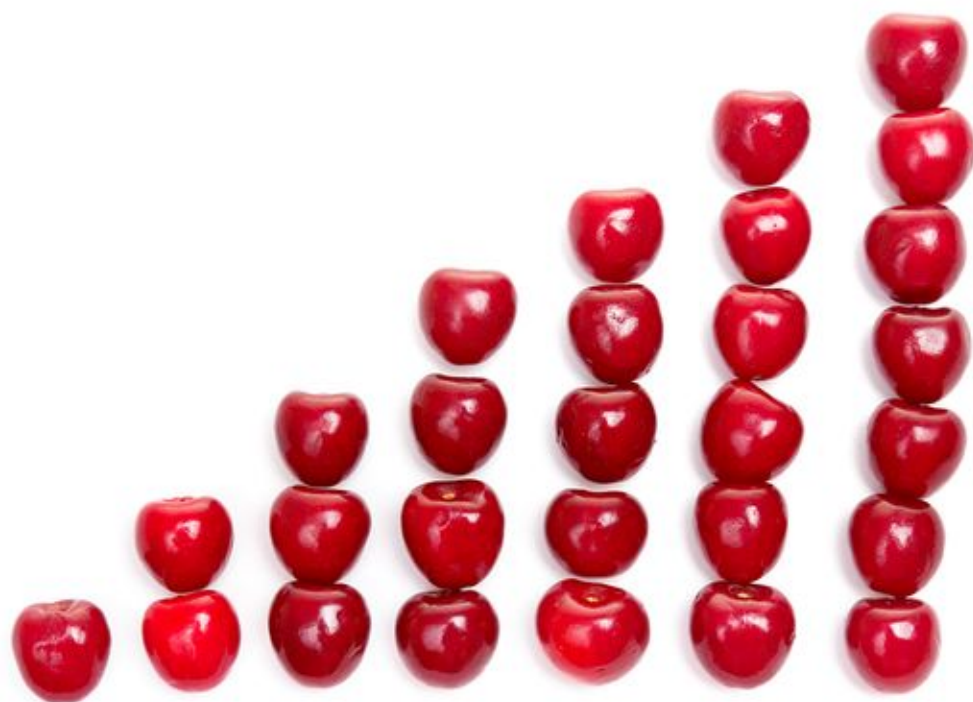


Social Marketing Research for Global Public Health

METHODS AND TECHNOLOGIES

W. Douglas Evans



OXFORD

Social Marketing Research for Global Public Health

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Methods and Technologies

W. DOUGLAS EVANS, PhD

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Contents

<i>Foreword</i>	vii
<i>Preface</i>	xi
1. Introduction to Social Marketing Research	1
2. Research Methods and Evidence for Social Marketing	13
3. Formative Research	43
4. Brand Research	79
5. Efficacy and Message Testing Methods for Social Marketing Research	113
6. Monitoring and Evaluation Research: Tools and Evidence for Understanding Social Marketing Performance During and After Implementation	139
7. Social Marketing Research in the Digital Media Age	175
8. Quasi-Experiments and Heavy-Up Experiments in Social Marketing	205
9. Case Studies: Social Marketing Research in Action	237
10. Lessons Learned and Future Social Marketing Research	273
<i>Index</i>	287

Foreword

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We know that politicians, policy-makers, and public sector officials from around the world are faced with a raft of complex social challenges, many of which require group and individual behavior to be influenced. Social marketing is a long-established, successful, and continuously developing field of research and applied action concerned with the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of such social programs. Social marketing is a systemic, critical, and reflexive process that seeks through the application of marketing principals to enhance social policy selection, objective setting, planning, and operational delivery. Social marketing can help define, develop, and deliver the more citizen-focused and evidence-based social programs that policy-makers now seek.

Social marketing's emphasis on systematic research, strategic analysis, planning, and evaluation make it a natural fit with modern policy development that increasingly emphasizes the application of evidence-based policy-making, efficiency, evaluation, as well as understanding about the lives, wants, and needs of the citizens who are potential beneficiaries of such programs.

Good research lies at the very heart of social marketing and is used at almost every stage of the process, from defining a problem, scoping what is known about it; to developing insight and understanding from participants, groups, stakeholders, and institutions; through to testing interventions, monitoring implementation, and program evaluation. Research helps develop target group insight and understanding and to establish objectives and goals for programs. It also helps with progress checking, day-to-day management, and determining if progress is being made. The goal of social marketing is to increase well-being, not just learn more about an issue or problem. Consequently, social marketing research and evaluation should be used to inform decisions about social programs, budget allocations, and development action plans.

Social marketing seeks to influence human behavior in a way that is ethically and socially acceptable and to produce learning about what works and what does not. This emphasis on evaluation and continuous progressive improvement is a hallmark of best practice. This focus leads to a set of questions that those who practice social marketing continuously ask:

- Is there a need for an intervention?
- Who are the intended audiences and subsegments who need assistance?
- What do we know about the needs, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of the target groups?
- What do we know about what has been done before in this field in terms of theory, intervention success, and research?
- Is there a plausible intervention or mix of interventions that could be delivered that will have a significant impact on the problem?
- Is the intervention or mix ethical and acceptable to sponsors, recipients, and the wider public?
- Is the range of interventions affordable and sustainable?
- Are the interventions efficient, and do they represent good value for money?

This book by Doug Evans sets out in a comprehensive and logical way to answer these fundamental questions and describe how researchers, evaluators, policy-makers, and practitioners can address these questions and a number of other related issues in a consistent and systematic way. This book also marks a milestone in the increasing sophistication of social marketing theory and practice. It represents a state-of-the-art review and guidance on social marketing research and evaluation and breaks new ground by including up-to-date information and consideration of a number of rapidly emerging new technologies and methodologies from the digital and social media fields and from the fields of community engagement and empowerment, communications, and behavioral sciences.

Like most modern fields of study, the theoretical basis of social marketing is contested and evolving. In addition to addressing the fundamental research questions set out as discussed previously, Evans also introduces—through the lens of evaluation and research—the big issues related to the theory and practice interface of social marketing. Chapter 1 explores these issues and suggests how they can be addressed through a new continuum model of social marketing research. Chapter 2 builds on this analysis by reviewing research

methods and the evidence base for social marketing. Chapter 3 explores the key issues associated with formative research and analysis and why they form the bedrock of effective social marketing practice. Chapter 4 takes a look at how brands can be developed, researched, and evaluated and why they are powerful in the social marketing context. Chapter 5 focuses on how to ensure efficacy in message testing and establish “proof of concept” for campaigns. Chapter 5 also explores the application of both effectiveness and efficacy research and how learning from commercial marketing research methods and the use of new technology can strengthen this aspect of social marketing research.

Chapter 6 sits at the heart of this book sequentially and metaphorically; it focuses on monitoring and evaluation research and provides tools for measuring the performance of programs during and after interventions. It describes in detail methods and measures for both process and outcome evaluation. Chapter 7 reviews social marketing research in the digital age and how new technologies are rapidly reshaping data gathering, analysis, and evaluation. The chapter also reviews potential research opportunities that are being open by new technology. This chapter also makes recommendations on how best to optimize the effectiveness of multiple modalities and the optimization of channel combinations in a digital world of influence. Chapter 8 explores different research and evaluation strategies and models in social marketing and how and when to apply them. Chapter 9 reviews how case study research can and has been used to promote learning and how this learning can be synthesized with other forms of evidence. The final chapter of this book discusses systematic reviews of social marketing based on synthesis of existing evidence to illustrate the range of available programs, research activities, and evidence that exists. This analysis is used to suggest future directions for social marketing research.

As social marketing continues to develop, it is moving into a phase of increasing specialization. This can be seen by the increasing number of new social marketing books and articles that are focused on specific aspects of social marketing research and practice. This book, through its comprehensive analysis, new contributions to theory, and the use of multiple case examples, makes an important contribution to this evolving and increasingly sophisticated understanding of social marketing theory and practice.

It is my view that the social marketing research and evaluation principles explored in this book will significantly contribute to the delivery of more effective and efficient social marketing programs, and in so doing, the book

makes an important contribution to social policy delivery, research, and evaluation. In this book, Doug Evans demonstrates that social marketing research and evaluation principles, concepts, and techniques—if systematically and reflexively applied—can add considerable value to both the development and the implementation of social programs that seek to influence human behavior.

Preface

W. Douglas Evans

Introduction

Social marketing has existed as a defined field of activity at least since Kotler and Zaltman's (1971) seminal article, with its roots going back to Wiebe's (1951) question: "Why can't we sell brotherhood like we sell soap?" There have been many useful definitions of this diverse, multidisciplinary field, many of them summarized by Kotler and Lee (2008). The one we focus on for purposes of this book is the following: Social marketing is a process that uses marketing techniques to influence target audience behaviors that will benefit society as well as the individual. The key phrase here, for our purposes, is that "social marketing is a process."

If social marketing is a process, the natural questions are Does it work? and, if so, How does it work? That is where research and evaluation come in. This book is about describing, applying, understanding, and advancing the state of social marketing research and evaluation. That means articulating a basis in theory and practice for specific social marketing initiatives, developing processes by which social marketing can be implemented in the real world, and conducting evaluation research to determine if those processes are effective in achieving their objectives (behavioral and social change) and if so how they achieved them (whether the underlying theory and practices explain their success).

Goals and Objectives of This Book

The aim of this book is to describe the state of the art in social marketing research and evaluation methods. In recent years, there have been significant developments in theory, measurement, data collection, and analytical methods

to conduct research aimed at designing social marketing programs and campaigns and to evaluate their efficacy and effectiveness. In particular, the rapid growth and widespread use of new technologies, such as mobile digital devices and social media and improved knowledge about experimental methods in developed and developing countries, provide significant new opportunities for research, including experiments and quasi-experiments in which researchers can measure participants' exposure to marketing and media stimuli. Much has been learned in recent years about which message strategies, such as appeals to individual and group norms, and marketing strategies such as stealth and viral marketing are most effective and in which topic areas in the health and social sectors. This book explores these new methods and evidence, how new technologies have influenced social marketing programs and research on them, what has been learned from the commercial sector to inform social marketing, and where the field is headed.

The overall trend of translation and application of commercial marketing strategies into public health is the most important in social marketing. Marketing research principles have been translated into the public health space, and evaluation of program effectiveness is rapidly evolving with the advent of new technologies, such as Internet panel studies, research with handheld devices, and social networking sites as natural laboratories for communication and marketing studies. This book aims to capture the application of research and program evaluation in this domain.

Purpose and Objectives of This Book

Audience

This book aims to meet many of the “T”-shaped needs of the social marketing researcher (the T representing a need for breadth and generalizability and for depth into a social marketing program), regardless of your discipline or background and whether this is your first day on the job or your fifth year. Chapters are structured to present research questions and challenges over the course of an intervention. Each chapter sets forth the scope of options facing the researcher and outlines steps to follow to conduct the research. References point you to studies that have implemented those steps. This book, along with coaching from more experienced researchers, can move you from feeling overwhelmed by the enormous demands placed on social marketing researchers, to understanding and action.

The primary audience for the book is public health professionals, health communicators and social marketers, and researchers working in these fields.

The intended audience is professionals who design, implement, and study programs in social marketing. It also acts as a reference book for advanced (master and doctoral level) courses in social marketing, marketing, public health, and related social science disciplines, such as social psychology and communications.

The book aims to be a valuable resource to research professionals and managers and other practitioners who need to be educated consumers of social marketing research methods and results. It will be suitable as a text in an intermediate-to-advanced undergraduate- or graduate-level course in a business, marketing, or public health school. It would cover basic and advanced methods (and so be suitable for higher and lower course levels), study designs, and analysis methods; review of evidence in field; and contain numerous case studies. It would also go in depth into research using new and social media (online studies, use of social networking as a research tool and venue, etc.). The book is aimed at social marketing and health communication professionals and researchers and as a text for use in advanced graduate-level courses.

In addition to a broad professional and academic audience, the book provides an introduction for those already working in these settings and for policy-makers and managers wishing to understand social marketing. The book summarizes the evidence from extant research, current state-of-the-art methods, and new and emerging methods and will thus be a resource for researchers and program evaluators, as well as consumers of research and evaluation.

Scope

The book reviews and clarifies the concept of the “full spectrum” or “continuum” approach to social marketing research and evaluation. The social marketing research continuum represents the breadth of research questions, methods, and measures from initial conceptualization of a campaign and its initial design, through in-depth testing, including experimental message testing, and after campaign launch to process and outcome evaluation. Research begins with the definition of a vulnerable population in need of intervention or behavior change and spans the full spectrum of social marketing activities to have an impact on evaluation of morbidity and mortality outcomes.

The book begins by defining and describing this spectrum of activity, using global case examples to illustrate stages of research from formative research to process, outcome, and impact evaluation. It describes the relationship between the commercial and social sectors and the actual and potential translation of methods and measurement between the sectors. It then describes

design, measurement, data collection, and analysis strategies and specific methodologies, again illustrated by numerous global case studies and findings from recent studies across global settings. The book concludes by examining new and emerging methods, including new and social media research methodologies, and outlines an agenda for 21st century social marketing research and evaluation.

Major Themes

There are several major themes in the book. First, chapters consistently focus on the intimate connection between social marketing campaign development and the research enterprise. Social marketing research is an applied methodology that serves two main functions. Initially, it is about identifying likely *determinants of behavioral choice*. Beneficiaries of social marketing programs choose to engage in a behavior, such as consistently using condoms, due to market factors such as price, availability, social norms, and other relevant knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs they have and form about the behavior. Social marketing research is concerned with identifying and analyzing those determinants of behavioral choice and working hand in hand with social marketers to design and improve the marketing plan and execution. Thus, it represents a kind of formative research.

Social marketing research is also very much concerned with evaluating the *outcomes of campaign activities*. Individuals who use condoms (as a category of behavior), or use individual condom products, will with some probability have different health outcomes than those who do not. What effect does exposure to social marketing activities, to the executions of the 4Ps (place, price, product, and promotion) in a campaign, have on individual health outcomes? Social marketing research, in its outcome evaluation function, is concerned with this question. In particular, it is concerned with the effects of campaigns on *communication objectives* of campaigns and their role as *mediators* of health outcomes. Social marketing aims to use the 4Ps to change behavior, promoting smoking cessation or increasing physical activity, through a theory of change for the specific campaign. In other words, by achieving certain proximal outcomes such as changes in social norms, self-efficacy, or outcome expectations for engaging in a behavior, longer term outcomes such as increases in daily exercise or smoking quit attempts will result.

Campaigns are designed based on such theories of change. Evaluation studies model those theories and measure the extent to which achieving communication objectives, such as increasing social norms among adolescents to

avoid junk food, leads to behavioral outcomes, such as less junk food consumption. Beginning in Chapter 1 on the social marketing research continuum, this book examines outcome evaluation from several different perspectives and provides detailed case studies of the principles, methods, and case studies of relevant evaluation studies.

Second, the book addresses research questions, methods, design, measurement, and analysis at each of the stages of campaign development. Beginning with initial formative exploration of behavioral determinants, chapters explore how social marketing research is built to address each stage of the research continuum. In the formative research stages, Chapters 2 and 3 explore the different purposes and objectives of social marketing in its first application, to assist in developing campaigns. These chapters identify and explore three phases of formative research—exploratory, concept testing, and pretesting—that lead to the completion of a campaign plan. Qualitative and quantitative methods and mixed methods can be applied in each of these phases, as illustrated by case studies.

Third, new, digital technologies such as the Internet, mobile phones, and social media are playing an increasingly important role in the design, implementation, and research and evaluation of social marketing programs. New technologies can be both *channels* for delivery of social marketing and *platforms* for conducting research. As channels, digital technologies have certain distinctive features that have major implications for social marketers. For example, the ubiquity of mobile phones and the fact that they are almost always with many users makes them well suited to social marketing using any of the 4Ps. Think of promoting physical activity messages through text messaging (promotion) and healthy eating messages through a mobile app close to dinner time (place). Or, consider how social media allow for new ways to influence social norms through social networking effects. These features of new technologies have changed and continue to change the way social marketing is done and expand opportunities for behavior change. Chapter 6 explores research with new technologies in depth.

At the same time, social marketing research has new opportunities to collect data, new ways to design and implement studies, and new ways of answering research questions. The Internet creates opportunities for experimental research on behavior change messages that did not exist previously. This is powered in part by the existence of Internet-based research platforms, such as large consumer panels, which recruit and retain participants who have expressed interest in research participation. The existence of large, and in some cases nationally representative, samples of individuals within a

country, region, or worldwide creates opportunities to experimentally control exposure to social marketing and to compare the effects of exposure, or higher and lower levels of stimulus, to control or no exposure conditions and examine effects on behavioral determinants and behavior over time. Chapter 7 explores message testing and case studies in experimental social marketing research.

Fourth, the book addresses important but relatively underappreciated methodologies and social marketing techniques such as branding and brand research. Chapter 5 covers the topic of branding and its role in social marketing efforts. Brands seek to build relationships between consumers and products, services, organizations, and increasingly healthy behaviors. Brands can be measured by the mental representations, the associations that individuals form with the brand. This construct, often called *brand equity*, is the key metric for brand research, which serves both formative research and outcome evaluation functions. There is a growing literature of published brand research studies, and Chapter 5 explores the evidence, methods, and case studies in this crucial domain and technique of social marketing.

Finally, the book covers social marketing research from a global perspective. Chapters 8 and 9 delve into a series of in-depth case studies in developed and developing countries. These chapters compare and contrast social marketing and research and evaluation activities in relatively resource-rich and -deprived contexts. New technologies offer great promise for increasing the effectiveness of social marketing in both contexts and have potential to overcome long-standing barriers to delivering and evaluating campaigns in developing countries. A wide range of case studies in infectious and chronic disease illustrates the breadth of social marketing and the evidence base and research on its development and effectiveness.

The book concludes with an examination of where social marketing research goes next. In many ways, existing theory and practice guide the way. Social marketing research is by nature applied and is about not only evaluating effectiveness of campaigns but also having continuous improvement and feeding back lessons learned in a continuous loop to improve practice. Chapter 10 examines these ideas, how they have in some cases been successfully applied and in others failed, and how the emergence and growing role of new digital technologies affect the basic principles and use of social marketing research.

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Introduction to Social Marketing Research

W. Douglas Evans

Summary Points

- Social marketing is a process, an approach to behavior change rather than a distinct discipline, that has grown tremendously, and there is a need for more research and guidance on best practices.
- Social marketing research also is a process with multiple stages.
- This chapter provides a continuum of social marketing research activities.
- Just as the needs of a campaign should be considered in recommending which of the 4Ps (place, price, product, and promotion) to apply, so should the mix of research methods also be considered in recommending how to research and evaluate a campaign.

Social Marketing, Research, and Evaluation as Interactive Processes

Social marketing is a process, rather than a distinct discipline unto itself (Kotler & Lee, 2008). It is a process that “uses marketing techniques to influence target audience behaviors that will benefit society as well as the individual” (Kotler & Lee, 2008, p. 5). In this sense, the field represents a toolkit of marketing techniques, specific goals and objectives for behavioral and social change, and multidisciplinary approaches to design, test, implement, evaluate, and improve future practice to those ends (Andreasen, 1995; Lefebvre & Rochlin, 1997; Maibach, Abrams, & Marosits, 2007).

The idea of social marketing as a process is illustrated in the well-known benchmark criteria, first introduced by Andreasen (2006) and later amended by French and colleagues (2010). (There have been other amendments, but for now we will stick to these published versions.) These criteria include use of the entire marketing mix, or all four of the “Ps” of marketing (i.e., place, price, product, and promotion) (Borden, 1964), creating attractive and motivating exchanges of value for consumers and paying careful attention to the competition, to name a few. The benchmark criteria are discussed in more depth in Chapter 9.

These criteria apply at each stage of social marketing planning and execution. Major social marketing organizations, such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the United States, describe a step-by-step process for social marketing activities. For example, the basic steps may be summarized as (1) problem description, (2) formative research, (3) strategy development, (4) intervention design, (5) evaluation, and (6) implementation (see, e.g., http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/socialmarketing/training/basics/planning_process.htm). Clearly, strategy development, intervention design, and implementation, just to name three of these steps, involve the application of 4P approaches (e.g., Which channel to use? To promote which message? With what requirements from the audience? and Where?), an exchange of value, and consideration of the value offered by the competition. At the conceptual level of the benchmark criteria and at the practical level of planning and implementation, social marketing is a process of applying techniques from multiple disciplines to execute a program of activities, a *campaign*, with a specific set of measurable behavioral or social change objectives and outcomes (Hastings, 2007). This book frequently refers to social marketing activities using the general terminology of a campaign as the frame of reference.

At the same time, it is worth recognizing that the benchmark criteria described by French and colleagues (2010) and the social marketing planning process referenced previously each include major elements of research. For example, segmentation, audience research, and process and outcome evaluation feature in these basic descriptions of social marketing. So, it is clear from the start that social marketing practice and research are interwoven and complementary processes.

Social Marketing Research as a Complementary Process

Social marketing research is an overarching subject area that includes the study of marketing campaigns intended to promote or change consumer

behavior, to bring about social change (e.g., through government policies), and to assess educational and entertainment media and the effects of news media on public discourse and policy (Siegel & Lotenberg, 2007). For example, both the American Stop Smoking Intervention Study (ASSIST), with its emphasis on tobacco control policy change at the state and local levels (Stillman et al., 2001), and the Heart Truth campaign to increase women's awareness that heart disease is the leading cause of death among adult women (Long et al., 2011) each represent social marketing, and evaluations of the implementation and outcomes of these efforts are social marketing research.

This chapter introduces a perspective and overall approach to research and evaluation of social marketing campaigns with an emphasis on their role in changing health behavior. In this respect, social marketing research is distinct from other forms of health promotion research and evaluation in that it focuses specifically on behavior change through social marketing processes—the use of 4P strategies—and promotion of health behavior or avoidance of unhealthful behaviors. Chapter 2 presents initial examples of distinct designs, methods, and measurement in social marketing research, and following chapters provide details on analysis, results, and implications for future research and practice.

The future of development of social marketing will be shaped in large measure by several developments: (1) growth in the evidence base through more rigorous formative and outcome evaluation research; (2) more evidence-based programs targeting health risk behaviors and health inequalities; and (3) increasing use of digital, social, and mobile media technologies to target and tailor messages for diverse audiences (Evans, 2013). Each of these domains is addressed in this book.

Social marketing scholars have synthesized the evidence base through systematic reviews of the literature to identify effective behavior change messages and campaigns across domains of public health. Systematic reviews and case studies produced by the Task Force for Community Preventive Health Services (Robinson et al., 2014), the National Social Marketing Centre in the United Kingdom (<http://www.thensmc.com>), as well as academic researchers such as Snyder and LaCroix (2013) and Evans and colleagues (2014) generally show that social marketing campaigns are effective and provide broad outlines of the types of 4P strategies that work and their strengths and limitations. In particular, they point out the generally small-to-moderate effect sizes and variability in how social marketing is described, how campaigns are implemented, and research and evaluation methods used to study their development and effectiveness.

The development of new technologies, including the Internet, social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter), and mobile health (mHealth), is equally transforming social marketing practice and research. The development of mHealth, or the use of mobile devices as tools to change health behavior and promote healthcare, is rapidly expanding and offers tremendous opportunities to reach populations using the one technology they use most—mobile phones. The widely cited systematic review article on text messaging programs by Cole-Lewis and Kershaw (2010) indicates that mobile solutions are generally effective in promoting health behaviors and healthcare treatment and adherence outcomes. In recent years, the use of mobile phone technology for health and healthcare has grown rapidly as a strategy to increase patient adherence to care protocols for chronic conditions. Mobile phones allow patients to monitor and take control of their own health (Abroms, Padmanabhan, & Evans, 2012).

Social media and mHealth also represent a kind of “leveling” technology that is accessible to almost everyone and thus represents a major opportunity to address health disparities. For example, the *text4baby* program is a service facilitated by a public-private collaboration (Jordan et al., 2011). The service (described at <https://www.text4baby.org>) delivers text messages promoting prenatal care behaviors to improve maternal and child health behavioral outcomes. It is primarily aimed at the Medicaid-eligible population in the United States and at increasing their healthcare utilization, reducing smoking during pregnancy, taking prenatal vitamins, and improving nutrition and related behaviors. By targeting low-income women with mobile technology readily accessible to them, *text4baby* seeks to reduce health inequalities facing racial/ethnic groups, including low-income Hispanic and African American populations. The *text4baby* program represents an innovative social marketing model to combat health disparities using mobile phones and the mobile phone infrastructure to address large-scale health and healthcare challenges.

Social marketing research generally follows the methodologies widely utilized in the study of health promotion programs, with specific methods, metrics, and analytical techniques related to campaigns and their design, implementation, and outcomes (Chapman, 2010). Research and evaluation in this field also presents special challenges, applies methods specific to the intervention modality, and faces a number of design and measurement considerations. Social marketing research methods and theories are interdisciplinary in nature, drawing from the social and behavioral sciences, business and marketing, and health and public policy arenas. Major domains of theory in communication and marketing include exposure theory, message theory, behavior change theory, and marketing theory. Methods include using behavioral

theory to influence behavior that affects health; assessing factors that underlie the receptivity of audiences to health messages; and both traditional mass communication of messages that aim to change the behavior of target audiences and new media technologies, such as mobile and social media, and their use in research and evaluation.

Closing the Loop: The Role of Evidence in Social Marketing Decision-Making

Social marketing practice and research are interwoven and interdependent activities. Yet, the practical integration of the work done by campaign designers and researchers is often challenging. Campaigns are developed by marketers working in marketing organizations, and the marketing mix is a product of creative developers and practitioners whose primary focus is on delivery of the best 4P strategy possible. While research is integral to the development process, as seen in the literature, resources, attention, and real use of research that results in the design, implementation, and ongoing continuous improvement of campaigns are often in short supply.

There are several reasons for this situation. Unlike most commercial marketing activities, which operate on a long-term basis to promote brands that may have many years or decades of sales history behind them (Mazur, 1996), most social marketing interventions are of limited duration (perhaps 3–5 years at most); thus, time is a serious constraint. Research typically operates on a much slower time frame and requires analysis and interpretation, which may not fit the fast timeline of a campaign operating on a schedule and time-limited budget. Marketers are often not trained in research and may not recognize the value provided by research insights, and researchers may not appreciate the nature of marketing decision-making, leading to a lack of connection between the two worlds (Evans, 2013). Finally, knowledge about research methods, resources to help conduct the research process, and decision-makers' knowledge and understanding of research and its role in decision-making are all significant constraints for influencing marketers' decision-making with research results.

As discussed throughout this book, the integration of social marketing practice and research is a delicate balance that has implications for both the success of campaigns and the growth of the evidence base. First, practitioners and researchers need a common basis in education, language, and understanding of the role and importance of the benchmark criteria and the growing evidence that fully integrated campaigns using all the tools in the

social marketing toolkit are typically most successful (French et al., 2010). Practitioners often have public health, business, communications and marketing, social work, or other backgrounds related to implementation, while researchers have backgrounds in the social sciences (Evans, 2013). Bridging this gap requires workforce professional training and development programs both for practitioners on the importance and use of research and for researchers on how to understand and integrate marketing concepts and activities into their study designs and measures (Evans, 2013). For social marketing practice and research to be *synergistic* as the benchmark criteria imply, all parties to the enterprise need to share a common knowledge base. This will lead to better research based on valid and reliable measures of campaign activity, which has been a challenge in previous campaigns, from tobacco control to HIV/AIDS prevention (Evans, Davis, & Farrelly, 2008), and better use of research in the continuous improvement of practice. Examples of this challenge, and situations for which it has been successfully overcome, are discussed in Chapters 2, 6, and 9 of this volume.

Second, for social marketing as a field to achieve its long-term potential of achieving social good through behavior change, evidence must be integrated into practice. This is the basic goal of the PRECEDE-PROCEED model (Green & Kreuter, 2005): to close the translation loop from program theory to development, implementation, evaluation, and integration of resulting evidence of what works back into improved future practice. This is a long-recognized and central challenge for all health promotion programs (Green et al., 1980) and has been reinforced by recent models, such as the RE-AIM (Reach, Effectiveness, Adoption, Implementation, and Maintenance) model, which calls for increased translation of research to demonstrate efficacy of programs under controlled conditions into field-based effectiveness studies under real-world conditions, leading to improved practice (Glasgow, Lichtenstein, & Marcus, 2003).

Social marketing shares this same challenge with the broad field of health promotion, in part because of the disciplinary and educational differences between practitioners and researchers noted previously. There are examples of successful partnerships between social marketing practitioners and researchers on large-scale programs in tobacco control and drug use prevention, as discussed in Chapter 9. These examples stand out in that they achieved a high degree of research-to-practice translation, and shared the common characteristics of integrating multiple components of the social marketing benchmark criteria and planning process into a single campaign. The gap that remains to be closed, and discussed further in Chapter 9, is *how to promote translation*

and integration of research and practice from the beginning of a project. This remains a central challenge to realizing the potential of social marketing.

The Social Marketing Research Continuum

This chapter introduces the idea of social marketing research and its integration into the social marketing process as a whole. Use of research at the design, development, implementation, and evaluation stages of social marketing is part of the benchmark criteria (Chapman, 2010). These areas of use represent stages in a time sequence over the life span of development of the campaign, our rubric for speaking about social marketing practice in this book. Each of these stages represents an important part of the evidence creation and decision-making process for social marketing. The key to gathering valid, timely, and actionable evidence is recognizing what place on the social marketing research continuum a project currently stands when planning research. Figure 1-1 (reproduced from Evans, 2015) illustrates the continuum concept.

Figure 1-1 illustrates a basic model of social marketing research based on the key questions researchers seek to answer. These follow the continuum from left to right and define a process moving from marketing design and development (Brown, 2009) through implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. The following are social marketing researchers' basic questions:

1. What should the marketing campaign be?
2. Are its strategies and messages efficacious?
3. Is it implemented as planned?

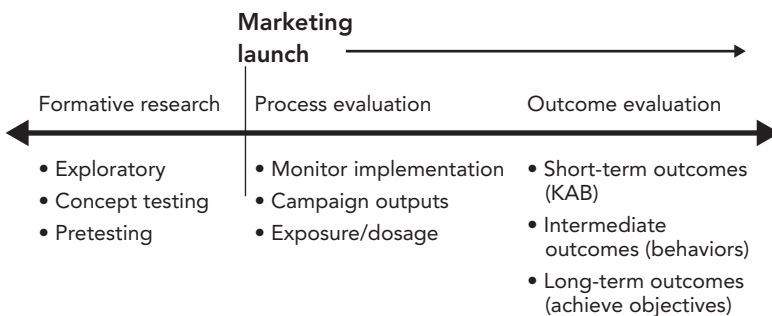


FIGURE 1-1 The social marketing research continuum.

Source: Evans, W.D. (2015) A Social Marketing Research Paradigm. In *Social Marketing: Global Perspectives, Strategies, and Effects on Consumer Behavior*, W.D. Evans (Ed.). Hauppauge, NY: Nova Science; Chapter 1.

4. Does the audience receive and adopt the intended knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs (KAB)?
 - a. Are the campaign **communication objectives** achieved?
5. Does the audience know/adopt key messages?
6. Does the audience adopt and maintain intended behaviors?
 - a. Are the campaign **behavioral objectives** achieved? These behavioral endpoints are either buy a socially marketed product or service or engage in health-promoting or disease-preventing behaviors.

Based on this basic process flow and distinct stages of research questions and objectives, there are several familiar methods of research used in social marketing, including the following:

- Formative research—What affects the targeted behavior of interest? How does the audience think and feel about the targeted behavior? What should be the marketing mix (4Ps)?
- Message testing research—Do messages achieve their communication objectives?
- Process evaluation—How is the marketing delivered?
- Outcome evaluation—What are behavioral effects of the message on audiences?
- Impact evaluation—What is the long-term effect of the message on health promotion and disease prevention (morbidity and mortality)?

The following chapters explore and elaborate on each of these research methodologies and how they are applied in social marketing. Each method is explicated using results from social marketing research and case examples from the design and implementation of campaigns. The concept of the social marketing research continuum and the interrelations between each stage of research are explored as well and elaborate on previous literature on this topic (Evans, 2015). Social marketing research is integrated with practice as a continuous process of exploration, feedback, knowledge generation, and improvement of the marketing mix. In these respects, it is grounded in the same principles underlying health promotion programs generally, as illustrated by the PRECEDE-PROCEED model (Green & Kreuter, 2005). The implications of this process and where the field is heading to realize the goal of a closed loop of translation from research to practice is discussed in detail in Chapter 10.

Additional Resources: Web Based

- Developing Health Communication Campaigns: <http://www.nccmt.ca/registry/view/eng/75.html>
- Making Health Communication Programs Work: <http://www.cancer.gov/publications/health-communication/pink-book.pdf>
- Oxford Bibliographies Online: Health Communication: <http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/>
- Theory at a Glance: A Guide for Health Promotion Practice: <http://www.sneb.org/2014/Theory%20at%20a%20Glance.pdf>

Additional Resources: Literature

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Research Methods and Evidence For Social Marketing

W. Douglas Evans

Summary Points

- Social marketing has a growing evidence base.
- There are challenges in reviewing the literature due to inconsistent reporting and description of programs.
- Gaps in the current evidence base should be filled using innovative methods and by harnessing new technologies, such as social media and mobile devices.

THIS CHAPTER BEGINS to explore the social marketing research continuum introduced in Chapter 1. Each of the steps in research methods, and their purpose in the social marketing process outlined in Chapter 1, is based in theory, practice, and evidence and has been widely used in the field. The overall goal of this chapter is to provide a brief, not exhaustive review of current methods and evidence in the field. Challenges in assessing the social marketing evidence arise due to issues of how programs and campaigns in the field are described and reported, and the chapter highlights these issues and ways that researchers have attempted to overcome them. Finally, the chapter addresses opportunities for innovation, such as new technologies for social marketing research, how these are currently being to be applied in the field, and how they are evolving.

Overview of the Evidence

There is a growing body of evidence, especially from public health subject areas such as tobacco control, nutrition and physical activity, and HIV/AIDS, to suggest that social marketing can change behavior and is a broadly effective social change strategy that can be applied to modify behaviors across multiple subject areas (French et al., 2010; Abroms & Maibach, 2008). A recent systematic review by the US Preventive Services Taskforce of 23 campaigns that used products (e.g., bicycle helmets) to promote health and prevent disease and injury concluded that communication and social marketing campaigns using these techniques were effective (Robinson et al., 2014).

There is also growing evidence that social marketing is effective in programs aimed at other types of behavior change, from increasing environmental conservation (McKenzie-Mohr, 2011) to promoting community participation (Dutta-Bergman, 2003). The best evidence of social marketing effectiveness comes from media campaign evaluations, typically studies of large mass media campaigns or laboratory experiments where messages are tested under controlled conditions (Snyder & Hamilton, 2002; Evans, Uhrig, et al., 2009). Recently, however, mobile phones, social media, and other new technologies have been studied for behavior change as well (Abroms, Padmanabhan, & Evans, 2012).

Recent evidence reviews indicate that social marketing through mass media is effective in changing health behaviors on a population level. In general, these studies show that social marketing has been effective in changing health behavior (e.g., those related to smoking, physical activity, and condom use) and behavioral mediators, such as knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs related to these behaviors. However, most of these studies have shown effect sizes of less than 10% (Snyder & Hamilton, 2002).

In their widely cited study of 48 US social marketing campaigns based on mass media, Snyder and Hamilton (2002) found that the average campaign accounted for about 9% of the variation in health risk behavior outcomes but with heterogeneous results. A study of 17 recent European media campaigns on a range of topics, including promotion of HIV testing, myocardial infarction admissions, immunizations, and cancer screenings, found similar effects in the range of 5% to 10% (Grilli, Ramsay, & Minozzi, 2002). Evans (2006) points out that single- or few-time behaviors can be easier to promote than behavior requiring repetition and maintenance over time. Some behaviors that do not require long-term maintenance, such as vitamin A promotion and switching to 1% milk, have shown greater effect sizes and generally appear to have higher rates of success (Hornik, 1997; Reger, Wootan, &