Do Data Analytics Actually Influence Government Funding and Administration Policy?

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Yes! And we can continue to do better!
Evolution of Federal Efforts to Increase Use of Evidence

• Longstanding OMB Role: Use best available data and evidence to inform budget and policy recommendations

• GPRA (1993 to present)

• PART (2001-2009)

• Obama Administration Evidence-Based Policy Initiatives
Key Features of Obama Evidence and Innovation Agenda

- Use **existing evidence** about what works
- Build **new evidence** with rigorous research
- Form **partnerships** among program, research, evaluation, and data officials
- Use **new tools and techniques**:
  - Evidence-based grant-making
  - High quality administrative data
  - Rapid experimentation and low-cost evaluation
  - Strengthened agency evaluation capacity
- Leverage **external partners**
Key Question: Where is Our Program Having the Greatest Impact?

- Analysis of Performance Data

![Bar chart showing employment rates: 63% for Youth, 57% for Adult men, and 49% for Adult women.](image)
Key Question: Where is Our Program Having the Greatest Impact?

• Findings from random assignment study:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Program Group</th>
<th>Control Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult men</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult women</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Employed (%)
Using Existing Evidence for Policymaking

• **Scaling Up Effective Practices:**
  – ED: Simplifying Applications for Student Aid
  – HHS: Home Visiting

• **Ending or Reducing Funding for Ineffective Practices:**
  – HHS: Mentoring Children of Prisoners
  – ED: Even Start
“Tiered Evidence” Programs
  – Structure: Proof of Concept, Validation, Scale-up

Pay for Success Financing
  – Private investors finance evidence-based prevention services

Performance Partnership Pilots
  – State and local pilot sites blend funds and receive waivers to test better ways to improve outcomes
Building Evidence: Harnessing High Quality Data

• Find best source of quality data
  – Assess quality of data collected by the program
  – Identify authoritative data from another program or third party

• Federal data-linkage examples:
  – ED-SSA
  – HUD-CMS

• Strengthen Federal, State, and local data infrastructure
Building Evidence: Agency Evaluation Capacity

- Departmental Chief Evaluation Officer
  - DOL “Learning Agenda”
- Evaluation Funding Set-Asides
- Common Evidence Frameworks
- Clearinghouses
- Cross-agency evaluation working groups
- IPAs
Building Evidence: Rigorous, Low-cost Evaluations

- OSTP/GSA: Social & Behavioral Sciences Team
- White House: Conference on Low-Cost RCTs (with Coalition for Evidence-Based Policy)
- NIH: Low-cost randomized controlled trials
- ED: Opportunistic Experiments
- External efforts: JPAL North America, Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy
Building Evidence: Internal Federal Government Partnerships

– OMB Workshop Series: Creating teams within and across agencies

– Intra-agency partnerships:
  • Evaluation, performance, research, & innovation
  • Programs
  • Mission support offices
  • Auditors

– GAO, Congressional Committees
Building Evidence: Examples of External Partners

• **Results for America**: “Moneyball for Gov’t”

• **Intergovernmental organizations**: e.g., NGA, Pew Center on the States, APHSA, AGA

• **Academic Researchers** (APPAM, JPAL)

• **Non-profits** (CEBP, AISP)

• **Foundations**
A Path Forward

Seekers
- Program and policy officials

Solvers
- Evaluation experts
- Data experts
- Perf. mgt experts

Enablers
- Mission support officials
Resources

• **OMB Memo M-13-17, Next Steps in the Evidence and Innovation Agenda**

• **2014 Economic Report of the President, Chapter 7: Evaluation as a Tool for Improving Federal Programs**

• **2015 President’s Budget Fact Sheet: Building and Using Evidence to Strengthen Results**