



2010

Research Review


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Recommended Citation

Beidas, Rinad S. and Lyon, Aaron R., "Research Review" (2010). *Departmental Papers (Psychiatry)*. 17.
http://repository.upenn.edu/psychiatry_papers/17

At the time of this publication, Dr. Beidas was a doctoral student at Temple University, but she is now a faculty member of the University of Pennsylvania.

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Research Review

Abstract

Given the commonly-cited "research-practice gaps" and nascent status of the dissemination and implementation (DI) field as it relates to psychological science, a multidisciplinary synthesis of the literature relating to DI efforts is an important addition. This is particularly true given that one prominent criticism of the DI field is that efforts to disseminate and implement evidence-based practice (EBP) lack their own empirical foundation.

Disciplines

Health and Medical Administration | Medical Humanities | Mental and Social Health | Psychiatry and Psychology

Comments

At the time of this publication, Dr. Beidas was a doctoral student at Temple University, but she is now a faculty member of the University of Pennsylvania.



Read DIS!

Newsletter of the Dissemination and Implementation Science Special Interest Group of the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies

DATES OF INTEREST:

- **March 2nd, 2010:**
ABCT 2010
Submissions
Deadline
- **May 2010:**
DIS SIG Poster
Submission
Deadline
- **September 2010:**
DIS SIG
Executive Board
Nominations

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VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

WINTER/SPRING 2010

Welcome to “Read DIS!”

Brad Nakamura, Ph.D.

Welcome to the inaugural Dissemination and Implementation Science Special Interest Group (DIS SIG) newsletter. As established at our initial 2008 meeting, “The intent of the DIS SIG is to promote research on how to better disseminate and implement evidence based practices by behavioral health care stakeholders (e.g., practitioners, policy-makers, consumers, etc.). Our goals include (1) helping members network with like-minded colleagues, (2) collaborating with stakeholders to identify what works for them, what they need, and how best to provide evidence-based practices, and (3) communicating the benefits of evidence-based practices in order to increase

consumer demand for effective treatments.”

I am extremely honored to serve as SIG Leader, and I have been impressed by the enthusiasm and efforts of our members over the past year in helping the SIG move towards its goals. The DIS SIG’s first year of collaboration and hard work has been met with great success. Highlighting just a few of accomplishments from 2009, we facilitated networking and formal partnerships among members, participated in the annual SIG poster session, created a DIS SIG listerv and website, and published an article in the Behavior Therapist on promoting DIS-related mental health issues and the formation of our group.

Now well into our second year of working together, we are moving towards a new set of deliverables that continue some of year one’s efforts, promote further collaboration within the SIG and/or ABCT, and expand outreach beyond the SIG and ABCT. This newsletter represents but one manifestation of these new efforts, and it is my hope that we can continue collaboration and good will for another successful year. To get involved with any aspect of the DIS SIG, please email me at bradn@hawaii.edu. Enjoy our first newsletter!

Sincerely,
Brad Nakamura
Leader, DIS SIG

Research Review:

Rinad Beidas, M.A., & Aaron Lyon, Ph.D.

Given the commonly-cited “research-practice gaps” and nascent status of the dissemination and implementation (DI) field as it relates to psychological science, a multidisciplinary synthesis of the literature relating to DI efforts is an important addition. This is particularly true given that one prominent criticism of the DI field is that efforts to disseminate and implement evidence-based practice (EBP) lack their own empirical foundation. In response,

Fixsen, D. L., Naoom, S. F., Blasé, K. A., Friedman, R. M., & Wallace, F. (2005). *Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature*. Tampa, FL: University of South Florida, The Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute. Department of Child & Family Studies.

Fixsen and colleagues (2005) provide a seminal work summarizing the current state of the evidence-base in the implementation literature and proffer important recommendations for a range of professionals. An electronic version of their monograph is available free of charge from the website of the National Implementation Research Network.

Fixsen et al.’s monograph includes seven chapters which thoroughly outline

and synthesize the state of the literature. The first three chapters set the stage by defining key terms and putting forth three conceptual models of implementation. The remaining chapters define core elements of implementation and focus on the contextual factors which influence implementation efforts. Finally, the last chapter provides a succinct summary of main findings and recommendations. A nice feature of

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each chapter is the inclusion of summary sections at the end of each chapter, allowing for quick referencing of main findings.

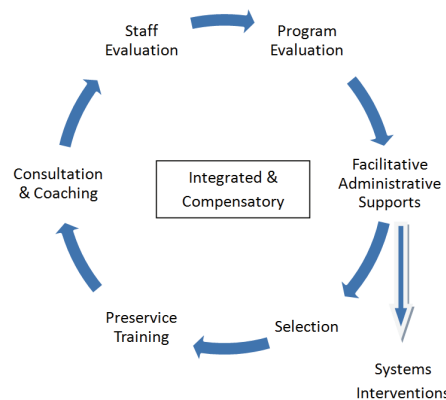
Fixsen and colleagues identify that the purpose of their review is “to synthesize research in the area of implementation as well as to determine what is known about relevant components and conditions of implementation” (p 3). Implementation is defined as a multi-level endeavor that involves both intervention and implementation processes. For example, when implementing an EBP, there are outcomes relating to the EBP itself, as well as the outcomes of the process of implementing the EBP. The review includes twenty experimental studies and two meta-analyses on which the authors based their findings and recommendations.

Conceptual models are emphasized throughout the monograph as organizing structures for a discussion of the literature. Among them, the authors suggest a model of “essential and indispensable” core implementation components: staff selection, preservice training, ongoing consultation and coaching, staff evaluation, program evaluation, administrative supports, and a focus on systems interventions (See figure to the right, adapted from p 29). These core implementation components are integrated, compensatory, and include feedback loops to allow for ongoing adjustment as needed.

The strongest evidence presented in the monograph relates to what is known to be ineffective with regard to implementation efforts. *Information dissemination and/or one-time trainings (i.e., “train and hope”) have repeatedly been shown to result*

in unsuccessful implementation when used in isolation. This robust finding has emerged from multiple methodologically-strong empirical studies conducted across disciplines. Despite this finding, these two methods remain the most widely-used in implementation efforts. In order to be effective, future implementation projects will likely require a different approach.

Fortunately, evidence exists to suggest what can be effective in implementation efforts. *In order to have successful implementation, a long-term multisystemic approach is necessary.* The core implementation components provided by Fixsen et al. provide a model for developing more specific implementation directions from this general statement of approach. With regard to the training portion of the model, *skills-based training including behavioral rehearsal and coaching is paramount, and practitioner performance and fidelity measures are important for successful implementation.* Less is known about how other components of the model (e.g., administrative practices) influence implementation.



The weakest and most preliminary evidence relates to how systemic variables influence implementation. *Little is known regarding how organizational and systemic variables can facilitate or hinder implementation. Even less is known about the transactional relationship among implementa-*

tion factors and time (e.g., implementation stages, practitioner adoption, sustainability). Despite the lack of information, it appears that these variables likely drive implementation and play a large role in the process. Understanding these systemic variables and their role in implementation efforts is an identified area in need of future research.

In addition to the main findings, one of the most significant contributions of this review is a thorough section of recommendations divided by interest area. These recommendations include suggestions for policy makers, implementation researchers, effectiveness researchers, and purveyors of EBP. Given the readership of the DIS SIG newsletter, we have elected to include the recommendations for implementation researchers: (1) A better understanding of the critical ingredients of EBP is necessary because it may allow for more efficient implementation efforts, (2) More research must be conducted on the effectiveness of the implementation strategies utilized, not just the effectiveness of the interventions being implemented, (3) Research must be conducted on implementation outcomes independently of the EBP being implemented, and (4) An emphasis on understanding organization and systemic factors is recommended.

Overall, this monograph is an invaluable and accessible resource for anyone (e.g., researcher, clinician, administrator) interested in gaining a more thorough understanding of implementation science. Fixsen and colleagues (2005) excellently synthesize the literature across disciplines and suggest important avenues for future research.

An electronic version of the Fixsen et al. (2005) monograph is available free of charge at:
<http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~nirn/resources/publications/Monograph/>

