Title of Project: Validation and interaction with the Prototype Inception Evaluator survey methodology

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Abstract

A. Specific Aims It is the goal of this research project to utilize, beta-test and continue to refine a novel survey and feedback methodology specifically designed to aid and focus the brainstorming process associated with new project development. This tool will initially be used during the OU School of Community Medicine’s 2013 Summer Institute in assessment of proposed social innovation projects. Benchmarking of benefits and drawbacks with regards to usage of the methodology will be explored. Furthermore, documentation of this process via publication of aspects of usage of the methodology is envisioned.

B. Background and Significance We hypothesize that by implementing and providing a rapid survey and visual feedback mechanism for learners involved in social innovation project creation and design, that this iterative evaluation cycle will stimulate deeper levels of thinking and learning thus subsequently complement rationally guided development and implementation of emerging projects.

C. Preliminary Studies/Progress Report Employment of similar forms of the survey instrument have been used in previous exercises and classroom examples but have not yet been rigorously designed to lead to production of generalizable knowledge. Preliminary data gathered utilizing the non-electronic survey method in a poster evaluation exercise indicated that the survey could produce results that correlated with an independent ranking method. In the non-electronic version of the survey, participants were given transparent sheets over survey templates (last page) upon which they individually responded to survey questions by placing adhesive dots on appropriate scaled responses. After all surveys were taken, sheets were collected and collated then displayed in a stack via an overhead projector. This provided a means to assess pooled individual perceptions as a group while providing group perspective for stimulation of iterative feedback during the evaluation process. At the respondents’ option, survey sheets were coded in a way that allowed them to later identify their response and publicly address/defend their stance during group feedback. Aside from full participation, three levels of anonymity were available to participants. They could decline to participate. They could participate yet decline to provide an identifying number on the survey sheet and thus remove themselves from individually participating in the feedback portion of the evaluation exercise. Third, they could provide a number and still decline to self-identify at a later point. To reiterate, this is a research project and participation is voluntary.

D. Research Design and Methods We have translated the PIE survey methodology to an electronic format that allows creations of online surveys and input of response via mobile devices. Survey responses are then immediately available for overhead project and discussion. By design, this methodology represents a consensus building tool and, as such, to be fully functional, requires participants to divulge their identities as they receive or provide feedback based on their perceptions of proposals made by the group at large. The application provides a means for participants to register...
by establishing a unique username (e-mail address) and associated password. The option is provided for participants to provide biographical information (including name, sex, phone number and address). A level of anonymity is possible in that the only required information (besides login info) that must be provided (if participating) includes level of training, field of study and OU-Tulsa affiliation (department or program of study). The surveys will contain a list of criteria against which emerging social innovation projects are judged. The acquired multiparametric data can then be analyzed and visualized, comparing any parameter against any other parameter, as well as providing a means to “overlay” data sets. By design, the software facilitates this “on the fly” methodology to provoke thoughtful and deeper consideration of the issues explored by the emerging projects and team members. Eventually, individual data points will be connectable to users in order to most robustly mine the data. Depending on the user identification provided, dictates the participant’s level of anonymity. Survey results in aggregate as well as parsed based on various input parameters are envisioned to be published.

E. Statistical Methods
This project represents a continuation of a survey methodology initially designed to serve only as a standalone grading/ranking tool for in-house assessments. Broadening the range of use has led to the development of the project to the current point. Appropriate statistical methods will be employed during final data analysis prior to publication of acquired data.

F. Gender/Minority/Pediatric Inclusion for Research
There will be no inclusion or exclusion criteria on the basis of gender, ethnicity, or racial group. The ethnic, gender and racial make-up of the participants will reflect the ethnic, gender and racial make-up of students in the Community Medicine Enrichment classes. Exclusion of children (under age 18) and the elderly (65+) is due to intentionally avoiding inclusion of IRB-designated protected groups.

G. Human Participants
1. 500 participants per year, age 18-64, male and female. No other exclusion criteria.
2. Describe plans for recruitment and consent procedures to be followed.
   a. A waiver of documentation of informed consent has been approved by the IRB. An example of a type of study that would qualify for a waiver of documentation of informed consent is a survey.
   b. While this status does not require written consent documentation, prior to engaging in the survey exercises, participants will be informed of the goals and rationale for the study and will be provided a copy of this document.
   c. Consent will be ascertained and established by participant involvement in the survey exercises.
3. The instrument is designed to be an interactive tool by which groups can poll its members and rapidly display the results back to the group. While data input into the tool can be done in an anonymous fashion, part of the evaluative power is to be able to perform the analysis with linked biographical information so that individuals with unique perspectives regarding the parameter under question would be able to be identified and be given the opportunity to share their perspective with the group. While publically expounding on one’s own thoughts and rationalizations could be psychologically or socially intimidating, there will be no public recrimination or other negative reactions for doing so. Additionally, there will be no deceptive practices (concealment or direct deception) utilized in this research project.

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Thus risks to individuals involved in this project are deemed to be minimal
4. Potential benefits to those that consent to participate are tangential to the
goals of successfully utilizing the experimental tool to help develop projects.