doesn’t”
http://aidwatchers.com/2011/05/controlled-experiments-and-uncontrollable-humans/

Full article at:
http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703956904576287262026843944.html#articleTabs_comments%3D%26articleTabs%3D


Terry Smutylo’s “Impact Blues” http://web.idrc.ca/uploads/user-S/10960530301karaoke.swf

852571E00068C6BD$file/impact_evaluation.pdf?bcsi_scan_D4A612CF62FE9576=0&bcsi_scan_filename=impact_evaluation.pdf

http://pareonline.net/pdf/v12n15.pdf


http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/publications/PDFs/nonexperimentalreps.pdf
http://www.norad.no/default.asp?V_ITEM_ID=12314

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2 Thanks to Jim Rugh and Scott Bayley for contributions to these references