

Task 5: Research Plan

Gretchen Gregor

Old Dominion University

Stakeholders

The stakeholder(s) within by any agency are quite important. “Stakeholders are the people who are personally involved with the program, derive income from it, sponsor it, or are clients or potential recipients of the program’s services” (Posavac, 28). For the purposes of the evaluation of the 4-H Jr. Summer Camp for the city of Chesapeake the identified stakeholders in the evaluation are the Program Director, member(s) of the Collegiate Summer Staff, as well as the current trainee counselor-in-trainings and counselors. The Program Director is an important stakeholder in the evaluation because her view of the effects of the program and her extensive knowledge of every inch of the program is invaluable. Collegiate staff members are also an important stakeholder within this evaluation because not only have then successfully gone through multiple years of CIT and counselor training as well as an interview process and then additional training to become a collegiate staff member. Their insight on the ins and outs of training and how they used it in the hiring process for their job for Collegiate staff would answer some questions about the effectiveness about the CIT/Counselor training and how it could/did prepare them for the Summer Collegiate Staff position. The current in training CITs and counselors are the most important of stakeholder in the entire evaluation. This whole evaluation is to see if the training they are receiving is truly benefiting them in their lives as well as in their job as CIT or a counselor.

Type of Evaluation

The basis of my evaluation question is the how effective is the CIT and counselor training in teaching adolescents leadership skills and how it benefits their lives within and outside of the 4-H program. After searching through the textbook, while the evaluation

designs that were listed could have worked, they didn't fit quite right. On a website sponsored by the University of Minnesota, CYFAR described a different type of evaluation. This type of evaluation is called Outcomes Evaluation Design. This design is explained as, "focuses on the changes in comprehension, attitudes, behaviors, and practices that can result from program activities" (University of Minnesota, 2017). Outcomes design applies to my evaluation question because this type of evaluation focuses mainly on the changes in a person following practices resulting from an agency. From the evaluation question, the desired answer is how effective is the training adolescents within the 4-H program in preparing them for leadership roles. The outcome evaluation design will give an outline on how interpret if the adolescents have resulted in since their training to become a CIT or a counselor.

Research Question

The evaluation question for the Chesapeake Jr. Summer Camp CIT/Counselor training reads: How effective is the C.I.T. and counselor training in preparing the adolescent program participants for their leadership skills/roles in the program as well as their everyday lives? Adolescents go through the CIT/Counselor training every year if they desire to hold the position and are chosen for the position. Through the evaluation, the information collected will hopefully answer the question if the months of training the adolescents go through is effecting their life and/or making them into better leaders within the program. Using the outcome design, looking at the adolescents' behaviors and leadership practices before, during, and after their CIT/counselor training.

Data

To collect data to answer the evaluation question without direct personal access to the adolescents or their records faced a challenge for the evaluation. Through interviews and observations of the adolescents will supply the same information as having personal/private access to the adolescents. Interviewing the program director about information that a college student is not privy to. By the director asking a series of open-ended questions about the content of the training or questions specific to numerical data. In addition to interviewing the program director, interviewing a member of the Summer Collegiate Staff would offer another side of insight on how the CIT/counselor training helped them with their leadership skills as an adult and how it could effect their position on summer staff. Observing the adolescents' during one of their training sessions to watch how the adolescents interact and react to different leadership skills and group activities that promote teamwork.

Research Method

The best method to evaluate the 4-H Jr. Summer Camp CIT/counselor training program would be mixed-methods. Mixed-methods is a research method that combines aspects of both qualitative research methods and quantitative research methods. This method will work best for the CIT/counselor training program evaluation because both qualitative and quantitative components will be useful. The personal observations and conversations with stakeholders make the qualitative portion of the evaluation method important. Without speaking to at least some of the stakeholders when given such limited resource capacities, interviewing the stakeholders will give important information. In addition to the interviews, observing is another aspect of an evaluation design that falls under the category of qualitative methods. All the while interviewing

and observing the different stakeholders involved within the 4-H program, numerical or statistical data could and will probably either be observed or discussed which would classify as quantitative methods. The combination of both kinds of methods, both necessary to this evaluation, makes mixed-methods the perfect research method for this evaluation.

References

- Posavac, E. J. (2011). *Program evaluation: Methods and case studies* (8th Ed.). Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson Education.
- University of Minnesota. (2017). [Graph illustration evaluation types]. *Different Types of Evaluations*. Retrieved from <https://cyfar.org/different-types-evaluation#Outcomes>