Methods for User-Based Evaluation

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Why we conduct user-based evaluation

- Learn about the current users of the collection
 - Purposes, methods, tools, content, satisfaction, impact
- Learn about potential future audiences
 - Purposes, methods, tools, content, satisfaction, impact

Focus of the study

Evaluation versus basic research

Research is more generalizable

Evaluation has local basis

Scope of study from narrow to broad



Evaluation criteria

Effectiveness

Utility/ usefulness/ impact

Satisfaction



Using the criterion for evaluation

Criterion-referenced evaluation

A standard is set prior to the study

Norm-referenced evaluation

Comparison with some other alternative



Data collection

Watching the users

Asking the users questions



Methods for watching the users

Direct observation during use

Think-aloud protocols

Transaction logs



Library of Congress Manuscript Division





Archdiocese of Milwaukee Archives

Methods for asking questions

Questionnaires





Interviews

Focus groups



Sample satisfaction measure

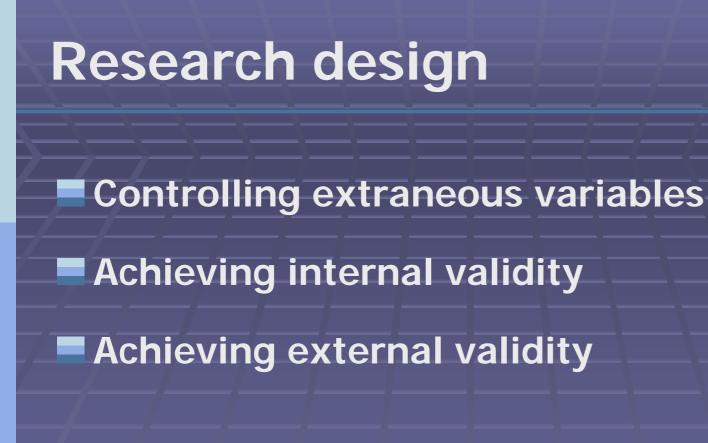
McKinney, Yoon, & Zahedi, 2002

| After using this Web site, I am | Very dissatisfied | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 | Very satisfied |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| After using this Web site, I am | Very displeased | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 | Very pleased |
| Using this Web site made me | Frustrated | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 | Contented |
| After using this Web site, I am | Terrible | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 | Delighted |
| After using this Web site, I | Will never use it again | 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 | Will definitely use it again |



Study sample Define the population of interest Consider sample size Develop a sampling plan Probabilistic sampling Nonprobabilistic sampling







Data analysis: quantitative

Descriptive statistics

Inferential statistics



From results to conclusions

Check for statistical significance

Check for meaningfulness of results

Draw conclusions



Data analysis: qualitative Qualitative content analysis Specifying a unit of analysis **Recognizing themes** Looking for negative evidence



From results to conclusions

Identify themes for further analysis

Weigh positive against negative

Draw conclusions



Review

The research/ evaluation question Evaluation criteria Data collection **Study** sample **Research design** Data analysis Drawing conclusions



Ax-SNet

- Archival eXcellence in Information Seeking Studies Network
- Collaboration of University of North Carolina, University of Toronto, University of Michigan, and many institutional partners across North America and the world.
- Myself, Wendy Duff (Toronto), & Beth Yakel (Michigan)

Ax-SNet

- An evolving international collaboration of researchers and institutions interested in:
 - facilitating accessible access to and use of primary sources;
 - exploring user information seeking and use behaviors;
 - provision of user instruction and guidance; and
 - User-based evaluation.

Ax-SNet

- The institutional partners, along with the researchers, will identify areas for which evaluation tools and modules will be created.
- Researchers will develop these tools.
- Practitioners will test them at their institutions.
- Researchers will revise until reliable tools are built.