HOW THE 1990 NATIONAL JEWISH POPULATION SURVEY WAS USED BY FEDERATION PROFESSIONALS FOR JEWISH CONTINUITY PURPOSES

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This is a descriptive study on the self-reported use of the 1990 NJPS by seven categories of federation professionals and the likely utilization of NJPS 2000 by executive, continuity, and planning directors. Compared to the 1970 NJPS, the Council of Jewish Federations (CJF) made great strides with regard to the utilization of the 1990 NJPS. However, it did not distinguish between distributing the findings of the 1990 NJPS and disseminating its findings. For the NJPS 2000 to be utilized more effectively, the professional and volunteer leadership of the United Jewish Communities should already be incorporating principles of knowledge dissemination and utilization.

The 1990 National Jewish Population Survey (NJPS) (Kosmin et al., 1991) was a seminal piece of research on the American Jewish community. The Council of Jewish Federations (CJF; recently merged into the United Jewish Communities) and researchers involved with the 1990 NJPS claimed that it "forced decisionmakers and organizations to redefine the communal agenda, led to dramatically new structures, new programs, and new ideas....To a great extent, today's Jewish community is remarkably different from the 1990 community precisely because of the information provided by NJPS 1990" (Council of Jewish Federations in promotional materials about the NJPS).

As NJPS 2000 will shortly be conducted, claims about the alleged impact of the 1990 NJPS assume greater interest.

Anecdotal evidence suggests strongly that the 1990 NJPS was perceived within the Jewish community as a highly relevant and the first useful body of knowledge. This article reports the findings of a study that actually aggregates, analyzes, and interprets data on its use within the federation system, particularly relating to continuity programs and policies.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODS

To understand how the 1990 NJPS was used in the federation system, I studied both how key federation professionals—campaign, continuity, endowment, executive, human resource development, marketing, and planning directors—generally utilized the 1990 NJPS and more specifically how executive, continuity, and planning directors used it to shape their local continuity initiatives. This study had three additional purposes: (1) to enhance the dissemination and utilization of NJPS 2000, (2) to understand more broadly the role that research plays in the work of key federation professionals, and (3) to foster the dissemination and utilization of social science research about the Jewish community by key federation professionals.

Six research questions were posed for the study:

1. How did federation professionals learn about the 1990 NJPS?
2. What role does research in general play in the work of federation professionals?
3. How was the 1990 NJPS utilized generally by federation professionals?

4. Specifically, how did executive, continuity, and planning directors use the 1990 NJPS for continuity purposes?
5. How can dissemination and utilization of research be enhanced among key federation professionals?
6. To what extent is it likely that executive, continuity, and planning directors will utilize the 2000 NJPS?

I then developed a survey instrument to collect data on the research questions. It was critiqued by researchers on the American Jewish community, in the fields of Jewish continuity, sociology, demography, survey research, education, and evaluation and by social scientists with expertise in survey research who work in the general community.

The survey instrument was a two-part questionnaire comprised of closed-ended questions and a built-in rating scale to measure specific attitudes. On the recommendation of researchers and senior staff of the CJF and of the Jewish Education Service of North America (JESNA), the first part of the survey addressed seven categories of federation professionals that typically constitute the senior management likely to have knowledge of the 1990 NJPS: campaign, continuity, endowment, executive, human resource development, marketing, and planning directors. The second part of the questionnaire, which consisted of 16 additional questions, addressed those professionals most responsible for continuity programs and activities: executive, continuity, and planning directors.

Five hundred sixty-one questionnaires were mailed to the above seven categories of federation professionals, with a response rate of 65%. This rate is considered better than acceptable by the standards of social science survey research (Merriam & Simpson, 1995).

KNOWLEDGE DISSEMINATION AND UTILIZATION: THE THEORY

Knowledge Utilization Defined

Knowledge utilization is defined as the conscious effort to apply research to solve human problems (Backer, 1991). Many academic disciplines as well as the corporate world are interested in understanding the processes by which research findings may have some measurable impact.

Knowledge utilization theory must take into account such factors as the user of the information; the source, content, and context of the information; and the medium of dissemination (Westbrook & Boethel, 1997). The widespread use of personal computers and other communications vehicles and the growth of the Internet have raised new concerns about equity and access, which are now being studied (Paisley, as cited in NCDDR, 1996).

While in the past researchers focused on the producers of knowledge, today they are giving greater attention to the consumers of knowledge (National Center for the Dissemination of Disability Research (NCDDR, 1996). More specifically, they are investigating how individuals and organizations learn about and apply information (Huberman, 1987).

Although there is no single accepted theory on knowledge dissemination and utilization (Lester, 1993), there are several dominant models of that process, as described below.

The "Two Communities" Model of Utilization

One frequently invoked theory is the *two communities theory* of utilization. It takes its cue from one first evolved to describe differences between the "hard" sciences and the humanities. Snow posited differences in the values, norms, and thought patterns between those who practiced hard science and those who were social science practitioners (Snow, as cited in Caplan et al., 1975; Wingens, 1990). Wingens suggests that Snow's conceptualization of "two communities" was then adopted by social science researchers to explain why their research was not utilized by social science policymakers and practitioners (Wingens, 1990, p. 29).

The Enlightenment Model of Utilization

The term *enlightenment* is often associated with knowledge utilization (Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith, 1988). In this context, en-

lightenment means that research does not directly affect policy and program changes, but has a much more subtle influence (Lindbloom & Cohen, 1979; Weiss, 1979, 1986). In other words, policymakers or planners probably could not identify how a specific research finding influenced a policy or program. Nonetheless, the research may have been influential in that it "enlightened" the practitioners' theoretical and conceptual understanding of an issue.

Research also enlightens in that it helps decision makers determine which issues should be defined as "problems," thereby entitling them to a place on a political agenda. The distinction between an issue and a problem is significant. Until an issue is defined as a problem, it does not receive consideration for resources that may help solve it.

The Linear Problem-Solving Model of Knowledge Utilization

Another prevalent model is the *rational or linear problem-solving model* (Glaser et al., 1983). This model, which draws its inspiration from the field of policy analysis (Dye, 1979), attaches much significance to the ability of research to reduce uncertainty in decision making because it views the decision making process as linear (Weiss, 1979). A social problem exists that requires a solution. Research is needed to develop alternative solutions. According to this theory, once solidly researched alternatives are developed, the "right" solution becomes evident and is applied to the problem.

In this model, practitioners utilize research directly. Its major assumption, though widely questioned, is that knowledge utilization may occur in a linear fashion if certain technical issues in the development and dissemination of the research product are addressed. This typically means strengthening the structural linkages between researchers and managers within organizations, creating processes and procedures that link researchers and practitioners, fostering relationships between the "two communities" of researchers and practitioners, and producing research products

that are user-friendly in language and appearance.

Knowledge Utilization and the Diffusion of Innovations Theory

The *diffusion-of-innovations model* has been applied to a wide variety of disciplines, including education, medical sociology, social psychology, consumer behavior, rural sociology, communications, marketing, public relations, and general sociology and economics (Rogers, 1995). More than any other explanation of the knowledge dissemination process, diffusion-of-innovations research is grounded in theory and has been tested empirically. Valente and Rogers, researchers closely associated with diffusion studies, found in 1995 over 4000 publications on the diffusion of innovations (Rogers & Valente, 1995).

Diffusion is "the process by which (1) an innovation (2) is communicated through certain channels (3) over time (4) among the members of a social system" (Rogers, 1995, p. 5). Diffusion-of-innovations theory then is a communications theory that accounts for the dissemination of an innovation, which may be an idea, practice, or product.

Diffusion research on communication channels concentrates on the process by which individuals create and share information with one another about an innovation. It has demonstrated that, although mass media channels are effective in creating knowledge of an innovation, interpersonal channels have a greater influence on the decision to adopt or reject an innovation. Further, the decision to adopt an innovation is determined primarily by the opinion of near-peers and not by scientific research (Rogers, 1995).

Cognitive Constructivism and Social Learning Models

Diffusion theory focuses on the dissemination aspect of the knowledge utilization equation. In contrast, two related theories about learning shed light on the utilization side. One learning theory is called *cognitive constructivism;* the other, *social constructivism.*

These learning theories derive from the field of cognitive psychology. Classical behavioral psychology viewed the human mind as a "black box" (Vander Zanden, 1997). Stimuli entered at one end and exited the other end as behavioral responses. Jean Piaget, a pioneer of cognitive psychology, focused attention on what occurred inside the black box. In his research on the thought processes of children, Piaget developed a scheme of sequential stages of cognitive development that children experience in gaining an awareness of self and their environment. He posited that children use schemes or mental models by which they interpret information from their environment (Vander Zanden, 1997).

Drawing on Piaget's research with children, cognitive psychologists believe that individuals use mental schemes ("scripts" or "frames") through which they filter and then structure information (Vander Zanden, 1997). Learning, then, is an active process in which learners construct new ideas and concepts based upon their existing knowledge (Kearsley, 1998). Knowledge transfer is viewed not as a static, linear process but as a dynamic and interactive one, shaped by the intended user. A theorist who pioneered this understanding of the learning process is Jerome Bruner (1956).

Cognitive constructivists examine the internal processes that lead to learning. In contrast, social learning theorists understand learning as "continuous, reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioral, and environmental influences" (Kearsley, 1998). The central idea of social learning theory is that an individual learns from another human being by observational modeling (Rogers, 1995). In other words, by watching what another individual does, a person forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed. The researcher most associated with this field of learning is Albert Bandura (Rogers, 1995; Vander Zanden, 1997).

Important implications for knowledge utilization are inherent in these related theories of learning that construe knowledge as an adaptive activity. These two theories of learning suggest that research, regardless of its scientific validity, does not contain objective, independent, self-evident truths. Rather, consumers of research use their experience and understanding to construct its meaning. Additionally, their social contexts influence their understanding (von Glaserfeld, 1995). In summary, cognitive constructivists and social learning theorists agree that it is the user who constructs the meaning of knowledge in the context of his or her daily activities (Fuhrman, 1994).

The Theories in Perspective

These five theoretical models—two communities, enlightenment, linear problem-solving, diffusion, and cognitive and social constructivist—represent the major approaches to understanding the knowledge utilization process. Each offers a set of conceptual keys for unlocking different aspects of the knowledge utilization puzzle.

Combining constructivist and non-constructivist approaches may provide insights into the frames of reference that utilizers of knowledge employ and how they actually use knowledge for decision making (Hutchinson, 1995). For example, a linear approach to knowledge utilization focuses our attention on the context in which information is developed and utilized. A social constructivist approach deepens our understanding of how individuals use information for decision making and builds upon an enlightenment theory of utilization. The "two communities" approach sensitizes us to issues of content, context, and dissemination source. Diffusion theory points our attention to the dissemination source and to how information is adopted by users. Future knowledge utilization research is likely to continue this trend of applying multiple theories to understand the knowledge utilization process.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

How Did Federation Professionals Learn about the 1990 NJPS?

Eighty-nine percent of respondents reported that they were aware that a major demographic study of the American Jewish community called the 1990 NJPS was completed in 1990. Although marketing and endowment directors reported a lower rate of awareness and utilization of the 1990 NJPS, the CJF was generally successful in making federation professionals aware of this seminal study.

Respondents did *not* learn about the 1990 NJPS from reading monographs written that utilized the 1990 NJPS data.[1] Rather, discussions with other co-workers, both within their own federations and across other federations, a summary publication entitled *Highlights of the CJF 1990 NJPS* (Kosmin et al., 1991), and General Assembly meetings were important dissemination vehicles.

What Role Does research Play in the Work of Federation Professionals?

One of the most significant findings of the present study is that only 40 percent of all respondents reported having formal training in research utilization. Yet, respondents' perceptions about research utilization were generally positive, despite their belief that sometimes political factors outweigh research findings. The majority reported that they valued research, had the time to use it, felt that their volunteer leadership valued it, and trusted those who produced the research that they typically utilize. The study findings suggest that federation professionals are accustomed to relying primarily upon the CJF and the academic community for the research that they utilize.

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[1]The three books that respondents were asked about were *American Jewry: Portrait and Prognosis* (Gordis and Gary, 1997), *Jews on the Move: Implications for Jewish Identity* (Goldstein and Goldstein, 1996), and *Gender Equality and American Jews* (Hartman and Hartman, 1996).

How was the 1990 NJPS Utilized Generally by Federation Professionals?

In answering this question, it is important to note that a sizable minority of federation professionals (slightly more than one third) were not sure if they could trust the findings of this seminal research. Research credibility tends to affect research utilization (NCDDR, 1996; Weiss & Bucuvalas, 1980).

Nonetheless, 70 percent of respondents reported that they found 1990 NJPS findings relevant to their work, and the vast majority reported that they learned new information about the American Jewish community from the 1990 NJPS. However, 42 percent of respondents reported that it did not provide them with much practical direction for their work, and 70 percent of all respondents reported that they were not given instructions on how to utilize the 1990 NJPS. Similarly, about 70 percent of respondents reported that it would have helped them if the 1990 NJPS were presented in a format specifically aimed at their area of work.

While a majority of respondents believed that the 1990 NJPS did not provide them with practical direction, as illustrated in Table 1, they reported that its findings were useful in two general ways: (1) providing a way of thinking about the Jewish community and (2) offering factual information for decision making. In a related vein, about 70 percent of respondents reported that they believed that the 1990 NJPS was utilized to educate volunteers about the changing nature of the Jewish community and to stimulate important discussions about important trends and issues in the American Jewish community.

One clearly perceived outcome of the 1990 NJPS was creating a new process for addressing the issue of Jewish continuity. Additionally, respondents perceived that the 1990 NJPS helped change continuity programs and policies. Sixty-nine percent and 62 percent, respectively, of respondents reported that the 1990 NJPS influenced a change in their federation's policies and programs on specific issues (e.g., outreach to interfaith families, Jewish education).

Table 1. Outcomes of the 1990 NJPS, by Professional Category.

Utilization of the 1990 NJPS	Strongly Disagree/Disagree	Strongly Agree/Agree	Not Sure
Planning			
Priority-setting process	17	53	20
More time in planning	16	60	25
Shape local research agenda	33	40	28
Fund Raising			
Continuity foundation gifts	34	41	28
Continuity campaign theme	49	31	20
Strengthening Institutional Partnerships			
Stronger synagogue relationships	16	58	27
Stronger agency relationships	23	45	31
Develop Volunteers			
Volunteers understood importance	20	38	43
Stimulated new leadership programs	25	45	29
Stimulated discussions/key issues	12	68	20
Used to educate about key issues	8	71	21
Influence on Programs and Policies			
Stimulated new programs	15	62	24
Stimulated new policies	11	69	21
Shaping Continuity Initiative			
Stimulated new process	21	62	18
Stimulated new staff positions	49	31	20
Increased funding for local needs	17	59	24

Note: The values represent percentages of respondents reporting each outcome.

It is also clear that there are areas where the 1990 NJPS seems to have had little impact. The 1990 NJPS was not seen as a significant catalyst in creating new continuity staff positions within federations. Additionally, the 1990 NJPS was utilized in a limited way for fund raising. However, a minority of respondents reported that new leadership programs that would better prepare volunteers to fulfill their roles in federations were created as a result of the NJPS.

How Did Executive, Continuity, and Planning Directors Use the 1990 NJPS for Continuity Purposes?

Seventy-six percent of respondents in this group believed that the 1990 NJPS affected their continuity process. The majority also reported that the 1990 NJPS helped shape the choice of target populations (e.g., adolescents, interfaith families) that became areas of activity for their federations, and provided a rationale for increasing the funding of college-age programs, adolescent trips to Israel, and educational programs. However, compared with college-age and adolescent programs, they perceived increased funding for programs for interfaith families to be less of an outcome.

How Can Dissemination and Utilization of Research Be Enhanced among Key Federation Professionals?

The data suggest a need for additional research training for federation professionals. Although only 40 percent of all respondents have formal research training, 82 percent expressed interest in learning how to

utilize research. Respondents also reported strong interest in creating joint research teams, comprising federation professionals and professional researchers who work outside the federation, to research issues affecting the American Jewish community. Additionally, respondents reported a high degree of interest in study guides, conferences, and expert consultants. They perceived electronic resources to be of lesser value in enhancing research utilization.

To What Extent Is It Likely That Executive, Continuity, and Planning Directors Will Use the NJPS 2000?

Almost 75 percent of respondents in these categories reported that they are likely to utilize NJPS 2000 to a great extent. More specifically, they thought they were very likely to utilize NJPS 2000 for continuity and general community planning, and for fund-raising purposes. They reported in noticeably lower rates that they were likely to utilize NJPS 2000 to strengthen their federations' relations with local institutions or with Israel.

REFLECTIONS ON THESE RESEARCH FINDINGS

Dissemination and Utilization of the 1990 NJPS

The data from this study make clear that the CJF did not distinguish between *distribution* of the 1990 NJPS on the one hand and its *dissemination and utilization* on the other. Distribution is an activity that occurs after a product is completed. Knowledge dissemination, unlike distribution, begins at the development stage of the research product and continues after the research is in the hands of its intended users. In other words, knowledge dissemination and utilization are a process, not an event. Their principles are incorporated at every stage of the process, influencing the research topic and design, the format in which research is disseminated, and the technical assistance available to the intended user. Indeed, as noted in the literature review, the best practices of knowledge dissemination and utilization consider the intended user from beginning to end. This consideration is logical, because the purpose of conducting social science research is to provide it to those who may apply it to solve problems. While the CJF staff believed that it was disseminating the 1990 NJPS, what it actually did was distribute it after its completion.

The 1990 NJPS was developed by professional researchers, who principally worked in academic settings, but was intended for an audience that primarily does not know how to read and apply research. Indeed, according to CJF's records, it was principally professional researchers who purchased the data tapes, professional researchers who wrote the monographs and articles on the 1990 NJPS, and professional researchers who generally attended special conferences on the 1990 NJPS. Very few federation professionals read the monographs or attended the special conferences.

There is a substantial body of theoretical and empirical literature on the knowledge dissemination and utilization process, offering practical and tested guidance on how to enhance knowledge dissemination and utilization (NCDDR, 1996b). Additionally, literature from the field of psychology on how individuals process information can help increase the knowledge utilization process (Huberman, 1987; Rogers, 1995).

From this perspective, we can appreciate the factors that mitigated against a fuller utilization of the 1990 NJPS. It was produced as *basic research by social scientists,* but not put into *applied formats for practitioners* in the field. Lacking an understanding of the knowledge dissemination process, CJF leadership could not understand that "getting the word out" would not mean that the "word" got used. Compared to the 1970 NJPS, CJF took a leap forward in distributing the findings of the 1990 NJPS. Changes are required, however, in the creation, dissemination and utilization of future research products if federation-sponsored research is to be applied by federation professionals.

Research

The CJF and now the UJC already maintain a significant and growing body of research on the American Jewish community. However, that research is underutilized for planning purposes. In part, that is because UJC's research arm, the North American Jewish Data Bank (NAJDB), has the resources only to be a repository of local and national community studies and to provide limited resources to local communities in their planning efforts.

In addition to the research produced under CJF/UJC auspices, there is a significant body of research on the American Jewish community created by national Jewish organizations, Jewish institutions of higher learning, religious denominations, and university faculties with programs in Jewish studies. Yet, there is no central clearinghouse for all of this useful information.

The federal education dissemination system, though not a perfect example of a coordinated information system (Klein & Gwaltney, 1991), may serve as a model for developing a national clearinghouse for the dissemination and utilization of information on the Jewish community at the NAJDB. In 1966, the U.S. Department of Education established the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) to provide users with easy access to an extensive body of knowledge on education. Its mission is "to improve American education by increasing and facilitating the use of education research and information on practice" (ERIC, March 23, 1999).

Given the extensive reach of the United Jewish Communities, the NAJDB is a logical candidate to become a national central clearinghouse on all research relating to the Jewish community. Its mission could be modeled after ERIC: "to improve American Jewish life by increasing and facilitating the use of research on the American Jewish community to inform program and policy development."

Continuity Initiatives and Planning

Clearly, the 1990 NJPS had a significant impact on continuity planning. Indeed, it helped put the very issue of Jewish continuity on the federation agenda. However, the extent to which actual research findings shaped that continuity planning is less clear. With the right kind of dissemination effort, UJC's national research can be better utilized to support local continuity planning efforts.

The 1990 NJPS helped local communities think about their continuity programs, policies, and process. However, it was utilized much less successfully to market the needs of the Jewish community as reflected in the 1990 NJPS and to raise funds for new continuity initiatives.

Although the 1990 NJPS was an important tool for educating volunteers about the changing nature of the American Jewish community, few leadership programs were developed to help volunteers respond to new challenges.

One of the outcomes of the 1990 NJPS was a strengthening of relationships between federations and synagogues. However, partnerships with other agencies were enhanced to a lesser degree.

Impact on Federation Professionals

The 1990 NJPS had a clear impact on federation professionals, in the way that they organized their thoughts about the Jewish community and in the changes that they made in continuity policies, programs, and processes. It also provided federation professionals with new information about the American Jewish community.

However, many federation professionals were not equipped to utilize the information fully. For example, the majority lacked formal research training and had a formal Jewish education that extended, at most, one year beyond the age of *Bar* or *Bat Mitzvah*. Thus, they could not draw upon research skills or a deep knowledge of the Jewish civilization to shape their responses to the information in the 1990 NJPS.

In addition, no instructions were provided to them on how to utilize the 1990 NJPS, nor did they network extensively with colleagues within and from other federations. As few new staff members were hired to work on the

continuity issue, it appears that existing staff members were requested to add the work of continuity to their professional portfolios.

Thus, federation professionals were presented with a new set of issues or at least a new way of conceptualizing them. However, they were not given a new set of tools with which to work, nor were they provided with the ability to hire staff who were better prepared. However, to their credit, many federation professionals reported taking the initiative to learn more about the 1990 NJPS for their work.

The findings of the 1990 NJPS lent a great sense of urgency in the federation world to involving more Jews in the organized Jewish community. That is undoubtedly why federation professionals put their efforts into constructing new processes, programs, and policies for Jewish continuity. Yet, this desire for an urgent response was not conducive to creating an atmosphere of reflection for understanding the lack of involvement of American Jews with Jewish life and the American Jewish community, at least as previously understood.

Research Utilization: A Reality Check

Disappointments about the utilization of research often reside in two types of unrealistic expectations. One has to do with an overestimation of the value of research in the policymaking process (research and information are only one input among many in the decision-making process); the other is related to the myth that research findings translate into direct policy responses.

One prominent knowledge utilization expert offers words of encouragement that can temper both the disappointments and the unrealistic expectations. Weiss (1986, p. 393) writes,

Don't leap to the conclusion that research is ignored. The expectation of direct and immediate policy effects from research is frequently unrealistic. Since policy decisions often accrete through multiple disjointed steps (and for other reasons as well), looking for block-buster impact from research results represents a misreading of the nature of policy-making.

These words, though written over a decade ago, are still valid. Therefore, the penultimate observation is that producers and consumers of UJC research maintain realistic expectations about the extent to which their work will be utilized and the time that is required for research to wend its way through a complex organizational system.

My final observation relates to limitations of demographics studies like the 1990 NJPS and NJPS 2000. The 1990 NJPS was clearly a watershed in high-quality social science research on the American Jewish community, and NJPS 2000 promises to exceed that standard. An important function of social science research is to develop a picture of the contemporary social reality as it is for those in program and policymaking decision capacities and to monitor social change over time (Caplan et al., 1975).

However, Jewish community studies are not designed to provide an ideal vision of a healthy Jewish community. In other words, community studies do not tell us what is preferable, but what is probable. Moreover, the very indicators used in community studies to measure Jewish life as it is may tend to reinforce assumed norms about the nature of Jewish identity, while missing emerging forms of Jewish identity. Thus, community studies may also create a distorted picture of community vitality because of their implicit assumptions about what constitutes a healthy Jewish identity and a vital Jewish community.

In the absence of a consensus about desired models of Jewish identity in contemporary society, national and local community studies have the potential to generate anxiety without providing direction (as indeed appears to have initially occurred with the 1990 NJPS). While they can offer a relatively crisp snapshot of the Jewish community, they do not tell us if the image that we have is one that we want to enhance, change, or discard completely. More qualitative research, like the kind produced by Cohen (1998) and Cohen and Eisen (1998), is needed to achieve some

consensus about the desired form or forms of Jewish identity in contemporary society. Then, our community studies will be most valuable in measuring the attainment of the kind of Jewish identity that the organized Jewish community hopes to perpetuate and in directing communal energies to areas where there are deficits.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The creation, dissemination, and utilization of knowledge form a distinct field of expertise. The intended user of research must be involved in each of these three phases if research is to be utilized effectively. Dissemination, then, begins in the product development phase, not after the product has been completed.

   Without the ongoing involvement of potential users, information may get out, but may not get used. Therefore, involve experts now from the field of knowledge creation, dissemination, and utilization to help shape the NJPS 2000.

2. Have research products that provide practical direction for individuals in their area of work available at the time of the release of NJPS 2000, in formats most suited to their needs. Therefore, actively involve federation professionals on an ongoing basis with professional researchers in the development and dissemination of NJPS 2000, and in creating the research products that will accompany it.

3. Provide instructions and ongoing technical assistance on how research may be utilized by individuals in different professional categories. Using NJPS 2000 as an example, create instructional materials on how campaign and marketing directors might build a case for marketing and funding local Jewish identity and continuity needs.

4. When NJPS 2000 is released, invite key federation professionals who are considered "opinion leaders" to make presentations on how they are utilizing it within their federation. In a related vein, use peer networks to share ideas about how to utilize the research. For example, offer additional regional conferences for different categories of federation professionals where they can create action plans for the utilization of NJPS 2000 in their area of work.

5. Offer training now on research utilization, through professional development workshops, UJC quarterly meetings, and other such vehicles. Training might include seminars on reading and interpreting statistical research, conducting research, understanding more frequently used research methodologies, and applying research findings.

6. Have federations identify local Jewish studies faculty and other appropriate academic resources who may help federation professionals understand and apply NJPS 2000 research findings to their work. Then, create a database of these individuals, and communicate with them about NJPS 2000 and their potential role in its utilization.

7. As endowment, marketing, and, to a lesser degree, human resource development directors were the least familiar with the findings of the 1990 NJPS and utilized it less compared to other federation professionals, spend additional resources on helping them learn about, understand, and utilize research so that they may more actively utilize NJPS 2000.

8. Create a marketing plan utilizing NJPS 2000 that marketing directors can use to "tell the story" of the American Jewish community. By highlighting areas of concern about the future of the Jewish community, significant funds may be raised through local annual campaigns and special endowments.

9. Utilize NJPS 2000 findings to create special leadership programs that can help volunteers address continuity challenges and for general educational purposes for all volunteers.

10. Retrain existing staff to deal with the challenges of Jewish continuity, or hire staff specifically equipped to do so.

11. As regular communications from the research source increase confidence in research findings, communicate regularly with federation professionals about the status of NJPS 2000.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH TOPICS

This knowledge utilization study of the 1990 NJPS is the first of its kind. It offers insights on

how federation professionals perceive the value of research in general, and on how they used the 1990 NJPS for Jewish identity and continuity purposes. This study also raises additional future research topics. These topics are presented below in the hope that they may form the basis for future studies.

- Replicate the 1990 NJPS utilization study on NJPS 2000. This replication study would allow for a better understanding of how seminal research diffuses in the federation system and is utilized by federation professionals. Such an understanding would enable the creation of more effective dissemination and utilization practices within the federation system.
- Study the dissemination and utilization of the 1990 NJPS within Jewish religious denominations and other central Jewish organizations (for example, within the Jewish Community Center, the Jewish Family Service, and Foundation for Jewish Life systems). The goal of this study would be to systematically study the utilization and outcomes of the 1990 NJPS on non-federation organizational systems within the Jewish community.
- Study how individuals in these seven professional categories utilize research differently from one another. The purpose of this study would be to determine the most effective ways to develop and disseminate research so that it is utilized more by these seven categories of key federation professionals.
- Study why marketing and endowment directors, in contrast with other federation professionals, report less familiarity with the 1990 NJPS and with the utilization of research. This kind of study would help enhance research utilization among these key professionals.
- Study federations that have a high utilization rate of the 1990 NJPS. The goal of this study would be to develop a "best practices" approach to research utilization within the federation system.
- Study if there are certain categories of federation professionals that are early adopters of research and innovations. This study may help research diffuse more rapidly within the

federation system by taking advantage of the influence of early adopters.

- While federation professionals do not have formal professional associations based on their professional category, they do meet formally within segmented groups (e.g., planners meetings). It would be worthwhile to study the role of these informal professional associations within the federation system in the dissemination and utilization of research. The purpose of this study would be to promote research utilization through professional associations, which, as noted in the literature review, have proven to be effective vehicles for promoting research dissemination and utilization.
- Perceptions of the reliability and relevance of the 1990 NJPS sometimes varied by denominational affiliation. Therefore, study the effects of denominational affiliation on research utilization and policy determination. Such a study might provide insights on how to package research for denominational consumption.

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