Engaging Home-Based Providers in Research Initiatives

Julia Isaacs

Child Care & Early Educations Research Connections (CCEEPRC)
Breakout Session on "Engaging and Supporting License-Exempt Providers in Monitoring, Quality Improvement and Research Initiatives"

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Goal and Overview of Presentation

➤ **Goal: Share practical advice for engaging home-based providers in research initiatives**

➤ Policy context & background

➤ Challenges and approaches to engaging home-based providers in research

➤ Resources for learning more

Policy Context

- 2014 reauthorization requires Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) lead agencies to:
  - Establish a continuum of professional development
  - Ensure subsidized providers (including license-exempt providers) receive pre-service and ongoing training in certain health & safety topics
- Many states are expanding training and professional development for home-based providers
- Time is ripe to learn more about home-based providers and how they respond to training initiatives

Center for Supporting Research on CCDBG Implementation

- Developed a brief on *Approaches to Evaluating Training and Professional Development of Home-Based Providers; An Issue Brief for CCDF Lead Agencies and Researchers* (Coffey and Isaacs, February 2019).

- The Center's goal is to supporting CCDF lead agencies and their research partners build their research and evaluation capacity.

  ➢ Particularly related to implementation of Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Act of 2014.

  ➢ Support for OPRE grantees, also funding for briefs and webinars.

Research Questions & Methods

➢Research questions:

  ➢What were the research methods used in recent studies of professional development for home-based providers?

  ➢What practical advice do experienced researchers offer for engaging home-based providers in research?

➢Methods:

  ➢Literature scan (19 recent studies & 2 lit reviews)
  ➢Consultation with expert researchers

Defining Terms

➢ **Home-based providers** include licensed family child care (FCC) homes, license-exempt home-based providers included on various state or local lists of providers, or unlisted family, friends, and neighbors (FFN)

➢ **Training and professional development** includes a diverse set of activities aimed at improving the skills of home-based providers

Engaging home-based providers: Challenges and researchers' approaches

1) Sample selection
2) Data collection
3) Recruitment and retention

Shannon Duncan, a Family Child Care provider, helps Anya Zamzow, right, and Michael Krohn, left, Sept. 21 during play time at her house where she cares for children. Family Child Care program is actively recruiting individuals in base housing who wish to become child care professionals. (U.S. Air Force photo by Jerry Saslav)

Sample Selection: Challenges

- ➤ Diverse population

- ➤ Some segments unlisted

- ➤ Hard to obtain large, representative samples

  - ➤ Many recent studies have small sample sizes

- ➤ Lack of control or comparison groups

Sample Selection: Researchers' Approaches

➤ Various Sampling approaches

  ➤ Sampling providers who participated in an intervention
  ➤ Sampling from licensing or other lists
  ➤ Non-representative convenience samples

➤ Target segments of the diverse population.

  ➤ One provider type (e.g., FCC or license-exempt)
  ➤ Racial, ethnic, and socio-economic groups (e.g., Spanish-speaking)
  ➤ Providers serving children of a certain age (e.g., children 3–5)
  ➤ Geographic area (e.g., neighborhoods in an urban area)

Data Collection: Challenges

➢ Providers may have limited English proficiency

➢ Providers may struggle with literacy

➢ Providers may lack access to Internet

➢ Providers work long hours and may not have time to complete self-administered survey

➢ Measures designed to measure the quality of centers often do not translate well to homes

➢ Instruments often focus on preschoolers, yet many children in home-based care are infants & toddlers or school-age children

Data Collection: Researchers' Approaches

➢ Most studies used variety of different data collection methods and many used mixed methods

  ➢ Provider surveys
  ➢ Provider interviews
  ➢ Provider focus groups
  ➢ Observations of child care home
  ➢ Interviews with trainers/coaches

➢ Use previously validated data collection instruments to measure quality

➢ Consider adapting items from parent and family relationship instruments

➢ Take care to match data collection instruments to the ages of children

➢ Sit down and talk through the survey

Recruitment and retention: Challenges

➢ Response rates are often low
  ➢ Provider may hesitate to have stranger enter their home
  ➢ Providers may be geographically and socially isolated
  ➢ Data collection challenges listed above

➢ Response rates can be particularly low in comparison group that did not get intervention

➢ Retention also can be challenging (rapid turnover, seasonal absences)

Recruitment and retention: Researchers' Approaches

➢ Consider who does the recruitment

  ➢ Work with a trusted partner organization or individual

  ➢ Hire and train field researchers who have cultural and linguistic match with providers

➢ Hold focus groups at convenient locations

➢ Offer financial incentives to encourage participation

➢ Allow providers to respond to surveys in several ways

➢ Emphasize that you want to give a voice to a group that is often ignored

➢ Emphasize that the goal of the research is not to judge the provider, but to evaluate the organization that provides the training

To learn more:

➢ Full brief summarizes 19 studies so you can identify which one(s) to study further

  ➢ Research questions or goals, study population, sample, data collection methods, strategies for engaging providers, study limitations

  ➢ Grouped by type of study

➢ [Center for Supporting Research on CCDBG Implementation webpage](#)

➢ Contact:
   Jisaacs@urban.org