The Work of the EPPI-Centre

Ann Oakley and David Gough

EPPI-Centre

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The EPPI-Centre is part of the Social Science Research Unit at the Institute of Education, University of London
History

- where?
- why?
- how?
About us

“**Our vision** is that healthcare decision-making throughout the world will be informed by high-quality, timely research evidence.”
SOCIAL SCIENCE
AND SOCIAL
PATHOLOGY

BARBARA
WOOTTON

Assisted by Vera G. Seal
and Rosalind Chambers

GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD
The first EPPI-Centre reviews

- Behavioural interventions for HIV/AIDS
- Behavioural interventions for men who have sex with men
- Sex education
- Young people and smoking
- Workplace health promotion
- Preventing falls in older people
The last EPPI-Centre reviews

- Innovation grants to smallholder agricultural producers
- Interventions to strengthen NHS delivery in low- and middle-income countries
- Predictors, assessment and outcome of cosmetic interventions
- Young people’s views about obesity, body size, shape and weight
- Strategies to improve the performance of un/under-trained teachers in developing countries
- Initiatives to reduce sexual violence in conflict zones
Systematic reviews of well-conducted research most famous in health care

**BUT**

Also an established history in public policy

Health care/public policy professionals often do what they think is the right thing

**BUT**

It actually does harm/doesn’t work
Three examples of harmful effects
WHAT DO WE WANT?
EVIDENCE-BASED CHANGE
WHEN DO WE WANT IT?
AFTER PEER REVIEW
The concepts defining the facts
Configure ideas, concepts, hypotheses

Aggregate data
Test hypotheses

The concepts defining the facts

The Facts Just Ahead
Idealist

Philosophy:

Methods:

Search:

Quality assessment:

Product:

Approach to synthesis:

Relation to theory:

Review use:

Realist

Generate

Explore

Test

Configuring

Aggregating

Iterative

A priori

Theoretical search

Value uniqueness of contribution

Emergent concepts

‘Exhaustive’ search

Avoid bias

Empirical findings

Enlightenment

Instrumental

Even if no stats!
Reviews are not all the same

- Question (e.g. what works and how to understand)
- Approach (aggregating or configuring)
- Complex reviews:
  - Theory driven
  - Mechanisms and contexts
  - Multi component /mixed method reviews
- Depth (Degree of detail)
- Length (Rapid or lengthy)

And reviews are interpreted and applied

REvised Questions
What more do we want to know and how could we know it?

Application of Knowledge
Demand and other pragmatic implementation issues

Interpretation of Knowledge
To inform analysis and decision-making

5. User input: explicit or unspecified process of application of knowledge of interpreted/contextualized review findings

Intermediary/Brokerage
Guidance, products, processes and organisations

Generic research evidence
- Tacit practice knowledge
- Other knowledge and perspectives

Context-sensitive research evidence
So need to study the evidence-to-use System
EPPI-Centre: for developing (and applying) methods of systematic review

For example:

- Text book, methods papers and tools for reviews
- Department of Health, Policy Research Programme, public health reviews facility
- NICE National Coordinating Centre for Social Care
- NICE Research Support Unit
- ESRC/ Home Office What Works in Crime Initiative
- Department for International Development: review and review support
- EPPI-Reviewer: comprehensive web based software for all types of systematic review
EPPI-Centre: Developing the study of research use and participatory methods of research

For example:

- EIPPEE (Evidence Informed Policy and Practice in Education in Europe): network of 36+ partners across Europe
- Catalyst: RCUK project to develop public involvement with research
- Research Advisory Service: supporting organisations and individuals in engaging with research
EPPI-Centre: Training

For example:

- MSc in Research for Public Policy and Practice
- Short course programme:
  - Systematic Reviews for Policy and Practice
  - Participative Research and Policy
  - Methods for Research Synthesis
- Commissioned short courses
Welcome to the EPPI-Centre

The Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Co-ordinating Centre (EPPI-Centre) is part of the Social Science Research Unit at the Institute of Education, University of London.

The EPPI-Centre is involved in two areas of work:

1. Developing methods for systematic reviews and research synthesis. This includes undertaking systematic reviews, supporting others to undertake reviews and providing training in this area. The EPPI-Centre offers support and expertise to those undertaking systematic reviews and those who are interested in finding out about or using research evidence. Please see our working with the EPPI-Centre page if you would like to work with us.

2. Studying the use of evidence in personal, practice and political decision-making. It is necessary, but not sufficient to review research evidence. We also need to understand how research evidence is developed, understood and applied. As well as being a centre for systematic review work, the EPPI-Centre is also a centre for studying the use of research in policy, practice and society.

http://www.eippee.eu

Evidence & Policy Journal

An introduction to systematic reviews: Sage Publications Ltd

http://eppi.ioe.ac.uk
Thank you for your attention

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