

### Detailed Findings About Stakeholder Involvement

Appendix to “The State of the Empirical Research Literature on Stakeholder Involvement in Program Evaluation,”  
 Paul R. Brandon & Landry L. Fukunaga, *American Journal of Evaluation*, Vol. 35, No. 1, pp. 26–44,  
 retrievable at <http://aje.sagepub.com/supplemental> or <http://goo.gl/W8oMnl> .

The findings in this appendix are classified in one of three ways. *Positive findings* are phrases or statements that suggest the benefits of stakeholder involvement or, in some instances, the beneficial aspects of evaluators’ involvement with stakeholders. *Negative or mixed results findings* are phrases or statements about findings that suggest detrimental aspects of stakeholder involvement or findings that are mixed positive and negative. *Explanatory or normative findings or topics* are findings that provide elucidation about how the study addressed stakeholder involvement or findings that provide guidance about how stakeholder involvement should be conducted. The positive or negative/mixed-result findings are about what was found in particular instances; the explanatory/normative findings provide elaboration.

Components and component features	Findings
A. Evaluation Use and Influence ( <i>Addressed in a Total of 32 Articles</i> )	
1. Instrumental use of findings	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The findings affected organizational mission, planning, implementation, and policy decision; the revision or development of interventions, hiring decisions, school committee formation and other practices, resource allocation, networking and communication, or the likelihood of future action.</li> <li>• Participants strongly agreed with statements related to instrumental use of evaluation findings.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Iterative communication about program issues, ongoing sharing of evaluation findings and genuine participation in decision-making facilitated instrumental use.</li> <li>• Evaluations with high stakeholder involvement reported greater instrumental use.</li> <li>• Teachers with low participative climates at their school tended to report greater instrumental use.</li> <li>• Participation efficacy was positively related to instrumental use.</li> </ul>
2. Process use	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process use was an important outcome of stakeholder involvement.</li> <li>• Organizations and stakeholders continued to use evaluation processes and methods for instrument design, data collection, and interpretation after the evaluation was completed or came to see evaluation as essential to their work.</li> <li>• Attitudes toward process use were more favorable than attitudes toward instrumental use.</li> </ul> <p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process use was reported more for some evaluation activities than for others.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involving multiple stakeholders increased process use.</li> <li>• Evaluation documentation and training helped stakeholders use evaluation processes after the study was completed.</li> </ul>
3. General comments about effects of stakeholder involvement on use or on the level of use	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involvement increased awareness, general use, deeper commitment, and support of evaluation activities.</li> <li>• A majority of evaluators agreed that stakeholder involvement enhances use, and a majority rated identifying and prioritizing intended users, involving stakeholders in the evaluation process, soliciting input on the evaluation design, establishing a balance of power among stakeholders, and ongoing communication of findings, as greatly influencing use.</li> </ul> <p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The effects of stakeholder involvement on use were low or less than anticipated,</li> </ul>

Components and component features	Findings
	<p>sometimes leading to cynicism and frustration in stakeholders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluators and project directors had varying expectations for use.</li> <li>• In some cases, the outcome of the evaluation affected use.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The degree of perceived ownership, credibility of participants, and administrative support affected use.</li> <li>• Having adequate staff/stakeholder participants, administrative commitment, positive perceptions of evaluation report, and adequate time and resources determined use.</li> <li>• The efficacy of participation mediated the relationship between context variables, outcome variables, and evaluation use.</li> </ul>
4. Enhanced knowledge of evaluand or stakeholders' organization	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders learned about their program and other organizations from reading evaluation reports, came to a greater understanding of their program activities or a focus on program goals, and brought to light new ways to assess and improve program quality.</li> <li>• Participation provided opportunities for discussion, mutual learning, and relationship building within and between organizations.</li> </ul> <p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation shed light on gaps in current program practice.</li> </ul>
5. Effects of stakeholder feedback on evaluation findings, recommendations or decisions	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders provided feedback about evaluation recommendations and were satisfied that their opinions were reflected.</li> <li>• Stakeholders believed that their involvement affected recommendations or that differences were resolved most of the time.</li> <li>• Evaluators agreed that stakeholder perceptions of merit and worth can improve decision making.</li> </ul> <p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The degree of stakeholder influence over evaluation findings varied considerably.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The causes of stakeholder dissatisfaction with evaluations and with evaluators' methods for dealing with dissatisfaction varied among stakeholder groups.</li> <li>• Evaluators were more likely to respond to the concerns of stakeholders who had logistical control over the programs and least likely to respond when evaluators perceived threats to methodological rigor, were resistant to stakeholder recommendations, or held inaccurate views of stakeholder support.</li> <li>• The participative climate, levels of participation, and influence on decision making affected stakeholders' perceptions of the efficacy of the participation.</li> <li>• Stakeholder perceptions about the flexibility of the evaluation process were related to beliefs that they could affect the evaluation product.</li> </ul>
6. Conceptual use of findings	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation findings encouraged greater systematic planning, thinking about organizational mission, and increased understanding of the evaluation results.</li> <li>• Participation improved attitudes toward evaluation processes, products, and use.</li> </ul>
7. General empowerment issues	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participating stakeholders reported increased empowerment in various modalities.</li> </ul>

8. Symbolic use of findings	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The evaluation process was used as a model for other programs</li> </ul> <p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation findings were used for public relations more than substantive changes.</li> <li>• The evaluation process was often used symbolically.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The “participative climate” of stakeholder involvement was positively related to symbolic use.</li> </ul>
9. Effects on advocating and getting funding for programs	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders used evaluation findings to advocate for their programs or to help bring in additional program funding.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders in organizations with high participative climate were more likely to report that involvement made them better advocates for their programs.</li> </ul>
10. Stakeholders’ expectations that involvement would help solve problems	<p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certain stakeholder groups believed that involvement would address their individual problems or help them cope with work responsibilities.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders who perceived their accountability audience to be more heterogeneous were also more optimistic that different stakeholders could come to negotiated agreement..</li> </ul>
11. Stakeholder learning about other than the evaluand	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders reported learning professional, research, communication, technological and leadership skills in addition to knowledge gained about the evaluand.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders reported that learning occurred because they had opportunities to apply new skills, staff time dedicated to the research, and administrative support.</li> </ul>
12. Level of responsiveness of program personnel	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff involvement in the evaluation stimulated greater responsiveness to issues, concerns, and interests of multiple stakeholder groups, including beneficiaries, and generated new ideas for program activities.</li> </ul>
13. Stakeholders’ future willingness to participate	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders reported being interested in participating in future evaluations if requested</li> </ul>
14. Awareness of diversity issues	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The evaluation strengthened stakeholder relationships and enhanced respect for cultural diversity.</li> </ul>
<p><b>B. Affective Aspects of Involvement (Addressed in a Total of 27 Articles)</b></p>	
1. Motivation or commitment issues	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was a high degree of motivation and participation reported, but levels varied among participants and stakeholder groups.</li> <li>• Stakeholders were willing to participate and committed to the process, to learning, or to using the evaluation results.</li> <li>• Increased motivation to participate, support, and ownership were to due to stakeholder involvement.</li> </ul> <p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deleterious effects of low stakeholder motivation on an evaluation were noted.</li> <li>• Low levels of motivation, commitment, interest or engagement by some stakeholders hindered the process.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders need to be willing to participate, have time to contribute, and be committed to involvement.</li> <li>• Motivation to participate varied based on personal interest, perceived usefulness of the</li> </ul>

	<p>information, evaluation knowledge, job duties, or what was at stake.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Methodological quality and commitment were related.</li> <li>• Individual stakeholder commitment is an aspect of organizational climate and evaluation context.</li> </ul>
2. Stakeholder satisfaction with involvement	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders were satisfied with various aspects of involvement and with the evaluations.</li> <li>• Stakeholders were more satisfied with involvement and more positive about the process than evaluators.</li> </ul> <p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The levels of satisfaction or the definitions of satisfactory levels of participation varied among stakeholders and participation can be perceived as stressful.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having various ways to provide input, multiple levels of involvement, and expected support from other team members contributed to stakeholder satisfaction.</li> </ul>
3. Stakeholders felt input was valued	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders felt valued due to provision of feedback, participation in decision-making, and/or involvement stakeholders who previously had not been consulted.</li> <li>• Stakeholders' reported increased credibility within the organization, interest, usefulness, and self-confidence.</li> </ul>
4. Degree of appreciation of evaluation	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants appreciated the evaluation, process, and outputs; and involvement increased their appreciation.</li> <li>• Participants expressed a preference for the stakeholder approach over other evaluation approaches.</li> </ul>
5. Insufficient or wavering levels of stakeholder involvement	<p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The level of involvement varied among evaluation stages or stakeholder groups.</li> <li>• Levels of motivation and engagement were difficult to maintain over time for certain stakeholder groups.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involvement of a large number of diverse stakeholders, inconsistent involvement and difficulties attracting new members lengthened the evaluation process.</li> </ul>
6. Stakeholder turnover	<p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The loss of stakeholders during evaluations including key leadership, community champions, personnel, and project beneficiaries posed barriers to participation and the sustainability of projects.</li> </ul>
7. Trust issues	<p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trust (a) is essential among participants, (b) depends on the use of tangible measures or the consistency of involvement, (c) is fostered by regular evaluator and stakeholder interactions, (d) depends on clear expectations, or (e) is affected by fear that participating stakeholders are cooperating with management.</li> <li>• Only sites that want to participate should be involved.</li> </ul>
8. Stakeholder involvement was perceived to be imposed	<p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some stakeholders perceived that involvement was imposed because the impetus for involvement came from the funders, not the participants.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expectations for stakeholder involvement should be clearly communicated by the organization.</li> </ul>

9. Participation limited because of stresses in stakeholders' lives	<p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stress due to stakeholders' personal issues can affect participation.</li> </ul>
<hr/> <p>C. Resource Issues (<i>Addressed in a Total of 26 Articles</i>)</p> <hr/>	
1. Time or stakeholder duties	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The participants believed the evaluation timeline was feasible or the amount of time they spent was appropriate.</li> </ul> <p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluation tasks were too time consuming, timelines were underestimated, or a lack of time was a challenge.</li> <li>• Additional work required and the time participating in the evaluation were constrained by other stakeholder responsibilities or interfered with other project tasks.</li> <li>• The process was too lengthy.</li> <li>• Too few people were involved to carry out the group's decisions.</li> <li>• The study was difficult to focus because of the diversity of stakeholders.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The time required when involving stakeholders is greater, is underestimated, unrealistic and excessive, or otherwise a challenge.</li> <li>• The feasibility of time requirements varied among stakeholder groups.</li> <li>• Perceptions of excessive time commitments were due in part to underestimated or unrealistic timelines, lack of research experience, or stakeholder expectations.</li> <li>• Time requirements were greater for smaller programs with fewer staff and resources or for evaluations that involved large numbers of diverse stakeholders.</li> <li>• Recommendations included clearly identifying evaluation goals and constraints, beginning participation early in evaluation planning, specifying stakeholder responsibilities, and adhering to a timeline.</li> </ul>
2. Degree of stakeholders' evaluation experience, knowledge, skills, or training	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders were satisfied with various aspects of involvement and with the evaluations.</li> <li>• Participating stakeholders were more satisfied with involvement and held more positive attitudes towards the process than the evaluators.</li> </ul> <p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruiting sufficiently qualified beneficiaries to participate as stakeholders was difficult, and working with them was challenging due to insufficient skills.</li> <li>• Some stakeholders found several aspects of evaluation stressful and challenging, such as developing evaluation instruments or working with collected data.</li> <li>• Stakeholders reported that they had insufficient knowledge about evaluation and needed more evaluation training to participate effectively.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders need to learn enough about evaluation early enough in the process to know whether the study addresses their needs.</li> <li>• Evaluators or team members need to be prepared to conduct training in evaluation and work with stakeholders with no previous research experience.</li> </ul>
3. General resource topics	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The participants committed sufficient or considerable time and resources.</li> <li>• The participants valued the time and resources that other stakeholders contributed.</li> </ul> <p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient resources were provided to stakeholders for completing evaluation tasks.</li> <li>• More time and resources were necessary to identify stable members, assess stakeholders' skills and encourage participation.</li> <li>• Stakeholders or evaluators had unrealistic expectations about what would be required of the stakeholders.</li> </ul>

	<p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders acknowledged organizational time and fiscal resource requirements or constraints.</li> <li>• Stakeholders reported the importance of ensuring (a) a sufficient number of stakeholders to participate, (b) administrative commitment, (c) high retention rates for the duration of studies, (d) ongoing evaluation tasks and activities, (e) sufficient resources for capacity building, and (f) respect for the resource constraints under which stakeholder groups operate.</li> </ul>
4. Lack of incentives for stakeholder participation	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants expressed appreciation of the evaluation, the process, and outputs; and increases in appreciation were due to involvement.</li> <li>• Participants expressed a preference for the stakeholder approach over other evaluation approaches.</li> </ul> <p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The evaluators provided insufficient incentives for participating to the stakeholders.</li> <li>• Stakeholders were not invested in the evaluations and expected some form of compensation.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incentives for collaboration and capacity building should be developed and specified or initiatives should provide direct benefits to stakeholders.</li> </ul>
5. Reduced level of technical quality of evaluation	<p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some participating evaluators did not agree that stakeholder participation improved technical quality or felt that the technical quality of the evaluation suffered.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommendations included frequent meetings, training, supervision, or data verification to ensure research quality.</li> </ul>
6. Problems with technology	<p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technological problems and a lack of technological capacity hindered stakeholder participation and sustainability of projects.</li> </ul>
<p><b>D. Collaboration, Communication and Interaction (Addressed in a Total of 26 Articles)</b></p>	
1. Quality of communication and interaction	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders were committed to good communication and took the time to engage in personal conversations and maintain open communication.</li> <li>• Stakeholders expressed satisfaction with communication or opportunities for input.</li> <li>• Teams collaborated well, respected each other, and acknowledged each other's contributions.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The importance was noted of (a) having open, face-to-face, respectful communication among participating stakeholders; (b) acknowledging participants' contributions; (c) paying attention to expectations about time commitments; (d) circulating documents for comment and feedback; (e) establishing and maintaining informal feedback during the evaluation; and (f) ongoing discussion of findings.</li> <li>• Regular interaction ensured that the evaluation was not perceived as an outside activity.</li> <li>• Evaluation use depends on open and iterative communication.</li> </ul>
2. Collaboration throughout the process	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration occurred at multiple stages of an evaluation and increased as the study progressed.</li> <li>• Surveyed evaluators were virtually unanimous in agreeing that evaluators should involve stakeholders for the purpose of enhancing use.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is recommended that stakeholders be involved throughout the process with the evaluator responsible for organizing and managing project details.</li> <li>• Assigning distinct tasks to each stakeholder or group enhances perceptions of ownership of the process.</li> <li>• Having the evaluator learn about the organization from stakeholders during face-to-face interactions facilitated later technical assistance.</li> </ul>

3. Sharing of stakeholder knowledge and expertise	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders and evaluators shared and appreciated each other's knowledge and expertise.</li> <li>• Stakeholders had valuable knowledge of historical context, personal experiences, and practical information that enhanced the research and reinforced evaluator recommendations.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing of expertise between evaluator and stakeholders or among stakeholders was essential.</li> <li>• Surveyed evaluators said that getting stakeholders' suggestions about the evaluation design, types of data, and data collection was very important.</li> </ul>
4. Communication issues	<p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication problems (a) were frustrating to some stakeholders, (b) created difficulties implementing the evaluation, or (c) could result in less use of evaluation findings.</li> <li>• Communication among stakeholders took time.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication difficulties occurred because (a) feedback about data collection instruments was done in writing, (b) there were limited opportunities to explain feedback, (c) open communication was assumed, or (d) because of organizational structures.</li> <li>• Better communication would have helped address stakeholders' feelings that feedback was inadequate.</li> </ul>
5. Evaluators' and stakeholders' differing perceptions of program or evaluation purpose, philosophy, goals, or expectations	<p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of clarity about stakeholders' and evaluators' roles or the purpose of the evaluation led to disempowering effects or disappointment in perceived lack of outcomes.</li> <li>• Evaluators' and stakeholders' perceptions of program goals or of the importance of aspects of program implementation and outcomes varied.</li> <li>• Different perceptions and expectations of participating stakeholder groups negatively affected collaboration.</li> <li>• Lack of clarity about the project reduced the evaluation's effects.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Success was affected by having clear and agreed-upon purpose, roles, expectations or goals.</li> <li>• The degree of congruence between the evaluators' and stakeholders' philosophy facilitated collaboration.</li> </ul>
6. Enhancements in communication, sharing, or networking	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration provided opportunities to network, reflect, and examine insights.</li> <li>• The activities helped ensure consensus and greater understanding among participants.</li> </ul>
7. Instructions about how to be involved	<p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing instructions on problem-solving strategies improved satisfaction with dialog and optimism about reaching a solution, even when stakeholder perspectives differed.</li> </ul>

**E. Equity and Bias (Addressed in a Total of 26 Articles)**

1. The democratic and equitable nature of stakeholders' involvement in the evaluation	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biases were limited or balanced and power balances were established and maintained.</li> <li>• The democratic characteristics of stakeholder involvement were beneficial in promoting: (a) exchanges between different stakeholder groups, (b) cooperation by project beneficiaries, (c) organizational commitment by staff, (d) an overall organizational climate of cohesion and democracy, and (e) greater balance of political agendas.</li> <li>• Multiple stakeholder groups reported that control, participation, or involvement was balanced.</li> <li>• Evaluators utilized a variety of design and process mechanisms to control potential bias and assure validity of results.</li> <li>• Open and transparent procedures for deliberation provided for acknowledgment of views and feedback.</li> </ul> <p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participating organizations met the criteria for democratic deliberative process to varying</li> </ul>
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	<p>degrees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Small gender differences in the degree of participation were found.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It should be decided if the advantages of stakeholder involvement in data collection and analysis outweigh the potential for bias and loss of methodological rigor.</li> <li>• Concerns about bias in data collection need to be addressed directly with involved stakeholders early in the process.</li> <li>• Democratic organizational climate affected stakeholder willingness to spend substantial time on an evaluation.</li> <li>• Positive outcomes of collaboration were more likely if project personnel and administrators did not feel threatened by other stakeholders' participation and less powerful groups were the same size as powerful ones.</li> <li>• Utilizing the different expertise of participating stakeholder groups' can help provide equity.</li> <li>• Evaluators might tend to pay the greatest attention to stakeholder groups with the most power.</li> </ul>
2. General potential for bias	<p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was concern about bias due to (a) involvement of stakeholders in an internal evaluation, (b) too much control by administrators, (c) not relying on a range of stakeholder groups, (d) differences in the amounts of time that stakeholders could participate, or (e) vested interests or personal beliefs affected analysis of results.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring representative stakeholder participation or ensuring that the needs of various groups are met is essential in limiting bias.</li> <li>• Perceived objectivity of the evaluator may be crucial to an evaluation's acceptance.</li> </ul>
3. Inequitable involvement; domineering stakeholders; power issues	<p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involvement was perceived to be inequitable because of different job positions, preexisting networks among stakeholders, or educational background of some stakeholders.</li> <li>• Involvement was not perceived as a way to shift power among stakeholders and information was a source of power benefitting some more than others.</li> <li>• Analyses suggested that the process and stakeholder decisions could have been dominated by certain stakeholder groups and a vocal minority.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceptions of representative participation varied by stakeholder experience and confidence, facilitation by the evaluator, consideration of power issues, and organizational climate of democracy.</li> </ul>
4. Representativeness of stakeholders	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representative membership was reported and seen as important in sustaining initiatives.</li> </ul> <p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The representativeness of relevant interests and degree of democracy in electing participating members varied.</li> <li>• Surveyed evaluators were divided about involving special interest groups.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representative participation provides better information and political acceptance, but increases the complexity of group dynamics.</li> </ul>



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5. Lack of stakeholders' forthrightness or honesty	<p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certain stakeholder groups were unwilling to share information, provide feedback on the evaluation, or express dissatisfaction with aspects of the program.</li> <li>• Evaluators walked a fine line between organizational pressures and conducting independent studies.</li> <li>• Concerns that having trust and respect might limit critical questioning and honesty or that too much input would lead to unrealistic expectations by stakeholders.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unwillingness to share opinions and feedback were due to (a) the material support that some stakeholders received for participation, (b) data collection by stakeholders internal to the organizations, and (c) stakeholders feeling that they did not have sufficient methodological expertise to challenge the evaluators.</li> </ul>
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F. Degree and Kind of Stakeholder Involvement (*Addressed in a Total of 23 Articles*)

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1. General comments about degree of involvement	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation levels in meetings were high and at an expected level.</li> <li>• Approximately half of surveyed evaluators reported that it was important to involve stakeholders in all stages of evaluation.</li> <li>• A majority of evaluators reported that it was important to involve stakeholders when focusing the evaluation.</li> </ul> <p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluators' perceptions of the importance of stakeholder participation varied for various phases of evaluation.</li> <li>• Evaluators tended to downplay practitioners' role in conducting evaluation tasks.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Differences in involvement levels occurred among stakeholder groups, multisite and single-site evaluations due to stakeholder experience or confidence, evaluator facilitation, and stakeholder gender.</li> <li>• Participative climate and level of participation and influence in decision-making significantly affected "participation efficacy", and participation efficacy was a causal mediator of other contextual variables.</li> <li>• Stakeholder buy-in occurs only with a sufficient level of participation.</li> <li>• In a simulation, evaluators modified levels of involvement of different stakeholder groups based on assumptions they held about resistance to an evaluation.</li> </ul>
2. Involvement of stakeholders in various roles	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Of four different stakeholder groups, program staff reported being involved the most in evaluation activities, with high levels of involvement in design activities, data collection, data analysis, and report writing.</li> <li>• High involvement bolstered staff confidence in the findings and differences in the interpretation of findings were resolved most of the time.</li> <li>• Stakeholder involvement was more likely in human services organizations, with smaller organizational budgets, and fewer staff who had greater responsibility for evaluation activities.</li> </ul> <p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratings of participation, depth of involvement, and activities varied by stakeholder characteristics, with involvement in defining the scope and dissemination reported most frequently.</li> <li>• Stakeholders reported the lowest or no involvement in identifying evaluation planning team members, writing evaluation reports, and analyzing data.</li> <li>• Few stakeholders engaged in deep discussions or consideration of results, findings, or conclusions.</li> <li>• Board members and funders were involved in evaluation activities much less frequently, and project beneficiaries were involved the least, although some reported being involved in data collection.</li> </ul>

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	<p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The perception that stakeholders controlled the process increased confidence in the results.</li> <li>• Evaluators should consider options for participation in various stages of an evaluation to involve stakeholders without overwhelming them.</li> <li>• Stakeholders held different perceptions of what constituted involvement and it was recommended that current definitions of involvement be expanded to include participation in meetings and provision of data.</li> <li>• Evaluators' organizational roles could affect the degree of their participation.</li> </ul>
3. Diverse stakeholder input	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive outcomes of involving diverse stakeholder groups were reported including (a) obtaining input from those directly involved in the project, (b) inclusion of a variety of views, and (c) prioritization of issues based on stakeholders' perspectives.</li> <li>• Other evaluation models do not facilitate as much interaction with so many stakeholders.</li> <li>• 60% of surveyed evaluators preferred conducting evaluations with diverse sets of stakeholders.</li> <li>• Beneficiaries serving as stakeholders were diverse and able to cooperate.</li> </ul>
4. Issues about organizational or political context	<p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political context and timing had the strongest effect on participatory evaluation.</li> <li>• Administrative commitment was essential.</li> <li>• More needs to be known about the characteristics of suitable organizational contexts.</li> </ul>
5. Lack of buy-in or support	<p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There were stakeholder concerns and doubts about the value of participating, usefulness of the data, and value of the evaluation.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation levels of some stakeholders were lower than expected when (a) buy-in and cooperation were assumed, (b) stakeholder investment in the project was low, and (c) stakeholders wanted compensation for their time.</li> </ul>
6. Bureaucratic or career impediments to involvement	<p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Institutional and bureaucratic rigidity, high turnover, hiring requirements, and a lack of potential career path for involved stakeholders impeded the participatory evaluation.</li> <li>• Some organizations were not ready to learn about evaluation..</li> </ul>
7. Over-reliance on the evaluator	<p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was some concern about reliance on the evaluator to facilitate activities and encourage action.</li> <li>• One stakeholder was concerned about excessive evaluator influence and the potential for unrealistic expectations.</li> <li>• Some participating stakeholders were disappointed in the lack of intended outcomes.</li> <li>• Some stakeholders reported not gaining new knowledge about the project.</li> <li>• Only stakeholders who were actively involved throughout the project developed new understanding.</li> <li>• The evaluators' primary audience was not the stakeholders, but the funders.</li> </ul>
<p><b>G. Evaluation Capacity Building (Addressed in a Total of 20 Articles)</b></p>	
1. Level of or changes in evaluation capacity	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholder participation increased organizational evaluation capacity in a wide variety of ways including (a) improved evaluation planning, (b) research methodology, (c) instrument design, (d) data management, (e) data analysis, (f) report complexity, and (g) staff training in evaluation.</li> <li>• Stakeholders and organizations increased their knowledge, use, and appreciation of the value of evaluation; organizational resources for evaluation; and application of evaluation skills elsewhere.</li> <li>• All types of stakeholder groups were capable of gaining knowledge and competency in evaluation.</li> <li>• Involvement stimulated self-assessment of performance and reflection on program goals and</li> </ul>

	<p>activities.</p> <p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One evaluator believed that the evaluation did not have much of an effect on capacities.</li> <li>• Several stakeholders reported that they learned little from the evaluation report.</li> <li>• Improvements were not always substantial.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program stakeholders were more skeptical than evaluators about (a) involving primary users and (b) that evaluation could help improve practices.</li> <li>• Empowerment evaluation worked best when the evaluators were considerably involved and when the technical assistance was tailored to the site.</li> </ul>
2. Stakeholder training topics	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductory training on research and evaluation procedures was important to establish relevant evaluation terms.</li> <li>• Training helped standardize evaluation procedures and build stakeholder confidence.</li> </ul> <p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some participating stakeholders reported wanting additional training in program evaluation.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The provision of an initial workshop or introduction to evaluation, followed by additional program-specific trainings in group and individual modalities was important.</li> <li>• The degree of training on research and evaluation provided to participating stakeholders can be critical.</li> <li>• The degree of participant knowledge should be taken into account when considering stakeholder involvement.</li> </ul>
3. Learning opportunity	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholder involvement generated opportunities for learning and mutual understanding of evaluation procedures and program processes by different stakeholder groups.</li> </ul>
4. Level of satisfaction with evaluation capacity building activities	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most or many stakeholders were satisfied with the training offered and improvements in evaluation capacity.</li> </ul>
<b>H. Evaluator Characteristics (Addressed in a Total of 20 Articles)</b>	
1. Level or importance of evaluator methodological expertise	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General positive comments were made about levels or type of expertise that the evaluator provided.</li> <li>• The evaluators' methodological expertise, technical skill, or technical assistance was appreciated.</li> <li>• Methodological flexibility was valued.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expert evaluator input was necessary methodologically and pedagogically.</li> <li>• Transfer of evaluator methodological knowledge may be critical.</li> <li>• The evaluator's technical assistance was most effective when it addressed the program's current needs and varied the format of stakeholder meetings aptly.</li> <li>• Evaluator expertise varied with self-identification of the evaluator (academically-oriented, client-oriented, or program-oriented).</li> <li>• The evaluator's involvement in technical matters varied, but this did not affect evaluation credibility.</li> </ul>
2. Evaluator communication, negotiation, or facilitation skills	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project staff appreciated the evaluators' participation.</li> <li>• The evaluators' role and skill as a facilitator of diverse views was important.</li> <li>• Evaluators with good communication skills were more likely to have less complicated relationships, respond to stakeholder requests creatively and iteratively, be more involved in</li> </ul>

	<p>project decision-making, and foster satisfaction and confidence in the evaluation.</p> <p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In some cases, the project director sought to improve the evaluator’s communication skills.</li> <li>• Evaluators with poor communication skills failed to recognize them.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Negotiation, facilitation, and communication skills can (a) assist democratic group decision-making, reduce conflict, increase collaboration, and improve relationships between and among stakeholders and evaluators; (b) enhance buy-in to evaluation, trust and confidence in the evaluator, and evaluation use; and (c) ensure acceptance of diverse stakeholder views.</li> <li>• Face-to-face contact early on improved later interaction with stakeholders, and follow-up assistance provided opportunities to assist the evaluation.</li> </ul>
3. Evaluator role	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Of surveyed evaluators and project directors, role sharing was the norm and was appreciated by both parties.</li> <li>• Survey respondents agreed that the role of the evaluator included facilitating stakeholder involvement, sharing findings, developing recommendations, maximizing or advocating for use, and engaging in follow up activities.</li> </ul> <p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There was mixed agreement that the evaluator should share decision making with project personnel.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluators varied in (a) their self-identification as primarily a researcher, an evaluator with understanding of evaluation literature or theory, or connected to the client; (b) the degree to which they stepped out of their traditional roles and shared tasks with stakeholders; and (c) in the degree to which they blurred the line between the evaluation and the project.</li> <li>• It was important for the evaluator and the project personnel to learn each other’s roles.</li> <li>• A majority of surveyed evaluators preferred to maintain control over evaluations or were reluctant to relinquish evaluation decision making, in part because a number of the evaluations were summative.</li> <li>• Project personnel believed that evaluators should share control of evaluation procedures, even if rigor is lost.</li> <li>• The evaluator’s role in sustaining evaluation practices varied.</li> </ul>
4. Evaluator leadership	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The evaluator’s leadership and guidance helped make the process work.</li> <li>• Stakeholders reported positively when evaluators were respectful, aware of time constraints, positions and knowledge of the stakeholders, and adaptable to project needs.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong leadership was necessary to conduct the participatory evaluation.</li> <li>• Evaluators should be competent managers and trainers.</li> <li>• The evaluator should manage technical details while involving the stakeholders throughout the process.</li> </ul>
5. Evaluator level of involvement	<p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In some cases, the evaluator’s role was invisible to most participants and involvement was limited.</li> <li>• The client-oriented evaluators were less involved in developing evaluation recommendations than the academically-oriented or program-oriented evaluators.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The evaluator with the most involvement had the least desirable effects, perhaps because expectations were unrealistic.</li> <li>• Direct involvement might not be necessary if stakeholders master technical skills and the evaluator is appropriately responsive and addresses the needs of the stakeholders.</li> <li>• Control of the study was perceived to be balanced between the evaluator and stakeholders, with the evaluator thought to be involved more in technical issues.</li> <li>• The academically-oriented evaluators were most involved in evaluation activities, the client-</li> </ul>

	<p>oriented evaluators were involved the least, and the program-oriented evaluators were in the middle. The academic evaluators gave more specific advice and helped make more data-driven decisions than the other two types.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extensive evaluator support was reported, but stakeholder awareness of the level of involvement was low.</li> </ul>
6. Evaluator background	<p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The varied backgrounds of client-oriented, academically-oriented, and program-oriented evaluators were related to their degree and type of involvement in evaluations and perceptions of evaluation roles.</li> <li>• Evaluators in the AEA Use Topical Interest Group were found to involve stakeholders more than non-TIG members.</li> <li>• In a simulation study, evaluators with 6-10 years of experience were most likely to involve stakeholder.</li> </ul>
<p>I. Evaluation Quality (<i>Addressed in a Total of 18 Articles</i>)</p>	
1. Credible evaluation findings	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders reported that the evaluation produced meaningful, credible, valid and reliable results.</li> <li>• Stakeholder involvement enhanced credibility.</li> <li>• The greater the involvement, the more the credibility; especially when stakeholders were provided opportunities to provide input on evaluation questions, collaborate on data collection or analysis, or confirm the evaluator's conclusions.</li> <li>• Involving stakeholders did not reduce perceptions about the evaluation's quality.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholder buy-in regarding methods of data collection and assessment are needed for evaluation results to be credible.</li> </ul>
2. Quality of evaluation design or methods	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders did not question the credibility of findings based on technical quality of the evaluation, despite disappointing or unexpected results.</li> <li>• The evaluators' work was credible and technically sound.</li> <li>• Surveyed evaluators rated methodological rigor low among variables affecting evaluation use.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Results from surveying participating stakeholders showed a relationship between methodological rigor and level of stakeholder commitment.</li> <li>• Both responsiveness to stakeholders and quality of the evaluation are important.</li> <li>• Emergent, responsive designs are appropriate.</li> <li>• Stakeholder involvement resulted in clear articulation of evaluation standards and facilitated consultation of stakeholders.</li> </ul>
3. Reporting findings	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular communication of findings was beneficial for a variety of reasons.</li> <li>• Nearly all surveyed evaluators agreed that communicating findings as evaluations progress enhances evaluation use.</li> <li>• Evaluators ensured that administrators would not use the information stakeholders provided against them.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having multiple opportunities for iterative, ongoing communication of results in written and discussion formats helped establish trust.</li> <li>• Regular reporting may have lessened tensions that arose during the evaluation.</li> </ul>

4. General comments about quality	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders' and evaluator's contributions helped evaluation productivity and efficiency.</li> <li>• Participating evaluators agreed that the formative evaluation had the greatest effects.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholder participants agreed that evaluations involving stakeholders should have a formative emphasis.</li> </ul>
<b>J. Stakeholder Group Characteristics (Addressed in a Total of 18 Articles)</b>	
1. Primary users' involvement	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Including all relevant parties as primary users of evaluative data increases the practice of evaluation use and affects program practice.</li> <li>• Identifying and prioritizing intended users of an evaluation was important to a majority of surveyed evaluators.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most evaluations (2/3) identified program decision-makers as the primary users and about one-fourth identified program beneficiaries and/or program implementers.</li> <li>• Program deliverers and decision makers were the groups most frequently involved.</li> <li>• Buy-in from primary users was necessary to sustain a participatory evaluation.</li> </ul>
2. Powerful groups' or decision makers' involvement	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involvement of an influential administrator was helpful and aroused interest in the evaluation by other stakeholder groups.</li> <li>• Project leaders who developed the action plan rated the evaluation process most highly.</li> </ul> <p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The involvement of a project administrator may undermine claims of objectivity if that individual has primary control over the selection of participating stakeholders, communication, and recommendations made.</li> <li>• Board members and funders were less frequently involved in evaluation design, analysis, and interpretation of results.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involvement of an influential administrator was helpful.</li> <li>• Advisory groups were particularly appropriate for successful collaboration.</li> </ul>
3. Program beneficiaries' involvement	<p><i>Positive findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involvement of students was seen as important.</li> <li>• Involving program beneficiaries distributed influence and enhanced the legitimacy of the evaluation.</li> <li>• Stakeholder involvement resulted in greater cooperation by project beneficiaries.</li> </ul> <p><i>Negative/Mixed findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program beneficiaries were least frequently involved in an evaluation, although some participated in data collection.</li> </ul> <p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To learn about all aspects of programs, stakeholder groups should include beneficiaries.</li> <li>• Students participating as stakeholders should be sufficiently knowledgeable and articulate; therefore, lower-education students should not participate.</li> <li>• Sometimes, beneficiaries were not involved so as to protect their identities because of the sensitive nature of the program.</li> </ul>
4. Program size	<p><i>Explanatory/Normative findings:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizations in human services fields, with budgets under 10 million dollars, and have staff who devote at least half of their time to evaluation were more likely to involve stakeholders in evaluation.</li> <li>• Participatory evaluation might be best suited for small programs with less bureaucracy.</li> <li>• A consultation process allowed for the participation of smaller programs with fewer staff and greater resource limitations</li> <li>• Having small groups of participating stakeholders enhanced the process.</li> </ul>