

# Harnessing research utilization for evidence-informed practice and policy

Artemio M. Gonzales Jr.

Editor, Mindoro Journal of Social Sciences and Development Studies

---

## EDITORIAL

---

Research utilization is integral to evidence-based practice (EBP) and evidence-informed policy (EIP). This involves utilizing research findings as the foundation for decision-making concerning policy, advocacy, resource allocation, planning and management, and program systems development and strengthening. Such utilization can be achieved through various means, including organizing workshops, publishing articles, crafting policy briefs, offering technical support, and conducting individual meetings with stakeholders (Walugembe et al., 2015). The concept of research utilization is described in various literatures as knowledge translation, knowledge management, knowledge exchange, knowledge transfer, knowledge utilization, or research dissemination (Murunga et al., 2020).

Research institutions, particularly higher education institutions, that demonstrate the capacity for generating high-quality and reputable research are often deeply integrated into the decision and policy-making process. Consequently, they wield more influence in translating and transferring research findings into practice and policy decisions. Research findings can be utilized at various stages within the policymaking process, spanning from agenda setting to policy formulation and implementation (Edwards et al., 2019). However, there remains a disparity in the process of translating research into practice, which continues to be slow, erratic, and uncertain. This leads to diminished benefits relative to the considerable societal investment in research. In settings such as low-resource countries, the ramifications of ineffective research utilization are magnified, emphasizing the need for decision-makers to substantiate their decisions with rigorous evidence of high quality (Poot et al., 2018).

Researchers may encounter difficulties in engaging with stakeholders, such as evidence users and policymakers, to enhance the impact of their research. They may require tools that facilitate better engagement and maximize the value of research utilization. Organizational and colleague support, along with ongoing education, play crucial roles in facilitating research utilization. Additionally, personal and professional commitment can further enhance the process (Minogue et al., 2022).

At the institutional level, the emphasis lies in how higher education institutions prioritize the utilization of research findings. This involves implementing policies, such as incentives and guidelines, and allocating budgets for activities geared towards research utilization. Moreover, it entails establishing processes, like forging institutional partnerships with target audience entities, and creating dedicated structures, such as research utilization units, to empower researchers in actively advocating for the integration of evidence into both policy-making and practical applications.

*This is an open access article under the [CC BY-NC](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/) license.*



---

## REFERENCES

- Edwards, A., Zweigenthal, V., & Olivier, J. (2019). Evidence map of knowledge translation strategies, outcomes, facilitators and barriers in African health systems. *Health Research Policy and Systems*, 17(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12961-019-0419-0>
- Minogue, V., Morrissey, M., & Terres, A. (2022). Supporting researchers in knowledge translation and dissemination of their research to increase usability and impact. *Quality of Life Research: an International Journal of Quality of Life Aspects of Treatment, Care and Rehabilitation*, 31(10), 2959–2968. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11136-022-03122-1>
- Murunga, V., Oranje, R., Bates, I., Tagoe, N., & Pulford, J. (2020). Review of published evidence on knowledge translation capacity, practice and support among researchers and research institutions in low- and middle-income countries. *Health Research Policy and Systems*, 18(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12961-019-0524-0>
- Poot, C. C., Van Der Kleij, R., Brakema, E. A., Vermond, D., Williams, S., Cragg, L., Van Den Broek, J. M., & Chavannes, N. H. (2018). From research to evidence-informed decision making: a systematic approach. *Journal of Public Health*, 40(suppl\_1), i3–i12. <https://doi.org/10.1093/pubmed/idx153>
- Walugembe, D. R., Kiwanuka, S. N., Matovu, J. K. B., Rutebemberwa, E., & Reichenbach, L. (2015). Utilization of research findings for health policy making and practice: evidence from three case studies in Bangladesh. *Health Research Policy and Systems*, 13(1). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12961-015-0015-x>