

Rebecca O'Neill

Evidence based policy making

Supervisors: [Chris Skelcher](/schools/government-society/departments/local-government-studies/staff/profiles/skelcher-chris.aspx) and [Karin Bottom](/schools/government-society/departments/local-government-studies/staff/profiles/bottom-karin.aspx) (INLOGOV)

The research aims to undertake a qualitative and quantitative investigation of evidence-based policy making and its impact on the policy making process. It will build on the existing literature and aim to show that in order for evidence-based policy making to be successful certain conditions must be put in place. The literature leads to several questions:

1. How does the concept of evidence affect evidence-based policy making? There is no existing practicable theory of evidence, one that is philosophically-grounded and yet applicable for evidence-based policy. Both philosophical accounts and practical accounts of evidence fail to provide a theory of evidence that is adequate.
2. Does the political ideology of government contradict the use of evidence in the policy making process? Research indicates that policy is not always informed by the available evidence and government often chooses to ignore the advice of experts when policy making.
3. How can relationships between researchers and policy makers be improved to ensure that evidence-based policy making is successful? Those doing public policy need research to ensure that their decisions are based, at least in part, on some kind of empirical foundation. Miscommunication and mistrust can occur even during interactions entered into with the best of intentions.

Research objectives:

1. To identify and explain the use of evidence in policy making.
2. To establish the role of knowledge producers and knowledge consumers.
3. To determine the influence of political ideology on the policy making process.
4. To facilitate the relationships between researchers and policy makers.

Profile

My core research areas comprise evidence based policy making and its impact on the policy making process. I am particularly interested in the relationships between researchers and policy makers and whether or not these relationships can be improved.

Qualifications

- BSc Public policy, government and management (University of Birmingham)
- MA Social Research (University of Birmingham)

Research interests

- Evidence based policy making
- Factors that affect the policy making process
- The relationship between researchers and policy makers
- Political ideology and the impact on policy making
- Knowledge and power in the policy making process

Contact

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