

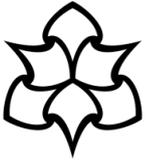
# Creating and co-creating the evidence base for co-creation

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# Overview



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- There are many areas in which co-creation and health and wellbeing overlap eg social prescribing
- But, the evidence base for the impact of co-creation is limited and doesn't meet the standard of evidence that health professionals expect.
- Co-created programmes are often small, emergent and complex. Therefore traditional impact evaluation approaches are not always appropriate.
- The solution is to use impact evaluation designs that work with small cohorts.
- These evaluation designs also provide more opportunities for co-creation of the evaluation itself.

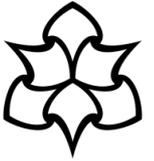
# Limited evidence



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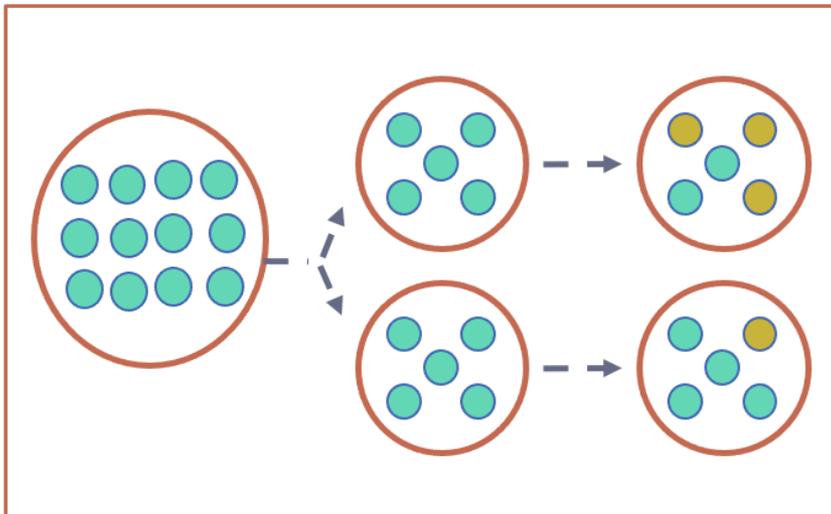
- Most studies of co-creation are small-scale, case studies that don't evaluate outcomes.
- Our knowledge about whether and how co-creation and co-production contribute to outcomes is limited.
- Voorberg et al. (2015) identified over a hundred empirical studies of co-creation and co-production but only 14 papers evaluated the outcome of co-production in terms of an increase (or decrease) in service effectiveness.
- “[G]iven the limited number records that reported on the outcomes of cocreation/co-production, we cannot definitely conclude whether co-creation/co-production can be considered as beneficial”. (Voorberg *et al.* 2015: 16)

# Traditional approach to evaluating impact

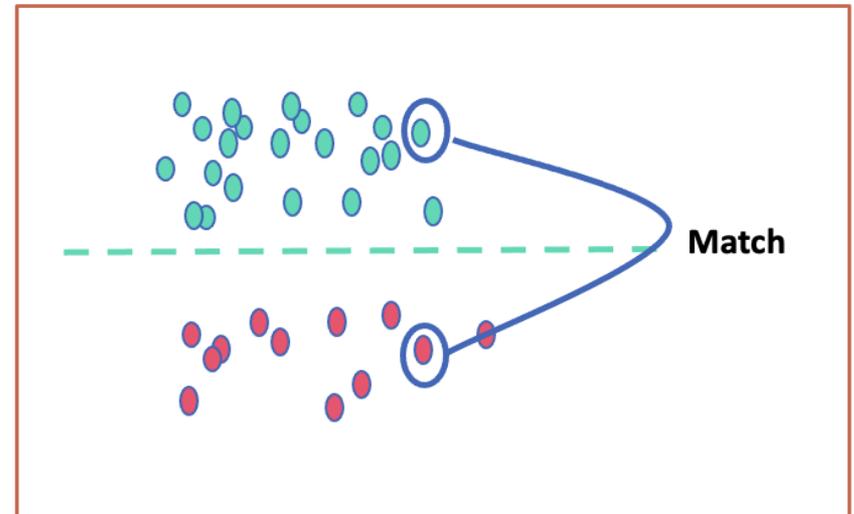


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- Large number of cases
- 'Fixed' intervention
- Divide population into two or more groups and compare outcomes for groups

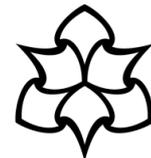


Randomised controlled trials



Quasi-experimental designs

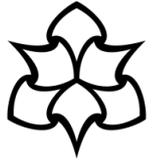
# Challenges for evaluating co-creation



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- How to open the ‘black box’ and answer questions about ‘how’ and ‘why’
  - “The unique strength of experimentation is in describing the consequences attributable to deliberately varying treatments. We call this **causal description**. In contrast, experiments do less well in clarifying mechanisms through which, and the conditions under which, that causal relationship holds – what we call **causal explanation**” (Shadish, Cook & Campbell 2002: 9)
- Co-created programmes are often:
  - Smaller programmes and pilots where statistical power is low
  - Programmes rolled out rapidly, thus negating opportunity for a counterfactual
  - Complex

# Complexity



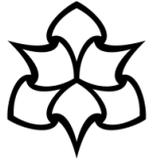
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- Complexity characterises the behaviour of a system whose components interact with each other and their environment in multiple ways, following local rules.
- These interactions give rise to emergent properties.
- The relationship and interactions in a complex system are dynamic and nonlinear. Small changes can have disproportionate outcomes and vice versa.

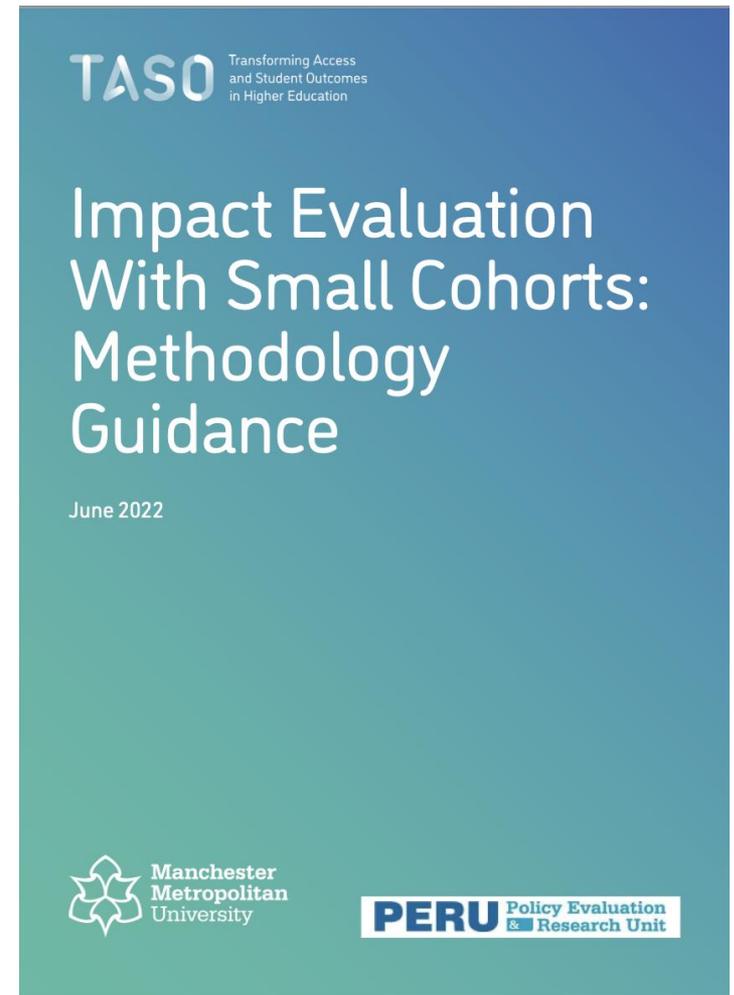
## ***The Magenta Book***

- “The defining feature of a complex system is that it is made up of (and emerges from):
  - many diverse, interacting components,
  - non-linear and non-proportional interactions between these components;
- and in complex *adaptive* systems,
  - adaptation or learning by the components in response to change.”

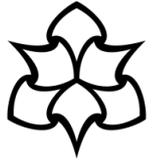
# Small 'n' impact evaluation



- Methodologies that rely on one case or a small number of cases
  - Cases may be institutions, neighbourhoods, individuals, etc.
- Goes beyond traditional understandings of 'case-studies' (Stern et al. 2012)
- Still possible to make causal claims
- Potentially more sensitive to complex & diverse settings in which practitioners and policymakers work.
- Helpful for emergent interventions where experimentation and adaptation are ongoing.



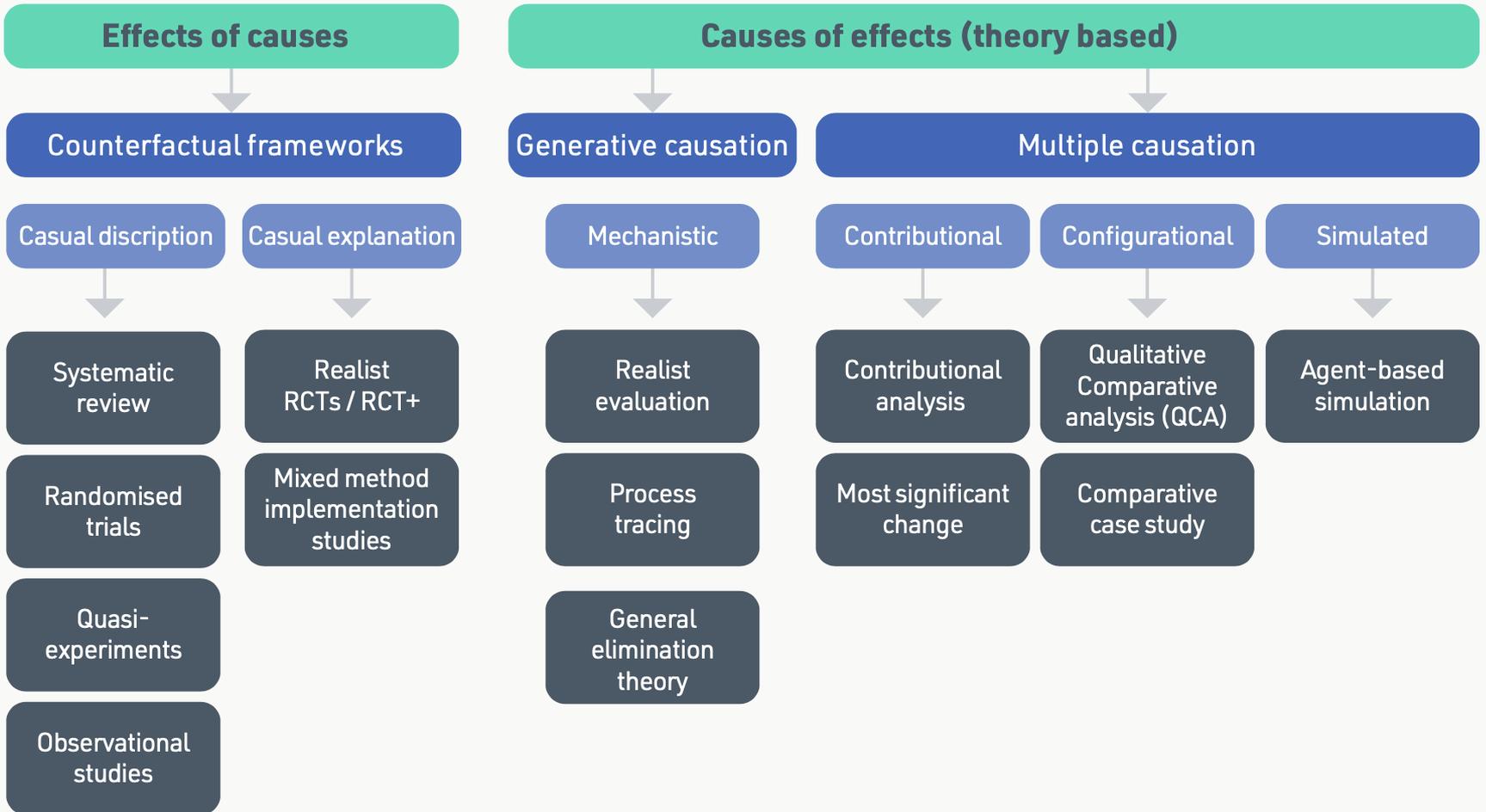
# Taxonomy (based on Stern et al. 2012)

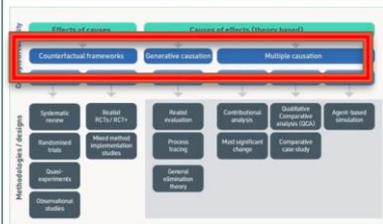


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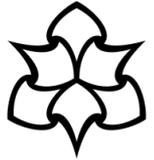
Concepts of causality

Methodologies / designs



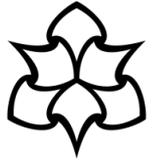


# Different understanding of causation



- Counterfactual evaluation assumes successionist causation:
  - “Causation is ‘external’ in that we do not and cannot observe certain causal forces at work.” (Pawson and Tilley 1997: 33).
- Generative causation.
  - “The generative conception of causation . . . sees the matter of causation ‘internally’. Cause describes the *transformative potential* of phenomena.” (Pawson and Tilley 1994: 293)
- Multiple causation (contribution)
  - “[T]he distinctive character of a contribution perspective focuses less on a single cause and more on the way different causal and supporting or contextual factors combine together.” (Stern et al. 2012: 12)

# Different types of small n methodologies



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- Methodologies can be broadly typologised as either:
  - between case comparisons eg
    - ✦ Qualitative Comparative Analysis or;
  - within case analysis eg
    - ✦ Process Tracing
    - ✦ General Elimination Methodology
    - ✦ Contribution Analysis
    - ✦ Most Significant Change

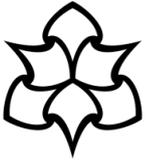
# Opportunities for co-creation in evaluation



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- Most small n methods are theory-driven and start with a Theory of Change (ToC)
  - TOC is usually participatory in its process of development
  - Opportunities to co-create mid-level theory that is tested during evaluation
- Small n methods tend to use ‘mixed methods’: quantitative and qualitative data
  - Opportunities for people’s experience to be central

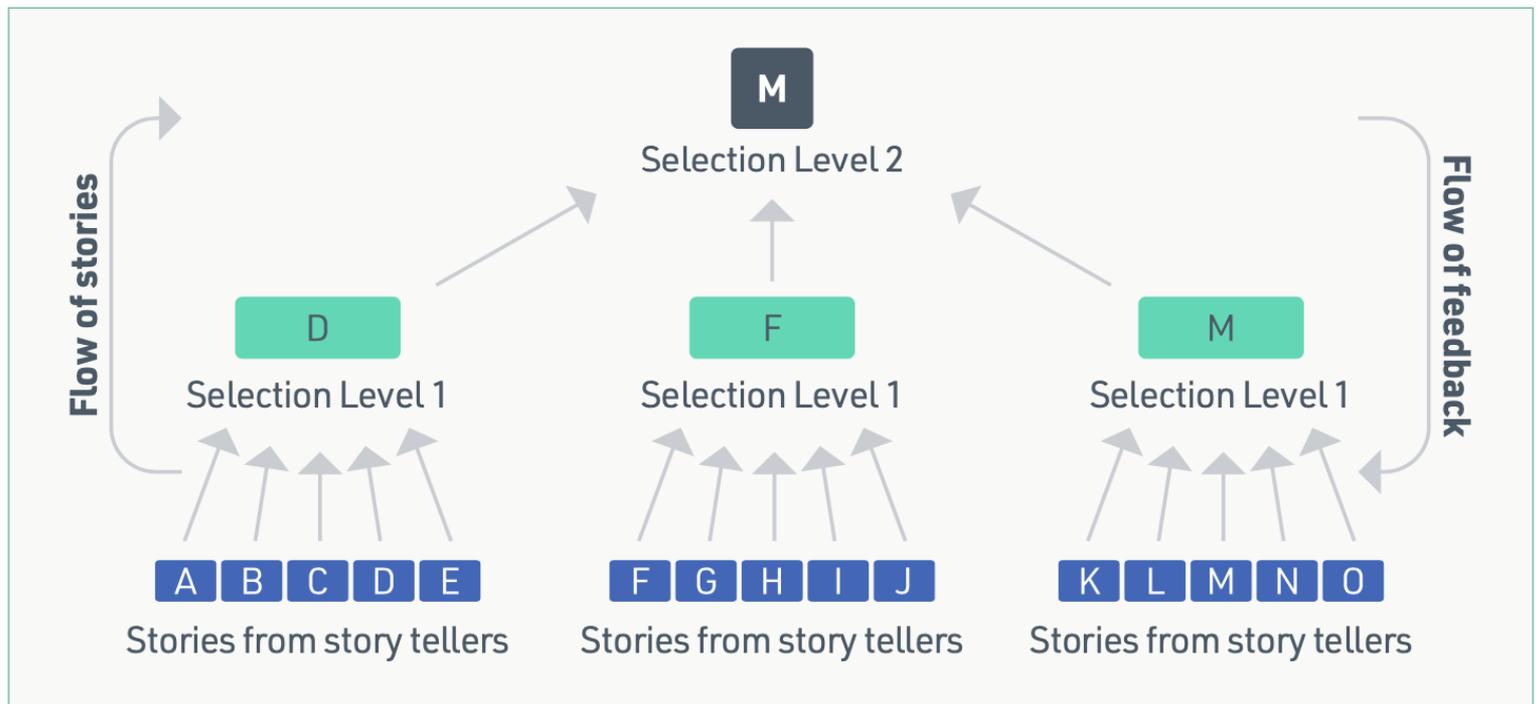
# Most Significant Change – a co-created evaluation



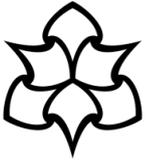
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- A participatory, qualitative method
- a dialogical, story- based monitoring and evaluation technique that involves the collection and selection of significant change stories.

**Figure 9. Flow of stories and feedback in MSC (Davies & Dart, 2005, p. 29)**



# Limitations

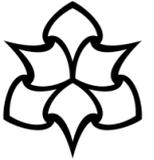


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- Most of these methodologies do not quantify size of an impact.
  - This can reduce options for subsequent economic evaluation.
- All involve detailed information gathering at the level of the case.
  - In some small n impact evaluations, gathering in-depth qualitative data from one or more cases could be just as time-consuming and resource-intensive as data collection in a counterfactual impact evaluation.
- The evaluator needs a deeper knowledge of the programme and the context within which it is being implemented than typically be required in a counterfactual impact evaluation.

Small n impact evaluation is not a low cost, low skill alternative to traditional counterfactual impact evaluation

# Conclusion



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- The limited evidence base for the impact of co-creation
- Co-created programmes are often small, emergent and complex. Therefore traditional impact evaluation approaches are not always appropriate.
- The solution is to use impact evaluation designs that work with small cohorts.
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