



Methodological Considerations for Evaluating the Policy Impact of Medical Research in Kenya: An African Perspective,

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Published: 20 March 2023 | Received: 02 January 2023 | Accepted: 03 March 2023

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DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.18530319](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18530319)

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Abstract

Translating medical research into health policy is a critical yet under-evaluated process in many African contexts. In Kenya, despite increasing clinical and public health research, there is a lack of standardised, contextually relevant methodologies to assess how this research influences national health policy. This article aims to propose a methodological framework for evaluating the policy impact of medical research in Kenya. Its objectives are to outline key conceptual challenges, identify appropriate indicators of policy uptake, and recommend practical data collection and analysis strategies for the Kenyan health system. The proposed methodology was developed through a critical synthesis of existing impact assessment models and stakeholder engagement. It integrates qualitative document analysis of policy artefacts, in-depth stakeholder interviews, and process-tracing techniques to establish plausible linkages between research outputs and policy decisions. As a methodology article, it presents no empirical results. The primary output is the proposed framework, which identifies three interlinked assessment domains: evidence absorption (e.g., citation in policy documents), policy adaptation (e.g., modification of guidelines), and system integration (e.g., changes in resource allocation). It emphasises the need to track indirect and conceptual impacts alongside direct instrumental use. Evaluating the policy impact of medical research in Kenya requires a flexible, multi-method approach that accounts for the complex, non-linear nature of policy-making. The proposed framework offers a structured starting point for such assessments. Researchers and evaluators should employ longitudinal designs, engage policy-makers as key informants, and utilise contribution analysis to attribute impact. Future work should pilot and refine this framework across different medical sub-specialties. research impact, health policy, evaluation methodology, knowledge translation, Kenya, Africa This article provides a structured, contextually grounded methodological framework to guide the evaluation of medical research impact on health policy in Kenya, addressing a significant gap in assessment practice.

Keywords: *research utilisation, health policy analysis, knowledge translation, sub-Saharan Africa, implementation science, impact evaluation, evidence-informed policy*

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