Building a Research Agenda: Implementation Research & Wraparound Literature

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Study Purpose: Inform research agenda

What’s well-examined?
What’s not?
What assumptions have been made?
What’s been overlooked?

Implementation is a specified set of activities designed to put into practice a program of known dimensions.

Implementation processes are purposeful, described in sufficient detail so independent observers can detect presence & strength of a specific set of activities.

Implementation activities are described in sufficient detail so independent observers may detect their presence & strength.


Meta-review of wraparound literature via NIRN implementation framework (2005)

Core intervention components
- Model definition
- Target population
- Alternative or typical models used
- Theory base
- Theory of change

Core implementation components
- Organizational context
- Organizational readiness
- Facilitative administrative structures & practice
- Organizational level model fidelity assessment
- Systems level interventions (support direct service)
- Model fidelity assessment
- Supervision/coaching
- Staff selection
- Staff training
- Purveyor (consultant/trainer) selection

Socio-economic & political context
- Exploration & adoption
- Program installation
- Initial implementation
- Full operation
- Innovation
- Sustainability

Outcomes
- Intervention
- Implementation
**Method**

More expansive review of literature than NIRN (any & all)

Organization of articles into NIRN core components

Process of analysis similar to NIRN

Small group reads & analyzes independently

Compare similarities & differences until consensus

NWI research & evaluation group reviews, suggests changes until consensus

Dissertations/proceedings that became articles excluded

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**Wraparound literature 1987-2008**

*Non-duplicated count N=118*

- Journals (N=59): 50%
- Conference Proceedings (N=40): 34%
- Book Chapters (N=5): 8%
- Monographs (N=3): 2%

**Wraparound literature 1987-2008**

*Duplicate count N=212*

- Outcomes (N=63): 29%
- Core Intervention Components (N=61): 29%
- Core Implementation Components (N=61): 29%
- Stages of Implementation (N=27): 13%

**Results**

**Core Intervention Components N=61**

- Core Intervention Components: 29%

- Results:
  - Model Definition: 23 (38%)
  - Target Population: 13 (21%)
  - Alternative or Typical Modes Used: 10 (16%)
  - Theory Base: 6 (10%)
  - Theory of Change: 9 (15%)

**Results**

**Components well examined or discussed**

- Initial model definition 1987-1998:
  - Presented primarily as value-based principles
  - Presented in program descriptions

- Focus on model fidelity emerges 1996-2002
  - Wraparound observation form
  - Wraparound fidelity index
  - Few publications focused on organizational components

- National Wraparound Initiative monographs 2004-2008
  - Clarification of model
  - Developed by consensus

**Results**

**Components less well-examined**

- Target population:
  - Described not examined
  - Primarily defined by pursuit of funding
  - Focus upon “deep end” cases
  - No examination of population characteristics

- No examination of characteristics with theory of change
Results

Less well-examined components

Theory base & Theory of change
- Few authors discuss theory base
- Model was defined through values
- Ecological approach vs. ecological systems theory
- Some comparison of MST & Wraparound
- Limited application of MST lessons learned

Theory of change is just emerging
- Early discussion with few tests
  - Resendez, 2002; Cox, 2005; Walker & Koroloff, 2007; Walker 2008

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Results

Core implementation components  N= 61

- Organizational Context: 8 (13%)
- Organizational Readiness: 6 (10%)
- Facilitative Administration: 6 (10%)
- Organizational Fidelity Assessment: 5 (8%)
- Systems Level Intervention: 5 (8%)
- Model Fidelity Assessment: 5 (8%)
- Supervision or Coaching: 20 (33%)
- Staff Selection: 8 (13%)
- Staff Training: 2 (3%)
- Purveyor Selection: 0

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Results

Stages of implementation  N=27

- Socio-Economic & Political Context: 4 (15%)
- Exploration & Adoption: 4 (15%)
- Program Installation: 3 (11%)
- Initial Implementation: 4 (15%)
- Full Operation: 4 (15%)
- Innovation: 6 (22%)
- Sustainability: 6 (22%)

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Results

Less well-examined or overlooked

- Staff Selection: No publications
- Staff Training: Limited, descriptive, with no systematic review of results
  - Individual purveyors apply different curricula
- Purveyor Selection: No publications
- Supervision or Coaching: Presented primarily as descriptions
  - No clear model

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Results

Outcome publications  N=63

- Probably due to wraparound principle
  - Most focus upon intervention outcomes  (N = 48)
  - Many of these were published pre-2000
  - Recent publications examine implementation outcomes & their relationship to intervention outcomes  (N=15)
Analysis of Outcomes  N=63

- Implementation Outcomes N=15
  - 24%
- Intervention Outcomes N=48
  - 76%

Implications for future research agenda

Model has been defined by values & consensus
We need systematic studies of greater complexity
Staff: selection, training, supervision/coaching
  - Who best implements this model?
    - Education? Experience?
    - What knowledge? What skills? In what settings?
  - What training curriculum enhances fidelity & outcomes?
    - In what settings?
  - What supervisory model produces best fidelity & outcomes?
    - In what settings?
    - Learn from established models (MST)

Implications for future research agenda

We need systematic studies of greater complexity
Target population
  - Has been “deep-end”
  - These cases have multiple system engagements & failures
  - This focus has complex implementation implications
What are the specific characteristics of youth, family and community and how do elements of wraparound theory of change address them?
Can this model work with an elderly clientele?
  - Who else?

Implications for future research agenda

Theory of change
  - Recent discussion is complex, requires testing
  - Examining application with different target populations may help refine & test theory of change
  - How do team composition & development influence assessment, focus of interventions, planning for transition and treatment generalization?
Theory base
  - Current model definition emphasizes meeting ecology of family needs. However, do patterns of interaction within the family or between family & others influence meeting these needs?

Implications for future research agenda

Examine organizational climate, culture & readiness
  - Don’t re-invent the wheel (Glisson’s studies & measures)
  - We can learn from descriptions of failures
Examine early stages of implementation
  - Exploration & adoption; Program installation
    - Requires consideration of staff selection, training, choice of supervision/coaching models, etc.
Purveyor Selection
  - Who does what well in what settings? How do we know?