NNIPCamp Oakland, Thursday, November 9th, 2023

Session 2 – Community Survey

Led by Tommy Pearce – Neighborhood Nexus

Notetaker: Elizabeth Burton

Attendees: Marissa Sandblom, Ethan Hug, Maya Salcido White, Alex Akaakar, Ashely Cajina, Amanda Phillips de Lucas, Matthew Jannetti, Dan Potter, Brandon Stanaway, Kate Eikel, Rachel Podoski, Amy Carroll-Scott, Hannah Bessenecker, Rohan Katti, Tommy Pearce, Stephanie Quesnelle, Rania Ahmed, David Harris

Tommy: Neighborhood Nexus as independent org, to do more human centered community-based data. How to capture lived experience as insight? Admin data limited – interested in understanding lived experience, business of primary data collection and large-scale surveying. Like Pew Center but for 5 county Atlanta. Panel survey w/ longitudinal data based on neighborhood or big enough sample size for. Right tools, funding, people. Hoping people have answers to some of these. New Haven does the wellbeing survey well. Copy from Atlanta. People in network doing it well, what kind of scale, what’s the value add of it outside of census data.

Amy: Urban Health Collaborative represented survey for Promise Neighborhood. Hyper local, promise neighborhood geography is co located with promise zone designation. Drawn by people not them, cut across census tracts. 2 square miles and 4 neighborhoods. Decided to look at admin data to sample. Most didn’t capture population well. Requested an integrated school enrollment data. 15 comm residents from those neighborhoods to hire and train. Very expensive survey but wouldn’t hear from everyone if didn’t go door to door with trusted community members. Issues with interactions with police data not able to get anywhere else. Three rounds of it. COVID supplement over the phone for child/family needs but built a lot of trust from community surveyors as well. Table and bring data and data activities at community events. Understand/interact with data. Continued three of the surveyors for dissemination and curate stories that would be most useful. Down to how much does this cost? $150,000 a round. Cheaper if just looking for adult to answer the door. Households with children a whole other level and randomly selecting children’s w/ caregivers.

Tommy: Talk about the trust? Value added? Data elsewhere, what are you doing with this and outcome?

Amy: Shoved in community engagement through the data requirements to create jobs and vehicle for co creation. Community advisory committee who listened to needs. Waiting for IRB to approve community surveyors piloted it so much to each other got it through. Pitch at the door. Worked with Mark at CT wellbeing survey, statewide version. Part of the training, what would your pitch be to a neighbor? Why folks should answer the survey was the only reason people took the survey. Ethics that need to live up to expectations and data available, dashboard, summaries back, send them to everyone in the mail, report out in presentations. Challenge is now that the grant ends and how to maintain the data infrastructure.

Question what about getting data elsewhere?

Amy: You can’t get the data from the census. Population so specific, families w/ kids who live in 2-mile area. Look at same census tracts, significant demographic distribution because unique to area, southern end is Drexel and Penn. If include those census tracts, not people with kids because college student. Couldn’t get the voices of the people. Also, census tracts great but not good at describing neighborhoods. A few neighborhoods where got enough responses but get down to neighborhood level. Addresses in Belmont area. Go back to communities and this is what people are saying. Other 40% is east park side.

Research as different role?

Tommy: Neighborhood Nexus looking to build machine and then open it up to ask questions. Using CJ’s question this morning, know if can get a cup of sugar? If you need a cup of sugar, do you trust your neighbor?

Amy: Ask questions about trust, social cohesion, social capital. Collaborative co creation. Brainstorming and some people have actual questions, but most people want to talk about domains of questions. Go find questions. Put it together and 375 questions too many then prioritize. Community surveyors got in the weeds with it. Didn’t want adverse childhood experiences questions. Triggering. Wanted a balance of assets and deficits. A lot of assets-based ones.

Neighborhood/geographic areas, do participants self-identify the neighborhood, zip codes. In different studies, zero in on where they live. Going to address and confirm resident. Have the address and ability to geocode the data. Ask them to identify if they’re a resident.

David or Rania(?): Philly strong neighborhood identity and boundary. New York also strong but names change particularly when under gentrification pressures. Generational differences for how people identify their names. Elder will say one and young people say others. Tried to in Oakland but gentrification pressures so fast that people moving in want to reidentify and go to chamber and rename it.

Amy: North Philly gentrification happening longer and a challenge. West Philly is more sub neighborhoods that older folks haven’t heard of. Precipice of dramatic gentrification. Zip codes so large and no one organizes by zip code.

Indicators work and find great housing measures that explain historical nature of housing crises. Listening to informational needs.

Trust idea, IRB and academic thing. Don’t need that but community data governance. Advisory committee. Basically, community IRB.

Stephanie: D3 neighborhood vitality project. Integrating community survey with secondary data. Project sitting in other organization to build shared agreement in CBOs in Detroit to move the needle. Supported that with maps. Need to do systematically. CBO task force develop and pilot survey documentation and make sure questions go back to goals and answering things. People interpret questions correctly. Piloting different methods. Did pilot and very expensive. Not worth it for the expensive. Closed pilot phase on Oct 31st and start analyzing data soon. Originally mailed survey and tested out door dropping because the same price. Not convenience samples, fill it out by phone. Biggest response. Partner doing survey – JFM. Success taking the paper surveys to community meetings and fill it out then enter survey platform. A lot of work.

People got o community meetings are engaged members. Incentive for CDO to go to door to door of service area, they get a cut of the data. Mix of methods to not just get engaged residents.

Survey half an hour. Incentives. $50 gift card. 20-30 min altogether. Don’t know how phone thing works.

Feedback that they wanted design to be longitudinal. Thought 3 panel but they wanted it longitudinal. Collect contact info and follow a sample of folks.

Increased incentive by each wave. Because of trust building, response rate went up. Response rate higher after COVID.

Oakland(?) Recently did small survey where response rates from CBOs to understand capacity issues. Not a representative survey, just as many CBOs as possible to respond. 2 general push outs and list assembled and acquired and hired to call and follow up. More successful with neighborhood associations than with larger nonprofits. Hard to get someone on the phone with those or they didn’t think they were the right person to give that information. Don’t think response rate was bad, 119 for 2 months. Expectations for response rate? General questions rather than representative survey.

Stephanie: D3 will help write and collect data and then they collect, and we’ll help analyze. 2 response rates for counties at schools. Set up expectations, do you have relationships to answer this. It’s long and sensitive information. Disappointing to them and to us. Thought did a good job. Now, give them steps. If you get X responds, this is what we can get. This number can give you this.

Amy: Response rate led them to shift to panel design. By the time go to late 2010s, struggling to get people. Phone bank that worked in the 80s. Tug of war with original designer but if want it to grow, rethink it. Shift to panel design and build it from originally up and got it to 75%. Randomly designed, address based, worked with XX. Responsive to geographic constraints. Philly had bad experience.

Dan: Letters from Texans (sports), super neighborhood leaders, postcards, MSG cellphones attached to it. Leveraging connections and relationships. What are we leading as a community. Movement over to panel, we had collected 40 years of data and didn’t have anything to show for it. Reality of confronting that. Honest dialogue for what they want to do. Challenges with Houston, pushed back on mischaracterization on the survey. Drive the story of Houston for next 40 years. Gave opportunity to make end roads with certain organizations. Avoided politicians entirely. Going into Montgomery/Ft. Bend County. Interesting process. It’s not community survey. More population survey.

Tommy: Neighborhood Nexus thinking of doing that. Falcons and other sports team. Atlanta POV brand, priorities, values. Atlanta civic, neighborhood nexus doesn’t need them to know them but just Atlanta POV.

Dan: They built it, paid for sampling services. Contracted with other company and spent too much money. Don’t need to promise they’re deliver but not sure why paying ½ million to write letter. MSG and one before, arcane detail sampling in own house to pay someone.

Tommy: Hit 10,000. Five counties, a few million. Particular areas to over sample? City of Atlanta and priority neighborhoods. Boot strapping from reserves. Something tangible to sell to fundraising.

Amy: Temple has a panel survey Be Heard Philly where recruit folks to be part of their sample for specific issues. New mayoral races, try to be zip code represented. What kind of device and how often, what topics. Your north philly and push out specific instrument to them. Voluntary and through interactions, try to incentivize. Go to specific neighborhoods and do tabling and canvassing, good community engagement there to increase sample sizes. Prioritize sample sizes with worst representation. Have collaborated with some. What to take methods city wide because horrible health data in Philly. No one has had funds to replicate model elsewhere. Something in between these models. Over sampling in areas unrepresented.

Philanthropy is place based, local united way bring in dollars and help. Neighborhood being displaced, track where they go. Diaspora of where community is going. Nationally funded cross sector, multiple, federal programs, if they would just partner with NNIP partners in cities instead of redoing eval without knowing how to do the work, paying them to collect mis matched data. NNIP partners perfect partners to evaluate.

Ask similar questions across cities. Cross sight project idea.

Dan: Language is important, translated into Spanish. Chinese and Vietnamese. Closing the loop. Moment where 12 surveys over 9 months but never closed loops with respondents. Cute little newsletter and tossed it out in June and highlighted 4 respondents and made front page of Houston Chronicle. People shot back with thank you for sharing, no unsubscribes. Saw response rate go up. People recruited in Nov 2021 after sending newsletter around. Research project small thing that sneaks off radar but that resonates. So extractive if just more surveys, 50 gift cards, cute newsletter.

Tommy: Local comedian in Atlanta that makes short videos and kicking around ideas. If you’re complaining about grown kid living with you, that’s a housing program. Share with them. What can they get out of this and how does this resonate? Here’s what we heard from you. Hear this early on.

Technology is way to collect this?

Dan: All online. Qualtrics is what Rice has account with. Vast majority of respondents are on their phone. Digital divide is a thing but Qualtrics has cell phone function. It shrinks compared to online learning. Interview administered and then enter to Qualtrics. Which is why it’s expensive. Working on making changes internally to IRB to be sensitive to community engaged. Hearing through community leaders to not go through community and ask for focused groups without asking for solutions. Health department hired for community health improvement plan. Series of focus groups that are required. Doesn’t matter the topic, please health departments stop asking what priorities are put us on the boards deciding. Promise about linking data to resources but easy to collect data that way.

Amy: Responses from people who are frustrated because asked same question and don’t see change? That’s why started community IRB and not organization/institution led unless CBO led. Sit on board and try to bring resources and eval stuff. Whole point of it is all the colleges proposing to collect data, come to them and ask them questions about reporting data, coming from community, why should we participate. 12 food security survey this year.

Stephanie: Report Detroit to spatialize college surveys. 15 reports on housing in Brightmore. Maybe read report before doing own work. People interested in that. Didn’t do homework that report happened.

Amy: If you ask residents, they say data crap because they didn’t care. If not co created, no buy in for residents or truth.

Rania: Survey monkey online and people take it on the phone. Not accessible to everyone who wants to take survey. Limit accessibility. Low-income people of color don’t have that accessibility, so print out survey and 50% of people who do that take it on paper. When online, logic prompts they answer specific question but on paper those aren’t auto. Don’t read it or not so accuracy isn’t good. Miss answering one questions than not making it accessible to everyone. Paper survey and hired community interns to do data entry after. All collected in same place.

Survey methodologies, stepping back from those to phrase things more conversational. Everything learned from grad school, validated as much as possible but in common language.

Through survey through lexicon thing and says college or above and bring it back down to earth.

Successes about specific questions?

Ethan: MORPC finished second survey. First one back in spring. Transportation planning mainly. Bringing Amtrac to central Ohio. Not rail or bus rapid transit. Getting first BRT next fall if passes. Question about feasibility of Amtrak, illuminated feeling of it through 15 county region and submitted 2 trail routes to FDA from Pittsburgh to Chicago and Cleveland.

Amy: Philly DA. Gun violence prevention, community safety and shooting race. Sent entire team to summer participatory class. Data transparency to public if systems work to change systems. Illuminating public opinion and departments within organization listening.

Policing as public health crisis. So could you do survey. Defunding police in Philly, behavioral health response. Could you do the survey? Resources vs convenience sample or online survey. Crap data that you can’t use or half a million to go door to door. Most surveys miss the people you want to hear from. Do smaller data collection. Data to lead to change in community. Start small and gradual trust. Have to report back and not stigmatize. People stopped them to ask when coming around again. Survey and people from community go door to door. Recognizable t-shirts and jackets. More visible and keep remembering people.

Convening a bunch of funders/potential funders. Wrote mock survey and phone numbers to text it to. Housing justice league survey. Trading services for trust. 9,000 people, pilot from last summer where got email list. Getting something out the door. 7 questions. Would someone watch your kid? Here’s some data no ones asked and doesn’t exist. Inform specific policies/funding strategies? Disaggregate and not represented. Give a taste and tangible to sell.

Pilot phase to work with two or three CDOS and then represented sample and then full city wide. Then next year doing final thing.

Explain what’s missing to funders don’t underestimate that. Trained to gloss over that in reports. Always have a what’s missing section which is powerful. Looking to fund stages.

Differential privacy in Census? Not represented in surveys, deep local level. If already have census and masking certain things then really do need another mechanism to get at that.

What do they want their thinking? Qualitative open ended more valuable.