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Collaborative, Participatory and Empowerment Evaluation: Stakeholder Involvement Approaches.

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Review

Fetterman, D. M., Rodriguez-Campos, L., & Zukoski, A. P. (2018). *Collaborative, Participatory and Empowerment Evaluation: Stakeholder involvement approaches*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press. ISBN: 978-1-462-53282-7.

As the field of Evaluation has grown, additional recognition has been given to the importance of stakeholder involvement. In the book *Collaborative, Participatory, and Empowerment Evaluation: Stakeholders Involvement Approaches*, Fetterman, Rodriguez-Campos, Zukoski and their contributors provide an overview of these three approaches which enhance capacity building and capacity use through creating environments that foster respect and appreciation for people and provide opportunities for stakeholders to engage in making improvements with the help of an evaluator. The book itself is very functional and easy to read. Its 12 chapters are organized into what I would describe as four main parts. Excluding the introduction and conclusion, the book provides the essentials of each approach followed by examples of how that approach was utilized. For example, after Chapter 2 Essentials of Collaborative Evaluation, which explains the Model for Collaborative Evaluation (MCE) framework, principles, roles, and steps to conducting an evaluation using this approach, the following two chapters highlight a collaborative evaluation that was conducted on a Marine Life Program and a multisite multiyear evaluation of an Early Childhood Quality Care Initiative that was conducted using the collaborative approach. After the reader is thoroughly educated on the three approaches, the fourth section of the book focuses attention on the similarities of all three approaches and concludes with a review of how the approaches may continue to evolve in the future.

I was very familiar with the collaborative approach and interested in learning more about how the other two approaches function, how stakeholders respond to their involvement in the other two approaches, and how the three approaches have been used within community programs, an area on which I intend to focus future evaluation efforts. The area of the book that I found personally helpful to my interests was chapter 9: An Empowerment Evaluation of a Comprehensive Sex Education Initiative. In addition to explaining the steps and stages of the empowerment evaluation, the chapter was laced with quotes from stakeholders who gave an account of their experience learning, working, and coming to respect Empowerment evaluation and their “Critical Friend” (i.e. a coach instead of an expert, who believes in the program and has the evaluation knowledge p.75).

Identifiable limitations could be related to the lack of detail about the example evaluation quantitative data specifics; however, I do not view this to be a shortcoming. The authors provided a great overview instead of going in depth about the specific evaluations and thus for made this book more of a practitioner’s tool, which is in line with the American Evaluation Association’s mission of improving evaluation practices and methods. My one suggestion would be in reference to consistently have a Lessons Learned section following each example evaluation. Documenting the lessons learned throughout an evaluation is very helpful to the success of future evaluation design. If a Lessons Learned section followed each evaluation example in the book, readers would have gained an additional level of knowledge about things to consider when encountering similar situations.

Collaborative, Participatory, and Empowerment Evaluation makes a major contribution to the evaluation field. It organizes the essentials of three well respected approaches in one affordable book that demonstrates how these approaches can be used to evaluate individual or comprehensive programs or initiatives, nationally or internationally. This book would also appeal to the field of Adult Education. Involving stakeholders in evaluations of continuing education programs and community initiatives is an approach that can be successfully utilized with the help of the models, instructions and examples in this publication. For the novice evaluator like myself it provides more than enough insight and clarification about the

approaches to help identify which one would be best suited to meet the needs of the stakeholders who have sought my services. For the experienced evaluator, it would be a reference guide of sorts. Though it may not contribute any new knowledge about the approaches, it provides great examples of evaluations, some information about lessons learned while working on some of these evaluations and a great synthesis of how the principles of the three approaches intersect and complement certain methods and skills. I would recommend this book to students, beginning evaluators and expert professionals.

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