

Semana da Avaliação 2026:

*Cultura avaliativa e conhecimentos
plurais para políticas públicas*

Workshop: Transformative Mixed Methods Evaluation

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Brasília

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DONNA M. MERTENS

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- Past President of AEA
- Former editor of the Journal of Mixed Methods Research
- Professor Emeritus, Gallaudet University



WHO ARE YOU?

- Name, position, organization
- Your work in evaluation
- What you want from this workshop

Poll: How familiar are you with paradigms and assumptions in evaluation?

Check one:

- I am an expert on this topic.
- I am well versed in this topic.
- I have an acquaintance with this topic.
- It is a foreign concept to me.

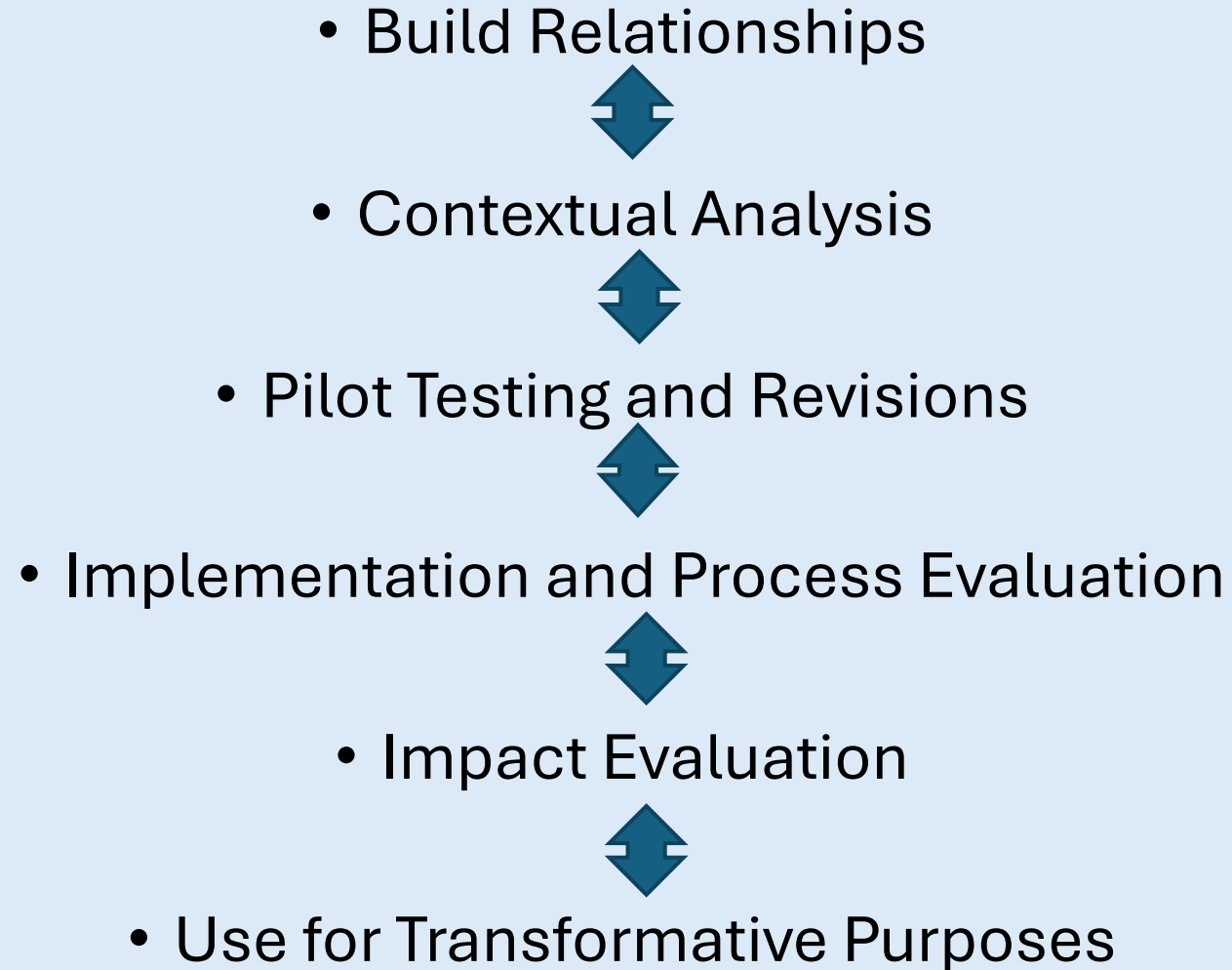
Transformative Paradigm

Assumptions	Beliefs
Axiology	Cultural responsiveness; promote social, environmental and economic justice & human rights; address inequities; reciprocity; resilience; interconnectedness (living and nonliving); relationships
Ontology	Multi-faceted; consequences of privilege; historically situated
Epistemology	Interactive; trust; power issues; coalition building
Methodology	Transformative, dialogic, culturally responsive, mixed methods; policy change

Transf MM Brazil

Mertens

Transformative Mixed Methods Design



HEALTH DISPARITIES

- Case: Reduce health disparities
- How does the transformative lens open up our understanding of health disparities?



J Paul Getty 2016)

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What program are you designing an evaluation for?
2. Where is the program located?

Relationships with Stakeholders

Distant from, neutral,
“objective”

Oppressive



Transformative

- Interactive
- Culturally responsive
- Recognizing heterogeneity
- Develop trust
- Build coalitions (Fight for Fifteen)

Relationship Building/Coalition

- identify existing community action groups and understand the history of their efforts;
- identify existing formal, informal, and potential leaders;
- identify community needs and gaps in services;
- identify community strengths and opportunities;
- understand your target population (both needs and assets) in order to improve, build, and secure project credibility within the community; and
- create a momentum for project activities by getting community input.

Application: Transformative Ethics - Relationships

- Who are the major stakeholders that you know about in your example? What additional communities might need to be invited?

How could you use mixed methods to:

Identify additional stakeholders that need to be included?

- identify the cultural norms and beliefs that might be operating in the community?
- Develop strategies to appropriately engage members of the community?
- How would you take into account the expertise, knowledge, and strengths of the community in order to provide a platform for authentic engagement between the evaluator and the community?
- Sketch out the relationship building stage of your research study

SMALL GROUP PRESENTATION

- Explain your first stage of a transformative mixed methods design: Relationships and Coalitions

Versions of Reality: Ontology

Oppressive: If only they would make better choices....



Transformative:

- Poverty, unemployment, educational attainment, wealth
- Access to grocery stores and healthy food and safe places to exercise
- Stress associated with lower SES and systemic discrimination
- Residential segregation
- Access to affordable health care
- Culturally responsive health care

Contextual Analysis



- Cultural
- Historical
- Political
- Environmental
- Legislative
- Power structures

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

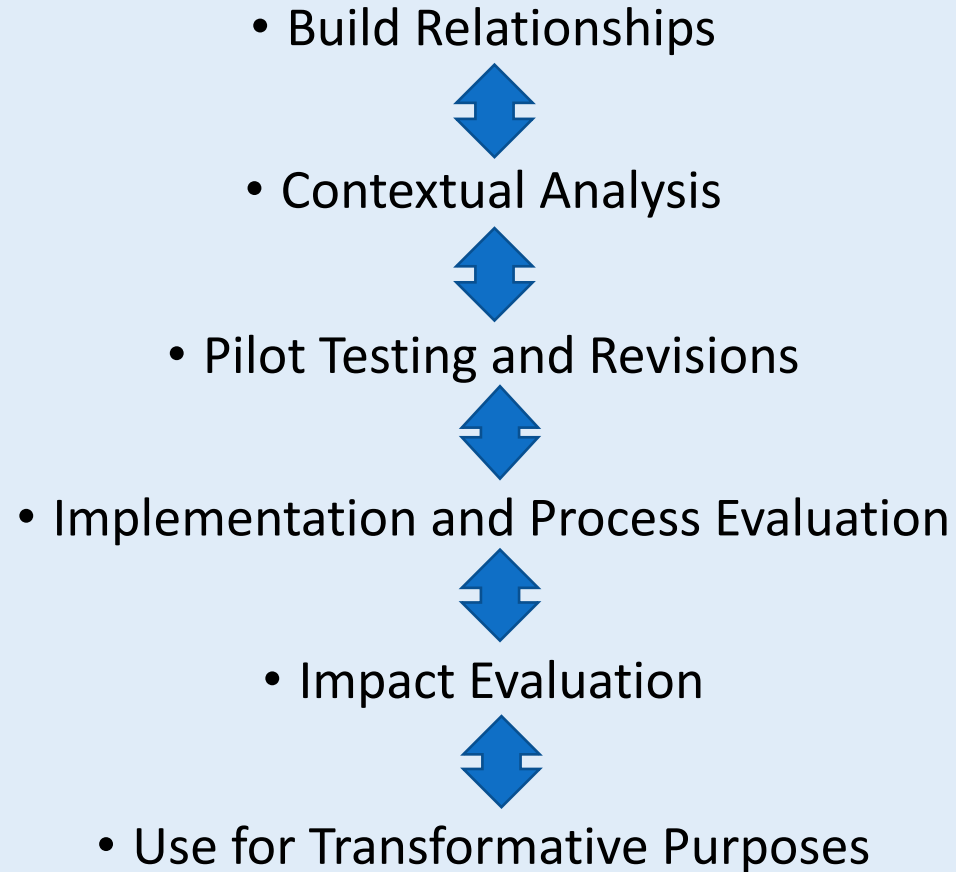
What MM data collection will you use for *context analysis*?

- Extant data; quant, qual data
- Be creative
- Fritz and Cutchin (2017) used photo voice and photo elicitation

REPORT FROM SMALL GROUPS

1. What does your phase of ***context analysis*** include?
2. Which methods give you quantitative data?
3. Which give you qualitative data?

Transformative Mixed Methods Design



Generic Transformative Mixed Methods

<p>Build relationships</p> <p>Review literature</p> <p>Individual and group consultation</p> <p>Develop relationships and coalitions</p> <p>Develop working strategies</p>	<p>Contextual analysis</p> <p>Focus groups, survey, extant data, literature, GIS mapping</p> <p>Identify value positions</p> <p>Develop intervention</p>	<p>Pilot intervention</p> <p>Observations, interviews, photo voice, focus groups, surveys, pre/post data collection, team meetings</p>	<p>Implement intervention</p> <p>Similar data collection as for pilot</p> <p>Add process evaluation of implementation</p> <p>Collect data on unexpected outcomes</p>	<p>Determine effectiveness</p> <p>Post data collection (indicators, art work, poetry, photos, mapping)</p> <p>Examine relationship quality</p>	<p>Use findings for transformative purposes</p> <p>Use for policy change</p> <p>Use to refine intervention</p> <p>Use to improve and expand relationships</p>
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METHODS FOR COALITION EVALUATION

- ***Traditional***: Key informant interviews, surveys, focus groups, progress tracking, observations of meetings, document reviews
- Facilitated community discussions (e.g. community visioning exercise)
- Relational mapping: assess strength of connections
- Collaboratively developed quantitative assessment survey
- Social network analysis
- Membership and leadership rosters
- Meeting attendance
- Rubrics to assess equity and justice

EVALUATING COLLABORATIONS AND COALITIONS

Transformative lens

- Who sets the coalition agenda?
- Who is engaged?
- How are they engaged?
- What evidence is there that the coalitions include members of marginalized communities in culturally respectful ways?
- How are power differences addressed?
- How do you connect program outcomes with functioning of the collaborative or coalition?

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

What MM data collection will you use for *effectiveness* evaluation of relationships/coalitions?

Generic Transformative Mixed Methods

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UTILIZATION FOR TRANSFORMATIVE PURPOSES

- The value of sharing information throughout the course of the evaluation is emphasized to facilitate midcourse corrections if an intervention is not moving toward the desired goal.
- Planning for utilization is essential during the initial design of the study; the topic of the study must be presented to participants in order to ensure that the data are gathered and disseminated in a way that they can be used to achieve the goals of social change and social justice.
- Policy analysis and advocacy are avenues to social change from the perspective of grass-roots organizations.

REPORTING FORMATS

- Written formats: voice and privilege
- Focus groups & interviews
- Visual presentations
 - Drawing pictures
 - Photos, videos, slide shows
- Ethnodrama
- Web-based
- Community-based

APPLICATION: DATA REPORTING & USE

1. Who would you include in the preparation and dissemination of findings?
2. How would you include members of the community in this process?
3. What challenges might you anticipate encountering at this stage of your study?
4. How would you deal with power differences among those involved in these activities?
5. What is your thinking about ownership of the data and how would you handle this issue?
6. What aspects of the transformative paradigm are most salient at this point in the study?
7. How would you include constructive action for improved relationships, coalitions, intervention, and policy?

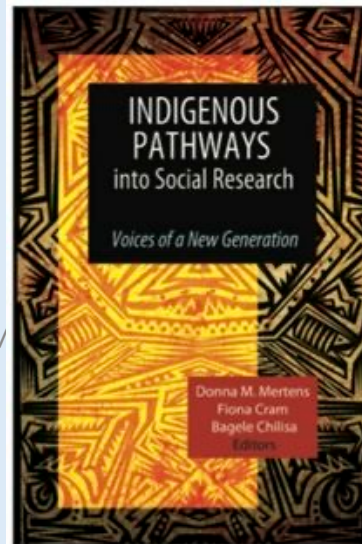
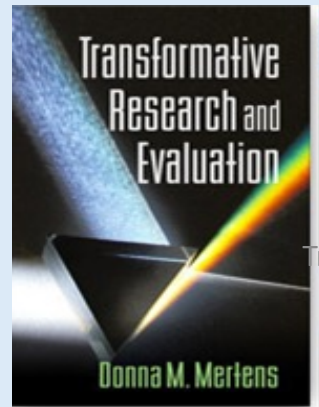
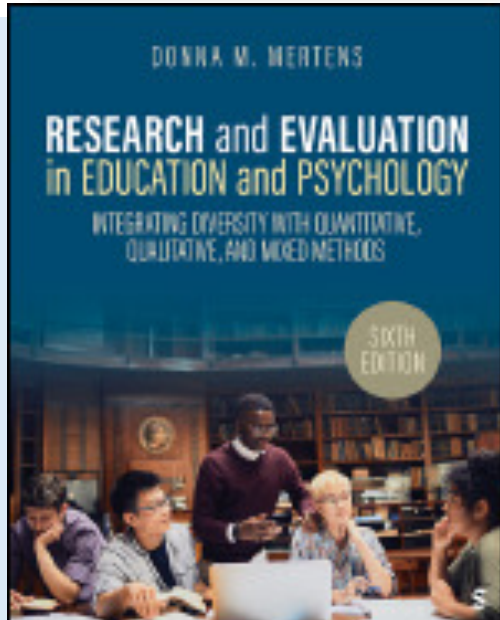
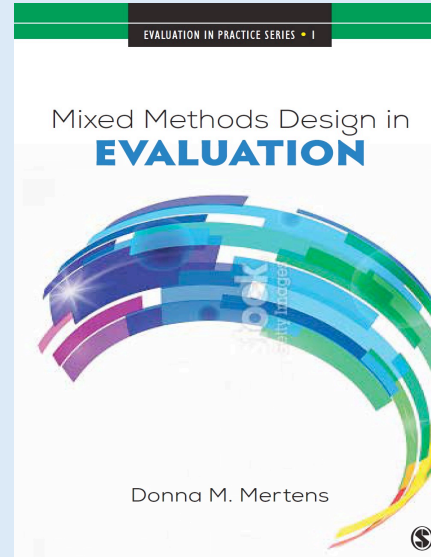
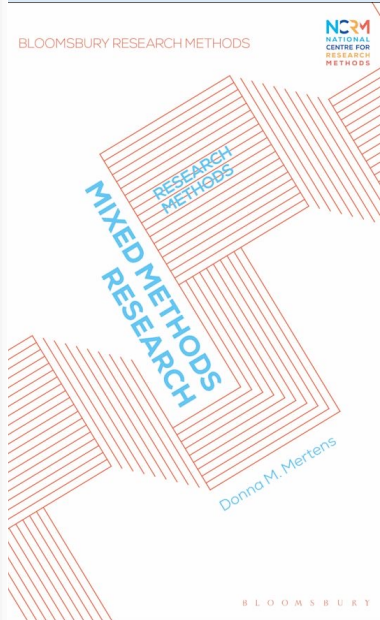
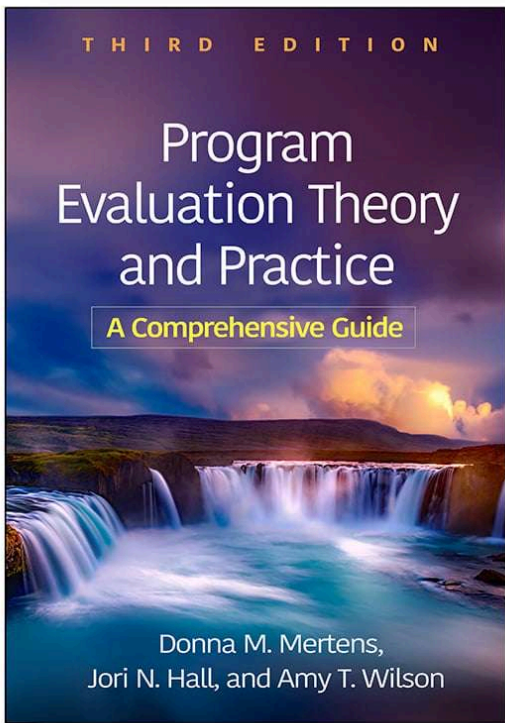
SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Utilization for Transformative Purposes

- What MM data collection will you use for utilization of the evaluation?

REPORT FROM SMALL GROUPS

What does your phase of utilization include?



- Mertens, D. M., Hall, J. & Wilson, A. (2025). *Program Evaluation Theory and Practice: A Comprehensive Guide*. 3rd ed. NY: Guilford.
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- Mertens, D.M. (2018). *Mixed methods in program evaluation*. Sage.
- Mertens, D. M. (2009). *Transformative research & evaluation*. NY: Guilford..
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Inspiration and Resources

- It takes all of us working together (Eleanor Roosevelt)
- Donna.mertens@gallaudet.edu
- transformativeresearchandevaluation.com – my website

Reflections

- Who is missing from this evaluation context?
- How can we ensure members of marginalized communities are included in respectful ways?
- How do we structure our evaluation to address power inequities?
- How do we consciously challenge oppressive systems and values?
- How do we structure the evaluation to support sustainable changes?



Homework

- What will you do differently because we shared this time and space?