P15 / Evidence use: empirical insights on practices and impact of knowledge mobilisation on decision-making

Topic : POLICY DESIGN, POLICY ANALYSIS, POLICY CAPACITY

Chair : Hannah Durrant (Wales Centre for Public Policy, Cardiff University)

Second Chair : Eleanor MacKillop (Cardiff University)

Third Chair : James Downe (Cardiff University)

GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

Interest in the role that evidence, knowledge and expertise can play in decision-making (by which we mean public policy and public service practice decisions) is growing worldwide, with many countries trialing infrastructure for mobilising evidence in policy and practice at national, regional and local levels (MacKillop & Downe, 2023).

And yet, there is still little research outside of health which demonstrates what aids evidence utilization and whether evidence has a positive impact on decision-making. In particular, examples of good quality empirical research illustrating how, why and which forms of research-policy engagement or knowledge mobilisation/brokerage practices work in particular contexts are needed in order for governments to determine whether to invest further into such initiatives and approaches (Bornbaum et al, 2015; Durrant et al, 2024; Neal et al, 2023). Another key area needing more research is the impact of knowledge mobilisation and evidence on decision-making and outcomes, and the challenges, implications and limitations involved (Oliver et al, 2022; Smith & Stewart, 2017).

This panel will draw together research from different contexts and perspectives (e.g., policy fields, geographical areas, and methodological approaches) to examine knowledge mobilisation and build better understanding of the practices it involves and impact it has.

We welcome papers that advance understanding of these topics, providing either new empirical, theoretical, methodological, or comparative insights. The two research questions at the heart of this panel are:
o What is the impact of knowledge mobilisation on evidence use in decision-making?
o What are the key practices of knowledge mobilisation that lead to impact on decision-making?

Other related questions include:
o What practices of knowledge mobilisation have been developed and implemented in different countries or contexts?
o Who is involved in developing and implementing different practices of knowledge mobilisation?
o What does the evaluations of knowledge mobilisation practices tell us about whether they work in informing policy and practice?
o What can we learn from knowledge mobilisation across different policy areas or geographical areas? In other words, how do practices of knowledge mobilisation relate to the context in which they are implemented?
o How do different political systems and cultures influence what counts as evidence and how evidence is used?
o What innovative methods are currently being used in different countries to measure the impact of evidence use?
o What methods exist that can help make sense of how evidence/knowledge mobilisation interacts with decision-making? E.g., theory of change, models of impact, tools and processes?

References:
Bornbaum, C.C., Kornas, K., Peirson, L. et al. (2015). Exploring the function and effectiveness of knowledge brokers as facilitators of knowledge translation in health-related settings: a systematic review and thematic analysis. Implementation Sci, 10: 162.

Durrant, H., Havers, R., Downe, J., and Martin, S. (2024). Improving evidence use: a systematic scoping review of local models of knowledge mobilisation. Evidence & Policy, 20 (3): 370-392.

MacKillop, E., and Downe, J. (2023). Knowledge brokering organisations: a new way of governing evidence.

Evidence & Policy, 19 (1): 22-41.

Neal, J. W., Posner, S., and Brutzman, B. (2023). Understanding brokers, intermediaries, and boundary spanners: a multi-sectoral review of strategies, skills, and outcomes. Evidence & Policy, 19(1): 95-115.

Oliver, K., Hopkins, A., Boaz, A., Guillot-Wright, S., and Cairney, P. (2022). What works to promote research-policy engagement?. Evidence & Policy, 18 (4): 691-713.

Smith, K.E. and Stewart, E. (2017). We Need to Talk about Impact: Why Social Policy Academics need to Engage with the UK's Research Impact Agenda, Journal of Social Policy, 46(1): 109–127.

CALL FOR PAPERS

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Session 1The practices of knowledge mobilisation

Wednesday, July 2nd 13:45 to 15:45 (B8)

Examining the mobilisation of ethical advice in policy making

Sarah Ball (University of Queensland)

Holger Strassheim (Bielefeld University)

The role of knowledge brokering organisations in facilitating academic-policy engagement.

Hannah Durrant (Wales Centre for Public Policy, Cardiff University)

Rosalind Phillips (Wales Centre for Public Policy)

James Downe (Cardiff University)

Embedded Impact Research at the Wales Centre for Public Policy

Findlay Smith (Cardiff University)

Hannah Durrant (Wales Centre for Public Policy, Cardiff University)

(Virtual) Innovative approaches to knowledge mobilisation for epistemic policy learning: Two case studies

Bridget Sealey (Sealey Associates Ltd, UK)

Duncan Russel (University of Exeter)

Andrew Mycock (University of Leeds)

Kayleigh Renberg-Fawcett (University of Leeds)

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Session 2Who is involved in knowledge mobilisation?

Wednesday, July 2nd 16:00 to 18:00 (B8)

Discussants

Eleanor MacKillop (Cardiff University)

(Virtual) Principles for Meaningfully Involving Experts-by-Experience in Knowledge Mobilisation for Policy Research and Practice

Rounaq Nayak (University of the West of England, Bristol)

What Knowledge, What Mobilization? Exploring Collaborative Governance in Coastal and Marine Policy

Ellen Fobé (KU Leuven)

Cécile Blatrix (AgroParisTech)

Using action research for local knowledge mobilisation: Drawing on “grassroots” knowledge in the public service

Assel Mussagulova (University of Sydney)

Susan Goodwin (University of Sydney)

Data for what? Potential and challenges of citizen-generated data to inform local policy-making

Fernanda Lima-Silva (Universidade de São Paulo)

Evangelos Pitidis (University of Warwick)

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Session 3International case studies of knowledge mobilisation practice 1

Thursday, July 3rd 08:00 to 10:00 (B8)

Discussants

Hannah Durrant (Wales Centre for Public Policy, Cardiff University)

(Virtual) A comparative analysis of Aotearoa New Zealand and the UK's approach to knowledge mobilisation for research-informed decision making.

Laura Bea (University of Southampton)

Juliet Gerrard

Kayleigh Renberg-Fawcett (University of Leeds)

Sarah Chaytor (University College London, University of London)

(Virtual) Culture and Institutionalization of Evidence Use in a Context of Political Polarization: a Comparative Study on the Social Assistance and Human Rights Sectors in Brazil

Natalia Koga (National School of Public Administration (ENAP))

Pedro Palotti (National School of Public Administration - ENAP)

Miguel Loureiro (University of Sussex)

Rising to the challenge? Assessing the impact of INE's 'Defining the Challenge' workshops

Alison Clarke (University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne)

Emily Rainsford (University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne)

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Session 4International case studies of knowledge mobilisation practice 2

Thursday, July 3rd 10:15 to 12:15 (B8)

Discussants

James Downe (Cardiff University)

How Knowledge Brokering Organisations have impact: An evaluation framework and case studies of UK What Works Centres

Eleanor MacKillop (Cardiff University)

James Downe (Cardiff University)

(Virtual) Reflections on the use of evidence at the city level: A case study of The London Assembly's Environment Committee

Veronica Qin Ting Li (University College London, University of London)

Carla Washbourne (University of Warwick)

Moving or Maintaining Expertise: The Value of Retaining Policy Expertise in the Everyday Making of Policies

Lindsey Garner-Knapp (University of Sussex)

Joanna Mason (University of Sydney)